

Royal Torbay Yacht Club (RTYC) Defaced Blue Ensign and Burgee



For many years flags were the only way to pass messages at sea and they remain a useful way of expressing identity. Flag etiquette is a mixture of international law and custom.

The RTYC Club Burgee is one of the oldest in yachting and the Club has also been granted the privilege to fly a defaced Blue Ensign.

A yacht's Ensign is the National Maritime Flag corresponding to the nationality of her owner. Thus, a British yacht should fly the Red Ensign unless she qualifies for a special Ensign. RTYC members, who own yachts of 7 metres or more, are eligible to fly the Club's special Ensign on application to the Club.

The Club is also privileged to be able to fly a Defaced Blue Ensign; something of which we should be very proud and must be guarded with care. Serious contravention could result in the revocation of the Club's General Warrant so it is important that members adhere to the rules and regulations.

All members may and are encouraged to fly the Burgee and Ensign.

The Club Colours must be worn correctly or not at all and some of the rules and regulations regarding this are actually law.

The Ensign must be kept clean and in good repair.

On a sailing yacht, the Burgee should be flown from the masthead but owing to the introduction of wind vanes at mastheads, it has become accepted practice on yachts to fly the Burgee from the starboard spreader. The Burgee must be flown from the masthead on a motor yacht or from the highest point if there is no mast.

The Ensign should normally be flown from the stern.

The Ensign should not be flown without the Club Burgee.



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Are you eligible to fly the Defaced Blue Ensign?

To wear the Ensign a permit is required which is issued by the Club and signed by the Club Secretary.

The yacht must be on the British Register of Small Ships (ie SSR).

The owner, or owners, must be British subjects and full members of the Club.

When the yacht is sold, or if the owner ceased to be a member of the Club, the permit must be returned.

The yacht must be used for private, non-commercial purposes only.

There must be no form of advertising on the boat including sails.

The yacht must measure more than 7 metres in length.

When should you fly the Club Burgee:

When the owner or owners are on board, in the vicinity, and in command of the vessel. (A Burgee shows that the vessel is in the charge of a member of the Club but does not necessarily indicate ownership.)

When should an Ensign be flown:

When the owners are on board and in command.

The Ensign may not be raised before sunrise and must be lowered by sunset or 21.00hrs depending on which is the earlier. The Permit holder must always be on board when the Ensign is being flown.

At sea, the Ensign must be worn when meeting other vessels and when entering ports, signal stations and coastguard stations.

Saluting:

Yachts salute Royal Yachts and Warships of any nationality. A salute is made by dipping the Ensign at half-mast upon the death of a relative or family member, usually on the day of the funeral.

For more information.

Please contact The Secretary at The Royal Torbay Yacht Club.

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