



ROYAL PORT NICHOLSON YACHT CLUB

*Established 1883*

## Procedure for “Rabbit Starts”

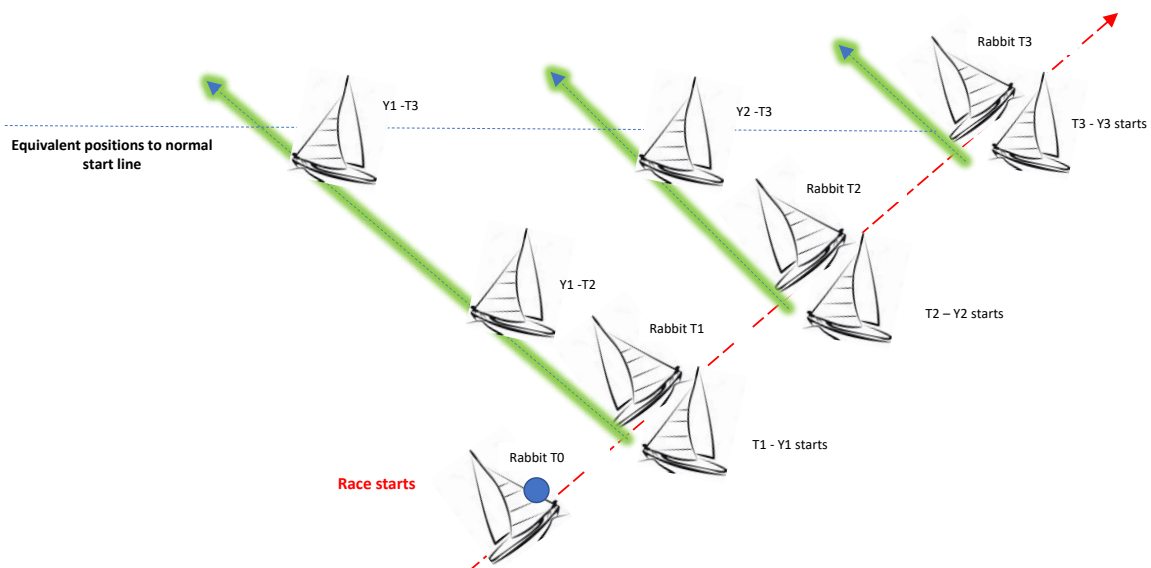
13 June 2023

### Background

The Rabbit Start is used to start a race to windward in the absence of a committee boat.

At a prescribed time, a boat known as the “Rabbit” passes an agreed upon mark, boat or specified location and heads off close hauled on port tack.

Other boats must pass behind the Rabbit on starboard tack in order to start, as shown herewith.



### Start Procedure

1. The start line is a line between the port-end starting mark/boat/location and the stern of the Rabbit.
2. A boat starts when it crosses the starting line by rounding the Rabbit's stern on starboard tack while the Rabbit is on port tack. Note that until all boats have started, the Rabbit on port tack has right-of way which temporarily replaces the 2021-2024 RRS Rule 10.
3. All boats shall start within two (2) minutes of the race START. Failure to do so will be an automatic disqualification and the boat shall retire
4. After starting, all boats shall remain on starboard tack until all boats have started and the Rabbit has hailed “clean start” and tacked to starboard. Only at that point may boats tack to port if they so wish.
5. The Rabbit will notify a boat that it has not started properly. The penalty for a boat failing to start properly is to immediately sail to the approximate location where the Rabbit tacked to starboard and make a 360-degree turn.
6. A boat making contact or interfering with the Rabbit is automatically disqualified and shall retire.

### Start timing

7. The following describes the intended time sequence/notifications for the start.

Signal	Mins before start	Sound	Rabbit's Approximate Actions
Warning signal (time as notified)	3	hail to the fleet of "three-minute warning" with a 5 second count down	Head to wind in the vicinity of the port end starting mark/boat/location.
Preparatory signal	2	hail to the fleet of "two minutes" with a 5 second count down.	Beam reach on stbd tack for 1/2 min. Tack or jibe; return on port tack.
	1	hail to the fleet of "one minute" with a 5 second count down.	Position for time on distance run to port end mark/boat/location.
Start	0	hail to the fleet of "START", and record the internet time.	Pass starting mark to port, sail close hauled. Note boats that start incorrectly or fail to start.
End of Starting Sequence		hail to the fleet of "clean start"	After the last boat has crossed, tack to starboard.

8. All times are approximate as the Rabbit may be preoccupied.
9. The absence of a hail shall be disregarded.
10. The observation of the Rabbit close hauled on port tack heading away from the port end mark/boat/location should be considered a strong indicator that the race has started.

### Finish Procedure

11. The location of the finish line and how to finish will be notified to the fleet by the Rabbit with notification of the course.
12. It is intended that the finish times will be taken by racers and :
  - a. at a downwind mark, leaving the mark to port, or
  - b. as specified by the Rabbit.