



TOPPER SPRINTS

Saturday 25th & Sunday 26th July 2026

Event Overview

This document serves as a guide to the Topper Sprint event at Donaghadee. Given it does not run in the normal fashion of a Topper event and it seeks to provide guidance and explanation about how the event will run. It is not a formal document and in the case of conflict with the Notice of Race or the Sailing instructions, the NoR & SIs will take preference.

Core Aims:

The event is supposed to be **low pressure & fun**.

The sheer volume of short, sharp races will ensure that racing is close and no-one will know how anyone is doing on the leaderboard!

- Firstly, by sailing short courses, the races will be very short in time and therefore even less-able sailors will never feel overly lost, this is good for confidence.
- Secondly, because of the sheer numbers of starts and mark roundings over the weekend, there will be lots of practice & learning opportunities.
- The GOLD, SILVER, BRONZE fleets for Sundays medal-racing means that it is **ideal for seasoned eventers and novice sailors alike**.

Core Format:

For the **5.3 fleet**, there will be a maximum entry of 36 boats and this will allow for 6 groups (aka flights) of 6 boats (or whatever the RO deems best for the given entry numbers).

The **4.2 fleet** is subject to entry numbers, may be split up or simply be run on the same racetrack as one fleet, again at the discretion of the RO.

Each flight will be named by colour and will have a corresponding ribbon to be tied to the masthead.

These flights will all race each other multiple times in a round robin fashion and each score recorded.

For example:

- Race Series One will be Orange vs Blue, Red vs Green, Pink vs Black and so on.
- You will only be racing the 11 other boats in your flight for that race, all other boats are irrelevant to you.
- Each pair of colours will have their own start so as to keep the line small and the numbers low.
- If you win your race, you score 1 point, if you are last you will score 12. (based on the full quota of 36 boats)
- At the end of the round robin series, all scores will be added up. The top 12 boats will be the GOLD fleet for the final series, the next 12 will be SILVER and the final 12 will be BRONZE.
- On Sunday, Saturday's scores will be completely discarded, and we will run a number of races with individual Gold, Silver & Bronze starts. (Think of these as 'medal' races, you are competing to win your fleet, not the event as the event does not have an overall winner.)
- These scores will be added to give us a 1st, 2nd & 3rd in each fleet of the three fleets.
- To keep it interesting, there will be no discards on Sunday so consistency counts!

On the water:

The Committee boat will have a PA system so that the race management team can keep things moving. Each race will have 2 coloured flags to show which fleets are racing in any given start.

To keep the pace up, the starts will be 3 minutes, 2 minute, 1 minute, go.

The coloured flags will be shown at 3 minutes, the black flag at 2 minutes, black down at 1 minute and coloured flags will drop for go. The normal sound signals will be made.

On Saturday, there will be no recalls. If you are over, you are out of that race. As there are only 12 boats, the race management team will easily identify those who are over and a rescue boat will inform sailors who have been OCS at the earliest opportunity. The reason for this is to keep the event moving and get as many races as we can in and encourages sailors to be well behaved on the start line!

Sunday's racing will be more traditional in this regard, and the race committee will run 'normal' starts with individual or general recalls as required.

The RO is intending that for the finals, the order of starting will be Bronze followed by Silver followed by Gold. This is intended to add further dimension to the racing as well as opportunities for Bronze and Silver sailors to see the Gold folks up close.

It is very important that sailors stay around the Committee Boat in between races, not only to keep things moving but also because sailors need to know what flights/colours are racing next.

The course will be described in the sailing instructions but it is very likely to be an upwind leg, a reach to mark 2, a downwind leg to mark 3 and then a short leg to the finish boat. The target time for each race shall be approx. 10-15 minutes but this will be determined by the number of entries.

Further information:

Dinghy Park, Slipway & Rigging

Dinghies will be offloaded by the roadside and be transferred straight onto the grass by the shore. There will be no dinghies rigged on the slipway or the carpark to ensure that everyone is safe from traffic.

Dinghies can be stored in the locked dinghy park overnight.

Launching will be via the slipway on both days and a wristband / tally system will be in place. It is important that everyone ensures they tag out and back in.

Recovery on both days will be via the beach as the tide will be out. On Saturday, we will not be allocating trailers but we will of course do so on Sunday.

Rib launching:

Slipway access is possible for launching ribs but will only be suitable a few hours either side of HW. Friday evening launching should be possible between 1845 & 2200. Saturday launching will be possible between 0745 & 1000. Please note – Low water is around 1600 on Sunday and rib recovery will be impossible unless you take your vehicle onto the sand.

Competitors intending to bring ribs should pre-register them on the event website. This not only helps us understand what arrangements we need to make on shore but also allows provision to be made with the Harbour Master with regard to overnight berthing.

Alternative launching & recovery is available at Millisle, Bangor & Groomsport.

Boat delivery is possible in advance of the event by arrangement with DSC. Contact Stuart Ogg on 07714262223.

Clubhouse & hospitality:

The clubhouse will be open on Friday night and any visiting crews are very welcome to make use of the facilities.

Saturday evening, there will be a BBQ in the Courtyard after sailing along with some musical entertainment and everyone is both welcome & encouraged to stay for a bite to eat. Tickets for the BBQ can be purchased from the event website.

Tea / Coffee & breakfast baps shall be available in the Clubhouse from 0830 on both days.

Accommodation:

Availability of accommodation locally has increased dramatically in recent years: The below are examples of accommodation available and are within easy walking distance of the Club.

- Apartment: <https://www.booking.com/Share-rm5fMG>
- 2 Hunters Lane: <https://www.booking.com/Share-iRyzhit>
- One Shore Street: <https://www.booking.com/Share-hTeiud>
- Harbour View: <https://www.booking.com/Share-lfdDi3>

Some camping is available in various members gardens if required and motorhomes can park at the dinghy park once sailing has finished for the day however no hookups or services are available. You are of course very welcome to use the clubhouse facilities, and these are available 24hrs by collecting a door fob at the Bar.

Getting to us:

The club address is 20 Shore St, Donaghadee BT21 0DG and the Google map is here: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/v3xpiaFeHXyfKwmY8>

Race Area:

As the courses are short, depending on the conditions & wind direction, it is likely we can race reasonably close to shore. Donaghadee shore front has a number of nice promenades and grass areas offering good viewing and the hill up at the Moat above the club offers a high vantage point to watch the racing if preferred.



Further information:

We look forward to welcoming you to Donaghadee for a weekend of racing, fun and entertainment. If you have any questions or want more information, please reach out to Stuart Ogg on 07714262223 or by email stuart@consultav.com

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