

ELTON SC RACE INTERMEDIATE TRAINING PROGRAMME 2005

Aim of course to improve racing standard over a period of 6 or so weeks.

- To qualify for the Sat spring series.
- To become more involved in the club racing environment.
- To build confidence & to become competitive.
- Enjoy & promote the sport.

Self Preparation - Mental and Physical

- **Boat Preparation**
- **Boat Handling and Sailing Techniques**
- **Boat Tuning**
- **Race Strategy**
- **Starting**
- **Tactics**
- **The Racing Rules**

Week 1

Five essentials

Sail balance & trim on all legs (sail triangular course)

gusts, lulls, looking for shifts (lifts & headers)

Rolling procedure (when to & when not)

Finish with short race

Week 2

Race strategy (aims & targets for improvement)

Start procedure (where & when on start line, full speed at start, what if)

Start practice (short beat & run, two boat races (between four marks, upwind rules)

Talk about handicaps (re: position on water to other boats)

first leg, next legs. (heavy weather / light weather tactics)

last leg (covering leg)

Follow my leader (not good tack off & try other tactics).

Week 3 (recap on weeks 1&2)

Reaching figure of eight with tacks & gybes

Bring in rules windward boat, overtaking boat, water at the mark (avoid collisions).

Reach procedures

Boat handling exercises (gutbuster, tacking on whistle,)

Gusts & lulls

Penalty turns practice

Week 4

Mark rounding

Triangular/sausage course

Boat handling exercises (RYA procedures)

Covering tactics as race progresses.

Basic rules (port/starboard, windward boat, 2 boat length rule, starting rules)

Five essentials

The five essentials of sailing are:

Sail Setting
Centreboard
Balance
Trim
Course Made Good

These have been touched on already, but if you have a good understanding of them you're well on the way to becoming a competent sailor.

The Five Essentials

Sail setting
Centreboard
Boat Balance
Boat Trim
Course Steered

These five principles should be applied to the boat and crew whenever a change of course is made or if the wind changes direction.

Sail Setting

When the sails are set correctly, not only is the boat generating maximum power and thus speed, but also your ability to control the boat with the sails is enhanced. In general you can say:-

Close hauled - sails hauled in as far as possible,

Running - sails let out as far as possible

Reaching – in-between.

Watch the front of the sail. If it flaps or "goes backwards" then you the sail is too far out. Too far in is a little more difficult to spot, so keep looking for the too far out spot - let the sail out a fraction and pull it in a fraction when it gets to too far...

Centreboard

The centreboard also needs to be adjusted on different points of sailing more maximum control and efficiency. All the way down close hauled, partway on reaches and most of the way up when running (always keep some down - it aids control).

Boat Balance

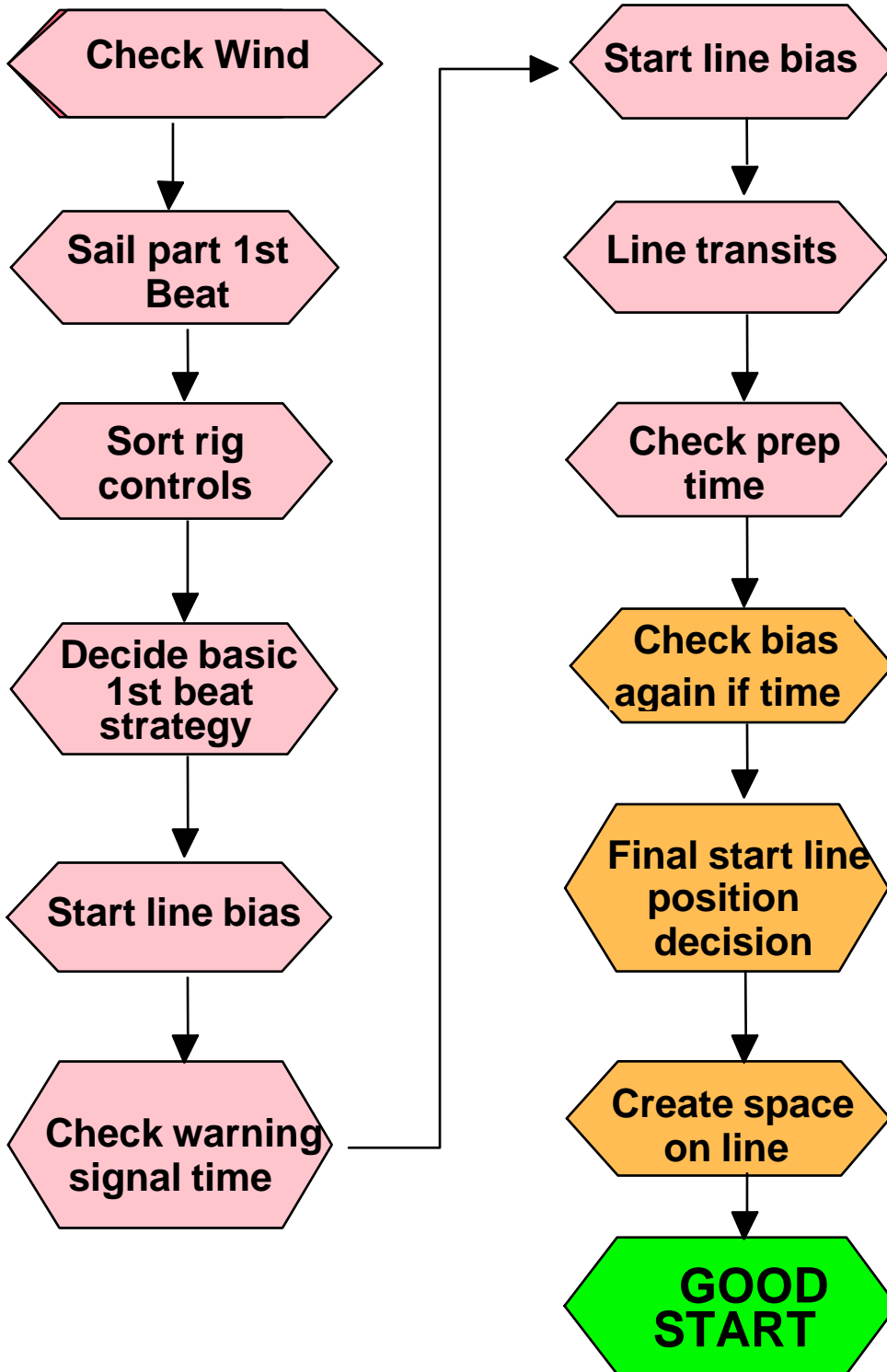
Its too often underestimated how important balance is. A boat will sail unbalanced and heeling over, it may look spectacular, but in dinghies its slow and difficult to control. You also use the balance of the boat to aid the steering.

Boat Trim

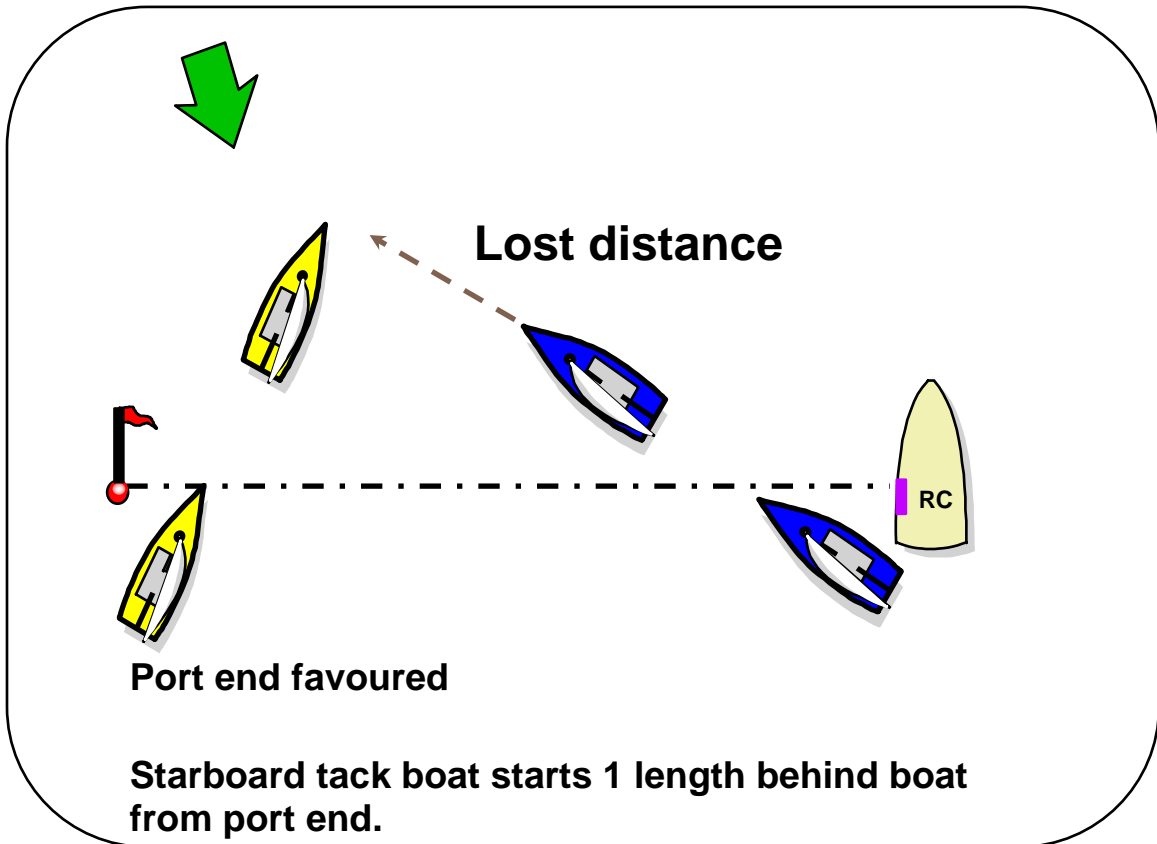
Trim is the fore and aft balance - whether the front or back is deeper in the water. The force of the wind on the sails alters the trim of the boat, pushing the stern down when close hauled and the bow down when reaching. Basically you aim to keep the boat level, so to counteract the effect of the sails you need to move slightly forward when beating and backwards when running. The effect is usually subtle and in most boats you may not need to move very far.

Course steered

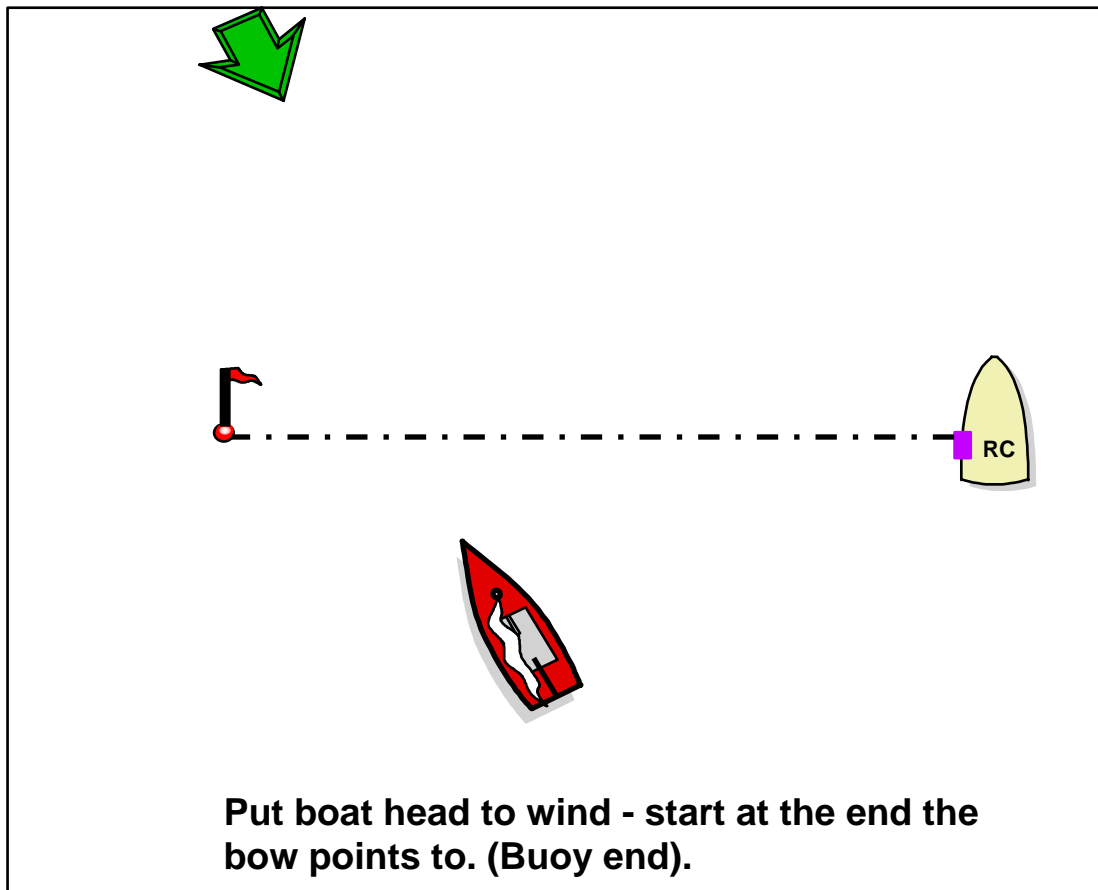
START PROCEDURE



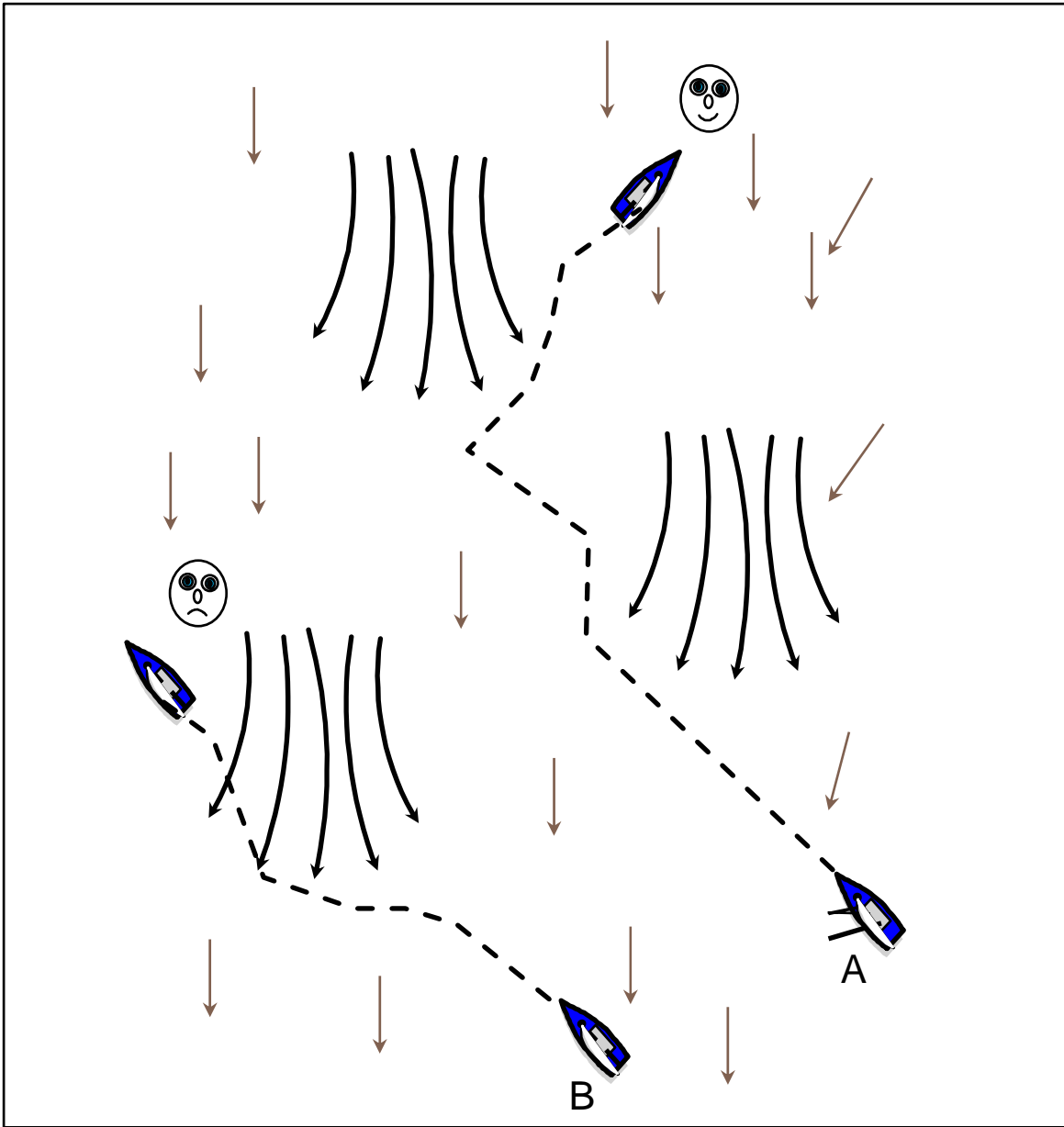
PORT BIAS STARTS



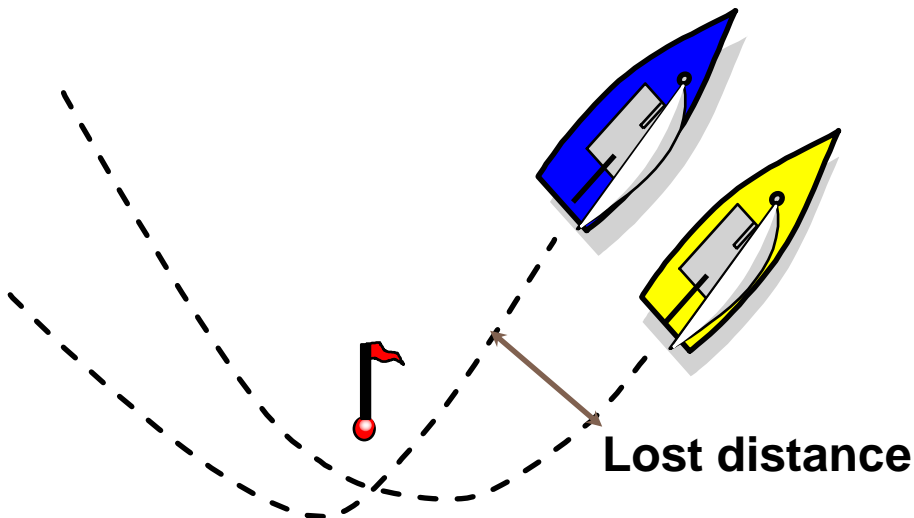
PORT LINE BIAS



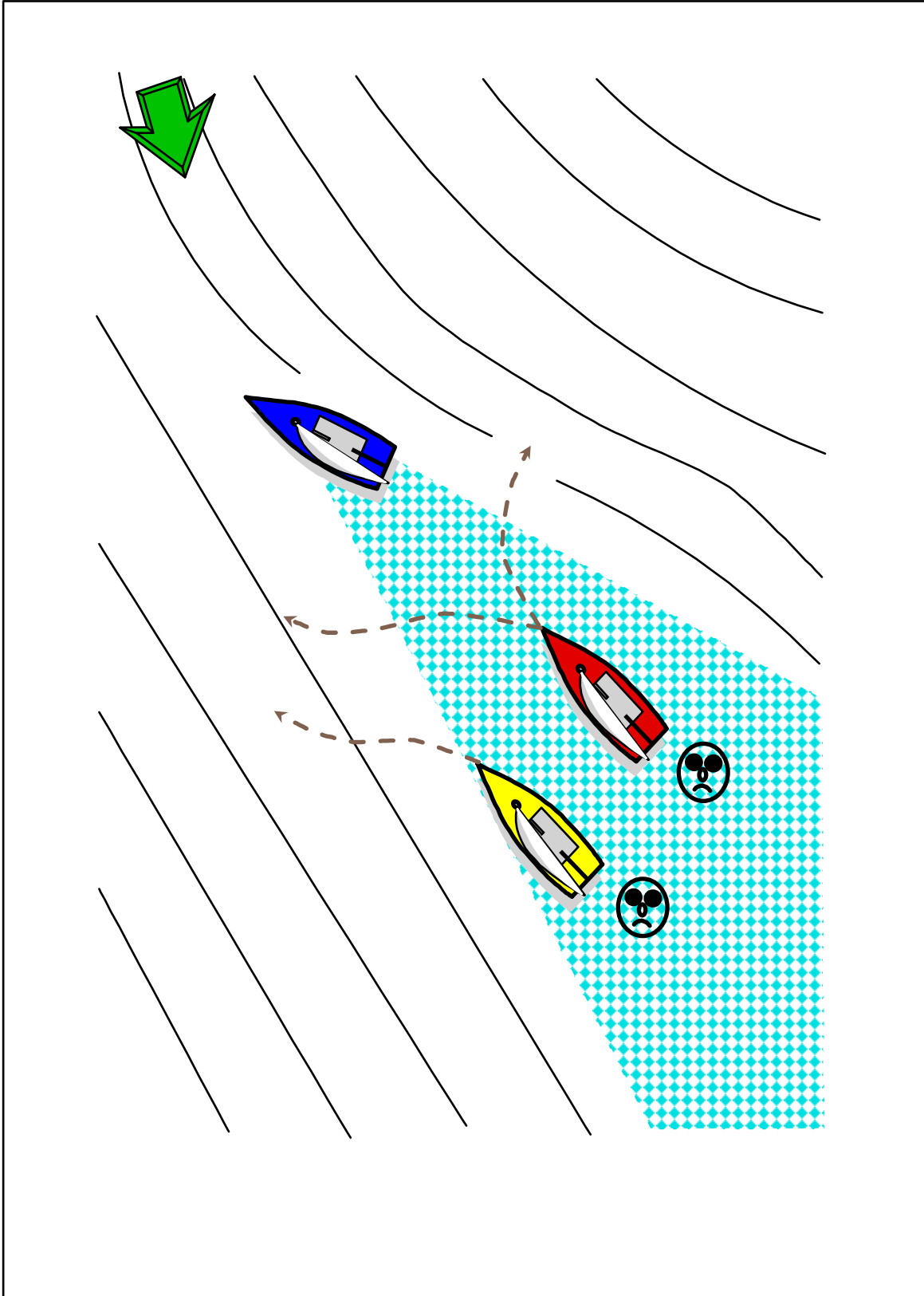
USING GUSTS



MARK ROUNDING



DIRTY WIND



The Hour Self Training Session

We all know nowadays about the benefit of training or coaching. However its not always possible to get to organised training sessions. If we go out for a sail on our own to get some time in on the water we can sometimes just faff about without any real benefit. A new idea passed on to me down the RYA pipeline is the hour self training session. This was developed by the 49er class but is equally applicable to Optimists and anything in between.

The basic idea is that you go out and cover every main skill needed in a race for an intense focused hour, by which time you will probably need to recover in the bar. The whole object is of course that you can do this on your own and at any suitable time. Below is a list of appropriate things to do in the hour.

- Stopping (as in positioning for a start)
- Hovering by a buoy (maintaining position for a start)
- Trigger pull (accelerating form a start line)
- 5 Tacks
- 5 Gybes (Can be around a short course)
- 5 Hoists and drops of spinnaker
- Reaching - higher in lulls, lower in gusts.
- Footing (sailing close hauled but slightly more free to go for speed)
- Stuffing (sailing close hauled but pinching to just make that mark rounding or lee bowing another boat)
- Change a rig setting to see the differences in the above
- Running by the lee heeled to windward (lasers and toppers)
- Mark roundings windward and leeward. (looking to speed up rig adjustments, smooth roundings with wide approach and close exits)
- Sprints (sailing the boat as hard as you can for 5 minutes)
- Other exercises not used in a race but which help to develop "feel" include tethered sailing. This is putting a bungee on your tiller and steering the boat by heeling it. Another is eyes closed sailing. (its normal to have a crew with eyes open!) Singlehanders can go out in pairs and shout instructions to each other - just make sure your partner is a good friend!
- The above is a list is of examples. Different classes might have other specific examples for their boat. Just think if you went and did this twice a week how much slicker your boat handling would become. Perhaps teaming up with another boat of your class would make the exercise even more rewarding.