



THE BRYC NEWS *ISSUE 18* 16/12/2016

The first thing is to wish everyone a very merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year with lots of good racing. The second thing is to say that I thought you could all do with some reading over the holiday period - not that us retired folks aren't always on holiday anyway, but I'm sure you get what I mean.

The new, updated Racing Rules of Sailing are out now and take effect from 1st January 2017 and as usual will apply for the next four years until after the 2020 Olympic Games when they will be revised again. Every sailor should have a copy of the rules together with an explanation of what applies in the different racing situations we all encounter from time to time. The rules aren't just a set of does and don'ts, they are an integral part of the sport of racing sailboats and it is impossible to sail a sound tactical race without a decent working knowledge of the basics so if you haven't already, go out and buy a book now. The one I would recommend and it is available from Amazon and probably other good book shops or from the RYA, is "The Rules in Practice 2017 - 2020" by Bryan Willis. This is an excellent book and covers just about everything you need to know about the RRS and has lots of nice diagrams and pictures (nice for those of us who can't read, we just look at the pictures) explaining everything throughout a race from before the preparatory signal through to the finish. There are also sections on the basics, taking a penalty and protesting.

If you do buy this book and I recommend that you do, make sure you read the introduction and the section entitled 'The Basics' they contain very relevant useful information.

There sometimes seems to be a misconception amongst sailors that the rules are somehow there to make life difficult and more complicated than it needs to be and in fact nothing could be further from the truth. The rules are there to provide a framework for fair competition. They are sometimes complicated but this is inevitable if all racing situations are to be adequately covered but if we all get the basics right then most of the complications will be avoided. One of the things we see so often in sports nowadays is cheating, not only by participants but also by sporting bodies; for example the recent Russian doping scandal. We are also used to seeing cheating in other ways; footballers flinging themselves to the ground in order to get a free kick or a penalty, cricketers tampering with the ball and so on. Something else we see all the time is participants arguing with officials in order to intimidate them and perhaps make them hesitate to penalise a particular player again. Sadly this behaviour is often condoned and even encouraged by coaches, managers, spectators, commentators and pundits who seem to see this behaviour as just a bit of gamesmanship, completely legitimate and justified by the attitude that they'll do it to us so it is OK for us to do it to them. What an appalling state of affairs!

Oh dear! I didn't mean to give you all a pre-Christmas lecture but it is an issue I feel strongly about. If we all sail fairly and this includes not arguing on the water and taking penalty turns when necessary, we will all enjoy our sailing to the full. In fairness I have to say that as a rule our members are all very good in this respect so let's keep it that way in 2017 (good grief that's another year gone, I've heard it said that the older one gets the faster time goes and it seems to be so).

You all now have a copy of next years racing programme (if you haven't tell me and I'll send you another one). There is practise racing for IOM's on Sunday and again next Wednesday so please come along if you can. I think the restaurant will be busy so an early coffee might be a good idea. In spite of difficult conditions, last Wednesday provided some excellent and challenging racing and Eric had his first experience of course setting and mark laying. Thanks for that Eric and well done. We will have a break from racing on 25th (of course) but we will be back on 28th December and again on 1st January. Also on 1st January is the Oliver Lee trophy race hosted by the Chelmsford club at The Blackwater if you fancy it.

I think that's about all for now and I hope to see you on Wednesday.

Cheers, Pete.