



WHEN TO CALL OFF RACING DISCUSSION ON WIND LIMITS AND OTHER FACTORS

Club officials, race officers and competitors often ask at what wind strength should racing be called off but, of course, it is not that simple as there are competing demands and many factors to be considered.

For example, safety is not well served by always calling off racing when the wind gets up as this will result in the sailors never gaining the skill required to handling their boats in a range of conditions. In addition, part of the enjoyment of sailing is the satisfaction of sailing is exercising the skills necessary to handle the boat in more demanding conditions.

On the other hand, when conditions are such that people and boats are put at risk or when they are beyond learning or enjoying the experience, it would clearly be unwise to send them out racing.

It must also be remembered that each boat bears the ultimate responsibility in deciding whether to race or to continue racing.

When considering whether conditions might be unsuitable for racing, wind strength alone is not necessarily a good indicator of risk and that there are a number of factors to be taken into account – and set out in a risk management plan for the club - including:

Wind

- Current wind strength.* Nominal limits for dinghy classes are around 25 knots beyond. This will depend upon whether the wind is steady or gusting as well as other factors below.
- Well found ocean racing boats are designed to handle higher wind strengths.
- Forecast wind strength* If the wind is forecast to abate, it might be quite acceptable to start a race at or above the nominal wind speed limit. If it is forecast to increase, a more conservative approach might be appropriate.
- On-shore / off-shore wind* Off-shore winds produce smaller waves but increase the risk of capsized boats being blown out to sea.
- Proximity to hazards* Proximity to hazards such as reefs, shipping lanes, a lee shore, etc., should also be considered.

Temperature

- Air temperature* Air temperature has an effect on “the weight of breeze” so that a hot northerly of 25 knots is not as heavy a breeze as a cold southerly at 25 knots. Air temperature also effects strength and stamina of the sailors.





Sea temperature Sea temperature has a significant effect on strength and stamina of people in the water and the risk of drowning.

Sea condition

Wave height Larger, steeper waves will increase the risk of capsizing in dinghy fleets and make rescue more difficult

Tidal influences A strong tide can have an effect on waves, may increase the risk of a capsized boat being swept away or increase the risk of being carried into danger.

Age / Experience / Capability

Age of competitors Younger kids in dinghies are likely to be less capable than the 20 to 30 year olds but, older adults are likely to be less fit, etc.

Experience of competitors Experience plays a big part in the ability of the sailors to deal with the more demanding conditions whether they are sailing dinghies or large keel boats.

Capability of boats Within the dinghy fleets, some boats tolerate the more demanding conditions than others. For example, high speed boats such as skiffs and cats are less capable of handling big seas than slower boats

Experience of officials Do the race officials have the experience to handle an emergency and/or are there enough of them

Rescue capability Keel boats are capable of rendering assistance to one another.

For dinghy fleets, are there enough rescue boats and trained crews to man them.

Rob Ware
Race Officials Committee
Yachting Victoria
10 Dec 08





Each sailing class has a limit at which they are able to start to or continue racing. The following table outline these limits.

Class Associations have recommended the following maximum average wind speed as a guide to Race Committees. However, the Race Committee should also consider sea state, tide, the number of patrol boats available and experience before making the decision whether to start or continue a race.

- Indicates at discretion of Race Committee.

	ONSHORE			OFFSHORE			INLAND		
	KN	MP H	KP H	KN	MP H	KP H	K N	MP H	KP H
A Class	22	25	40	22	25	40	22	25	40
Arafura Cadet	18	20	32	18	20	32	18	20	32
Arrow	26	30	48	26	30	48	26	30	48
Bonito	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Boomerang 20-Day	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Boomerang -Night	30	35	56	30	35	56	30	35	56
Cadet (Int)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Castle 550/650	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Cherub	22	25	40	26	30	48	26	30	48
Clifton	30	35	56	30	35	56	35	40	64
Cobra	22	25	40	22	25	40	26	30	48
Contender	22	25	40	22	25	40	26	30	48
Corsair	26	30	48	26	30	48	26	30	48
Diamond	25	29	46	30	35	56			
Dragon	26	30	48	26	30	48	26	30	48
Dolphin	26	30	48	26	30	48	26	30	48
National E	22	25	40	22	25	40	26	30	48
Elwood Junior	18	20	32	18	20	32	26	20	32
Etchell	22	25	40	22	25	40	22	25	40
Explorer 16	22	25	40	22	25	40	22	25	40
Fairy Penguin	22	25	40	22	25	40	26	30	48
Farr (All)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Int. Finn	26	30	48	26	30	48	26	30	48
Fireball	26	30	48	26	30	48	26	30	48
FJ	22	25	40	22	25	40	22	25	40
Flying Ant	22	25	40	26	30	48	26	30	48
Flying Dutchman	26	30	48	26	30	48	26	30	48
Flying Fifteen	22	25	40	26	30	48	26	30	48
Gwen 12	26	30	48	26	30	48	26	30	48
Hartley TS 16	22	25	40	22	25	40	22	25	40
Hartley TS 18/21	22	25	40	22	25	40	22	25	40
Heron	22	25	40	22	25	40	26	30	48
Hobie 14/16/21	26	30	48	26	30	48	26	30	48
Hydra	26	30	48	26	30	48	26	30	48
Impulse	22	25	40	22	25	40	22	25	40





Javelin	26	30	48	22	25	40	26	30	48
Laser II	22	25	40	22	25	40	26	30	48
Maricat	26	30	48	26	30	48	26	30	48
Matilda	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Mini Quest	22	25	40	22	25	40	22	25	40
Minnow	22	25	40	18	20	32	22	25	40
Miracle	22	25	40	22	25	40	22	25	40
Mirror	22	25	40	18	20	32	22	25	40
Mosquito Mk I & II	26	30	48	22	25	40	26	30	48
Moth	22	25	40	22	25	40	22	25	40
Nacra 5.0/5.2/5.8	26	30	48	26	30	48	30	35	56
Nacra 162m, 182m	22	25	40	22	25	40	26	30	48
Northbridge Junior	18	20	32	18	20	32	18	20	32
NS 14	22	25	40	22	25	40	26	30	48
O.K	22	25	40	22	25	40	26	30	48
Pacer	22	25	40	22	25	40	26	30	48
Paper Tiger	22	25	40	22	25	40	22	25	40
Prindle 15	22	25	40	22	25	40	22	25	40
Prindle 16	22	25	40	26	30	48	26	30	48
Prindle 18	22	25	40	26	30	48	26	30	48
Q.B.2	22	25	40	26	30	48	26	30	48
Quickcat	22	25	40	13	15	24	26	30	48
Rainbow	22	25	40	26	30	48	26	30	48
R.L 24	22	30	40	13	15	24	26	30	48
Sabot(Senior)	22	25	40	22	25	40	22	256	40
Sabot(Junior)	18	20	32	18	20	32	18	20	32
Saber	22	25	40	22	25	40	26	30	48
Sailfish	18	20	32	18	20	32	22	25	40
Seabita	30	35	56	30	35	56	35	40	64
Sharpie	26	30	48	26	30	48	26	30	48
Solo (Mono)	22	25	40	22	25	40	22	25	40
Solo 16	22	25	40	22	25	40	22	25	40
Sonato (All)	30	35	56	30	25	56	30	25	56
Spacesailer 24	*	*	*	*	*	*	26	30	48
Sparrow	22	25	40	22	25	40	22	25	40
Status 580	22	25	40	26	30	48	26	30	48
Sunmaid 20	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Sunbird 25	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Tasar	22	25	40	22	25	40	26	30	48
Timpenney 670	26	30	48	26	30	48	26	30	48
Tornado	22	25	40	*	*		22	25	40
TS-500	22	25	40	22	25	40	26	30	48
Tumlaren	26	30	48	26	30	48	*		
Ultimate 16/18/23	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Windrush 14	26	30	48	26	30	48	26	30	48
Windsurfer	22	25	40	22	25	40	26	30	48
14'Dinghy	22	25	40	26	30	48	26	30	48





125	22	25	40	22	25	40	26	30	48
145	22	25	40	22	25	40	22	25	40
420	22	25	40	22	25	40	26	30	48
470	22	25	40	22	25	40	22	25	40
505	22	25	40	22	25	40	26	30	48

