

# What is Practice Racing on Sailonline?

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## Origins of Practice Racing

Several years ago a couple of SOLers in the USA decided to matchrace each other during pre-race practice. Others joined in and over the years this matchracing evolved into racing round “cans” in an area close to SOL race start. A History of Practice Racing is in development.

## What is a practice race?

A Practice Race (PR) is a short, informal, race round a series of marks forming a short course near to SOL Race Start. The PR course is set up during the day and details are posted widely, inviting everyone to join in. The races are an excellent way to practise mark rounding, hone SOL-skills generally and, above all, to socialise and get to know other SOLers around the globe. Many top SOLers have come through Practice Racing and many continue to enjoy the camaraderie of these short evening get-togethers.

## When are the races?

Practice races are run only during the pre-race practice phase of a SOL race. They start at 1900utc during wintertime and 1800utc during Daylight Saving and are intended to be less than 2hrs long.

## Who can take part?

Everyone is welcome to take part in practice races BUT you do need to be near to SOL Race Start to do so. Once you have headed off down-course, unless you can sail back in time to participate, then you are out of luck. There is no self-teleportation of boats in SOL!

## How do I join in?

Just position yourself at the announced start, mention in chat that you are joining in and set a start command for the first mark!

## How do I race?

The process is entirely manual which means you need to set commands to start, to race and to stop!

## Where can I find out about what PR is next?

Race information can be found in the Practice Racing Forum, and it is also posted in the Sailtalk and General chatrooms of the race in which the Practice Race (PR) will take place, and links are posted in all open race chats (although can scroll out of sight). If in any doubt, just ask in race chat and someone will help.

## Are there any rules?

Yes. Some rules have developed and they can be found in the Practice Racing Forum. For everyone new, however, you are allowed a few trial races where rules are suspended and, of course, during this time you will find other racers very happy to share knowledge/expertise.

## What is the G-SCOW Award?

This is a special award for the person starting on time and finishing last overall, despite having really tried. It is a most honourable award and full details are in the Practice Racing Forum.

## and finally.... what are the PINK dots?

The pink dots are our marks – they behave just like boats (i.e., are not solid) – and are findable in the Boat List as Practice\_Mark\_1, \_2 etc. They do not sail in SOL races and they do not have chat privileges.

Joanne / RainbowChaser

