Royal Corinthian Yacht Club Ltd

RCYC Club Policy on the Use of Club Cannons

There are three Club cannons but only the two polished steel cannons are in use. The old cannon is not currently used.

Cannon Use.

Stuart Munro (the 'Licence Holder') currently holds the Firearms Licence under which the club cannons are used. Stuart is authorised by the club and he may in turn authorise other suitable persons to also use the cannons, e.g. race officers, start box crew and the club manager.

The Cannons are only to be used for: the starting and finishing of races; for the start of the one-minute silence on Remembrance Day; at 6.00pm on each day of Burnham Week; and on any other occasion deemed appropriate by the Licence Holder.

The rules of usage are as follows:

1. The cannons shall only be fired from the Eastern side of the Race Box balcony, ensuring they are both secured to the balcony balustrade. The Licence Holder may authorise their use from other locations, if safe, e.g. from the deck of a Committee Boat or another balcony of the club;
2. Only use the club's blank cartridges provided which are specifically for yacht club cannon in the cannons. They are in the steel storage box in the basement (see below);
3. To remove a fired blank cartridge from the cannon, make sure the breach is open and remains so when removing. Use of a ramrod to push out a spent cartridge should be done carefully.
4. If a cartridge fails to fire, remove it carefully from the cannon and dispose of it environmentally and carefully, as it could still be explosive;
5. Always wear ear protection when firing the cannons. Suitable ear protection for the user and those in the vicinity, are located in the Race Box;
6. Never point the cannon at a human being, an animal or an object. Blank Cartridges fire a blank wad a short distance from the cannon;
7. Never look down the barrel of a cannon unless you are absolutely sure there are no cartridges in it;
8. Be very careful when handling and transporting unfired blank cartridges. They can fire on their own if dropped in a particular way;
9. If the cannons are hot after use, let them cool down in the open until they are safe to store;
10. Always stand behind or slightly to one side of the cannon when firing to avoid any recoil;
11. Designate a firing area in advance of a cannon's use and make sure it is free from obstruction. Be aware blank cartridges fire a small wad and produce smoke;
12. If you notice any damage to a cannon, do not use it but immediately report to the Licence Holder;
13. No one under the age of 18 shall be authorised to fire the cannons;
14. No smoking or drinking alcohol within the vicinity of a cannon to be fired.
15. Advice the club office when a cannon is to be used, so as not to inconvenience other events that may be taking place at the club, e.g. weddings.
16. Do not inhale any smoke given off from a firing, it could be detrimental to health.

Cannon Storage.

The Cannons and all unfired blank cartridges shall be stored, when not in use, in the steel storage box on the floor of the club Racebox. Cannons should only be removed for firing or servicing.

Never store a loaded cannon.

When cannons or cartridges are stored in the basement storage box it shall be locked with the available key.

There are two keys to the storage box, one with the Licence Holder and one in the club safe. Access to these keys is restricted to the Licence Holder and those people authorised by the Licence Holder.

Always lock both doors to the Racebox when not in use.

Cannon Servicing.

Periodic servicing, cleaning and inspection is to be, carried out periodically, by the club

Risk Assessment.

There is a Risk Assessment for cannon use attached to this club Policy.

Licencing.

Club starting cannons are exempt from the prohibition of weapons under the Firearms Act 1968, however we still need a Firearms Licence to use them. As we are disposing of the starting shotgun, we will not need a Shotgun Certificate.

The Licence Holder has agreed with the Essex Police Deputy Firearms Licensing Manager & Explosive Liaison Officer, that the club can use the Club Cannons for the above stated purposes. Essex Police address: Firearms, Shotguns and Explosives Licensing (FSEL) Section, Essex Police Headquarters, PO Box 2, Springfield, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 6DA. Email: firearms@essex.police.uk

Should the cannons ever be stolen, the theft should immediately be reported to the Essex Police.

A copy of the Licence Holders, Firearms Licence and the cannon serial numbers are filed in the club office together with a copy of this policy.

Dated: 1st March 2025.