



Sovereign Harbour Yacht Club

SAILING INSTRUCTIONS 2026/7

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ORGANISING AUTHORITY



Sovereign Harbour Yacht Club

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1 DEFINITIONS

Article	A provision within this document; a reference to 'Article' will be accompanied by the Article Number
Documents Page	Website Library of Race and Safety Documents https://shyc.co.uk/racing-information
Organising club	Sovereign Harbour Yacht Club. https://shyc.co.uk
Results Page	Location of race results https://shyc.co.uk/racing-information/

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1. RULES

ALL COMPETITORS, TAKING PART IN ANY SHYC RACE, AGREE BY TAKING PART TO ADHERE TO THE CURRENT RACING RULES OF SAILING (RRS).

All series races will be classified as open races with entry for racing subject to acceptance by the Race Committee of SHYC at its absolute discretion, with all entrants being required to have current membership of an RYA affiliated club.

a. Racing will be governed by the rules as defined in:

- ◇ World Sailing; Racing Rules of Sailing (RRS):
<https://www.sailing.org/racingrules/>
- ◇ SHYC Sailing Instructions <https://shyc.co.uk/racing-information/>

Supported by the prescriptions of:

- ◇ Coastal and offshore regulations (OSR, cat3 and cat4)
See Keel and Rudder and Appendix C.
- ◇ IRC <https://ircrating.org/irc-rule/>
- ◇ Rules and Definitions: <https://IRC2025-Rule.pdf>
- ◇ **SHYC Club** Yacht Time Correction system

b. The above documents, i.e.: Annual Signing On Sheet, IRC Certificates, Completed and signed copy of the relevant OSR check lists for Cat 4, plus Cat 3 for Offshore races must be submitted to and acknowledged by the Race Committee prior to entering a race organised by SHYC and copies kept onboard whilst racing.

- ◇ Prior year rating certificates remain valid up to the end of the Frostbite Series only, unless superseded by a current year certificate in which case the new certificate will be used to calculate results from the date of receipt by the race committee.
- ◇ After sunset to sunrise the Racing Rules of Sailing (R.R.S.) Part 2 shall cease to be operative and are replaced by the current International Regulations for the Prevention of Collisions at Sea in their entirety.

c. The owner of a boat not meeting requirements of Offshore Special Regulations (Category 4) may submit an application to the Organising Authority requesting dispensation of Article 1.2c)(ii).

d. Each participating boat shall be insured for racing with third-party liability cover in the name of the Yacht, the person-in-charge and any surrogate where each person-in-charge or surrogate shall be insured with a minimum third-party liability cover of £3,000,000 per event or the equivalent. In event



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Insurance cover lapses or is withdrawn prior to the scheduled end date of a race, the boat shall not compete.

- e. IRC Rule 22.1.1 shall apply to all competing boats; 'bunk cushions may be removed; no compensating weight need be carried'. This changes IRC Rule 22.1.1. **NOTE: This is from Nov 1st March 1st inclusive. Unless the NOR states differently.**
- f. IRC Rule 22.4 is deleted and replaced by 'Subject to a decision by the person-in-charge and rules declared in the Sovereign Harbour Yacht Club Sailing Instructions, no restriction shall apply to the maximum number of crew that may sail aboard a boat. No restrictions on crew weight shall apply. This changes IRC Rule 22.4.
- g. Where safety rules of the above-named organisations conflict, the higher specification shall prevail.
- h. A boat's sail number shall remain consistent for all races unless a written request to change the boats sail number is approved by the Organising Authority.

2. NOTICES TO COMPETITORS

- a. Notices to competitors posted ashore will be displayed on the Racing Notice Board in SHYC.
- b. Notices to competitors will be notified via displaying the IC Flag Lima: served ashore, as per Article 4; or served at sea via the flag gantry of the race management vessel or via VHF channel 77 at sea if practical.

3. CHANGES TO SAILING INSTRUCTIONS

- a. Any change to the sailing instructions will be published:
 - i. **On the day preceding the race before 23:59hrs** : On the documents page of the SHYC website: <https://shyc.co.uk/racing-information/> or by VHF on the day of the race.
- b. RRS Rules changed by Articles of these sailing instructions are:
 - ◇ RRS Rule 26 changed by Article 11
 - ◇ RRS Preamble Part 4 changed by Article 22
 - ◇ RRS Rule 32.1 changed by Article 12

4. SIGNALS MADE ASHORE

- a. Signals made ashore may be displayed on the beach when practical.
- b. Any decision made ashore to postpone racing will be notified via VHF channel 77.
- c. Any decision made afloat to postpone racing may only be notified on VHF Channel 77 and no further signals unless the NOR states differently.



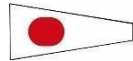
5. SCHEDULE OF RACES

- a. By completing the annual sign on form, a boat can enter any of the club races but would still be required to sign on by VHF channel 77 or 72 if committee boat, to "Suntrap" confirming number of persons on board and the boats sail number, no further sign-on is required.
- b. There will normally be one race on any day of club racing.
- c. Competing boats are required to sail within clear visible distance of the race start location (see Article 11) prior to the first start to confirm she has arrived at the start area and intends to compete, confirming their intention to race via VHF to 'Suntrap'.
- d. Pursuit races with staggered starts; competing boats awaiting their start time shall keep clear of those vessels on their individual start. (RRS 23.1). This would normally be to the leeward and non-course side of the start line.
- e. The person in charge is required to confirm with the race officer a decision to retire from racing on each occasion by hailing the race management (callsign Suntrap) via Marine Band VHF Radio channel 77 or 72, the race frequencies - See Article 22
- f. Where the number of boats in a single class, which are signed on and have arrived at the start area, at the time of the warning signal is 1 or less the race for the class shall not be run,
- g. Where the number of boats in all classes, which are signed on and have arrived at the start area, before the time of the warning signal is 1 or less the race for said class shall not be run, instead the race shall be postponed. (However, if 2 boats from different classes are present, e.g. 1 Club Handicap and 1 IRC both boats will race under Club Handicap only). Where a race is postponed race signal AP over IC Flag A shall apply.
- h. Races shall be run in sequential numeric order, including any postponed races; it shall be the responsibility of the Person-in-Charge to maintain awareness of the race schedule.
- i. Warning signals are scheduled as designated by RRS 26:

5 min class flag and / or One sound signal	= warning signal
4min P, I, Z, Z WITH I, U, or black flag / one sound	= preparatory
1min Preparatory flag removed and / or one long sound	= one min
0min Class flag removed and / or one sound	= starting signal

6. CLASS FLAGS

- a. Class Flags shall be:

Group 1	IRC 1	Numeral Pennant One	
	Club 1	Flag G	

- b. All competing boats shall prominently display the class flag or Pennant from their backstay or raised position above the transom.

7. RACING AREA

- a. The race area shall be the English Channel in the vicinity of Pevensey Bay for club races and the wider English Channel for offshore or longer races.

8. THE COURSES

- a. Courses may be formed of Fixed Special Purpose Buoys or Laid Inflatable Buoys or any combination of each.
- b. The default method of announcing the course to be sailed shall be via Marine Band VHF Radio channel 77 or 72 as specified in the NOR as the race frequency (see Article 23). The course to be sailed aligned to a specific race, **will be announced prior to the 5min** warning signal; the course announcement may be repeated. The timing of course announcement, or any repeat of the course announcement shall not provide grounds to seek redress.
- c. Where the race is to be started via a race management vessel:
- The course to be sailed may be displayed on a noticeboard along with an approximate compass bearing to the first mark and number of laps.
 - In changing the course instruction, attention of competing boats may be drawn via displaying IC Flag Lima.

9. MARKS

- a. Details of Fixed Special Purpose Buoys and Inflatable Marks can be found in NOR's.

10. DESIGNATED AREAS OF OBSTRUCTION

- a. A competing boat shall not make passage to the area between an inshore line marked by a row of small yellow buoys and the shoreside water line; this area is designated for swimming only.

11. THE START

- b. 11.1 The Race Officer may start a race from a Race Control vessel or a Shore Based Location:
 - I. **Race Control Vessel** - A race control vessel (if being used) at the Start, will announce her position and description. **She shall be anchored for both the starting sequence and the finish sequence of races.**
 - II. **Shore Based Station** –The location of the Shore Based Start shall be the Outfall Basket in the vicinity of the sewage works, to the west of Sovereign Harbour or Martello tower 64, (1st tower east of Sovereign harbour).
 - III. The shore based start line shall be a transit marked by either the Basket or two triangles positioned on the beach. The Outer Distance will be a yellow buoy or a substitute at the RO's discretion and announced to the race fleet prior to a course announcement.
- c. Signals made during the start sequence shall default to the use of VHF radio, with exception of when the race is started from any location other than the default race control vessel. The Race Officer may supersede flag signals with Verbal Announcements at the timed intervals defined in RRS Rule 26 via Marine Band VHF Radio on the Race Frequency channel 77. This changes RRS Rule 26.
- d. To alert competitors that a start sequence is about to begin:
 - I. If managing the race from a race control vessel, the orange flag will be displayed at least five minutes before a warning signal is made;
 - II. If managing the race from any other area / vessel, a verbal announcement will be made via Marine Band VHF Radio on the Race Frequency channel 77, at least five minutes before a warning signal is made.
- e. Competitors not under her preparatory signal shall keep clear of the starting area from time of the warning signal and avoid impeding those boats under start sequence. RRS 23.1
- f. Between the warning signal and the start signal, only one head sail or spinnaker to be used. As defined in RRS Rule 55.4.
- g. There shall be **no use of competitors VHF during the start sequence** (Unless there is an emergency situation).



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- h. If any part of a **boat's hull**, is on the course side of the starting line during the two minutes before her starting signal, and she is identified, the race officer will attempt to broadcast the sail number and/or name of the boat via Marine Band VHF Radio on the Race Frequency as a warning. Failure of the race officer to time accurately or make a broadcast shall not provide grounds to seek redress. As RRS Rule 30.3.
- i. A boat failing to start within 10 minutes after her starting signal shall be scored DNS without a hearing. This changes RRS Rules A5.

12. TIME LIMITS

- a. Time Limits shall be as designated by the relevant SHYC, NOR.
- b. **If no boat can make the start line in the time limit (10 Mins).** The race may be restarted. (e.g. in light airs a race may be started, then recalled and restarted).
- c. The race may be shortened for any reason considered appropriate by the Race Management Team. This changes RRS Rule 32.1.
- d. **Time Limits as in Article 12; the race officer will mark the finish of all boats completing the course and for 30mins after the first boat finishes, thereafter competitors will take their own finish time and submit them on the Race Management (WhatsApp). As RRS Rule 35 and RRS Appendices A4 and A5.**

13. THE FINISH

- a. The Race Officer may finish a race from a Race Control vessel or a Shore Based Location:
 - i. Race Control Vessel - the Organising Authority may use any vessel as a start / finish, Race Control Vessel and substitute the same. The vessel will make its presence and location clear prior to the start sequence as article 19. **This vessel shall be anchored during this procedure.**
 - ii. **Shore Based Station** –The location of the Shore Based finish line shall be the Outfall Basket in the vicinity of the sewage works, to the west of Sovereign Harbour or Martello tower 64, (1st tower east of Sovereign harbour).
 - iii. The finish line shall be a transit marked by the Basket or **one triangle** positioned on the beach and the Outer Distance mark, which will be a yellow buoy or a substitute at the RO's discretion and announced to the race fleet prior to a course announcement.
 - iv. Where a race is being finished and boats are requested to take their own time; the finish line will be the same as the start line. Being a transit of outfall and its ODM or tower 64 and the nominated ODM.

- b. Where adverse ambient conditions prevail, the person-in-charge of a competing boat is requested to notify the boat's impending arrival at the finish line via Marine Band VHF Radio channel 77 the Race Frequency (see Article 23).
- c. The Race Officer may confirm a boat as finished via a verbal announcement on Marine Band VHF Radio on the Race Frequency - Failure for the Race Officer to confirm a boat as Finished shall not provide grounds to seek redress.

14. PENALTY SYSTEM

- a. A boat may take a One-Turn Penalty when she:
 - i. may have broken one or more rules of Part 2 of RRS in an incident while racing;
 - ii. may have broken RRS rule 31.

15. PROTESTS AND REQUESTS FOR REDRESS

- a. Registered breaches of Rules, Incidents whilst racing and requests for Redress shall be resolved via the RYA procedural structure:

HEARING REQUESTS

- a The protest time limit is 120 minutes after the last boat [in that class] finishes the last race of the day or the race committee signals no more racing today, whichever is later. The time will be posted on the official notice board.
- b Hearing request forms are available from the race office at Sovereign Harbour Yacht Club.
- c Notices will be posted no later than 30 minutes after the protest time limit to inform competitors of hearings in which they are parties or named as witnesses. Hearings will be held in the protest room, located at SHYC, beginning at the time posted.
- d A list of boats that have been penalized for breaking RRS 42 under Appendix P will be posted. RRS 62.2(a) and 66.2(a) do not apply.

16. SCORING

- a. The **Low Point** scoring system shall be used, unless designated in the relevant NOR. The Organising Authority wish to draw the competitor's attention to the provisions of RRS Rule 90.3.
- b. A boat's finish time shall be corrected via applying a Time Correction Factor (TCF); a boat's TCF may be determined as follows:
 - i. All competing boats shall be scored under RYA Yacht Time correction factor for Cruisers (YTC as determined in the NOR or Club Handicap.
 - ii. Boats may be scored under IRC on satisfying Article 1.

- c. all races of the series shall count toward a final series score; a boats Series Score shall be determined as follows:
 - i. When a boat has completed 4 or less races her score shall be the total of her race scores;
 - ii. When a boat has completed from 5 to 6 races her score shall be the total of her race scores excluding her single worst score;
 - iii. When a boat has completed 7 or more races her score shall be the total of her race scores excluding her two worst scores.
- d. Regardless of provisional race results, race results are not deemed confirmed until official results are published.

17. REPLACEMENT OF CREW OR EQUIPMENT

- a. No authorisation is required for the substitution of crew or equipment.

18. EVENT ADVERTISING

- a. The Organising Authority will not require advertising materials to be displayed on competing boats.

19. OFFICIAL VESSELS

- a. Official vessels will be marked as follows:
 - i. The race management vessel at the Start shall announce on the race channel (as designated in the relevant NOR) her position and description. The Organising Authority may substitute another vessel as the race management vessel at a Start.
 - ii. Any race management vessel may display a BLUE Flag to signify the race management vessel is at the Finish.
 - iii. Any mark laying vessel will display IC Flag 'Bravo' at the Rear.

20. TRASH DISPOSAL

- a. Competitors are asked to respect the environment and the Sussex Coastline; please DO NOT dispose of trash at sea; trash may be disposed of in the waste transfer bins provided within Sovereign Harbour.

21. Prizes

- a. Prizes will be awarded to the first three boats in each Class as confirmed in official results.
- b. Pending outcome of any protest; a Prize Giving will be held after racing is complete and results have been finalised. This will be held at a time and venue TBA.

22. SAFETY REGULATIONS

- a. All boats entered in the SHYC races, shall comply with the following safety requirements defined by the NOR category : <https://www.sailing.org/inside-world-sailing/rules-regulations/offshore-special-regulations/>
 - i. The boat is fully found and seaworthy; this includes, both, Construction and Maintenance; shall be Maintained and Found such that the boat may be declared as Seaworthy at all times whilst under way; under circumstances whereby the condition of a boat ceases to be Seaworthy and/or found she shall retire from racing with immediate effect and make for safe haven.
 - ii. Each crew member aboard is (i) skilled/experienced sufficient to warrant as competent at sea under the prevailing conditions, and (ii) familiarised with the location of equipment aboard and how to use said equipment.
 - iii. The provisions of ISAF Cat4 or Cat3 Regulations shall apply. (as designated in the relevant NOR). <https://www.sailing.org/inside-world-sailing/rules-regulations/offshore-special-regulations/> . A list of safety equipment to be carried aboard can be found within the stated publication.
- b. A boat may be inspected for compliance with safety requirements at any time by any person appointed by the Organising Authority for that purpose.
- c. Any boat refusing, failing or unable to comply with any of the safety regulations shall not compete.
- d. All competing boats shall have completed the annual signing on form / declaration.
 - i. The boat has complied with the Rules as stated in the Notice of Race and the Sailing Instructions;

23 RADIO COMMUNICATION

- a. It shall remain the responsibility of the person-in-charge to ensure:
 - i. The yacht is able to maintain communication with the Race Management Team via Marine Band VHF Radio on the Race Frequency.
 - ii. A listening watch is maintained at all times whilst underway.
- b. Failure to receive transmitted instruction from the Race Officer shall not provide grounds to seek redress.
- c. The Race radio frequency shall default to Marine Band **VHF Channel 77 (or 72)** as designated in the relevant NOR.
- d. The Race Management Team call-sign shall be **"Sun Trap"**.
- e. General announcements to competitors shall be announced using the call-sign "Sovereign Harbour Race Fleet".
- f. Except in an emergency, a yacht shall neither make, nor receive, radio communications while racing that are not available to all yachts. This restriction also applies to mobile-telephone equipment.

24 USE OF ENGINE

All yachts shall compete in accordance with RRS 42

25 RACE OFFICER DUTIES

All members of SHYC who are racing entrants and their crews will be required to perform race officer duties as defined in the SHYC Race Officer's Guidance Notes at some time throughout the season.

- a. Race Officers may be drawn from the entrants participating in the Series and will be responsible for the proper control of the race under the guidance of the Series Officer if required.
- b. If a yacht does not compete in a race due to race officer duties, then she shall be awarded points equal to third place provided the race is valid for her class. Only one race-officer duty points will be awarded per Series, but this may include double points if running two races in a single race day.
- c. If the skipper of a boat competing in a Series is required to serve as Race Officer for a race but the boat still sails then the boat's score for that race shall be her actual result **up to and including 3rd** in place of the automatic third place given when the yacht chooses not to compete.

26 BEHAVIOUR

- a. The Person-in-Charge of a boat associated with the SHYC Race Fleet and/or sailing under the SHYC banner will be held responsible for the behaviour and actions of all crew at all times during the event.
- b. Any misbehaviour which is deemed likely to bring the name of the organising authority into disrepute will be subject of a protest; serious occurrences could result in the crew being barred from taking part in any future event associated with the organising club.

27 DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY

- a. The Organising Authority wishes to stress that Competing owners and crews are expected to observe and embrace the provisions of Section 21 'Safety Regulations' at all times whilst underway. The spirit of Yacht Racing requires that owners and/or crew shall not seek to make changes to design and fixed or portable equipment forming the boat where such changes remove safety features or may compromise Safety at sea. Any exploitation of the provisions of the Safety Regulations is discouraged; reported incidences of exploitation shall be subject to disciplinary hearing and may result in disqualification.
- b. Competitors participate in the SHYC races, entirely at their own risk. The organising authority will not accept liability for material damage or personal injury or death sustained in conjunction with or resulting from, prior to, during, or after any SHYC race.

SHYC offers a free one month membership to all visiting yacht crews. This gives you members' prices at the bar. Please ask the bar staff for a temporary membership number.

28 RISK STATEMENT (As article 24 and RRS Rule 3)

Sailing by its nature is an unpredictable sport and therefore involves an element of risk. Betting part in the event, each competitor, agrees and acknowledges that:

a, they are aware of the inherent element of risk involved in the sporting accept responsibility for the exposure of themselves, their crew and their boat to such inherent risks whilst taking in SHYC events.

b, they accept responsibility for the safety of themselves, their crew, their boat and their other property whether ashore or afloat;

c, they accept responsibility for any injury, damage or loss to the extent caused by their own actions or omissions;

d, their boat is in good order, equipped to sail in the event and they are fit to participate

e, the provision of a race management team, patrol boats if any, and other officials/ volunteers by the organisers, does not relieve them of their own responsibilities;

f, the provision of a patrol boat cover is limited to such assistance, particularly in extreme weather conditions, as can be practically provided in the circumstances;

g, they are responsible for ensuring that their boat is equipped and seaworthy so as to be able to face extremes of weather; that there is a crew sufficient in experience and fitness to withstand such weather; and that the safety equipment is properly maintained; stowed and in date and is familiar to the crew;

h, their boat is adequately insured against third party claims and seaworthy so as to be able to face extremes of weather;



Appendix A

Article 1.2 C (ii) Keel and Rudder inspections, as defined in the rule, are strongly recommended as laid out in Cat 3 from January 1st 2023.

Appendix B

<https://www.sailing.org/2025-2026-offshore>