



ROYAL SOUTHAMPTON YACHT CLUB

FLAG ETIQUETTE

1 ENSIGN AND BURGEE

1.1 The Ensign is the national flag and denotes the nationality of the owner. A yacht may wear the RED or a SPECIAL ENSIGN which is commonly known as the 'Colours'. The Burgee is a triangular flag particular to each yacht or sailing club.

1.2 The Club Burgee (hereinafter referred to as 'the Burgee') and privileged Ensign (hereinafter referred to as 'the Ensign') are as stated in Rules 2 and 3.

Rule 2

2.1 The colours of the Royal Southampton Yacht Club are a field of dark blue with a device thereon of a shield bearing the county roses surmounted by a Tudor crown.

2.2 The Burgee of the Club is a triangular flag in proportions 2 x 3 on which the above colours are displayed.

2.3 The flag of the Commodore is a swallow-tailed pennant of the same proportions and bearing the same colours. The flags of the Vice Commodore and Rear Commodores are similar to that of the Commodore except that the flag of the Vice Commodore has one ball in the top corner nearest the mast and the flags of the Rear Commodores have two balls in the same position, vertically aligned. The balls are white.

Rule 3

3.1 The privileged Ensign of the Royal Southampton Yacht Club is the Blue Ensign of His Majesty's Fleet defaced by a Crown superimposed in the center of the union Flag in the upper canton.

3.2 The privileged Ensign of the Royal Southampton Yacht Club may only be worn by the holder of either a Warrant issued by the MOD prior to February 1985, or a Permit issued by the RSYC subsequent to that date.

1.3 Any full member of the Club may fly the Burgee in any yacht he is aboard, but the Special Ensign may only be flown by holders of a Permit issued under the Rule 3.2.

1.4 The Executive Committee requires that every member to whom a Warrant or Permit has been issued shall be fully conversant with the Ministry of Defence Conditions governing their issue.

1.5 Neither the Ensign nor the Burgee shall be hoisted by members from flagstaffs at their private house or at their business premises.

1.6 The Ensign should be raised at 0800 in the summer (the period of B.S.T.) and at 0900 hours in the winter and lowered at sunset or 2100 whichever is the earlier. The Burgee should be flown when the member is on board or in effective control, although it is acceptable to strike the Burgee at sunset if desired.

1.7 Colours shall be worn at sea during daylight hours when in sight of land, when passing another vessel or when entering a foreign port.

2 WEARING THE ENSIGN

2.1 The Ensign shall be worn only when the owner and the Permit are on board the vessel. When the vessel is in harbour or anchored near the shore, the owner need not be on board but must be in effective control of the vessel.

2.2 The Ensign shall be worn by all yachts when at anchor or in harbour at the Ensign Staff at the stern of the vessel.

2.3 When under way the Ensign may be worn in the after part of the vessel and, if not at the Ensign Staff, then if the rig permits, permitted positions are:

a) On gaff rigged vessels the Ensign shall always be worn at the gaff of the main mast but gaff rigged ketches and yawls may wear the Ensign at the gaff of the mizzen mast.

B) On Bermudan rigged yachts the Ensign may be worn two thirds of the way up the leech of the mainsail or backstay. On Bermudan ketches or yawls the Ensign may be worn at the mizzen masthead.

3 WEARING THE BURGEE

3.1 The Burgee shall always be flown when the Ensign is worn but may not be flown when wearing a Special Ensign agreeable to a permit issued by another Club.

3.2 The Burgee shall be flown by all yachts at the main masthead. In yachts where by reason of electronic equipment or other obstruction at the top of the mast it is not practical to fly the Burgee, the Burgee should be flown at the starboard yardarm or outer starboard end of the spreaders, so that the Burgee is in a superior position to all other flags carried – see 6.2 following.

3.3 In power craft without a mast the Burgee may be flown at a staff in the bows or over the wheelhouse.

4 FLAG OFFICERS' PENNANTS

4.1 A Flag Officer shall on all appropriate occasions fly his Broad Pennant instead of the Burgee save that it shall always be flown at the main mast head. Rule 3.2 also applies to Flag Officers' pennants.

4.2 A flag Officer should not strike his Broad Pennant at night when he is on board or in effective control.

4.3 When a Flag Officer is on board another member's yacht it is customary courtesy for him to be invited to fly his pennant on board that yacht in place of the member's burgee.

5 HOUSE FLAGS

5.1 A member may use his own personal flag on his own yacht or one that has been chartered or lent.

5.2 It shall only be flown on a yacht when the member is in effective control.

5.3 It shall be hoisted and lowered at the same time as the Burgee.

6 POSITION OF HOUSE FLAGS, FOREIGN FLAGS AND FOREIGN BURGEES

6.1 A member may fly his house flag at all times the Ensign and Burgee are worn. He may, on appropriate occasions, fly the Flag of Foreign Country and the Burgee of a Foreign Yacht Club provided he is a member of that Club.

6.2 The position in order of priority from which these flags may be flown are as follows:

Fore mast head (schooners)
Mizzen mast head (ketches and yawl)
Main mast starboard cross tree outer halyard
Main mast port cross tree outer halyard
Main mast starboard cross tree inner halyard
Main mast port cross tree inner halyard

6.3 The order of priority of the Flags under reference is as follows:

National Flag of Foreign Country
Owner's House Flag
Customs – I.C Flag 'Q'
Burgee of Foreign Yacht Club

6.4 In power craft without a mast the Flags under reference should be positioned appropriately above the wheelhouse but always in an inferior position to the Burgee.

7 COURTESY ENSIGNS

7.1 When in Foreign Waters a member's yacht shall fly the appropriate Burgee and Ensign and, as a courtesy, the Maritime Flag of the Foreign Country in accordance with 6 above.

7.2 In certain provinces it is an additional courtesy to fly the provincial Flag as well as the National Maritime Flag. In such cases the provincial Flag shall be flown on the same hoist as the National Flag but always in an inferior position.

8 YACHTS LET ON HIRE OR HIRED

8.1 No member shall be entitled to the benefits or privileges of the Club in respect of a vessel which is used for trade or business or for letting for hire or for any purpose other than pleasure; provided always that this regulation is not intended to preclude any member from letting his vessel, or to deprive such vessel of the benefits and privileges aforesaid, except for the time during which she shall be let.

8.2 The Executive Committee strictly enjoins any member who is loaning or chartering his yacht to a person who is not a member of the Club to remove the Permit, the Burgee and the Ensign or to place them under lock and key. If the person to whom the yacht is chartered is also a member of the Club he will not be entitled to wear the Blue Ensign unless he holds a Permit which is specific to that vessel.

8.3 For yachts chartered by members the Burgee may be worn but the Ensign may only be worn if the member has a Permit issued for the period of the charter and specific to the vessel under charter.

9 ADVERTISING

9.1 No member's yacht carrying advertising other than that permitted under Appendix G of The Racing Rules of Sailing 1997 - 2000.

10 DRESSING SHIP

10.1 To celebrate festivals, either national or local, yachts may be dressed as follows:
a) Overall
b) With mast head Ensigns

10.2 Dressing overall consists of two or more hoists using a sequence of flags of the International Code between the stem or bowsprit and the mast head and thence to the stern.

Additionally, an Ensign shall be worn at each mast head, with the Ensign at the main mast head flying alongside the Burgee. A Pilot Jack may be worn under the bowsprit or, in motor yachts, on a Jackstaff in the bows.

10.3 Ensigns, racing flags or house flags shall not be used on the dressing line.

10.4 As far as possible all vessels should be dressed alike and in general, the order of flags is as follows:

From bow to mast head

E, Q, n3, G, n8, Z, n4, W, n6, P, n1, I, AP, T, Y, B, X, 1st. sub, H.

From mast to stern

3rd. sub, D, F, 2nd. Sub, U, A, O, M, R, n2, J, n0, N, n9, K n7, V, n5, L, C, S.

The line between the masts of two-masted vessels starts with Y and ends with O.

10.5 For British and Foreign national festivals a Flag Officer shall fly his Pennant alone from the main mast with no Ensign.

10.6 For local festivals and regattas the Burgees shall be worn at the main mast head with no Ensign. An owner's house flag may be worn at the appropriate position and an Ensign shall be worn at all other mast heads where no other flag is flying.

10.7 When more than one special (or privileged) Ensign is flown they shall always be the Club Ensign. The special Ensigns of more than one club shall never be worn at the same time.

11 SALUTING

11.1 When a yacht is passing, or if at anchor being passed by, a Royal Yacht, a Man-of-War or a Flag Officer's yacht the Ensign of that yacht shall be dipped. When a yacht meets a Squadron the Ensign shall be dipped only to the Senior Officer's ship.

11.2 When a yacht is cruising her Ensign shall be dipped to a Flag Officer only once a day. Usually this will be immediately after hoisting morning Colours but the Flag Officer concerned (or the senior one if there are more than one present) may promulgate a variance of this regulation.

11.3 The Ensign may be dipped by slowly lowering it to about one-third from the lower end of its hoist. If the size of the ensign staff does not allow for this, the staff may be removed from its socket and slowly lowered to a horizontal position. The yacht making the salute keeps her Ensign at the dip until the ship being saluted starts to re-hoist her Ensign; the yacht making the salute then re-hoists her Ensign.

12 MEMBERSHIP TO OTHER CLUBS

12.1 In the vicinity of the Clubhouse particularly when alongside the pontoon, club members who are also members of another yacht club shall wear the colours of the Club unless that member is a Flag Officer of the other club.