

Official Raingutter Regatta Rules
CUB SCOUT PACK 70
New Canaan, CT
(with special thanks to Pack 957 in St. Peters, Missouri)

1. Overview – “Just what is a Raingutter Regatta?”

The Raingutter Regatta is a boat race that is designed to be a parent-son project. Please feel free to give guidance and minimal assistance to your Scout as he builds his Raingutter Regatta boat, appropriate to his age. This is a chance for your son to be part of a team (he and you), and to enjoy the spirit of friendly competition with his peers. These “Official Raingutter Regatta Rules” are written to help you keep it simple and fun for your child, and to know what to expect when it comes time to race your boat.

A special note to all parents and scouts: Together, please read the concluding article (Section 8) on sportsmanship. While everyone will be trying to win, it's always a good idea to start out by remembering the Cub Scout Motto, "Do Your Best," and some of the basic ideas behind good sportsmanship.

2. Ground Rules for Participation – “Who can race?”

The leadership of Pack 70 always tries to keep our activities family oriented, so not only can the scouts have fun, but their brothers and sisters can too. Here are our participation guidelines:

- a. The race is open to all Tigers, Wolves, Bears and Webelos Scouts registered to Pack 70, as well as any prospective Cubs who bring a boat to race between ages 5 to 11 (1st through 5th grade).
- b. Each scout or sibling may enter only one boat in the competition. They should have a significant level of participation in building their boat (designing, sanding, gluing, painting, decorating, etc.).
- c. The boat must have been built during the current program year (the school year in which the Regatta is held). Boats that have competed in a previous regatta are not permitted. The Pack provides a new kit to every registered Scout each year to make this easier.

3. Boat Specifications – “Are there boat building rules?”

To ensure that the race is as fair as possible, all boats must be made from the BSA Raingutter Regatta kits. However, the materials supplied in the kit can be modified or added to somewhat. On every boat, the hull, mast, keel, rudder and sail provided in the kit must be used in the boat construction. Also, no other form of propulsion besides the sail is allowed. Here are some additional boat construction details to be aware of:

- a. Hull: Length between 6-1/2" and 7" (maximum). The boat body CANNOT be wider than 2-1/2". The boat must remain a single hull boat using the supplied hull wood. Multi-hull catamarans and boats with stabilizing out-riggers are not allowed. Hull should be painted, stained, or otherwise finished to minimize water-logging during the race.
- b. Mast: Height limit is 6" to 7" (maximum) from deck to top. Masts may not be extended, but may be decorated.
- c. Sail: Supplied in kit, may be trimmed but not enlarged or added to (except for decorations).
- d. Rudder and Keel: The provided keel and rudder must be securely attached to the bottom of the boat. The rudder may extend beyond the stern (rear) of the hull. The mast hole, keel and rudder layout specifications given in the BSA kit are for informational purposes only and alternative placements are allowed. For maximum stability, it is highly recommended that the guidance be followed, especially regarding centerline placement of all three components.
- e. Decorations/Additions: Objects such as sailors, cannons, etc. may be added. All such decorations must be firmly fastened to the boat, and may not be placed in such a manner as to exceed the boat dimensions as listed above. Bowsprits (large spars projecting forward from the stem) are discouraged, as they extend the overall length of the boat, providing an unfair advantage. Numbering is not required.

4. Boat Assembly Guidance – "How can I build a 'winning' boat?"

The following assembly guidelines (tips) are provided to help you get the best performance from your boat. They are not meant to be restrictive. (See 3. Boat Specifications above for requirements.)

- a. Shaping the boat: Do not round the sides of the hull. (A less rounded hull is more stable than a more rounded hull.) Any gouges can be repaired with spackle or latex caulk (sandable).
- b. Keel & Rudder: Sand the bottom front corner of these with sandpaper. Use epoxy or hot glue to install the rudder into the slot at the back of the boat body. Likewise, install the keel centerline on the hull bottom behind the mast position, with the shortest flat side down (not with a point down).
- c. Mast: Point one end of mast using sand paper. Install the mast by twisting the point into the boat body approximately 2 to 2-1/2" from bow (front of boat) in the center side to side. Remove and then glue back into place. Be sure to check mast height (see section 3. above).
- d. Sail: Position the sail on the mast. About 3/4" from the top of the mast, either glue the sail to it, or attach securely with tape. Attach

bottom of sail in a similar manner. The bottom edge of the sail needs to be about 1/2 inch above the deck of the boat. If the sail is too low, the corners rub against the gutter or dip in the water. If the sail is too high, the boat is top heavy and tends to tip over. A well secured sail makes the boat easier to handle in the water.

- e. Painting/Decorations: Sailboat body should be painted at least 24 hours before racing to allow sufficient time to dry. You may want to use Krylon spray paint -- it dries to a sandable finish in about one minute on the balsa wood hulls. Do not use water soluble paints. Stickers, decals, and other objects may also be added to customize your boat. See section 7. Rewards and Recognition for appearance award categories. Use your imagination!

5. Inspection and Registration – “What must I do to enter my boat?”

Before the race begins, all participating “Captains” must check-in with their boats. Here are the pre-race check-in details:

- a. Before a boat may compete in the regatta, it is subject to a technical inspection, to verify that it meets the prescribed specifications (see 3. Boat Specifications above for details). If a problem is noted, the Captain may be asked to correct it before the boat is registered.
- b. When the boat passes inspection, it is then registered along with the boat Captain’s name.
- c. Registration cutoff will typically be no later than 7:15 p.m. (evening races) for all participants. Boats that have not registered by the cutoff deadline will not race, so plan to arrive early enough to get your boat registered.

6. Competition – “How will the race be run?”

Every race has to have rules, and ours is no exception. Here’s what to expect:

- a. Once all boats are registered, the competition brackets will be seeded. Scouts will start by racing with other scouts from their same rank. Winners from each rank will compete for overall Pack awards. Prospective Cub Scouts will only race against other prospective Cub Scouts, without regard to age.
- b. Each race heat will involve two equal lengths of raingutter (approximately 10-feet long) filled with water.
- c. The race heat begins once the official starter has placed the competing boats against the back wall of the gutter and commands the scouts to “GO!”
- d. On the starter's command, the scouts will blow into the sail of their boat in order to advance them through the water. The boat can only

be propelled by blowing into the sail. Once the race has started, the scout CANNOT touch his boat with his hands, except to right a capsized boat.

- e. Pushing the boat forward is NOT allowed while righting a capsized or stuck boat by hand, nor is pushing by a scout's face, lips, hat, nose or other body part that touches the boat. Pushing may disqualify the scout during that race heat. Any disputed heat may be rerun at the discretion of the judges.
- f. The first boat to reach the finish line (the opposite end of the gutter) is the winner of that heat. The finish line official(s) will have the final and only say in determining the winner. In the unlikely event of a tie, the racers will be given a chance to catch their breath, then that heat will be rerun.
- g. If a boat is damaged during a race (boat loses its rudder, keel or mast/sail) and can be repaired in a reasonable amount of time (a few minutes), the race may be run again at the discretion of the judges. Any non-functional decorations that fall off during competition will NOT be reattached during racing.
- h. The race will be run as a double elimination format, with the winners of each heat advancing until the third, second, and first place winners are determined for each rank.
- i. First place winners in each rank will compete in the overall Pack competition.
- j. Ungentlemanly or unsportsmanlike conduct by any participant or spectator may be grounds for expulsion from the competition and/or the race area.

7. Rewards and Recognition – “What can I take home?”

The most important values in Raingutter Regatta competition are parent/son participation, good sportsmanship and learning how to follow rules. The Pack Leadership is responsible for recognizing and encouraging these qualities in addition to traditional racing awards. Here are the tangible awards that each boy may receive:

- a. Every participating Scout will receive a Raingutter Regatta participation patch.
- b. Boats from all ranks are eligible to be selected for appearance (static) awards. Judges will reward creativity and workmanship. Award categories include: Most Colorful, Really Radical, Most Realistic, Most Original, Most Scout-Oriented, and Captain's Choice.
- c. Ribbons will be awarded to the first, second and third-place finishers in each rank.

- d. A Trophy will be awarded to the first place finisher overall in the pack. Second and third-place finishers will receive a medal.

8. Sportsmanship – “How should I act?”

Two things the Raingutter Regatta requires each participant to learn are 1) the craft skills necessary to build a boat and 2) the rules that must be followed. Even more important, though, is how we act and behave while participating in the Raingutter Regatta or any other group activity. This is called sportsmanship.

The first thing to remember about sportsmanship is that everyone's skills are a little different. Your craft skills may be just developing, while someone else may be more experienced. Parents have different skill levels, too. Whether or not you feel that you have good boat-building or racing skills, remember, you and your friends are individuals first and racers second. This idea is often called having respect for others.

The second thing to remember is to follow the rules. Without rules, there would be no Raingutter Regatta. You will never know if you are really good at doing something unless you follow the rules. This is often called being honest.

The third thing to remember about good sportsmanship is that there are winners and losers in every competition. You accept this when you choose to compete. There may be times when you win and feel happy, and times when you lose and feel unhappy. Being a winner is easy, and losing is sometimes hard. If you win, you must not brag or gloat. If you lose, you must not feel jealous or bitter. To be a good sportsman, you must be able to say, "I did my best" and be satisfied with the results. You must also be able to appreciate and feel happy for someone else when he runs a good race or builds a neat boat.

Good Luck!