



Digital Innovation in Sailing Erasmus+ project

## HANDBOOK

for using the Virtual Regatta platform and organizing the eSailing events

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#### 7. SUMMARY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This handbook is created as a comprehensive instruction addressed to sailing federations and sports clubs in order to increase public participation in eSailing and sailing.

Playing Virtual Regatta, as is the case with other sport simulators, can help people understand the sport and increase their willingness to participate both as spectators and active participants.

With that in mind, this handbook was developed to guide potential organizers of eSailing events through the process. It is easy to follow, filled with real life examples coming from experience gained in Poland, Sweden and Türkiye while implementing DigiSail project.

In this document you will find **examples of activities, guidelines, technical requirements, pictures and screen shots** from the game. All to help you make eSailing more accessible to your community.



## 2. WHAT IS ESAILING

eSailing is a form of competitive sailing that takes place in a virtual environment. It involves using online sailing simulation platforms to race against other sailors from around the world.

eSailing offers sailors an opportunity to stay connected to the sport and compete with others even when physical sailing events are not possible.

The eSailing platforms simulate real-life sailing conditions and allow participants to control their yachts using tactics and strategies similar to those used in actual sailing. Competitions are held in various formats, including one-off races and longer, offshore series.



## **3. VIRTUAL REGATTA PLATFORM**

The Virtual Regatta website provides access to the following services:



Virtual Regatta Inshore and Offshore section, where You can play the game or learn about upcoming eSailing events



A News section,



Community spaces: the User can interact with other users in the space called "club-house". You can chat with other players and share or discuss aspects of the Virtual Regatta game and sailing news.



Discord section, where you will find a direct link to the official Inshore and Offshore discord groups



Business offers section.

## 4. VIRTUAL REGATTA INSHORE GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Virtual Regatta Inshore is a real-time multiplayer racing game. The game is free to play with options to purchase in-game equipment to aid your races. You can access Virtual Regatta Inshore, either through a computer, smart phone or tablet

#### **Requirements:**

a continuous internet connection.

#### **Recomendations:**

for a smooth and uninterrupted gaming experience: 4G, 5G or LTE internet connection for comfortable gameplay: devices with a screen size of less than 8.7"







**DOWNLOAD OPTIONS** 

## 4. VIRTUAL REGATTA INSHORE

### **4.1.** Education value

There are applications of the game that have useful educational values such as Virtual Regatta Sailing School. Virtual Regatta Inshore platform provides **10 step explanation of the rules** of sailing to people who have not had contact with traditional sailing or for various reasons cannot take up sailing.

Sailing School section is designed to either educate and overcome economic and communication barriers among people interested in sailing. That support may be needed when outdoor whether doesn't allow sailing!



## 4. VIRTUAL REGATTA INSHORE

### Racing value

4.2. —

Virtual Regatta platform provides fantastic way to stay in touch whilst practicing your racing tactics from your own home. Virtual Regatta Inshore allows players to participate in real-time and race between each others from their computers or mobile devices, simulates the real meteorological conditions experienced by the skippers.

Many of professional sailors from olympic classes chose Virtual Regatta Inshore as a tool to **improve tactical and other skills**. It's great tool in training your decision-making reflexes in a dynamic environment.



## 4. VIRTUAL REGATTA INSHORE

### Game panel navigation

After starting the game, You will find yourself into **welcome panel**, where you can:

- create an account,
- log in to the account,
- play as a guest.

4.3. -

We recommend to **register an account** to be able to use all the game futures, including custom race panel.

FOLLOW NEXT PAGES TO SEE SPECIFIC STEPS OF REGISTRATION & USE



#### I create my account

#### I have an account

**Play as guest** 

Terms and Conditions

Privacy policy

#### **4.3.1.** Account registration





### To create a User account, the following information is required:

- Boat name/nickname (Pseudo)
- Email
- Password

Once the form is completed, the User validates the information given and its accuracy by clicking on the validation button. A confirmation email will then be sent to the User in which there is a link on which he/she will have to click to confirm his/her registration. **The User must provide additional Information** to appear in the rankings (Virtual Regatta Offshore) and/or to participate in the eSailing World Championship (Virtual Regatta Inshore).

The information provided must be accurate, complete, verifiable and updated by the User. The nickname is visible to other Users.

#### 4.3.2. Main panel



#### The main panel consists of five tiles.

The explanation of each of them is under the letter "i" in the upper right corner of the tile. In the lower right corner of the panel there is a section of settings and news. If you are taking your first steps in sailing, we recommend using the Virtual Regatta Sailing School. Just click on the lifebuoy icon in the bottom left corner of the panel. You will find eSailing World Championship and National rankings by picking World Sailing icon in the upper left corner. To purchase in-game equipment to aid your races, click into "trolley" icon.

### **4.3.3.** Virtual Regatta Sailing School



#### If you are taking your first steps in the game, it's worth using the tutorial.

In the tutorial, you will learn how to control the yacht and how to react when you are near another yacht. You can return to the main menu by using the arrow located in the top left corner of the screen. We present an explanation of each episode.

#### **Point of sail**

#### 

A boat is powered by the wind



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VIDEO



The wind is the engine that propels your sailboat. The red and white wind indicator shows the direction from which the wind is blowing. When the wind is blowing on the starboard side and the sails are on the port side, the yacht is on a starboard tack. While on a starboard tack, pulling the tiller towards yourself while simultaneously easing the sail will cause the sailboat to turn left. This maneuver is called bearing away. Conversely, pushing the tiller away from yourself while simultaneously trimming the sail will cause the sailboat to turn right. This maneuver is called heading up. In the game, use the arrow keys to control the sailboat.

To accurately determine the course of the yacht, we need to know the direction from which the wind is blowing.

Remember the red and white wind indicator from the first episode? The yacht can sail with the wind, across the wind, and even close-hauled. When the wind blows directly onto the side of the boat, the course on which the yacht is sailing is called a beam reach. When the wind blows directly onto the stern, the course is called a downwind. A course between a beam reach and a downwind is called a broad reach. A course where the yacht sails close to the wind is called a close-hauled. Remember that a yacht that finds itself in the head to wind zone, with the bow into the wind, will stop.



In sailing, sailing upwind and downwind is possible by tacking. Tacking involves sailing on alternate tacks, first on a starboard tack and then on a port tack, zigzagging your way forward. Remember that the yacht cannot move forward if it is in the head to wind zone, right? To transition from a starboard tack to a port tack through head to wind zone, we need to execute a tack, which involves swiftly crossing the no-sail zone. A similar situation occurs on a downwind course when the wind blows directly onto the stern. In that case, transitioning from a starboard tack to a port tack is called a jibe. When the wind blows directly onto the stern, on some yachts, we can hoist an additional sail to sail faster.

In the game, you can use the blue button to hoist and lower the additional sail. Remember to stow the extra sail before sailing upwind.

#### 14

VIDEO

A H.3 KTS





Sail fast, always on the optimal course towards the destination. Remember that the speed of the sailboat depends on its positioning relative to the wind and the proper adjustment of the sails. The telltales on the boat will help you with that. They are the green and red threads attached to the sails, indicating the sail's positioning relative to the wind. In the game, a wind indicator glowing green means you are steering the yacht correctly.

In sailing, the race course is the designated route marked by anchored buoys. Can you imagine how it looks? The starting line runs between the Race Committee boat, where the main race officer is, and the so-called "pin," which is the mark on the other end. After the start, we go upwind, sailing towards the windward mark. After rounding the windward mark, we bear away to the downwind leg. The race finish line is usually in the same location as the start, between the Race Committee boat and the "pin" mark.

VIDEO

 $\Box$ 



Before we discuss the definition of overlap, let's cover a few important topics when both yachts are on the same tack. The overtaking yacht from behind is the one that does not overlap with the yacht ahead along its entire length. The latter yacht is considered the overtaking yacht from the front. In this situation, both yachts are not in the overlap, and it is the responsibility of the overtaking yacht from behind to give way to the overtaking yacht from the front. In a situation where one of the yachts catches up to the other, and the yachts begin to "overlap", yachts will be in an overlap position. In this case, the yacht that caught up to the other yacht must give way. When the wind blows onto the right side of the boat and the sails are on the left side, the yacht is on starboard tack.

On the other hand, when the wind blows onto the left side of the boat and the sails are on the right side, the yacht is on port tack. When yachts are on opposite tacks, the yacht on the port tack must give way to the yacht on the starboard tack. It's up to you to decide how you will give way to the starboard tack yacht. You can give way by bearing away (falling behind) or by making a turn.



Do you remember the definition of overlap from the previous episode? It will be important in considering the next situation. When yachts are on the same tack and overlapped, the windward yacht must give way to the leeward yacht. How do we know if the yacht we are sailing is windward or leeward? We call the yacht sailing closer to the wind the windward yacht. Similarly, the yacht that is farther from the wind is called the leeward yacht.

Marks (buoys) are well-visible points floating on the water that define the boundaries of the racecourse. To navigate the racecourse correctly, each participant must round the marks in a specified manner. A mark is a location where we perform the bear-away and head-up maneuvers. When yachts simultaneously reach a mark (buoy), the "inside" yacht has priority if it enters a 3-length zone overlapped with other yachts.

VIDEO

### **4.3.4.** Custom race panel - how to organize a race





#### Click on the "Custom Race" tile.

In this panel, you can create your own races, join races and events organized by other players, or watch others competing live.

To create your own race, click on the green tile located in the top right corner.

In the race creator panel. You can give the race a name, specify the maximum number of players, and assign an access code. By assigning an access code, you ensure that only players with whom you share the code can participate in the race.





After clicking "Next," you will see further options regarding the boat class and type of course.

Upon clicking the green tile, the game will take you to the race course. In this simple way, we have created a private "practice race" in the J/70 class, with an upwind and downwind course, which we will organize for 10 players. From now on, players can join the race in the "Custom Race" panel by entering the access code. The list on the left side of the screen indicates how many players have joined the race. You can initiate the start procedure by clicking the green "Start" button. If you don't want to compete but simply follow the progress of the race you organized, you can leave the race after starting the procedure.



Click on the square button in the top right corner and then click on the house icon. Your race will be visible in the list of ongoing races. You can only join the race as an observer.

Are you organizing a regatta? Remember to record the order of players at the finish line after each race.

### **4.3.5.** Custom race panel - How to participate in a race



To join a race with a code, access "Custom race" panel.

To participate in a race with a code, press the green "Play"-button displaying a lock Enter your code in the dialogue box and press the green tickmark.

To join a race without a code, access "Custom race" panel. Choose the race you wish to participate in on the left hand side.

## 5. VIRTUAL REGATTA OFFS HORE GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Virtual Regatta Offshore is an offshore racing game. The game is free to play with options to purchase in-game equipment to aid your races. You can access Virtual Regatta Offshore, either through a computer, smart phone or tablet.

#### **Requirements:**

a continuous internet connection.

#### **Recomendations:**

For a smooth and uninterrupted gaming experience: 4G, 5G or LTE internet connection. Unlike the Virtual Regatta Inshore game, you can comfortably play on any device.





DIRECT LINK





## 5. VIRTUAL REGATTA OFFSHORE

### **5.1.** Value

In Virtual Regatta Offshore game, you can take part in **long-distance races**, compete with **real-world players**, improve your navigational skills, diagnose weather phenomena, and use them to gain miles.



## **5. VIRTUAL REGATTA OFFSHORE**

### 5.2. Game panel navigation





The registration in the game is similar to the Inshore platform.

The main game interface consists of tiles representing individual races. The explanation for each race can be found by clicking on the "i" icon in the top right corner of the tile. If you are new to the game, we encourage you to use the tutorial. Simply click on the question mark icon available in the bottom left corner of the screen. By clicking on the icon in the top left corner of the screen, you can find out your ranking in the game. The section for settings and subscriptions can be found in the top right corner of the screen.

The game allows you to organize your own races where yachts can adopt the colors of your club, federation, or company.

## 6. HOSTING EVENTS

### Define the Purpose & Goals.

**Determine** the purpose of the event and set clear goals that you want to achieve.

### Set a Budget.

**Establish** a budget for the event, taking into account all potential expenses.

To successfully organize an esailing event, several aspects need to be taken into consideration. Think about what you want to achieve with your event and go through the following points.

## Select the Date and Venue:

**Choose** a suitable date and location for the event, ensuring it aligns with your audience's availability and preferences.

### Create a Timeline:

**Develop** a detailed timeline that includes all the necessary tasks leading up to and during the event.

### Plan the Program:

**Create** an engaging program that includes speakers, activities, and entertainment relevant to your event's theme.

### Marketing and Promotion:

**Develop** a marketing strategy to promote your event and reach your target audience effectively.

## Registration and Ticketing:

**Set up** a registration system for attendees and determine ticket prices if applicable.

### Technology and Equipment:

**Ensure** you have the necessary technology and equipment to support your event, especially if it's a virtual or hybrid event.

### Event Staffing:

**Recruit and train** event staff, volunteers, and any necessary technical support.

### Consider Safety & Security:

**Implement** safety measures and ensure compliance with any relevant regulations to keep participants safe.

### Feedback and Evaluation:

**Plan** to collect feedback from participants to evaluate the event's success and make improvements for future events.

Based on the aspect above, choose the type of event. Decide whether you want to organize a live, virtual, or hybrid event based on your target audience and objectives.we distinguish three categories of events, that will help you focus your actions on a specific goal from the start.

## 6. HOSTING EVENTS

### 6.1. Live Event

#### This is a type of event that takes place

in a specific location. The obvious advantage of live events is that participants meet in person, leaving a lasting impression among attendees. Such interactions can lead to direct contacts and collaborations. People participating in live events often feel honored to be part of such an event. Live events are typically time-consuming and costly endeavors. When considering organizing a live event, we should consider aspects such as location, event duration, transportation costs, and participant accommodation.

#### In summary:

Live events are a great solution if you want to combine esailing with traditional sailing activities and create an unforgettable experience. However, they come with high costs and a limited audience.



#### **6.1.1.** Inviting Your participants

- You will need to **contact** them to find out their availability for attending a Live Event.
- You will need to ask to see **identification** to ensure they are in fact the defined players.
- It's useful to ask for a **small biography** from each player to support your communications, especially if perhaps they have sailing experience.
- It's important to define ahead of time, and communicate this to the invited players, what **device/computer** they will use at the Live Event.
- It's useful to provide a document all about 'Attending the Live Event' - so that all players have the same information about what to expect, how to register, where to go, travel arrangements, expenses, what to wear etc. Specify the **platform through which you will communicate** with the participants. We recommend using applications Discord or WhatsApp.
- Ensure access to all the **necessary documents**, such as Notice of Race, Virtual Racing Rules, Protest Procedures and Penalty Guidelines.



### 6.1.2. What is needed for a Live Event?

A space suitable for public viewing of a Live Event with a stage and big screen - this could be at a pre-existing event on a central stage, or at a dedicated eSailing event where a stage is created. A robust sound and lighting plan - this can make or break a show, and dynamic lighting can really add to the atmosphere. A device or computer per player - we recommend iPads because the app can be launched and locked so the game is the only activity available. (With a desktop computer, it's easy to close the game browser and open another.) Access to power for all players. Although devices should all be charged, always ensure the access is there for any unexpected situations during a live show. A table / lectern / station for each player - we recommend a standing height for players on stage. You might want to brand each lectern with the name of the player. Participants may also be asked to bring their own **material** but be aware that this can cause challenges, with some players wanting to bring 26inch computers or equivalent. You can also provide Your devices as the only to be used. A Backstage Computer and operator connected to the big screen (screen share). A strong network connection - all terminals must be connected to the internet. Presenter(s) / Commentator(s),

It is useful to have a **Race Officer** (RO) who will be responsible for conducting the races. The RO is a manager on the water, who will oversee everything on the entire race course.

- Your time is priceless. Use reliable **software for quick point calculations**, as you have limited time between races. We recommend utilizing ready-made platforms like sailranks.com, but you can also create your own spreadsheet.
- For live camera playback, consider **fixed cameras** on players, commentators and audience, as well as a roaming camera for other angles / over the shoulder player shots. If you plan to stream online your Live Event, we suggest checking you have **the ability to record in HD** whilst always streaming at a lower resolution. Ensure you have the ability to simultaneously record the show, so that if there are issues with the live stream, you will still have the HD content for use after. An internet upload speed of 20Mbps is typically ok for streaming in a lower definition. An upload speed of 50Mbps is required for HD streaming.
- **Live video streaming software** You can create professional live productions with affordable live streaming software like vMix, YouTube, Twitch, Vimeo and Facebook. These platforms allows You to produce, record and stream from 1PC.
- If you have the necessary resources, you can hire a **production partner** who will handle the event.

### 6.1.3. Find inspiration from other eSports

- To maximize views and interactions, plan the event not to interfere with on-water action. Carefully **plan** the pre and post commentary schedule.
- The esailing event can precede and promote the main event, attracting people outside the esports community. We encourage **promoting** sailing activities during breaks between races.
- Ensure a **professional appearance** for commentators, players, and event branding. invite active sailors to comment on the event. The presence of a well-known sailor will enhance interest to the event.
- **Prizes don't have to be expensive.** Presenting the prizes in the form of checks also adds to the attractiveness of the closing ceremony. Consider providing on-water experience as prizes.
- Esailing is a relatively young esports discipline, but inspiration can be sought from **other sports**. Get in touch with local esports companies, and you might gain valuable insights or start an interesting collaboration.



#### 6.1.4 Running the Live Event

Each player joins the race using the predefined **password**.

**Backstage Computer** also joins the race using the predefined password and then can control various aspects from 'spectator mode'.

#### Players click on **PLAY**.

Backstage Computer waits for all the players to be in the 'room', then initiates the race start using the **«START»** button that appears on its interface.

#### The race is launched.

Backstage Computer, from 'spectator mode', can control the 'game camera' changing what spectators see of the race. i.e.. They can move the camera, zoom in and zoom out from a boat to another etc. If the Backstage Computer doesn't adjust the camera to follow the racing, the spectator point of view will be fixed which is not as exciting.

The Backstage Computer controls the regattas directly from the game 'spectator mode'. There is no need to have any special back- end access - it is simply an identified account that is given rights to launch a race. Everyone can access the 'spectator mode', but only this identified user will have a «START» button displayed on the screen. One click on this button launches a race.



#### 6.1.5. Big screen viewing

Working with your screen provider / production partner to plan the 'screen show' will allow you to create a more dynamic experience for your audience. Speak to them about **split screen viewing and picture-in-picture** allowing your audience to see the in-game play whilst also watching live playback of the players on stage or **live playback of your presenter/commentator**.

Consider the graphics required to 'frame' and **'brand' your show in the right way**. Examples below of screen graphics planning for large LED. The yellow dotted line indicated the 16:9 view that online viewers of the Live Stream can see. The full 3:1 LED screen indicates what the audience in the venue can see.





### **6.1.6.** On-event game zone

- To support your Live Event and encourage participation, you might want to consider having an eSailing games zone running throughout your event. This could be in a dedicated eSailing tent or stand.
- We recommend devices fixed into playing stations so that they are secure and **members of the public** can try the game without the need for a member of your team to supervise.
- Members of the public can complete the sailing school or **join challenges** that are live in the game. Players in the tent/at the stand can play against each other in private races.
- Utilize virtual reality. Recording actions with a 360-degree camera and transferring them to a VR device will show participants what sailing looks like from a first-person perspective. If you have VR goggles, check out the platform: https://www.trim-on.com





## 6. HOSTING EVENTS

## **6.2.** Virtual Event

Virtual events take place online. Participants can join from anywhere in the world, with the only requirement being an internet connection. Virtual events require fewer resources. When organizing a virtual event, we limit the time, finances, and number of people involved. Virtual events are targeted towards younger individuals who are comfortable navigating virtual interfaces. They allow for easy participant interaction, a wide reach of attendees and audience without incurring additional costs. Building connections during virtual events can be challenging, and virtual events require participants and the audience to spend extended periods of time in front of a device screen.

#### In summary:

Virtual events are cost-effective events with the potential for generating extensive reach. The only requirement for participants and the audience is an internet connection. Communication with participants is straightforward, and the platforms used provide various statistics that are useful for planning future initiatives.



#### 6.2.1. Inviting Your participants

You will need to **contact** them to find out their availability for attending a Virtual Event. The remaining important steps have been presented in the Live Events section. You can freely select steps to tailor the event to your needs.

For online events, the key point is to **indicate the platform** through which you will communicate with the players. We recommend using the Discord platform, which allows for simple and clear management of the organized virtual event.



#### 6.2.2. What is needed for a Virtual Event?

A studio space suitable for online streaming with a wellarranged background. The space should be well-lit, focusing attention on the commentators. It's useful to have a screen on the background to present a needed content. For live camera playback, consider fixed cameras commentators. To ensure clear and uninterrupted sound, each commentator should have an independent microphone.

**Broadcast director.** This is a person handling the event broadcast. They have appropriate software that manages the online stream view and selects the content presented between the studio, gameplay, scoreboard, and sponsor spots.

Presenter(s) / Commentator(s),

A strong network connection - an upload speed of 50Mbps is required for HD streaming.

**Live video streaming software** - You can create professional live productions with affordable live streaming software like vMix, YouTube, Twitch, Vimeo and Facebook. These platforms allows You to produce, record and stream from 1PC.

**Backstage computer and race technician**, responsible for all activities related to the course of the competition and communication with the players. After the race starts, the technician observes the regatta course in spectator mode. Their screen can be used for broadcasting by the operator. Additionally, the technician is responsible for recording the finish table and calculating points between races.

As always, is useful to have a **Race Officer (RO**) who will be responsible for conducting the races. The RO is a manager on the water, who will oversee everything on the entire race course.

Your time is priceless. Use **reliable software for quick point calculations**. We recommend utilizing ready-made platforms like sailranks.com, but you can also create your own spreadsheet.

If you have the necessary resources, you can hire a **production partner** who will handle the event.

### **6.2.3.** Find inspiration from other eSports

#### To learn more, **check out the** Live Event section.

To increase participants' interest, **align your activities** with the sailing season.

Utilize eSailing as a tool to develop sailing skills when weather conditions don't permit. eSailing can serve as a **preseason warm-up**.



## 6. HOSTING EVENTS

### 6.3. Hybrid event

Hybrid events allow for any proportion of live and virtual components. They are a solution when participants or the audience are a mixed group and the event allows for both remote and in-person participation. With hybrid events, we can manage the budget on the go and transfer the most costly elements to the online sphere. Through this type of event, we can conduct a tangible event with unlimited reach. Organizing hybrid events can be time-consuming.

#### In summary:

A hybrid event enables the combination of live and virtual event elements. This solution is suitable for a diverse audience and when, in addition to broad reach, we want to deliver tangible experiences.



## 7. SUMMARY

Using the Virtual Regatta platform contributes to the increase in interest in esailing and sailing.

This handbook has been created **to provide useful tools** for sailing federations, sports and entities that want to expand their offerings and propose a new, attractive form of promotion. In this document, we focused on creating a game instruction and organizing races.

An important aspect was providing a **detailed description** of the Virtual Regatta Sailing School section, which holds significant educational value. In the second part of the document, we presented **topics useful for event organization**.

## () Remember

to use the above tools it is essential to stay organized, flexible, and prepared for unexpected challenges that may arise during the planning and execution process.



## **PARTNERS**















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