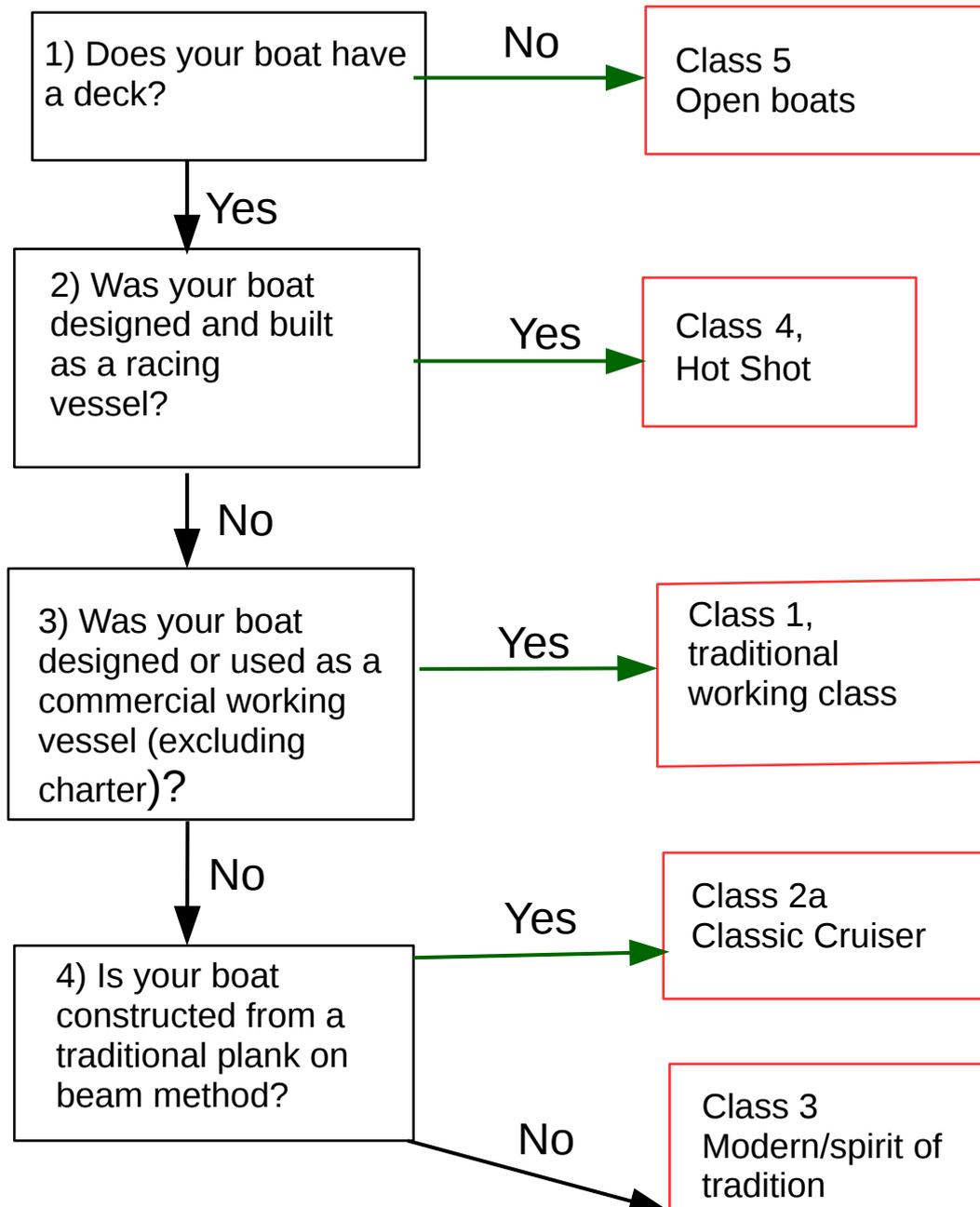


Racing classes of the East Coast Gaffers

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The East Coast gaffers use the following flow chart to work out what class to put each boat in when racing in the East Coast Race, held annually (currently at Brightlingsea). It may also be used in other races if there is a large turnout. Start with question one and work through to find out where your boat belongs.



There are boats that can fit in more than one category, and obvious areas of overlap, which means a possibility of confusion for some boats, so owners uncertain where their boats belong should get in touch with the race organiser .

The classes are further defined as follows.

Class 1: Traditional working boats, which include gaff rigged boats with fishing numbers (whether originally made for fishing or not), and all gaff rigged boats that have provided employment for commercial gain, (e.g. cargo boats, pilot cutters, and police boats) excluding boats built for charter.

Class 2: Classic Yachts to include all boats built using traditional methods and materials, i.e. built of wood planks on frames, and designed primarily for cruising. These include new build replicas such as the Luke Powell pilot cutters.

Bermudan rigged yachts form a sub class within this group. All such boats intending to race must fit the construction criteria above.

Class 3: Spirit of Tradition/modern are **all** gaff rigged cruising yachts built using modern designs or materials (GRP, concrete, plywood, strip plank/epoxy). This includes Heards and other GRP Falmouth working boats, as well as modern designs, such as cabin variety Memory 19s, Cape Cutters, Cornish Crabbers/shrimpers/pilot cutters, and *Kite* and her sister ships.

Class 4: Hot Shots are gaff rigged Dayboats designed and built primarily for racing. *e.g. ECODs, broads boats, Dirty Girty*. These are expected to be decked or half decked and over 18' stem to stern on the waterline.

Class 5 These are shallow draft open boats, under 20' on deck, designed for sailing in sheltered waters and include smacks boats, wrinkle brigs, and whalers. These are not suitable to compete in the main East Coast Race.

The first four classes are eligible to compete in the main East Coast Race and other OGA off shore races, while Class 5 are expected at events such as the Tollesbury Rally and Swallows & Amazons.

Boats that find themselves uncomfortable in their class after their initial placement will be allowed to appeal to the committee after their first event, and ask to change class. This will be allowed ONCE per boat if judged appropriate.

In smaller events the classes may be amalgamated and the handicap system used as the main "leveller" of the fleet. Those used to racing with the East Coast Gaffers may not notice any changes, and wonder what the fuss it about!

There are major size differences within the classes, which will require the use of handicaps; getting those sorted is the job of the handicap committee.