

HANDBOOK OF THE THAMES PUNTING CLUB

including

RULES FOR PUNT RACING

RULES FOR AMATEUR REGATTAS

NOTES FOR UMPIRES

RULES FOR INTER-CLUB PUNTING

THE MORRIS TROPHY

THE IVY PARDOE CUP

THE HISTORY OF PUNTING

AUGUST 2020

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PREFACE

This revision of the TPC rules was undertaken over the period December 2019 through to July 2020. The TPC Committee discussed the work at its meeting in March 2020 and this is now a finalised version. Our thanks to Peter Williams, Sandy Nairne, Bruce Maidment and Dan Teuten for their contributions.

The primary purpose of the revision was to update rules to reflect current reality and not least the scale of cooperation and collaboration that now exists between clubs. We also took the opportunity to rework the order of the sections so that the first and main part focusses on the rules and the second shorter part on the history and running of different competitions. The TPC will revisit the rules on a regular basis, adjusting them in the light of experience and the needs of the sport.

2: A PUNT: DEFINITIONS AND PRELIMINARIES

A Punt is a flat-bottomed craft without stern, keel, or sternpost, and the width at each end must be at least one-half of the width at the widest part. The length of a Punt is its extreme measurement overall, and its width is at its widest/extreme part measured inside on the bottom of the well. Subject to compliance with these definitions, a Punt may be any length or width.

A Punt when used for racing shall have no external attachment to assist the balance or for any other purpose, nor shall it be propelled by any means other than a pole used by the punter.

2.1 A TWO-FOOT PUNT

A two-foot Punt (2ft) is a punt in which the width of the boat is restricted to two feet at its widest point, and in racing is accepted to mean a craft used in an event in which a matched pair of racing punts is provided by the relevant Club and/or Regatta Committee.

2.2 A BEST-AND-BEST PUNT

A Best-and-Best Punt (B & B) is generally a lighter narrower craft in which the size of the boat is not restricted (except as defined under "a Punt" above) and which is provided by a competitor (or his Club) for his/her own use.

2.3 A PUNT POLE

A punt pole may be made of any material and may be of any length and diameter.

2.4 A RYEPECK

A wooden or plastic pole placed vertically in the river-bed serving as a marker for the turning point in a punting race.

2.5 CATEGORIES OF PUNT RACING

The category of a race is defined by the type of Punt and the gender and number of the competitors in the boat e.g. 2ft Gentlemen's Singles, B & B Gentlemen's Singles, 2ft Mixed Doubles.

2.6 RULES OF THE THAMES PUNTING CLUB (TPC).

Section 3 of this Handbook details the Rules of the Thames Punting Club.

2.7 RULES FOR PUNT RACING

Section 4 of this Handbook details the Rules for Punt Racing and their administration. Any changes in these Rules would normally be proposed by the TPC Committee acting on behalf of the membership and related clubs. Such proposals would then be considered at a subsequent AGM or SGM, providing the membership is given due notice of the proposed changes

2.8 GENERALLY

In this Handbook and throughout the Rules, references to any person involved in punt racing and its administration, and references to "he", "his" and "him", are used inclusively and are intended to refer to both men and women.

3 RULES OF THE THAMES PUNTING CLUB

3.1 OBJECTS, MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUTION

3.1.1 NAME AND COLOURS

The Club shall be called the Thames Punting Club. The colours of the Club shall be blue, pink and white.

3.1.2 OBJECTS OF THE CLUB

The objects of the Club shall be the encouragement of Punt Racing on the River Thames and elsewhere in the United Kingdom, and to make rules which shall govern all punting races on the Thames. The objects shall be furthered by organising annually the Thames Punting Championship Regatta and other events to promote the Sport and administering the scoring for the Morris Trophy and Ivy Pardoe Cup.

3.1.3 ELECTION OF MEMBERS

Any person interested in Punting, whether participating in the Sport or not, shall be eligible as a candidate for election. Candidates for membership must have a proposer and seconder, one of whom must be an Officer of the Club or a member of the Committee, and both of whom must be personally acquainted with their nominee. The name and address of the applicant must be received by the Honorary Secretary at least 14 days before the Committee meeting at which the candidate's application is to be considered. The election of members will be by a vote in Committee based on a simple majority.

3.1.4 DISQUALIFICATION AFTER ELECTION

A Member who has misrepresented their case for election shall have his/her membership revoked at the discretion of the Committee but shall remain responsible for any subscription or other liability incurred whilst a member.

3.1.5 RESIGNATIONS

Members wishing to resign are asked to offer their resignation in writing to the Honorary Secretary before the end of the current year (by the 31 December).

A member who has left the Club but now wishes to re-join must be proposed seconded and balloted for in the usual way.

3.1.6 SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Annual Subscription to the Club shall be fixed from time to time by the Committee and shall fall due on 1st January each year. Members are able to do this by standing order so that payment is made automatically.

A member whose subscription has not been paid by 1st March shall receive notice thereof. If payment is not made within 30 days of such notice, the member *may* lose the rights and privileges of membership unless there are extenuating circumstances.

No member shall be entitled to attend or vote at the Annual General Meeting unless his or her current subscription shall have been paid. Payment of the subscription entitles the member to the benefits of the Club and signifies acquiescence to its Rules.

3.1.7 NEW MEMBERS

New members must pay their subscription within 30 days of notification of election. Membership will not commence until the subscription is paid. Subscriptions paid by new members elected after 30 September shall not expire until 31 December in the following year.

3.1.8 LIFE MEMBERSHIP

The fee for Life Membership shall be fixed from time to time by the Committee and a member becomes eligible for life membership after ten consecutive Annual Subscriptions have been paid.

3.1.9 OFFICERS

The Officers of the Club shall be the President, Chairman, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer, who shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting.

3.1.10 VICE-PRESIDENTS

The Committee shall have the right to nominate Vice-Presidents, who shall be appointed at the Annual General Meeting.

3.1.11 COMMITTEE

The Committee shall consist of the Chairman, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer and not more than eight other members, who shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting. Ideally the Committee should be made up of members from all active punting clubs. However it is important to recognise that Committee

members are there to represent the sport of racing punting rather than their specific clubs.

Nominations for Officers and Committee, together with confirmation that the nominee is prepared to stand, must be received in writing by the Honorary Secretary by 31 January. Nominations from the floor at the Annual General Meeting will be accepted (a) in the absence of prior nominations and (b) with the agreement of all those attending the AGM. The management of the Club shall be vested in this Committee, five committee members present to form a quorum. The Committee shall have the power to co-opt additional members onto the Committee.

3.1.12 CHAIRMAN

If at any Committee Meeting the Chairman is absent, a chairman of that meeting shall be elected from among those present by a show of hands. The Chairman of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

3.1.13 POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee shall have the power and authority to administer all aspects of punt racing addressed by this Handbook during its annual term of office, including dealing with and/or ruling on any matter not provided for by the Rules in this Handbook.

The Committee will meet on a periodic basis and at least 3 times a year. Meetings may be in person or via phone or the internet. A schedule of planned meetings will be published by the Honorary Secretary at the AGM for the coming year. The Honorary Secretary will normally call the meetings but 4 or more Committee members may request a meeting by notifying the Honorary Secretary accordingly.

All meetings are to be minuted and the minutes should be circulated by the Honorary Secretary to the membership within two months of each meeting.

With regard to Section 3 (The rules governing the running of the club) of this Handbook, the Committee shall have the power to propose new rules or amendments and to repeal existing Rules, for adoption by an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting of the Thames Punting Club.

With regard to Section 4 (The rules governing punting racing) of this Handbook, the Committee shall have the power to propose new rules or amendments and to repeal existing Rules for agreement at the AGM or a specially convened SGM.

In any vote taken by the TPC committee the matter at hand can only be agreed if those supporting it are themselves members of the majority of the clubs affiliated with the TPC. This safeguard is in place to ensure that even if a single club has several members on the Committee it is not able to dominate proceedings. In the event of a tie the Chairman will be asked as an individual to make a casting vote.

The Committee may suspend, disqualify and reinstate punters, and determine and settle all questions and disputes relating to Punt Racing which may be referred to them by Regattas or Affiliated Clubs for decision. Furthermore, the Committee shall take any other steps as it may consider necessary or expedient for carrying into effect the objects of the Thames Punting Club.

3.1.14 HANDICAPPING SUB-COMMITTEE

The Committee may annually appoint a handicapping sub-committee. At present this would normally comprise the Chairman and Honorary Secretary and up to two other members of the Committee to assist them in discharging their handicapping obligations under Section 3.2 of the Rules for Punt Racing. Alternatively, the Committee may appoint a named person to undertake these duties under the supervision of the Chairman and Honorary Secretary.

It is essential that the handicaps are kept up to date during the racing season. Clubs and regatta organisers must ensure a full record of each race is made with the results then being communicated to the Chairman and Honorary Secretary of the TPC as soon as possible after the conclusion of the day's races. Prior to the start of any regatta under TPC rules, the umpire and starter must be in possession of an updated set of handicaps. These will be supplied through the TPC.

3.1.15 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM).

The Annual General Meeting of the Club shall normally be held in the month of March in each year. At least 21 days' notice shall be sent to each member of the time, place and agenda of the Meeting. All resolutions at the meeting will be subject to a vote and with agreement being signified by a simple majority of those voting. The AGM can be chaired by the President, Chairman or Secretary depending upon availability.

3.1.16 SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING (SGM).

Within 21 days of the receipt of a written request, signed by at least six current members of the Club, and stating the purpose for which it is required, the Honorary

Secretary shall call a Special General Meeting. The Notice convening the Meeting shall define the matter to be resolved and shall be sent to every member at least 14 days before the date of the Meeting. No other business shall be discussed and a matter which has been determined at any Special General Meeting shall not be re-opened for a period of 12 months thereafter.

3.1.17 ANNUAL JOINT MEETING WITH AFFILIATED CLUBS

Between 1 April and 31 May in each year the TPC may convene an Annual Joint Meeting of the Officers of the Club, together with not more than two members of the Committee, and the Captains of Punting of the Affiliated Clubs (or his/her nominee). At present given the TPC Committee has membership drawn from all clubs it has not been necessary to convene such a meeting. However, if such a meeting is to be held then at least 21 days' notice shall be sent to the Committee and each Affiliated Club of the time, place and agenda of the Meeting. This meeting can be held by conference call or other mechanisms.

The objective of the Annual Joint Meeting is to enable the Committee and Affiliated Clubs to prepare for the forthcoming punting season and determine and/or review and/or amend any matter referred to in Section 4 of this Handbook.

3.1.18 CONDUCT OF THE ANNUAL JOINT MEETING WITH AFFILIATED CLUBS

The Chairman of the TPC shall chair any Annual Joint Meeting with Affiliated Clubs. If the Chairman is absent, the meeting shall elect another Officer or Committee member of the TPC as chairman of the meeting by a show of hands. The Chairman of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

In the absence of unanimous agreement on matters to be determined at this meeting, the Officers and Committee members of the TPC present shall each have one vote. The Captain (or his/her nominee) of each Affiliated Club present shall have two votes.

3.1.19 PROPERTY OF THE CLUB

The legal ownership or possession of any and all property to which the Club is or may be entitled, or shall from time to time have charge of, shall be vested in the Committee.

A person who has ceased to be a member of the Club shall have no claim on the Club's funds or assets.

None of the Club's non-cash assets (other than goods held for resale to members or Affiliated Clubs) may be disposed of without sanction of the members of the Club at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting.

3.1.20 APPLICATION OF FUNDS

After payment of all expense's incidental to the management and maintenance of the Club and its property, the Committee may devote such funds as they think fit and proper to the promotion of the sport of racing punting and the provision of prizes and medals for racing punting.

The Honorary Treasurer shall prepare annual accounts to 31 December each year and provide copies to all members with notice of the Annual General Meeting.

3.1.21 AUDITOR

An Honorary Auditor, not being a member of the Committee, shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting. He shall audit the next year's accounts and append his/her report to the annual accounts presented at the Annual General Meeting in March of the following year.

3.1.22 THE RULES

The Rules of the Club the Club shall be printed (or published in digital form) and a copy sent or made available to every member and Affiliated Club.

Any member of the Club who shall infringe them may be liable to be suspended or expelled as may be decided by the Committee.

Any member of an Affiliated Club who shall infringe them shall be liable to be suspended, as may be decided by the Committee.

3.1.23 ALTERATION OF THE RULES

Notice giving particulars of proposed alterations to the Rules in Section 2 and Section 3 must be sent to the Honorary Secretary by a member of the Club or the Committee not later than 31 January each year in order that they may be published in the notice convening the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting.

3.1.24 SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION OF AN INDIVIDUAL MEMBER OF THE THAMES PUNTING CLUB

In case any circumstances may occur likely to be injurious to the welfare and standing of the Sport, due to the conduct of any member, the Committee shall have the power

to call upon such member for an explanation in writing. In default of such explanation or if such explanation is, in the opinion of the Committee, unsatisfactory or insufficient the Committee shall invite by letter the member whose conduct is under enquiry, and another member of the Club of that member's choice, to attend a specially convened Committee Meeting to state his/her case.

The Committee may suspend or expel a member if, in its opinion, that member is guilty of (i) an infringement of the Rules, and/or (ii) conduct unbecoming a member of the Club.

The suspension or expulsion of a member can only be valid providing at least five members of the Committee are present at the Meeting, and providing that any decision arrived at is the result of a secret ballot. Any decision by the Committee shall be by simple majority.

Immediate notification of such suspension or expulsion shall be sent to the member, in writing by registered post, with a copy of the Resolution, who shall have the right of appeal within 14 days of receipt thereof. The member must inform the Honorary Secretary in writing of his/her wish to appeal to a Special General Meeting, which shall be called by the Committee to discuss the matter as soon as is practicable. Until such Special General Meeting is held the member shall withdraw from the Club.

3.1.25 COMMUNICATIONS

Any communications or complaints relating to the Club or its members should be addressed to the Honorary Secretary who will submit them to the Committee at its next meeting.

3.2 AFFILIATION OF CLUBS AND THEIR MEMBERS

3.1.1 AFFILIATION OF CLUBS

Any boating club willing to bind itself and its members to observe the Rules of the Thames Punting Club may become affiliated upon making application to the Honorary Secretary and being elected by a simple majority of a meeting of the Committee.

The Committee shall not consider an application for affiliation from any club previously refused until after the expiration of 12 calendar months from the date of such refusal.

Each Affiliated Club shall pay to the Thames Punting Club by 30 April in each year an annual subscription to be determined by the Committee.

3.1.2 SUSPENSION OF AN AFFILIATED CLUB

The Committee shall have the power, on due cause being shown, to suspend any Affiliated Club. No motion for the suspension of an Affiliated Club shall be considered except at a Committee Meeting, specially called at not less than 14 days' notice, for the purpose. Such a motion shall be deemed carried by a simple majority of the Committee present.

3.1.3 SUSPENSION OF A MEMBER OF AN AFFILIATED CLUB (NOT BEING A MEMBER OF THE THAMES PUNTING CLUB)

In case any circumstances may occur likely to be injurious to the welfare and standing of the Sport, due to the conduct of any member of an Affiliated Club, the Committee shall be obliged to call upon such person, and the Club for which they raced, for an explanation in writing. In default of such explanation or if such explanation is, in the opinion of the Committee, unsatisfactory or insufficient, the Committee shall invite, by letter, the person whose conduct is under enquiry, and a member of his club (or parent or guardian in the case of a minor), to attend a specially convened Committee Meeting to state his/her case.

The Committee may suspend the person from punt racing for a specified period if, in its opinion, that person is guilty of conducting him/herself in a manner detrimental to the sport of punt racing.

The suspension of a person can only be valid providing at least five members of the Committee are present at the Meeting, and providing that any decision arrived at is the result of a secret ballot. Any decision by the Committee shall be by simple majority.

Immediate notification of such suspension shall be sent to the person, in writing by registered post, with a copy of the Resolution, who shall have the right of appeal within 14 days of receipt thereof. The person must inform the Honorary Secretary in writing of his wish to appeal to a Special General Meeting and to be accompanied by a member of his/her club (or parent or guardian in the case of a minor), which shall be called by the Committee to discuss the matter as soon as is practicable. Until such Special General Meeting is held the member shall remain suspended from punt racing.

3.1.4 COMMUNICATIONS

Any communications or complaints relating to any person involved in punt racing should be addressed to the Honorary Secretary who will submit them to the Committee at its next meeting.

4 RULES FOR PUNT RACING

4.1 STATUS RACES

4.1.1 DEFINITION

A Status Race is an event in which the entry is restricted to those qualifying competitors (based on past performance) who do not exceed the requirement of the event.

4.1.2 GRADING OF STATUS

Status is graded separately for all competitors under two categories only:

- 2ft singles
- Best-and-Best singles

A punter who changes Status in one Category does not change Status in the other Category.

4.1.3 THE LEVELS OF STATUS

Status is the degree of proficiency in performance by which a Punter is graded by previous activity. There are 5 status levels:

- Novice Restricted (2ft Punts only)
- Novice Open
- Junior
- Junior-Senior
- Senior

A novice is one who has never won a scratch single punting race in any kind of punt. A punter may win one Novice Restricted event in which the competitors do not turn a Ryepeck, without affecting his/her status of Novice.

The other levels of Status are defined in accordance with the table overleaf.

4.1.4 PROGRESSION THROUGH LEVELS OF STATUS

Punters progress through the levels of Status in accordance with the table below and explanatory notes overleaf.

PROGRESSION FOR MEN AND WOMEN

#1	Novice Restricted	2 or more		#2
#2	Novice Open (win 1)	3 or more	Yes	#4
			No	#3
#3	Novice Open (win 2)	3 or more?	Yes	#4
			No	#4
#4	Junior Open (win 1)	3 or more?	Yes	#5
			No	#5
#5	Junior Open (win 2)	3 or more?	Yes	#7
			No	#6
#6	Junior Open (win 3)	3 or more?	Yes	#7
			No	#7
#7	Junior Senior (win 1)	3 or more?	Yes	#8
			No	#8
#8	Junior Senior (win 2)	3 or more?	Yes	#10
			No	#9
#9*	Junior Senior (win 3)	3 or more?	Yes	#10

			No	#10
#10	Senior	* A 2 times winner of Junior senior can win #9 in a following season until win #10 is achieved		
Note: ANY WIN at #2, #4, #7 or #10 bars a competitor from entering a status below that win number.				

4.1.4.1 Explanatory notes

1. A win at steps 2,4, 7 and 10 bars a competitor from entering an event below that win number.
2. A win at a higher step than the current status of a competitor precludes the competitor from competing below that higher step.
3. A two-time winner of Junior-Senior can return to win 9 in the following season unless or until step 10 is attained.
4. No competitor may win more than two Novice Open events,
5. No competitor may win more than three Junior events.
6. No competitor may win more than three Junior-Senior events.

4.2 HANDICAP RACES AND HANDICAPPING

4.2.1 DEFINITION

A Handicap race in any Category is an event in which the competitors are graded by a handicapping system defined in seconds of time and is open to Punters of any Status.

4.2.2 OBJECTIVE OF HANDICAPS

Handicaps are allocated to punters in order to produce as fair and evenly contested races as possible.

4.2.3 ALLOCATION OF HANDICAPS

Handicaps are assessed for every punter for Courses of any length in multiples of 5 seconds. The maximum handicap is 30 seconds subject to special allowances to punters of novice status aged 16 and under, and veterans.

For Gentlemen and Ladies, separate handicaps may be calculated for the following categories of race: 2ft Singles, Best-and-Best Singles, Doubles and Mixed Doubles.

Men and women who have won Championship Races at the Annual TPC Regatta forfeit any handicap allowance in their races for a period of 10 years (from the year after their last championship win) but may then revert to a 10 second handicap in singles and doubles races after that period has elapsed (ie, in Year 11).

4.2.4 HANDICAPS FOR DOUBLES

In the case of doubles, the handicaps of the two competitors will be added together and divided by two. Where the result is not an exact multiple of 5 seconds, the handicap will be rounded downwards to the nearest multiple of 5 seconds.

4.2.5 THE HANDICAPPING SYSTEM

The handicapping system comprises two elements:

1. The Handicapping Sub Committee will be review and amended as necessary, taking into account the objective of handicaps and the guidelines in the Appendix. On an annual basis the Sub Committee will report to the TPC Committee on the current handicaps raising any problems or issues for discussion and resolution.
2. During each punting season, handicaps will be subject to constant review and amendment taking into account the objective of handicaps and the guidelines in the Appendix. Changes in handicaps will be agreed between the Captain of a competitor's Club and/or the competitor and either the Chairman and/or Honorary Secretary of the Committee.

4.2.6 VETERANS

A Punter 50 years of age or over on the first of January in any year shall be entitled to compete in Veteran events in the following season.

Allowances are made for veterans (50 years of age or over) with additional seconds added to their normal handicap as follows; 50 to 59: 5 seconds, 60 to 69: 10 seconds and 70 and over: 15 seconds.

4.2.7 OTHER HANDICAP ALLOWANCES

Novice punters aged 16 and under, competing in either a singles or doubles handicap race, will receive an additional allowance as agreed at the commencement of the season by the TPC committee

4.3 CLASSES OF RACES AND USE OF HANDICAPS

4.3.1 CLASS OF RACES

SCRATCH	Competitors start together
HANDICAP	Competitors start at intervals in accordance with the difference in Handicaps
STATUS RACES	All start together Novice Restricted Novice Open Junior Junior-Senior Senior
CHAMPIONSHIP RACES	All start together Competitors racing in a Championship event.
INVITATION RACES	Events restricted to competitors specified by the organisers in which the result does not count for status. Can start together or use handicaps as decided by the organisers
OPEN RACES	Events in which men and women punters compete against each other than the men's handicaps are halved for such races
OTHER EVENTS	All start together Marathons, team relay events and punting in canoes

4.3.2 GENERAL

1. All Punting Races shall be governed by these Rules which shall be applied to ensure that all competitors race under fair conditions.
2. Except in some "Other Events", races will be conducted in craft defined as "Punts". No more than two spare poles shall be carried in a punt during a race.
3. Punting Races shall be conducted under the control of a properly qualified Umpire whose jurisdiction is absolute. The Umpire's decision in all cases shall be final.
4. The result of each race shall be decided by the Judge (typically also the Starter) in conjunction with the Umpire

4.3.3 THE COURSE

5. At all Regattas and Races held under the Rules of the TPC a Ryepeck shall be provided at each turn for each competitor. The Ryepeck must be turned from outside to in (centre of the river to the bank). Ryepecks may be staggered if the inequality of the station makes this desirable. If a Ryepeck is dislodged during a race, the Umpire will stop the race, refix the ryepeck and then restart the race. .
6. A Course may either have a single Ryepeck to be raced to (Novice Restricted) or turned (a two-leg course), or three Ryepecks to be turned (a four-leg course).
7. All Courses shall be buoyed down the centre to indicate stations. If circumstances require it, additional buoys of a contrasting colour may be used to denote the bank or streamside of a station or to warn of a hazard. In all cases the Umpire shall be the sole judge of a Punt's own water or station.

4.3.4 THE START

8. The Umpire may act as Starter but may not judge the finish of a race, except in the case of a Novice Restricted race.
9. The Starter on being satisfied that the competitors are ready, and the sterns level shall give the signal to start. The Starter shall be subject to the control of the Umpire. The detailed starting procedure is set out below.
10. If the Starter considers the start false, he/she shall at once recall the punts to their stations, and any competitor refusing to start again shall be disqualified by the Umpire. A competitor shall only be allowed one false start in any race; a second false start will result in disqualification.
11. A Punt not at the starting punt at the time specified for the start of the race may be disqualified by the Umpire. (See also Rule 9 above.)

4.3.5 CONDUCT OF THE RACE

12. Every competitor shall be responsible for his/her own Punt's accidents.
13. Each Punt shall keep to its own Station on the Course throughout the race.
14. A competitor commits a foul, and as a consequence **MAY** be disqualified, if he/she:
 - 1) Departs from his/her station and collides with his/her opponent;
 - 2) Departs from his/her station and interferes with his/her opponent's Course;
 - 3) Passes a single buoy on its wrong side and makes no attempt to return to his/her own station and to pass the next buoy on the correct side;
 - 4) Touches any object outside his/her own punt with any part of his/her body (including the bank, but excluding a Ryepeck and the river-bed - see rule 18);
 - 5) Causes his/her pole, punt, or person or other object to interfere in any way with his/her opponent;
 - 6) Receives directions or assistance in any manner from any person in another boat or on the bank;
 - 7) Conducts himself/herself in a manner detrimental to the sport of punt racing.
14. A competitor commits a foul, and as a consequence **WILL** be disqualified, if:

Either

He/she gains an unfair advantage by:

- 1) Striking his/her opponent's pole, punt, or person;
- 2) Using his/her pole in a dangerous manner;
- 3) Using any of his/her opponent's poles;
- 4) Causing his/her Ryepeck to impede his opponent's Course;

Or

- 1) He/she makes more than one false start;
- 2) He/she passes a total of more than four buoys on the wrong side during the course of a race;
- 3) He/she uses offensive language directed at himself, his/her crew, his/her opponent or any official.

15. The Umpire shall decide all questions as to when and if a foul has been committed. When a foul occurs, the Umpire, may at his/her discretion (except in the case of the events cited in Rule 14), and whether appealed to or not:

- 1) Allow the race to continue if, in his opinion, the foul was accidental, and/or no advantage was gained.
- 2) Warn the offending competitor(s);
- 3) Order a restart;
- 4) Stop and restart the race from the place where the foul was committed;
- 5) Disqualify the offending competitor;
- 6) Determine any other matter which may arise.

16. When a foul occurs, the Umpire will announce his/her decision as soon as practicable and not wait until the end of the race. The Umpire has the right to reserve his/her decision, but the competitors involved must be warned. A decision must be given before the presentation of prizes.

17. If a competitor wishes to claim a foul, he/she must do so to the Judge/Starter or Umpire before getting out of his/her Punt at the end of the race.

4.3.6 THE FINISH

18. To finish the race a Punt must contain all the competitors who started in it. A competitor who has fallen out of his/her Punt may embark immediately and continue the race provided he/she has received no external assistance and no advantage has been gained by any movement towards the finish whilst not in the Punt.

19. The Judge/Starter will decide the order in which the Punts finish the Course but will not announce the winner until the Umpire has confirmed that the race was in order, and that no competitor is claiming a foul. In the event of a dead-heat, the competitors shall be required to punt again over a distance specified by the Judge/Starter and the Umpire. Any competitor(s) refusing to punt again shall be adjudged to have lost.

20. Subject to the foregoing Rules, the race will be won by the competitor who is the first to take his/her Punt up to the winning line. A Punt hitting the finishing Ryepeck has completed the Course.

21. Restricted Race - If the Ryepecks are staggered at the finish, the Punt reaching the nearest Ryepeck is the winner, irrespective of station.

4.3.7 NOTES ON THE RULES

8	A competitor shall, within his/her own station, be allowed to start from any part of the Starting Punt providing that the stern of his punt is level with the line made by the starting Ryepecks.
9	If in a handicap race the second competitor to start leaves the Starting Punt before the Starter has given the order "Go", that competitor shall be recalled to start again.
10	Umpires may not enforce this Rule when programmes are heavy.
14(6)	Umpires should notify competitors at the start of the race of any buoys out of position that may be ignored in applying this rule.
15(4)	In the event of a restart of a race, due allowance should be given to a clash which occurs near the Ryepecks, so that a competitor is not penalised in having to turn with a punt with little forward momentum

In all cases:

- a) If the Umpire considers the fouled punt to have suffered no disadvantage – he/she may allow the race to continue.
- b) All competitors should continue racing until instructed otherwise by the Umpire.
- c) At all times the Umpire will make his/her decision taking into account the conditions and circumstances prevailing at the time - that decision is final.

4.4 RULES FOR REGATTAS

4.4.1 OBLIGATIONS OF REGATTA COMMITTEES/CLUBS

The Rules for Punt Racing adopted by the Thames Punting Club shall be observed and the Regatta Committee/Club shall state on its programme, entry forms and all other official notices and advertisements, that its regatta is held in accordance with the Rules of the Thames Punting Club.

The Regatta Committee/Club shall provide:

- a) A clear Course, fair to each competitor;
- b) Ryepecks and buoys denoting stations and hazards;
- c) Matched Punts for the appropriate events;
- d) Suitable craft for Umpires:
- e) A Starting Punt and all other equipment including tents, flags, loudhailers, and stop watches, for the use of officials.
- f) Clubs are encouraged to share racing poles at regattas to assist solo entrants from other clubs
- g) Regatta committees may offer (a) singles or doubles open events, in which men and women punters compete against each other (men's handicaps halved for such races), and (b) open doubles races in which novice or less experienced punters are deliberately paired with more experienced punters.
- h) Status races should be encouraged wherever possible, while recognising that with smaller numbers participating, open and handicap races may predominate.
- i) All clubs are encouraged to enter suitable members into races at the TPC Annual Championships. Entries are a club responsibility rather than an individual responsibility

4.4.2 OFFICIALS

The Regatta Committee shall appoint one or more Umpires from the Official List of Umpires compiled by the Thames Punting Club Committee. Such names must appear on the official Regatta programme.

No race shall be umpired by anyone other than a person whose name is included in the current season's panel of Umpires or Probationary Umpires.

The Regatta Committee shall appoint one or more Starters/Judges whose decision as to the order in which the punts reach the winning line shall be final in conjunction with the Umpire.

The Regatta Committee shall also appoint a Regatta Race Committee to adjudicate on any disputes arising during any programme of punting races.

4.4.3 NOTICES AND PROGRAMMES

1. A copy of the official notice and of the entry form must be sent to the Honorary Secretary of the Thames Punting Club prior to the date of the Regatta. A copy of

the Programme and a list of results of all races and prize-winners must also be sent to the Honorary Secretary within 5 days of the event.

4.4.4 EVENTS

2. The official notice, entry form and programme should specify the races open to competition. Details should include the Category and Class of race and the length of Course for each event.
3. No money or "value prize" shall be offered for competition.
4. The Regatta Committee may cancel or withdraw any event if there are insufficient entries. Subject to this, if there is only one entry for any prize, or if all entries but one withdraws, the one remaining must punt over the Course to be entitled to the prize.

4.4.5 ENTRIES

5. It is recommended that entries shall close at least 6 days before the date of the Regatta and must give the real name, Status and club of each competitor.
6. No official of the Regatta shall divulge any details of entries whilst the entrance list is open. When it has closed the Regatta Secretary may, if required, furnish to any competitor a list of names of other entries in the event in which the applicant is involved.
7. A competitor shall not enter more than once for the same event. A substitute may only be permitted in a doubles event with approval from the Regatta Committee before any race has taken place in that event. No substitute shall be permitted in a singles event.
8. The Regatta Committee shall investigate any questionable entry and, irrespective of protest, shall have the power to refuse or return any entry up to the time of starting, without being bound to assign a reason.
9. The Regatta Secretary should send a list of all competitors in Handicap races to the Honorary Secretary of the Thames Punting Club in order to obtain Handicaps in time for them to be printed in the programme

4.4.6 COMPETITORS

10. Objections to the qualifications of a competitor must be made in writing to the Secretary of the Regatta at the earliest moment practicable. No protest shall be entertained unless lodged with the Regatta Race Committee before the prizes are presented except any matter of disputed status. The latter shall remain open until determined.

11. Preferably, every competitor must be properly dressed, i.e. quarter-sleeved vest in his/her Club Colours, and shorts. The Umpire shall have the power to refuse to start any competitor who is deemed improperly dressed.

4.4.7 CONCLUSION

12. Except for the conduct of each race, which is the sole responsibility of the Umpire, all matters not specifically provided for in these rules shall be decided by the Regatta Race Committee.

4.5 UMPIRES

4.5.1 JURISDICTION

The Rules for Punt Racing give the Umpire jurisdiction over the whole race and all matters connected with it from the time the race is specified to start until its final termination.

In the event of an accident the Umpire's first duty is to the safety of the competitor or any person in difficulty.

4.5.2 APPOINTMENT

At the first TPC Committee meeting after the AGM:

- A Panel of Umpires shall be approved.
- A Panel of Probationary Umpires shall be approved.
- Promotions from the Panel of Probationary Umpires to the Panel of Umpires shall be approved based on evidence of Probationary Umpires having officiated under the supervision of at least one Umpires at three or more regattas

4.5.3 EVENTS

All races other than Closed-to-Club events shall be umpired by an Umpire on the Panel, or by a Probationary Umpire if accompanied by a qualified Umpire.

Closed-to-Club events may be umpired by a Qualified or Probationary Umpire.

4.6.4 NOTES FOR UMPIRES

a) Prior to the commencement of racing the Umpire should make himself/herself acquainted with the Punting Course, going over it in a Punt if possible.

- b) An Umpire has no authority to alter a Course on his/her own initiative but, should he/she consider it needs adjustment, he/she should draw the attention of the Regatta Secretary or delegate to the fact before the commencement of the Regatta. The re-instatement of buoys to their proper positions shall be within his/her jurisdiction.
- c) The correct position of the Umpire's launch should be as near the centre of the Course and as close behind the Punts as required. The turn must be from stream to shore to avoid wash interfering with the competitors.
- d) An umpire should endeavour not to signify to the Judge that a race was "fair" until he/she is sure that no claim is- forthcoming.
- e) Preferably an Umpire should not compete in a Regatta at which he/she is umpiring. In any case, no person should umpire any race in an event in which he/she has entered.

4.6 RULES FOR INTER-CLUB PUNTING

4.6.1 ORGANISERS

The Committee of the Thames Punting Club together with the Captains of the Affiliated Clubs i.e. those entering a team on the day.

4.6.2 VENUE

At the annual TPC Regatta.

4.6.3 COURSE

800 metres.

4.6.4 DATE

To be agreed by the TPC Committee.

4.6.5 EVENTS

It may consist of Gentlemen 's Singles in 2 ft punts, Ladies' Singles in 2 ft punts, Gentlemen's Doubles in 2 ft punts, Mixed Doubles in 2 ft punts and Ladies' Doubles in 2 ft punts as agreed by the Clubs

4.6.6 ENTRIES

To close 13 days before the event.

4.6.7 ENTRANCE FEE

To be agreed by the Organisers and paid on entry.

4.6.8 THE DRAW

To be made at the close of entries, at which the Captains of the competing Clubs should be present.

4.6.9 STATIONS

To draw for Stations - thereafter teams to have alternative Stations in each heat and re-drawn for the final. Stations to be adhered to in accordance with the published programme.

4.6.10 TEAMS

To be nominated at time of entry - 4 Ladies and 4 Gentlemen - after which no alterations may be made, except with the approval of the Organisers.

4.6.11 SUBSTITUTES

One woman and one man to be nominated at time of entry. No substitutes allowed once a competitor has participated in a heat except in the case of injury preventing further involvement in the event.

4.6.12 DOUBLING -UP

If a Club is unable to nominate enough individuals to compete in the prescribed events, then doubling-up will be allowed subject to the approval of the competing Club Captains at the Draw. No current Champion (either singles or doubles) may double-up.

4.6.13 SCORING

If two or four or more clubs enter - straight knock out.

If three clubs enter - all against all.

Win	3 points
Dead-heat	2 points
Starting in each event	1 point

In the event of a tie, the result of the Gentlemen's Single race to decide.

4.6.14 PRIZE

To hold the Trophy for one year and retain a Thames Punting Club pennant.

4.6.15 RELATIONSHIP TO MORRIS TROPHY AND OTHER CATEGORIES OF RACING

No points shall be gained in the Morris Trophy and the Status and Handicaps shall not be affected.

4.7 THE MORRIS TROPHY

4.7.1 BASIS OF COMPETITION

The Morris Trophy is open to all Affiliated Clubs and is awarded annually to the most successful Affiliated Club based on the points scored during the punting season.

4.7.2 SCORING

Points towards the Morris Trophy are scored by the winning punt in events as follows:

Punting Championships event (including Junior Championship)	5 points
Status events	2 points
Marathon or relay event	2 points
Handicap event	1 point

4.9 THE IVY PARDOE CUP

4.9.1 HISTORY

The Pardoe Cup was originally won by Miss Ivy Pardoe for the mixed Doubles Championship in 1930.

4.9.2 BASIS OF COMPETITION

The Trophy is presented annually to the Member of the Thames Punting Club, male or female, who obtains the highest number of points during a season from racing in Punts in Status and Handicap events (including Veteran events and marathons).

3.8.3 SCORING

Points are scored by competitors as follows:

For starting a race	2 points
For winning a heat	2 points
For winning a final	4 points

5. APPENDIX

5.1 LIST OF AFFILIATED CLUBS (2020)

Dittons Skiff and Punting Club

Albany Cottage, 2 Albany Reach Queens Road Thames Ditton Surrey, KT7 0QY

Skiff Club

The Clubhouse, Trowlock Way, Teddington, Middlesex, TW11 9QZ

Sunbury Skiff and Punting Club

Next to Shepperton Open Water Swim, Ferry Lane, Shepperton TW17 9LH.

Thames Valley Skiff Club

Off Dudley Road, Walton On Thames Surrey, KT12 2JY

Wargrave Boating Club

Off Station Road Wargrave, Berkshire, RG10 5EU

Wraysbury Skiff and Punting Club

Riverside, Egham, Surrey, TW20 0AA

5.2 LIST OF THAMES PUNT RACING COURSES IN USE - 2020

Chertsey

Maidenhead

Sunbury

Teddington

Thames Ditton

Walton on Thames

Wargrave

Wraysbury

5.3 ANNUAL CALENDAR OF THE THAMES PUNTING CLUB

1 January	Annual Membership Subscriptions due.
31 January	Closing date for written nominations for Officers and the Committee Closing date for submission of proposed changes to the Rules of the Thames Punting Club (Section 2).
March	Annual General Meeting to be held
31 March	Closing date for submission of proposed changes to the Rules for Punt Racing and its administration (Section 3). Individual membership lapses if annual subscription unpaid
1 April to 31 May	Meeting of the TPC Committee
30 April	Annual affiliation fees to be paid by the Affiliated Clubs
July	Meeting of the TPC Committee

September/October	Meeting of the TPC Committee
31 December	Latest date for an individual's resignation for the following year

5.4 GUIDELINES FOR HANDICAPPING

These guidelines should be read and considered in conjunction with Section 3.2 of the Rules of Punt Racing, relating to handicap races and handicapping.

1. Handicaps given all the commencement of the season will be based on an 800 metres (1/2 mile) course. For a 600 metres (3/8 mile) course, 5 seconds will be deducted from all handicaps of 10 or 15 seconds and 10 seconds will be deducted from all handicaps of 20 seconds and over.
2. The winner (for the first time) of a handicap event may, at the discretion of his/her Club Captain, or representative, and the Chairman or Honorary Secretary of the Thames Punting Club, incur a penalty of 5 seconds depending on the circumstances. After two wins in any season, a competitor will automatically incur a penalty of 5 seconds and move down one multiple of 5 seconds, a scratch person incurring a minus handicap.
3. Handicaps should be related to status as follows:

Course Length	Maximum Handicap (Seconds)	
	800m (1/2 mile)	600m (3/8 mile)
Status		
Novice Restricted/Novice	40	30
Junior	30	20
Junior-Senior	20	10
Senior	10	5

Current holders of the Gentlemen's and Ladies Amateur Championships should be handicapped at scratch in any category of handicap race.

Current holders of any of the doubles' Championships should be handicapped at scratch in any category of doubles' handicap race, but their handicaps in both 2ft and Best-and-Best singles categories should be unaffected.

4. Entries to Regattas may include agreed handicaps, but at the same time a copy must be sent to the Honorary Secretary of the Thames Punting Club for

confirmation. A note will be made of all persons competing for the first time in a handicap race.

5. Each Affiliated Club should maintain an up-to-date list of all their competitors with their respective handicaps and display it in their club.
6. All competitors have the right of appeal through their Club Captain to the Committee of the Thames Punting Club.

5.5 STARTING PROCEDURE FOR PUNT RACES

When competitors are held on the Starting Punt the Starter will proceed by saying:

FOR ALL RACES, this is a:

- a) Championship
- b) Status
- c) Handicap

Race on a Buoyed Course - you must therefore keep to your Station throughout the race or you are liable to be disqualified.

He/she will then indicate that it is to be raced over (one for Novice Restricted), two or four legs of the Course and will continue by saying: You will turn (a) one or (b) three sets of Ryepecks from outside to in. (In a Championship race he may need to indicate that it is the first or second set of Ryepecks to be turned.) Followed by any other special information relevant to the Course.

For STATUS races, including CHAMPIONSHIPS:

The Starter shall start the race in the following manner: When I see that you are both straight and ready, I shall ask you once if you are ready, and if I receive no reply, I shall say "GO".

For HANDICAP races:

The Starter will indicate to which Station he is speaking by referring to Inside or Outside Station. When Handicaps are level you will both start on the word "Go".

When Handicaps are not level; You receive "X" seconds start - when I see that you are straight and ready, I shall ask you once if you are ready, and if I receive no reply, I shall

say "Go". Then to the other Station - I shall count off 5 second intervals and, with one and a half seconds of the handicap time remaining, then say "Get Ready, Go".

NOTE

1. In the event of persistent appeals (2 or more) by a competitor, the Starter may warn that he/she will start the race without further appeal by saying "Get Ready, Go".
2. In any handicap race a competitor starting before the "Go" will be called back to start again, whilst his/her opponent will? may be allowed to continue.
3. In the event of a restart during a race, the Umpire will give positional directions and deemed appropriate will say "Get ready, Go". No appeal by a competitor will be allowed.
4. At all times, a competitor refusing to comply with the Umpire's directions will be disqualified.

5.6 BRIEF HISTORY OF THE THAMES PUNTING CLUB AND PUNT RACING

The amateur sport of punt racing on the River Thames evolved during the late 1800s from races between professional boatmen, who would compete in fishing punts for a "purse" normally provided by a gentleman sponsor or backer. The gentlemen would then wager, sometimes considerable sums, on their own proteges. This led to competitions between the Gentlemen themselves, and the development of the 2ft (comparatively) lightweight matched pair punts and the lightweight "best-and-best" punt.

Originally there were two centres for the sport, Maidenhead, where the Upper Thames Championship originated, and Sunbury, the home of the Championship of the Lower Thames.

Such competition required rules of conduct, and so the Thames Punting Club was formed in 1885, based in Sunbury. Rules were formulated, a committee established, and punting events organised within established regattas at various locations along the Thames.

The first Amateur Punting Championship organised by the Thames Punting Club was held at Sunbury in 1886 and won by E.V. Gardner. This was for men only. The Ladies' Amateur Championship was first held in 1927.

In 1890 the Thames Punting Club assumed responsibility for staging the Professional Punting Championship. This event had commenced by open challenge in 1877. The Professional Punting Championship was raced on the Maidenhead Mile until it ceased in 1953. The record for the Maidenhead Mile was set by Bill Wyatt in 1953.

In 1894 the Club had two matched punts built by W Haines & Sons of Old Windsor. These measured 28 feet long by 2 feet 3 inches wide, and each weighed 189 lbs. The pair of punts cost £25 12s.

In 1898 two further matched punts were built by Haines. These measured 30 feet long by 2 feet wide, and each weighed 196 lbs. The pair of punts cost £16 12s, including an allowance for the old punts.

The Committee and Officers of the Thames Punting Club, drawn from elected members of the Club, continued to govern the sport until 1959. In 1959, the Affiliated Clubs were embraced in the administration of the sport through the formation of a Racing Committee. With the revival of interest in punt racing from 1970 onwards, and

the growth in the number of Affiliated Clubs in the 1990s, the administration of the sport has been periodically overhauled to produce the framework set out in this hand book.

With the exception of the years of the Great War and the Second World War the Amateur Punting Championship was competed for every year from 1886 until 1970, at the following venues: Sunbury, Staines, Shepperton, Laleham and Maidenhead. After more than a decade of inactivity, the Championship was revived in 1982, initially being staged at Walton, before returning to Maidenhead in 1986 to mark the centenary of the Thames Punting Club.