



Grand Prix Finishing

In the some classes, there can be large differences in speed between the most experienced sailors and the least experienced sailors, it is not unusual in a race where the leader completes 3 laps while other boats only complete only 1 lap. To avoid long waiting times for the experienced sailors, and not discourage the less experienced sailors, the Grand Prix finishing system may be used. The aim of the Grand Prix finishing system is to make sure that every sailor who finishes at least one lap will get a score.

When the first boat has crossed the finish line, the committee boat should sound a long signal and display a unique flag to indicate that

- The finish line is "open"; and
- The "Finishing Time Window" has begun.

This flag should be large, to make it easy to see for the approaching boats. A similar flag may also be displayed at the windward gate or mark. All subsequent boats should cross the finish line irrespective of whether they have completed all laps, and will be scored according to their position and the number of laps they have sailed. Boats that fail to cross the finish line within the Finishing Time Window, will be allocated a score based on their position at the last time they rounded the leeward gate/mark.

The wording in the sailing instructions could be:

"When the leading boat completes the course and finishes, the Race Committee signal boat will immediately display a chequered flag¹ with a sound signal. This indicates the Finishing Time Window is now open. From this time, all boats that cross the finishing line within 20 minutes after the leading boat has finished, shall be deemed to be finished irrespective of number of laps they have completed. Their position in the race will be noted from their finishing order and number of completed laps, with those having the most laps being recorded ahead of those with less completed laps. Boats that have completed 1 lap shall be ranked behind boats that have completed 2 laps. Boats that have completed 2 laps shall be ranked behind boats that have completed 3 laps.

If a boat after the Finishing Time Window has opened sails one more lap, this will not count as a completed lap in the scoring. This changes RRS 28.1 and A4.

Boats failing to cross the finish line within the Finishing Time Window, will be scored after those finishing as described in the above mentioned finishing rule. They will be scored according to their position at the previous passing of the gate or bottom mark.

If they have not been able to complete one lap, they will be scored did Not Finish without a hearing. This changes RRS 35, A4 and A5."

To operate the Grand Prix finishing system is one of the most challenging tasks of conducting such regattas. The effective implementation will require:

- 1 or 2 race committee members to record each finisher. Recording ideally on a digital recorder.
- Back up lap recording, either paper or 2nd digital device.

¹ or similar, as detailed in the sailing instructions