



**British Powerboat Racing Club**

## **Section 3 – Racing Rules**

# **2024 Offshore Powerboat Rules**

**06 July 2024**

2024 BPRC OFFSHORE POWERBOAT RULES

SECTION 3 – Racing Rules



Published &  
Held by the:

British Powerboat Racing Club Management Ltd



# 2024 BPRC OFFSHORE POWERBOAT RULES

## SECTION 3 – Racing Rules

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### **300 - Racing Rules**

Offshore races are held in open waters that are accessible by the public.

Accordingly, all competitors are held responsible as they would be under pleasure regulations.

The presence of course marshals is not to be taken as a presumption that the course is clear.

Organisers should make every effort to sanitise a start chute before leading boats into a start run and competitors are minded that a red flag may be shown at any time to abort a start.

### **301 - Timing**

Timing is carried out by officially appointed timekeepers using timing devices graduated to one tenth of a second. The devices must have a split-second system one part of which must be capable of being stopped and restarted.

### **302 - Marks of the Course**

#### **302.01 - Definitions**

The Marks of the Course are any objects (boat, buoys...) that are specifically designated as such in the racing instructions. The objects that are not designated specifically as such are to be considered as obstacles.

An Official may be posted near the turning marks. They must observe the turning of the marks and report to the Race Committee.

Should any mark be removed from its proper position either by accident or otherwise, the Race Committee shall, if possible, have it replaced. Should it be impossible to replace the mark in time for the boats to round it, the Race Committee shall decide whether the race is to be restarted or not. In any case the if a Race Mark is missing the competitor must “round” the nominated position of the virtual mark, as prescribed in the Race Instructions.

The distance between the starting line and the first turning buoy must be at least one nautical mile.

#### **303.02 – Spectator Areas**

Race Organisers should designate spectator areas.

If a race boat finds itself in a designated spectator area, it must come off the plane immediately and proceed “off plane” with caution until back on the racecourse to avoid disqualification.



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### **303 - Procedure for Offshore Starts**

#### **303.01**

A safe area shall be established for mustering. In this area, boats must be off plane (bow down, no wake) and must turn in counterclockwise direction.

#### **303.02**

Distinct areas in which each starting group can muster (safe area) will be established. See diagram for area and location.

#### **303.03**

A control line on the race side of the muster area which is effectively where the start boat turns to pick up each class to start will be established.

#### **303.04**

The race official on the start boat may use hand signals, radio and flags to control the fleet prior to the start.

#### **303.05**

The use of a startboat is mandatory for all classes.

There must be a safe interval between each race start with the start boat headed towards the start line to one side or the other of the chute.

#### **303.06**

The minimum width of starting chute is 20M with a minimum length of 200M. The chute must be straight.

Drivers must keep their lane in the start chute, up to a point presented in Race Instructions.

From there on only the “International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at sea”, are valid.

Breaking this rule will result in one or more of the following penalties: warning, time penalty, disqualification, yellow cards, depending on the severity.



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#### **303.07**

When the start official deems the fleet and chute to be ready to initiate the start sequence, the start boat shall raise and continue to display a yellow flag whilst running across the “pick - up” line.

When the start boat reaches the opposite side of the starting chute it shall turn and begin it's run towards the start line.

All race boats may then begin their run towards the start line, following the start boat, at the 30M minimum safety distance, until the raising of the green flag.

The minimum dimensions recommended for the yellow flag are 1.5 m x 1.0 m.

#### **303.08**

During the start procedure the race boats must run at the safety distance of at least 30M behind the start boat and must observe a safe spreading distance between boats.

#### **303.09**

The start boat should approach the start line at a speed which allows boats which have difficulty in getting on plane to catch up.



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#### **303.10**

When the starter is satisfied that all boats are in a satisfactory line, at a satisfactory speed, they will raise the green flag and simultaneously lower the yellow flag. The raising of the green flag determines the actual start.

The minimum dimensions recommended for the green flag are 1.5 m x 1.0 m 305.7

The race only starts when the green flag is raised. However, for time keepers, the official start is when the leading boat crosses the actual start line. The actual start line shall be announced in the racing instructions.

#### **303.11**

If at any time during the start procedure a red flag is raised, the start has been aborted and all boats must return off plane to the milling area for restart or follow specific instructions of the start boat.

Start line/check marker boats may be used in conjunction with other fixed or laid marks help define the actual start line.

#### **303.12**

A disabled boat or one which cannot get on plane with its class, must not interfere with the start of the next race in any manner. The craft must go to one side of the chute and wait for a clear lane to commence their start and after permission to do so from the OOD, or Start Official. Should a boat fail to start after its respective race has started, it may start, in a normal fashion within a half hour (30 minutes) of its respective class time of start.

#### **303.13**

It is recommended that the start and/or pace boat personnel be limited to seven persons.



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#### **303.14**

Penalties for infraction of the starting procedure are:

- a) Failing to respect a safety distance 30M - 3 minutes
- b) Turning wrong direction – 3 minutes
- c) Interference with starting procedure - disqualification
- d) Excess speed in the milling area, or faster than speeds determined in race instructions - 5 minutes penalty. If the driver has caused danger to other boats, they may be disqualified
- e) Should the bow of any boat be in front of the transom of the start boat when the green flag is raised - 5-minute penalty.

An outer-limit pace boat on the other end of the penalty line may be used to help define the actual penalty line from transom to transom.

#### **303.15**

Safety takes precedence over racing. Drivers should do nothing to endanger crew, spectators or other participants.

#### **303.16**

If it is desirable to start two or more starting groups together, this may be done provided it is fully covered in the racing instructions (and/or drivers briefing).

#### **303.17**

Either the same start boat or a second start boat will start each starting group. If the same start boat is being used for the second start in which case the start boat, having started the first group should return on the diagonal to its original position at the opposite end on the control line and immediately repeat the starting procedure outlined in 305.08 for the next starting group until all the groups have been started.

Alternatively, if separate start boats are used for secondary starting groups they should utilise the procedure described in Rule 305 at time intervals fully described in racing instructions.





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#### **303.18**

Should sea conditions in the milling area be such that boats ship water when turning while off plane, procedure will be modified as follows:

- The start boat will lead race boats to the milling area at which point it will raise yellow flag slowly to allow race boats to get on the plane in safety before accelerating towards the start line.
- Race boats will follow the start boat at the thirty meters minimum safety distance, on the side and in the manner described in the racing instructions or at race briefing, until the raising of the green flag.



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#### **304 - Bad Weather Course**

Should bad weather compel the organisers to have any race run on a shortened course and/or an alternative start time, points are granted provided:

That a minimum of hour notification, prior to the start time, of the amendment to the course or the start time is given to each driver in a Race Bulletin. A register should be signed by every driver confirming receipt of the Race Bulletin.

The bad/Rough weather course should be published as part of the race instructions with boat coordinates, buoy descriptions and a chart.

Should the race be stopped for any reason of 'force majeure', the boats will be classified, providing 70% of the minimum race distance has been completed. If this distance has not been completed, no points will be awarded.

#### 70% Rule

If the race distance is 90 miles then 66.5 miles is 70%

If a race boat completes 65.5 miles it will be rounded up as a finish

If a race boat completes 65.4 it will be rounded down as a non finisher

#### **305 - Race Cancelled**

The Race Committee has the power to cancel any race should unfavorable weather or other serious circumstances render such action necessary.

A red flag raised indicates that such race has been cancelled.

#### **306 - Race Postponed / Race Shortened / Race Stopped / Race Curtailed**

##### **306.01**

The Race Committee has the right to postpone a race, in which case the red flag must be raised from the start boat and/or a patrol boat.

Race starts thus postponed may re-commence the starting procedure with the raising of the yellow flag as described.

The Race Committee may postpone the start, even after the first signals have been given, but only in cases of force majeure or if an error in the starting signals has been made.



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### **306.02**

In both cases, signaling is to be recommenced.

When the need for postponement has passed, the Race Committee signals the start according to the instructions contained in the programme.

New entries are not to be accepted for postponed races.

Only drivers who duly entered and were present when the race was postponed are admitted.

### **306.03 - Race Shortened**

A shortened race is a race over a course which has been shortened by the Race Committee before the start.

The decision with instructions about the shortened course must be handed in writing to the drivers and the timekeepers.

### **306.04 - Race Stopped**

The organisers may stop the race at any checkpoint of the route before the official finish, and/or if the race has been run more than 30 nautical miles, and/or the drivers have been racing for at least an hour.

The curtailment decision must be ratified by the Race Committee immediately after the race.

A red flag raised indicates the race has been stopped.

A stopped race is a race which has been interrupted by the Race Committee after the start.

Stopping the race is decided by the Race Committee for reason of force majeure of which it is the sole judge.

The Race Committee classes the boats according to their position at the time or place when and where the race was stopped.

### **306.05 – Race Curtailed**

A curtailed race is a race shortened by the Race Committee after the start.

The signal to be used to announce it, is the waving of the chequered and red flag by the committee boat only at the finish line.

The O.O.D. or other responsible official can implement a curtailment decision at any time



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during the event, provided the curtailment signal is broken out on the start/finish line.

Once the curtailment signal has been broken out, all boats will stop racing at the end of their current lap.

Raising a retirement flag will not preclude a driver from getting finishing points that would otherwise be awarded if the race is curtailed.

Arriving at a finishing sequence - The first boat in each class, or subdivision, to be stopped by the curtailment signal becomes the “key” boat in that class. Then -

I) All boats that subsequently take the curtailment signal and have then completed the same number of laps as the “key” boat are listed, in their finishing sequence behind the “key” boat.

II) All boats that subsequently take the curtailment signal and have completed one less lap than their “key” boat are listed, in their finishing sequence, behind all the boats listed under (I) above.

III) Boats that break down on their last lap shall be placed in the finishing order, in the sequence which they last crossed the start/finish line and in accordance with the number of laps which they actually completed.

IV) All boats that subsequently take the curtailment signal and have completed one more lap than their “key” boat are listed, in their final finishing sequence, ahead of all boats listed under (I) and (II) above, and probably ahead of all boats listed under (III).

V) Boats that break down on their last lap having completed less laps than any other finisher (under the above rules) shall be regarded as non-finishers.



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#### **307 - IRPCS**

##### **307.01**

The International Regulations for preventing Collisions at Sea, shall apply at all times.

##### **307.02**

Whereby any of these rules one of the two boats is to give way, the other must keep her course and speed.

##### **307.03**

Every boat, which is directed by these rules to give way to another boat must, if the circumstance of the case admit, avoid crossing ahead of the other.

##### **307.04**

Every boat which is directed by these rules to give way to another boat must on approaching her, if necessary, slacken her speed, or stop or reverse.

##### **307.05**

Any boat overtaking any other must give way to the overtaken boat.

##### **307.06**

In obeying these rules, due regard must be made to all dangers of navigation and collision, and to any special circumstances which may render a departure from the above rules necessary in order to avoid immediate danger.



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#### **307.07 - Overtaking**

Any overtaking boat must give way to the overtaken boat.

A boat being overtaken must not deliberately alter its course in any way that would hinder the overtaking boat.

An overtaking boat must give way to and not cause the overtaken boat to change course or take evasive action and in all circumstances be prepared to alter its course to avoid a collision.

Extra caution is advisable when overtaking canopied boats that may have limited all-round visibility, especially to the rear.

If a boat in consequence of its neglect of any of these rules compels another to foul, it will be disqualified.

Definition of fouling - if any boat by its action causes another boat to have a collision or causes another boat to take action to avoid a collision which may or may not result in that boat infringing another rule.

(e.g. missing or hitting a mark of the course), they will be penalised.

Any/all boats involved in a collision may be disqualified at the discretion of the OOD/Race Director

#### **307.08 - Passing Obstacles**

When they are about to pass an obstacle, then the outside boats shall give the inside boats room to pass clear of the obstacle.

#### **307.09 – Passing Marks**

When they are about to pass a mark on the required side, then the outside boats shall give the inside boats room to pass clear of the mark, leaving it on the required side.

#### **307.10 – Altering Course**

When one of the boats is obliged to keep clear to avoid risk of fouling, the other shall not alter her course.

A boat must not alter her course so as to hinder another in passing to starboard.

#### **307.11**

When an overlap exists (two clear boat lengths between the stern of the boat in front and



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the bow of the boat behind) but neither boat is an overtaking boat, the one which has the other on her starboard side must give way.

#### **308 - Rounding and Fouling Marks**

##### **308.01**

Rounding marker buoys must be in the direction and on the side stipulated in the race instructions.

##### **308.02**

A driver who is forced on to a mark by another driver may lodge a protest against that driver. If a boat damages/destroys a turn marker a penalty may be applied by the race officials and any damage / loss will be charged to the competitor

#### **309 - Fouling Competing Boats**

If a boat, in consequence of her neglect of any of these rules fouls another boat, or compels others to foul each other, she is disqualified.

#### **310 - Running Aground**

Any boat, running aground, fouling a buoy, vessel or other obstruction, may use her own anchors, warps, spars or other gear to clear herself.

#### **311 - Anchoring During a Race**

A boat may anchor during a race but must weigh and recover her anchor again, not slip it.

#### **312 - Means of Propulsion**

All methods of propulsion other than motor, and paddle are prohibited.

The action of the wind and current will not entail the disqualification of the competitor.



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### **313 - Outside Assistance**

#### **319.01**

Unless specified in racing instructions, no outside assistance (including refueling) is allowed during a race.

For all classes it is permitted to use electronic steering compasses and/or electronic position fixing equipment. It is expressly forbidden to interface any of this equipment to the steering system.

GYROS: All movable surfaces allowed on the boat shall be under the control of the onboard crew without any sensors in the control loop (i.e. no auto pilots, gyros, accelerometers or other attitude or acceleration sensors may be in the control loop).

The Race Committee has the right to decide whether there was outside assistance or not.

No changes to the boats systems may be made from outside races (i.e. no radio command links to adjust onboard parameters to engine management systems, either air/fuel ECUs or ignition ECUs).





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### **314 - Finishing a Race**

#### **314.01 – The Finish**

The finish of a race is signalled to the driver of the winning boat by waving a black and white flag at the finish line.

Where two or more classes are running together, a different flag may be used for each class.

The description of the flag used for signalling the finish of each class must be clearly specified in the Racing Instructions.

When the leading boat completes the course and crosses the finishing line, the chequered flag will be waved. It designates the “winner” of the race and the start of the finish procedure of the race.

Any boat crossing the finishing line after the “winning boat” will be classified considering its time and the number of laps completed, provided that it has covered the minimum number of laps announced at the race briefing.

When calculating the number of laps completed by a boat, its last lap completed (after the arrival of the winning boat) must not be slower than 50% of its fastest average lap speed.

The race may be curtailed or stopped at the finish line at any time by waving the chequered flag.

This designates the end of the race. To be designated a “finisher”, a minimum of 70% of the laps completed by the winning boat must be completed, rounded up or down to the nearest full lap unless otherwise stated in the race instructions.



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#### **314.02 – Stopping the Race**

In case of force majeure or accident, the Race Committee may stop the whole race, waving a red flag. This signal will be given from the turn mark control boats.

Additionally, this signal may be given by other official safety boats.

#### **314.03**

A driver who finishes a race or heat must withdraw from the course without hindering the boats that are still in the race. This constitutes an exception to rule “Right of Way”.

A driver who has finished that race and cuts across the course may be disqualified.

A vessel is timed as completing a race when her bow crosses the finishing line.

After finishing the race, she must continue to observe any special regulations prescribed by the Race Committee as to keeping clear of the finishing line and the course.

#### **314.04**

The Race Committee has the right to stipulate the maximum duration of each race.



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#### **315 - Scoring System**

##### **315.01 – REVISED for**

##### **approval**

Unless otherwise specified, the following scoring system is to be adopted:

Position	Points	Position	Points	Position	Points	Position	Points
1st	35	6th	15	11th	10	16th	5
2nd	27	7th	14	12th	9	17th	4
3rd	21	8th	13	13th	8	18th	3
4th	17	9th	12	14th	7	19th	2
5th	16	10th	11	15th	6	20th	1

##### **315.02**

If boats of different series or classes start together every boat must be classified within its own class.

#### **316 - Posting of the Results**

The results of each race must be posted, as soon as possible after the race on the notice board at race administration office (specified during the driver's meeting/or in the Race Instructions).

The O.O.D. and Timing officer must sign together the provisional and official results and state the time of posting on the sheets.



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#### **316.01- Provisional Results**

The first posted results, with “Provisional Results” mentioned on the sheet, remain provisional for 1 hour, unless otherwise stated on the results sheet for purpose of post-scrutineering or other purpose.

Competitors can only lodge protest against results or against other competitors as long as results are provisional (protest time).

The deadline of an hour is not valid for penalties imposed by the O.O.D. for the reason of post-race scrutineering, and under the condition that this is clearly stated on the provisional results sheet.

The results will in this case remain provisional until hour after the finalization of the post-race scrutineering.

Once post-scrutineering is finalised, the technical scrutineers in charge will report this to the O.O.D, who has to record the finish time of post-race scrutineering. One hour after the end of post scrutineering, if no protests lodged, results will be made official.

All competitors and jury members must remain available on the event site during the hour after posting of provisional results or hour after finalisation of post-scrutineering if results remain provisional till the end of post- scrutineering. This is the post-race protest period for each race.



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#### **316.02- Protest Procedure**

During the protest time competitors will be able to protest.

A protest against new results which are not caused by a jury decision can be lodged within one hour of these new results being posted, but only concerning the decision (e.g. post-scrutineering, etc.) which led to the changing of the results.

If protests have been lodged, these protests will be reviewed by the Jury and hearing must be organised.

The Jury must decide as soon as possible on the protest presented to it and will make a decision, unless otherwise stated in the jury decision. And then the “Official results” will be published with the signatures of the O.O.D. and the jury or committee.

No protest is permitted on Jury decisions.

If there has been no protest after expiry of the protest time, the O.O.D. will sign and so approve the results as official.

Any protest made after the expiration of the protest time will be dismissed.

#### **316.03- Official Results**

After 1-hour provisional results are posted, or in case subject to post race scrutineering, after 2 hours after the finalisation of post-race scrutineering, and if there has been no protest, after this expiry of the protest time, the O.O.D. will sign and so approve the results as official, with “Official Results” mentioned on the sheet.

A copy of the official results signed by the O.O.D. will be published on the notice board in Race Administration Office. As from that period no more protests can be lodged by competitors.

For some specific classes or cases, results can remain provisional, not only subject to post race scrutineering, but also for other reasons.

These reasons have always to be clearly stated on the provisional results sheets, such as: -

- Subject to the results of routine fuel analysis for the following boat
- Subject to further checks to be carried out for boat #
- Subject to the result of the appeal lodged by the competitor of boat #
- Subject to the results of a complete engine inspection or dyno test for boat #
- Subject to the results of the anti-doping tests for the following crews...



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#### **317 - Inspection of Hulls and Engines**

##### **317.01**

Boats, and engines taking part in a race which are subject to checking, must not leave the boat park until one hour after the positing of the results.

##### **317.02**

The Technical Officers may postpone the inspection and stipulate the time limit and place where the engines must be available.

##### **317.03**

In the meantime, the motor must remain sealed to prevent any alterations being made. Refusing to produce the motor or the hull entails disqualification.

##### **317.04**

It is compulsory for a driver to make arrangements for tools, special tools and mechanics so that his motor can be disassembled if the Technical Officers at a post- race inspection want to check any part of the motor.

Both the driver and/or the mechanics shall work as efficiently as possible so that inspection duration can be kept to a minimum.

Motors and boats will be placed pending inspection in a well-delimited place, which remains under the care of the 'boat park' Official.

This area is called the 'parc fermé'.

##### **317.05**

After the pre-race technical inspection, the boats must not leave the boat park without permission except for practicing or racing.



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### **318 - After the Event (Reports)**

If any repairs can only be effected outside the boat park, they must be carried out in the presence or with the permission of a Technical Officer.

Officers allowed to attend the inspection:

- The Officer of the Day
- A BPRC delegate
- The measurers named by the organising committee
- The driver and a mechanic if necessary
- The presence of other persons is only allowed if authorised by the Race Committee.

At the end of the event, the Secretary of the Race Committee must send a report to the BPRC including:

- Classification and distribution of prizes (minutes of the jury)
- Report of the timekeepers
- List of drivers
- Penalties
- List of protests and decisions relating to these protests
- If the results are to be taken into consideration for the granting of a trophy or a prize, the points must be sent to the BPRC by e-mail within 24 hours.

