

Mass Bay League
New Coach Handbook

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Administrative Information

Unlike many high school sports programs, the coaches are responsible for scheduling and representing their team for most league matters.

The Mass Bay League (MBL) has two meetings a year – one in October and one in January. Each team should have a representative at the meetings. The representative is usually the coach.

The league charges annual dues (\$200) payable by April 1. Invoices are sent by the league Treasurer to both coaches and Athletic Directors. It is a good idea to verify that the Athletic Director is handling the payment. In cases where dues are paid by an organization other than a school, the coach needs to monitor progress and verify that payment is made. If payment is not made for a team, it will be barred from participating in some events.

The MBL has a website, mblsailing.org, which has a wealth of information about the league. Some of the information you will find there follows:

- [MBL bylaws and MBL procedural rules](#),
- schedules for all A and B division league meets and events (many are open to C Division teams as well),
- racing results for meets and events,
- venues for each team, and
- contacts for all the coaches in the league.

Make sure you know what division your team is in and read from the descriptions below an overview of how your division works and what is required. Following the division descriptions is a list of the various other opportunities that you are advised to consider. Some of our teams participate in all of them and some, none of them.

The League Has Three Divisions

The organization of teams and divisions has been in flux the past few years so check the website's [By-Laws and Procedural Rules](#) section for the guidelines currently in force.

C Division

C division sailing is based at Community Boating (CBI) on the Charles River in Boston. The teams in this division do only fleet racing. Both 420s and Mercuries are used. All activities and schedules are set by CBI. Contact CBI for all information: www.community-boating.org

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All C Division teams are welcome to participate in our year end, league wide championship regatta, the **Carl Zimba MBL Championship**.

B Division

Teams in this division engage in both fleet and team racing. (The fundamentals of the two types of racing are described [here](#).)

There are three B subdivisions divided geographically into B North, B West, and B South.

The team racing regular season consists of at least five best-of-five, head-to-head team race meets against other teams in the B division. At least three of those meets must be with teams in your geographical division. Teams are encouraged to race more meets, including with A Division teams. Season scoring uses the Elo ranking system. Scores can be seen and are reported (by the winning coach) using the links on the [home page of MBLsailing.org](http://home.page.of.MBLsailing.org).

There is an overall B Division championship at the end of the season. Four teams qualify – the three teams with the highest Elo ranking within their subdivision and a fourth team with the highest Elo ranking among non-subdivision winners. Currently, the championship meets are held at Courageous Sailing Center in Charlestown during the week or weekend before the MBL Championship Regatta.

There are no required fleet race events, but MBL fleet race events are open to all through a separate registration process for each regatta. The league provides a default “suggested schedule” for all the required meets which is available online by the October league meeting. If coaches mutually agree to a more convenient date, they may change the scheduled date of their meet. The coaches decide upon the venue. The best practice is to alternate home and away venues each year, but for some teams, this is not possible. Venue information and rescheduling dates should be communicated with the league president so that the published schedule can be accurate.

Potential meet make-up dates are also shown on the schedule. These should remain open on your schedule so that any postponed meets can be made up on those days.

It is good practice to contact the opposing coach a week in advance of a meet to confirm date, time, and venue.

In the event of potentially un-sailable conditions on meet day, the coaches should confer to discuss postponement. In the event of a disagreement, the hosting coach or those responsible for the host venue make the final decision to proceed or postpone.

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B division teams are encouraged, but not required, to join NESSA (New England Schools Sailing Association). See more about NESSA below. As a member of NESSA, there are many more events that are open to you.

There are opportunities for division B teams to participate in many other league events, NESSA events, and non-league events. Most of these are A and B fleet race events. (see below)

A Division

Teams in this division engage in both fleet and team racing. (The fundamentals of the two types of racing are described [here](#).)

There are currently no subdivisions in the A Division.

The regular season consists of one best-of-five, head-to-head team race meet against every other team in the division (usually about 6-7 total.) The season winner is the team with the highest winning percentage. Although they are not used to determine the season winner, results for A Division teams should also be entered into the Elo ranking system. Scores may be seen and reported (by the winning coach) using the links on the [home page of MBLsailing.org](#).

An A Division Team Race Championship Tournament takes place near the end of the season. Traditionally, the six to eight teams with the best winning records are invited to compete. The tournament uses either a round robin format or a bracketed format with seeding by regular season records. The tournament is shown on the “suggested schedule”.

The “suggested schedule” that is provided for all the required meets is available online by the October league meeting. If coaches mutually agree to a more convenient date, they may change the schedule date of their meet. The coaches decide upon the venue. The best practice is to alternate home and away venues each year, but neutral venues are sometimes used. Venue information and rescheduling dates should be communicated with the league president so that the published schedule can be accurate.

Potential meet make-up dates are also shown on the schedule. These should remain open on your schedule so that any postponed meets can be made up on those days. When a meet between division A teams does not happen sometime during the season, both teams are scored with a loss.

It is good practice to contact the opposing coach a week in advance of a meet to confirm date, time, and venue. In the event of potentially un-sailable conditions on meet day, the coaches should confer to discuss postponement. In the event of a disagreement, the hosting coach or those responsible for the host venue make the final decision to proceed or postpone.

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A Division teams are required to join NESSA (New England Schools Sailing Association). See more about NESSA below. They are required to register for the NESSA team race season and have the required number of meets against NESSA teams that are outside the one's league (i.e. the MBL.) Failure to do so disqualifies a team from receiving division awards and may result in a team having to move to the B Division the following year. NESSA members have many more events open to them.

There are opportunities for division A teams to participate in many other league events, NESSA events, and non-league events. Most of these are A and B fleet race events. (see below)

Optional MBL Events

(Check the website home page schedule for the exact dates and details)

Except for the Linda Juliano Regatta, all of the regattas below use an A and B fleet race format. In that format, each team gets one boat in the A Division and one boat in B division. Most of the regattas use 420s, so the minimum number of sailors is four per team. Teams may bring more than four sailors and use substitutions. There is typically a rotation of boats after two races. All races are counted and lowest total score wins. Our regattas frequently allow schools to enter two different teams. Conglomerate teams (comprised of more than one school) are welcome. Except for the MBL Championship, all of the regattas are held on weekends.

(Listed in order of occurrence)

The Courageous Keelboat Regatta at Courageous Sailing Center in Charlestown in late March or early April. Rhodes 19s are used with three sailors to a boat.

The Sharon Invitational at Lake Massapoag in Sharon about the second week of April. The regatta is timed to be a warm up for the NESSA O'Day regatta.

The Linda Juliano Regatta, a **girls-only** team race regatta hosted by Wellesley traditionally on Lake Cochituate in Natick. The regatta is held in late April or early May. Usually, this is a 2-day event with a clinic on the first day. Because it is a team race regatta, a minimum of six sailors per team are required. If a school has fewer than six sailors, the host will combine sailors from different schools to form a team.

The Freshman/Sophomore Regatta typically on the day of the May SAT test. Only open to freshmen and sophomores. It may be hosted by various schools

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The Donald Greene Regatta at Lake Cochituate in Natick in early May. The regatta is sponsored by the Lincoln-Sudbury team in honor of the founder of the team who died in 9/11. Additional boats are provided by the Wellesley and Wayland teams.

The MBL Champion Championship Regatta (aka Carl Zimba Regatta) at Community Boating in Boston, traditionally held on Monday and Tuesday of the week before Memorial Day. The regatta has two 420 divisions and two Mercury divisions. One 420 division sails each day, but both mercury divisions sail both days. Awards are given for each division, and an overall champion is declared as well. The overall award is determined by adding all the finishing positions (ranks) in the four divisions, with low score winning. Teams may register for either or both Mercury divisions. A team may register for both 420 divisions, but not for only one. Sailors may sail in only one division. In order to be eligible for the overall championship a school needs to sail in all four divisions, thus the school needs to at least four pairs of sailors. **All MBL season awards are presented along with the regatta awards on the final day of the MBL Championship.**

MBL Event Registration

The registrations for all of the MBL events share the same procedure. A *Notice of Race* is published by the host or the league about two weeks before the event, and each team registers according to instructions therein. (NESSA events have a slightly different system.) Regattas are sometimes oversubscribed and entrance is determined on a first come, first serve basis for the first team for each school before any second teams are considered. Second teams are then entered on a first come, first serve basis. Host schools may have a second team before all other teams are considered.

What are ISSA and NESSA?

The Interscholastic Sailing Association (ISSA) is a national organization for high school sailing. It writes a set of administrative rules applicable to high school sailing. These supplement the *Racing Rules of Sailing* and prescribe some regatta formats and scoring methods that differ from the basic rules.

This national organization, ISSA, is made up of regional organizations. The **New England Schools Sailing Association (NESSA)** represents our region and provides another organizational structure in which high schools can compete in sailing. NESSA hosts New England-wide championship regattas that provide a stepping stone to intersectional and national regattas. All of our MBL A Division teams and some of our B and C division teams compete in NESSA events. It provides a range of opportunities beyond those provided within the league. Over the years,

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several MBL teams have advanced to intersectional and national regattas which afford tremendous experiences for our sailors.

How to Join NESSA

A new MBL member school can join at NESSA anytime but after April 1st, they do not get much "bang for that buck" since registration for all NESSA regattas closes on that date. To register, go to <https://registration.hssailing.org/> and follow the directions.

The following steps are recommended:

1. Register your school athletics administrator
2. Register your team
3. Pay the Invoice
4. Get on the NESSA email list so you stay informed:
[NESSA- sailing+subscribe@googlegroups.com](mailto:NESSA-sailing+subscribe@googlegroups.com)

Optional NESSA Events

Spring Events

Teams must be NESSA members in order to participate, and all events are on weekends. Information and registration instructions are available on the NESSA website, nessa.hssailing.org.

The O'Day Regatta is a 2-day A and B fleet race event. The first day is a qualifier where the better teams advance to the finals on the second day. The scheduled dates have varied over the years, sometimes the days are not consecutive. The top finishers are eligible to advance to a national championship regatta and a separate consolation regatta. There are so many teams participating that there are several venues for the qualifiers and a separate venue for the final. Venues vary from year to year with a goal of geographical distribution throughout New England. Teams get to pick their qualifying venue on a first come, first serve basis.

The Herreshoff Regatta, a girls-only 2-day A and B fleet race event. The first day is a qualifier where the better teams advance to the finals on the second day. The scheduled dates have varied over the years and usually the days are not consecutive. There is a choice of qualifying venues on a first come, first serve basis. There is no national championship for girls only.

The NESSA Team Race Championship

President's Trophy (formerly Mark Trophy) and the **Terk Regatta** are two 2-day team race regattas for the highest ranked teams in the NESSA rankings. Currently eight teams are eligible for each regatta. Teams must register prior to the season to enter the ranking system.

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The results of head-to-head team race meets against NESSA teams are entered into a complex ranking system based on won-loss record, a team's record against top 20 teams, strength of schedule, and a coaches' poll. The highest-ranking schools are invited to the President's and the next highest to the Terk. Top finishers advance to a national championship regatta (Baker Trophy) or to a consolation regatta (National Invitational Tournament, Founders Trophy) currently held on the weekend before Memorial Day weekend.

Fall Events

The Healy Regatta is a single-handed fleet race 2-day regatta in Lasers held in late September or early October. Top finishers advance to a national championship.

The **Casco Bay Open** in Portland, Maine, the **Arnold Brown** in Martha's Vineyard, and the **Fall Funfest (Gleekman Trophy)** usually hosted by the MBL in Sharon, and the **Roy Williams Regatta** in Newport, RI. The winners of each event advance to the **Atlantic Coast Championship** held at various venues in early November.

Event Registration

Registration for all of NESSA events follows the same procedure. A *Notice of Race* is published before the season begins, and each team registers according to instructions therein. In the spring, *Notices of Race* are issued on February 1. **Registration is open March 1 and extends until April 1. There are entrance fees for each event.** Submission of your team race schedule is also required to participate in the NESSA team racing season. Events are open to all teams who register in time, but specific venues are sometimes oversubscribed, and entrance is determined on a first come, first serve basis. When teams advance to national or regional events, there are additional registration requirements.

Other Spring Events

The Massachusetts States Regatta is traditionally hosted by MIT on Wednesday and/or Thursday of the week before Memorial Day. It is a one or two day fleet race event in FJs and 420s. It is open to all schools in the state. Registration works the same way as it does for MBL events.

Sail Maine hosts a variety of regattas on weekend throughout the spring.