

10 November 2018 – East wind mid to top A rig and sunny conditions. We sailed across the lake at the north end with good visibility of the course and Paul J sitting in the dinghy passing boats to and from the water and the shore (we really need a launch platform there). The day was designated for training, focusing on starts and RRS Right of Way Rule 10 – Port and Starboard. Paul was joined by Bruce to lead the training.



From left to right: Rick, Colin, Vern G, Gareth, Peter, Bruce and Gerry. Heat A after a few attempts at lining up for a start – 20 seconds to go and shy of the line.

Later in the day, after repeated starting and returning straight away for another countdown, all skippers were holding close to the line and hardening on to the wind for line-abreast starts within less than a second either side of the gun. We will repeat this picture after a few more practice sessions to show how the skill has improved.

When boats were close together from a start, Paul and Bruce let them race on and gave commentaries out loud round the course stating which boat was on port needing to give way and which was on starboard with right of way. As the day progressed, racing became much tighter with fewer collisions, with skippers developing strategies for approaching the windward mark for clean roundings.

'Tack-tickle Head Talk' Takeaway Tips from the day included

- Recognise which tack you are on at any point in the course. For a given day's course and control area, recognise which direction you are going in and what side the boom is on for each tack. Remind yourself just before each race, by sailing along each windward and leeward track.
- 'Head Talk' from the one-minute signal to the finish line - what tack you are on, who is approaching and who has right of way.
- 'Tickle the rudder and sails' to hold a position for a start. Choose a place, even 30 seconds away from where you want to start. This is a link to my favourite video from the [2011 Worlds in West Kirby, Race 22](#) between Brad Gibson and Peter Stollery. The starts demonstrate how skippers can hang their boats on the start line, and then there is a titanic battle between the two World Champions.

We finished the day with the '[Right of Way Challenge #1](#)' identifying right of way boats and discussing handling port and starboard situations.

- **When giving way to a Right of Way boat**, allow space between hulls to avoid the tops of each mast touching while heeling on the beat, or to avoid the boom touching the right of way boat in a gybe. Use your 'Head Talk' ahead of an incident to choose whether to tack or bear away.
- **When acquiring right of way**, initially give the other boat room to keep clear.