



DANA POINT YACHT CLUB

# OPENING DAY

TRADITIONS & PROTOCOLS





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Dana Point Yacht Club was founded in 1952, and every year in mid-May we have our Opening Day Ceremony. Part of the day's festivities include an annual Boat Parade in which Members are invited to participate in traditional or theme dress . . . that is both boat and crew. Boats in the parade all pass by the Club Review Boat for salute and review by the Flag Officers and Staff Commodores on board. Following the morning boat parade, Members and guests are invited to the Opening Day Ceremony and then to lunch immediately following the ceremony.

DPYC also conducts an annual Bristol Boat competition leading up to Opening Day with awards given in both sail and power categories on Opening Day.

Opening Day is a long standing tradition in all yacht clubs, stemming from the re-opening of the yachting season after having been closed for the winter. In California, we are lucky to be able to stay open all year. However, we are a yacht club and as part of the Southern California Yachting Association we follow the tradition of hosting an Opening Day. This is also a time for us to be proud to share our Club with visitors from other yacht clubs.

# PROPER DRESS AND SALUTING AT OPENING DAY

*By S/C David McMillin*

There always seems to be some confusion about proper dress for opening day, and especially the proper way to salute the American Flag and what to do during the singing of the National Anthem. Although Dana Point Yacht Club is a fairly informal club, many members really want to know and follow the traditions that are part of our yachting heritage. The following guidelines are taken from the Southern California Yachting Association Protocol Guidelines.

## Dress

First, some dress guidelines and definitions. In the yachting world, you are in “uniform” if you are wearing any of the several accepted types of dress.

**Traditional Blue Blazer** – Single or double breasted in navy blue. On blazers, the club “bullion” (please, no “patch”!) is worn on the left breast pocket 1" below the top of the pocket. Devices of office should be worn across the top of the pocket. Nametags should be worn on the right hand breast of the blazer in a position horizontal to the top of the pocket on the left breast. A white or light blue shirt may be worn with the blazer. Other colors or stripes are never worn with the blazer. The dress shirt may have an embroidered insignia of office or club initials over the left breast pocket. During the spring and summer months, it is traditional to wear white pants with the blazer. Same for women, except a white skirt may be worn instead of pants. Four-in-hand or bow ties may be worn with a blazer and should be black, navy blue or a yachting tie with the club burgee or other yachting insignia (e.g. U.S. Sailing or Blue Gavel). Black dress shoes are always appropriate; white shoes may be worn only with white pants.

**Summer Formal Pilot Shirt** – In recent years, the white “pilot” shirt has become popular for summer and is frequently worn in lieu of a blazer for opening day. It is worn tieless with shoulder boards designating rank and club initials embroidered over the left breast pocket. A nametag may be worn on the top lining of the right pocket. White pants or shorts are worn with the pilot shirt. If shorts are chosen, they should be worn with white knee length socks and white shoes. The shoulder boards are “Old Glory blue” (never black) with the office designation in gold or silver. **Note:** The pilot shirt is never worn with a blazer.

**Other Styles** – Some yacht clubs wear the double-breasted naval service coat in black with appropriate sleeve insignia and black buttons, together with matching black pants; but they have not been used at Dana Point Yacht Club because they are regarded as overly formal.

**Caps** – The traditional naval style service cap, which includes a suitable frame to ensure shape retention, is the “uniform” style of headgear. This is known as “service cover”. For Opening Day when worn with blazer and white pants, the cap should be white with black visor and should have an emblem, which denotes the club.

**Important:** Gold embroidery, i.e. “scrambled eggs” or other decoration on a cap’s visor is entirely incorrect, improper and inappropriate. These caps are never worn with the summer formal pilot shirt. Baseball style caps may be worn, but are not considered “service cover.”

## Saluting

**Presentation of Colors** – When a color guard is presenting the national colors (American Flag) salutes are made as follows:

**Service Caps** – When in uniform and wearing a service cap, stand and hand salute with straight wrist with hand brought sharply to the bill of the cap when colors pass or flag is being raised. Hold salute until colors are presented or flag reaches top of hoist.

**Informal Cover and No Cover** – Men remove cover and place right hand over heart as colors pass or flag is hoisted and hold until colors are presented or fully raised. Women would not remove headgear, but would place their right hand over their heart.

**National Anthem** – During the playing or singing of the national anthem, which may or may not coincide with the hoisting of the national flag, join in the singing, raise hand salute if properly covered (as above). Men in informal headgear should remove same and place right hand over their heart. Women would not remove headgear, but would place right hand over their heart. These actions should occur from first to final note.

**Pledge of Allegiance** – Rise, hand salute or place right hand over heart, as appropriate to dress (see above) and join in reciting the pledge.

**Blessings or Moments of Silence for Departed** – Rise unless directed otherwise by the speaker. If in uniform and service cover, remove cap and place under left arm, bow head and bring hands together. If in informal cover you may follow the above procedure also. Those not covered should just bring their hands together. Women would not remove covers or headgear.

**Introductions** – If you are introduced and in uniform and service cover, rise, salute and hold salute until it is returned or you are recognized and then be seated. If in informal cover or uncovered, rise and at head level gently wave hand until recognized and then be seated.

## DRESS SHIP!

*By S/C Dick Holmes*

As far back as the 7th century, movable items on board a ship, such as stores and rigging, were termed “apparel”. During the 9th and 10th centuries, the terms “clothing” and “apparel” became synonymous and were used to refer exclusively to the rigging. Thus the term “dressing ship” came to mean the placing of flags, bunting or other items of cloth on the rigging.



The custom of dressing ships for festive occasions dates back to the early days of sailing ships. When warships returned from battle, their captains would dress ship to signal their victories. The more flags, the bigger the victory. Eventually, navies developed sets of regulations about when and how to dress ship for ceremonial occasions.

Since our Opening Day qualifies as a ceremonial occasion, it is proper for us to dress ship to celebrate the day. Although ships are not normally dressed while under way, the unit commander can authorize ships to carry their dress flags during a parade. To honor the day, the DPYC Commodore gives his authorization for the fleet to carry their colors while participating in the parade.

The naval regulations for dressing ship eventually evolved to include a recommended sequence of signal flags. The sequence is based on a harmonious color scheme and has no meaning in terms of the letters or numerals represented by the flags. The recommended sequence is: AB2, UJ1, KE3, GH6, IV5, FL4, DM7, PO 3rd Repeater, RN 1st Repeater, ST Zero, CX9, WQ8, ZY 2nd Repeater.

Flags are flown beginning with “A” at the forward waterline, over the stem and the top of the mast, to the stern and finally to the waterline aft. Properly the ends are weighted with a champagne bottle at the bow and a shackle at the aft end.

So dust off your flags, get your champagne bottle and let’s make DPYC’s Opening Day a colorful, memorable occasion!

***See you on the water all dressed up!***

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Boat Parade questions should be directed to our Fleet Captain and Bristol Boat Competition questions to the Port Captain. Questions on dress and protocol should be directed to our Parliamentarian & Historian.

