

WHITSTABLE YACHT CLUB

Founded 1902

Affiliated RYA

SAILING INSTRUCTIONS FOR WYC CLUB RACES

Updated 10 August 2026

1. RULES

- 1.1. The racing shall be governed by *The Racing Rules of Sailing* (RRS) 2025-2028, the prescriptions of the Royal Yachting Association (RYA), the appropriate class rules, Canterbury City Council Water Safety Rules and these Sailing Instructions. In the event of conflict these Sailing Instructions shall prevail.

2. ENTRIES

- 2.1. **Eligibility and entry:** Members of Whitstable Yacht Club may take part in club races and series of races organised by the club. Visitors who are members of an RYA recognised sailing club and are signed in to the WYC visitors book may take part but will not be scored in club series. Entrants shall complete the Declaration (signing on) sheet at the WYC course board on the veranda railing before going afloat to race and are required to sign in after coming ashore. An entry for a series shall be the boat and one sailor, who must sail on the boat for every race as helm or crew to be awarded an entry for those races.
- 2.2. **Entry fees:** There are no fees for racing in club series. Entry fees will be charged for the RNLi pursuit race, all open meetings and Whitstable Week.
- 2.3. **Insurance cover:** Each participating boat shall be insured with valid third-party liability insurance with a minimum cover of £3,000,000 per incident or the equivalent.

3. SAFETY

- 3.1. **Personal responsibility:** Neither the provision of support boats and crews nor the decision of a Race Officer to start or continue a race shall absolve a boat of the personal responsibilities defined in RRS Fundamental Rules 1 and 3.
- 3.2. **Personal buoyancy:** Personal Floatation Devices (PFD) must be worn by competitors at all times when afloat. Wet suits and dry suits are not personal buoyancy and will not satisfy this instruction.
- 3.3. **Shipping:** Boats shall always keep well clear of shipping wherever it may be.

4. NOTICES TO COMPETITORS

- 4.1. Notices to competitors will be posted on the Sailing Notice Board in the Sea Room at least one hour before the start of the first race affected and remain there as long as they are in effect.

- 4.2. Temporary notices relating to one day will be posted on the Course Board on the veranda railings at least thirty minutes before the first Class Warning Signal of the day.

5. CHANGES IN SAILING INSTRUCTIONS

- 5.1. Permanent changes to the Sailing Instructions will be posted on the Sailing Notice Board at least one hour before the start of the first race affected and remain there as long as they are in effect.
- 5.2. Temporary changes to the Sailing Instructions relating to one day will be posted on the Course Board on the veranda railings at least thirty minutes before the first Class Warning Signal of the day.

6. SIGNALS MADE ASHORE

- 6.1. Signals made ashore will be displayed at the clubhouse mast.

7. SCHEDULE OF RACES

- 7.1. **Series racing:** The schedule of races is shown in the Whitstable Yacht Club Handbook and website.
- 7.2. **Special events:** The schedule of races in special events will be displayed on the Sailing Notice Board, the Handbook and the club website.

8. CLASS FLAGS

- 8.1. For starting the class/fleet warning signals are:

Wanderer/Wayfarer	Flag W
All-in-Handicap	Flag G
Laser/Laser Radial	Flag Laser

- 8.2. Individual class/fleet flags for shortening races are:

Wanderer/Wayfarer	Flag W
All-in-Handicap	Flag G
Laser/Laser Radial	Flag Laser

9. GENERAL RECALLS

- 9.1. In the event of a General Recall the recalled classes will be restarted 3 minutes after the last scheduled class start.
- 9.2. If there are multiple recalls the recalled classes will be restarted in the sequence of their scheduled starts.
- 9.3. A recalled class preparatory signal will be displayed 3 minutes before the class restart.
- 9.4. Recalled restarts will not be given class/fleet warning signals.

10. RACING AREA

- 10.1. The racing area is in the Thames Estuary to the northwest of Whitstable Yacht Club.
- 10.2. The area of the oyster beds is a prohibited area which racing boats may not enter - it is designated an obstruction in accordance with RRS (Definitions) and is to be passed to seaward by all boats racing. Any boat entering the prohibited area, which is defined by the shore to the south and buoys and flags on the other boundaries, will be disqualified without a hearing. This alters RRS 63.1.

11. THE COURSE

- 11.1. **Course diagram:** The course diagram will be displayed on the Course Board on the veranda railings no later than thirty minutes before the first class warning signal. The order of mark rounding will also be written out in full and take precedence should the diagram differ.
- 11.2. **Changing the course**
- 11.2.1. After the start, should the course be changed, a new additional mark (a yellow or black inflatable ball) will be used. Any change of course will be signalled before the leading boat has begun the leg to the new mark, although the new mark may not then be in position. The new mark will be in position before the leading boat is adversely affected. The original mark will be lifted as soon as is practicable.
- 11.2.2. To signal a change of course, a Race Committee vessel near the mark preceding the new mark will display a red or green flag to indicate whether the new compass bearing is to port or starboard respectively of its previous bearing and will make repetitive sound signals. Any mark to be rounded after the new mark may be re-located, without additional signals, in order to maintain the original course configuration.

12. MARKS

- 12.1 The marks of the course will be described on the Course Board on the veranda railings.

13. STARTING

- 13.1. **Starting intervals:** Class races will be started at three minute intervals – this changes RRS 26.
- 13.2. **Class/fleet warning signals** (*Class flag*) will be displayed with one sound 6 minutes before Class starts.
- 13.3. **Class/fleet preparatory signals** (*Flag P*) will be displayed with one sound 3 minutes before Class starts.
- 13.4. **The normal class/fleet starting sequence** will be as shown in 8.1 above (two or three starts), with the first class/fleet starting at the time shown in the programme.

13.5. **Notwithstanding 13.4 above** the class/fleet starting times and sequence may be varied by instructions on the course board, excepting that no start shall be before the published time of the scheduled first start.

13.6. **Starting line**

13.6.1. **Club starting line:** The starting line will be a line projected seawards from the clubhouse mast through the inner transit pole (or IDM mark) and limited to seaward by the Outer Distance Mark (ODM). The ODM is not necessarily on the transit line.

13.6.2. **Committee boat starting line:** The starting line will be between a mast displaying an orange flag on the committee boat at the starboard end and a port-end starting mark **OR** between a mast displaying an orange flag on the committee boat at the port end and a starboard end mark. The starting mark is usually a black buoy or will be described in temporary instructions on the course board (see 4 above).

13.7. **Keeping clear:** Boats whose preparatory signal has not been made shall keep clear of the starting area and keep clear of boats whose preparatory signal has been made.

13.8. **Starting Time limitation:** A boat shall not start later than 4 minutes after her class/fleet starting signal.

14. **FINISHING**

14.1. **Club finishing line:** The finishing line will be the same definition as the start line for the class/fleet concerned, but courses may be defined which finish across the line in the opposite direction to the start.

14.2. **Committee boat finishing line:** The finishing line will be between a mast displaying a blue flag on a race committee boat and the nearby mark.

15. **TIME LIMIT**

15.1. The time limit for all club races will be one hour 30 minutes from the last class/fleet start. Boats failing to finish within the time limit will be scored as 'Did Not Finish'. In order to encourage inexperienced sailors to race and achieve a result, the Race Officer may award such competitors their positions when they last rounded an observed mark, rather than scoring them DNF under this rule.

15.2. At the discretion of the Race Officer, when a race has to be stopped due to lack of wind, positions and times taken on an earlier lap may be used.

16. **PROTESTS**

16.1. **Lodging of protests:** Protests and claims for redress shall be written on RYA Protest Forms available from the Race Hut and shall be delivered there within 45 minutes of the time of the last boat finishing the last race of the day.

- 16.2. **Protest hearings:** Protest hearings will be arranged by a member of the Sailing Committee and protests will be heard in the order of receipt as soon as possible. Hearings may be held at a later date.
- 16.3. **Reopening a hearing:** RRS 66.2 is changed by adding 'A party to the hearing may ask for a reopening no later than one hour after being informed of the decision made.
- 16.4. **Post-Race Penalty:** The Post-Race Penalty, Advisory Meeting and RYA Arbitration of the RYA Rules Disputes procedures shall apply (for information on the procedures, go to www.rya.org.uk/go/rulesdisputes). The outcome of an RYA Arbitration can be referred to a protest committee, but an arbitration cannot be reopened or appealed.

17. SCORING SYSTEM

- 17.1. The Low Point scoring system, RRS Appendix A4, will apply. For all club series races RRS A5.3 will apply i.e. a boat that did not start but was afloat at its class preparatory signal, did not finish, retired after finishing or was disqualified shall be scored points for the finishing place one more than the number of boats entered in that race. Any boat not competing in a race, or not afloat at its class preparatory signal, will score the number of entries in the series plus one. The number of races to count for series racing shall be half the number of races sailed plus one, rounded down. A boat shall not be awarded a prize unless it has started at least two races and finished at least one.

18. LOCAL VARIATIONS

- 18.1. **Canterbury City Council Water Safety Rules:** Attention is drawn to the CCC Byelaws and Rules displayed at the public slipway or available from Canterbury City Council offices by post.
- 18.2. **Car Parking:** No car shall park on the beach.
- 18.3. **Lifeboat obstruction:** No boat, trailer or any other obstruction shall be placed so as to impede the route from the RNLI Lifeboat Station to the water at any time.

19. RISK STATEMENT

- 19.1. RRS 3 states: 'The responsibility for a boat's decision to participate in a race or to continue to race is hers alone.' By participating in this event each competitor agrees and acknowledges that sailing is a potentially dangerous activity with inherent risks. These risks include strong winds and rough seas, sudden changes in weather, failure of equipment, boat handling errors, poor seamanship by other boats, loss of balance on an unstable platform and fatigue resulting in increased risk of injury. Inherent in the sport of sailing is the risk of permanent, catastrophic injury or death by drowning, trauma, hypothermia or other causes.