



2026 Tri-Service Regatta

12 SEPTEMBER 2026

Sailing Instructions



Norfolk Naval Sailing Association¹

1. **Rules:** Races will be governed by the rules as defined in the *Racing Rules of Sailing* (referred to herein as **RRS**), these Sailing Instructions, and the Tri-Service Race Notice of Race 2026 (NOR26).
 - 1.1 **SAFETY:** The decision to race or continue racing or retire rests with an individual skipper.
 - 1.2 Boats must meet US Sailing Safety Equipment Requirements for Near Shore [Monohull-SER-2022.0-Nearshore.pdf](#)
 - 1.3 No crew limits apply.
2. **Schedule of Races:** The Tri-service Regatta date is Saturday, 12 September 2026. The scheduled time of the first warning signal is 1000 EDT.
3. **Notices to Competitors:** Copies of the notices to competitors, Sailing Instructions and any amendments will be posted on the **Official Notice Board**, located online at <https://norfolknavalsailing.org/>.
4. **Changes to Sailing Instructions:** Any change to the sailing instructions will be posted to the notice board before **2330, 11Sep 2026** and online thereafter.
 - 4.1 Changes required as a result of the Skipper's Meeting will be included in this posting; *skippers are responsible for complying with these amendments whether or not they attend the meeting.*
5. **Communications:** VHF Channel 72.
6. **Sail Numbers.** Boats in cruising class that do not have sail numbers will be assigned temporary sail numbers by the race organizing committee.
 - 6.1 These numbers must be carried on both sides of the main sail, but do not need to be carried on any other sail.
 - 6.2 These numbers may be made of masking, duct tape or similar removable material, and must be at least 12 inches high. This modifies RRS G1 and G2. Only the R/C may protest a breach of this rule.
 - 6.3 Numbers may be carried on the bow meeting criteria of 6.2 instead of the sail if desired.
7. **Classes and Class Flags**
 - 7.1 The R/C reserves the right to split Classes based on the number of entrants.
 - 7.2 Racing (**PHRF NS**)—Boats with 2026 PHRF of the Chesapeake Valid Ratings. 2HS allowed. Boats in this class are subject to PHRF of the Chesapeake Sail and Equipment policies, as well as Near-shore Category Safety criteria. Class Flags: **5 and 5 plus White Ribbon**
 - 7.3 Cruising—Boats without valid ratings, single HS. Boats are allowed two headsails only when changing sails. Staysails allowed on boats so configured. Boats will be assigned a courtesy rating which may not be appealed.
 - i) Maximum unpenalized whisker pole length is J and maximum unpenalized %LP is 155%. Class

¹ Serving as Organizational Authority

Ribbons: **CR1-GREEN**, **CR2-YELLOW**, **CR3-BLUE**.

7.4 All boats are required to fly their class flag or ribbon from their backstay. Boats without backstays shall fly their class flag from the starboard shroud. Only the R/C may protest a breach of this rule. This changes RRS 60.1.

8. **Check-In.** To be eligible to **START**, all boats must, prior to the first Fleet Warning Signal, pass close aboard the R/C with sail number visible (or hail their sail number) and receive explicit acknowledgement from the R/C. Boats that fail to check in shall be scored DNS.
7. **Starting Times:** Starts shall be in accordance with RRS 26. The Warning Signal scheduled for 1000L for the first Fleet identified below with rolling starts for subsequent Fleets.
- 7.1 In addition, the R/C will attempt to broadcast an "Attention" signal approximately 1 minute before the first warning, consisting of several short horn blasts and a VHF transmission.

8. **Starting Sequence and Class Flags / Ribbons:**

Fleet	Ratings (PHRF)	Class Flag
Racing – 1	Up to 150	# 5
Racing – 2	Over 150	#5 + White
Cruising – 1	Up to 179	Green
Cruising – 2	180 – 204	Yellow
Cruising – 3	Over 204	Blue

8.1 Based upon the number of entries, starts can be combined at the discretion of the R/C.

8.2 Final Fleet splits will be announced following completion of entries at the Skippers meeting and posted on the NNSA website and sent out via email to participant's Race Captains for distribution.

9. **Racing Area:** All races will be held in Willoughby Bay (aka Little Bay).
10. **Marks:**
- Start – Red Ball drop mark north of the R/C Boat, and approximately 200 yards south of Green Day Marker #11.
 - Alfa (A) – Bird Nesting Pole at the east end of Willoughby Bay
 - Bravo (B) – #5 Daymark at the west entrance channel to Willoughby Bay.
 - Charlie (C) – Yellow Ball drop mark located 20 boat lengths southwest of Daymark #7 at the North entrance channel to Willoughby Bay. Approx. coordinates are 36°58.080'N, 76°18.400'W.
 - Delta (D)- Large Pink drop mark located about 40 boat lengths southwest of the Bird Nesting Pole at approx. coordinates 36°57.26'N, 76°17.016'W.

10.1 **Mark Passing:** All marks will be passed to Starboard when rounding.

- 11 **Courses:** Courses will be signaled by a flag on the backstay (or prominent location) of the R/C Boat:

Flag	Start	Course	Around the Course
White	East	Start-A-D-B-C-A-D-B-C-Finish	Twice
Blue	West	Start-B-C-A-D-B-C-A-D-Finish	
White above Red	East	Start-A-D-B-C- Finish	Once
Blue above Red	West	Start-B-C-A-D Finish	

12. **The Starting Line and The Start:** It is anticipated (but not required) that except for the first fleet to start, subsequent Warning Signals will be made simultaneously with the previous class Start Signal. Flags on the R/C Boat govern. The starting line for all fleets will be between the Start Mark and the orange flag on the R/C Boat.
 - 12.1 The order of starts shall be posted on the official noticeboard. Expect Racing (NS-1 then NS-2) to start first followed by Cruising Class as divided, faster cruisers first.
 - 12.2 Individual Recalls. The R/C will attempt a hail to OCS boats on VHF. The hail is a courtesy: its timing, the sequence of boats recalled, or perceived lack of courtesy hail does not absolve a boat from the responsibility to correct a starting error and shall not be considered grounds for granting redress. This changes RRS 29.1 and 61.
13. **Line Restriction:** After starting and subsequently rounding the first mark of the course, boats shall not cross between the Start Mark and the R/C vessel until finishing. Boats in violation will return to the course side of the line, unwind with a single penalty turn and then continue racing. The restricted line is considered an obstruction.
14. **Shortening the Course:** After the starting signal, the R/C may shorten the course at any Mark for all classes by moving the committee boat to a position near the selected rounding mark and displaying Code Flag S. Finish will be between the adjacent mark and Flag S.
15. **The Finish:** The Finishing Line will be between the Start Mark and the orange flag on the R/C boat.
 - 15.1 In the event of a shortened race, the finish line will be between a course mark and the “S” flag displayed with Class Flag(s) of the affected Class(es) on the R/C boat finishing those classes. If no class flags are displayed, the course is shortened for all classes.
16. **Penalty System:** Except when required to retire by RRS 44.1, a boat infringing a rule of RRS Part 2 may take a penalty under RRS 44.2 (Two-Turns Penalty) or, as permitted by RRS 44.3(a), a Scoring Penalty of 20% of her points for that race (RRS 44.3). The Two-Turns Penalty is strongly recommended.
17. **Time Limit:**
 - 17.1 The time limit for all races is 1500L/3PM EDT. Boats **still racing** but not finished within the time limit will be scored DNF and awarded finishing credit (participation points only).
 - 17.2 If no boat of a Class has finished within the time limit, that Class’s race will be abandoned. This changes RRS 35.
 - 17.3 When a boat’s finish position in her Class may be easily determined, the R/C may finish her in place prior to the expiration of the time limit by advising her over VHF. This modifies RRS 35.
18. **Scoring.**
 - 18.1 Individual boat points. For club scoring all boats will be scored by corrected time and will be scored one point for each boat beaten.
 - 18.2 Additionally, boats earn “participation points” at the rate of ½ point for starting the race and ½ point for finishing the race (includes ZFP). Boats scored DNF retain participation points for starting only; disqualified boats (DSQ, OCS, BFD), boats retiring under RRS 44.1b, and boats scored DNS lose participation points.

18.3 Club points. Total of the club's individual boat scores. The club providing the R/C boat (if members') and PRO (if members) will be awarded an additional 2 points (1 point each).

18.4 In the event of a tie between clubs, the Racing NS top finishing boat will be awarded an additional 0.25 point to break the tie.

19. **Safety/Compliance with Government Restrictions:**

19.1 The line of pilings marking the security perimeter near the Naval Station side of Willoughby Bay (if present) is both a mark and an obstruction. Boats must stay out of these restricted zones at all times.

19.2 In support of the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel construction, there is a construction Safe Harbor located on the Northern edge of Willoughby Bay. The Southern edge of this restricted area is marked by buoys: Willoughby Bay Special Exclusion Buoy B (vic: 36 57 33.97N 76 17 19.37W and Willoughby Bay Special Exclusion Buoy C (vic: 36 57 28.6N 76 16 51.37W). Boats will remain south of this restricted area at all times and will be DSQ if entered.

19.3 Boats racing in or near a shipping channel shall give way to commercial and/or military vessels operating in the channel and are required to **KEEP CLEAR** of those vessels. Competitors shall take evasive action well in advance of any potentially dangerous situation. Communication directly with those vessels via VHF16 and/or VHF 13 is advised.

19.4 Any attempt by a competitor to exercise right of way over, to cross in close proximity to, or to interfere with the reasonable transit of the race area by commercial, military, or other vessels unable to respond readily or restricted in their ability to maneuver will be grounds for protest.

19.5 Should such a protest occur, the burden of proof is on the vessel allegedly interfering to show that she in no way interfered with that commercial /military vessel. Such protest may also be filed by a protest committee as a result of a report received from the offended vessel or local port authorities/pilots; the protest time limit is 48 hours after the time limit of the race.

19.6 Per RRS 42.3(i), if a dangerous situation develops, a boat may use her engine to avoid that situation. No penalty will be assessed, provided she does not gain a significant advantage in the race.

19.7 This instruction does not absolve any competitor from violating the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (IRPCS).

20. **Weather Cancellations:** In case of forecasted marginal weather, the decision to set the drop mark(s) and Start/Finish line shall be made by the R/C (R/C) not later than 0900.

20.1 Racing may be cancelled at any time (before or during the race) when weather conditions warrant, such as severe weather predicted during the time frame of our event to include (examples) observed lightning in the area, or steady winds of 22 knots or greater predicted or observed at the Willoughby Degaussing Station [[NDBC - Station WDSV2 \(noaa.gov\)](https://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/station.shtml)] and other sources of weather information.

20.2 This decision will be made based on the judgment of the R/C and the decision is not subject to request for redress.

20.3 Abandoning the race will be announced via VHF and while racing by a signal flag November and a series of three horn blasts.

21. **Protests and Request for Redress:**

21.1 A boat intending to protest shall inform the R/C upon finishing or retiring and identify the boat(s) being protested. This notification must be acknowledged by the R/C. Use of VHF Channel 72 authorized.

21.2 The protest time limit to file a written protest or request for redress is 90 expires at 1630 local. This changes RRS 60.3.

21.3 Documents may be filed until the expiration of the time limit at the NNSC Marina Lounge or by submitting via the online protest form located at: [US Sailing 2025-Hearing Request Form FINAL.pdf](#) to dull1492@verizon.com or 757-615-2985 as either pdf or image file format (e.g. jpeg, png).

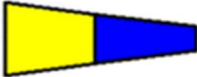
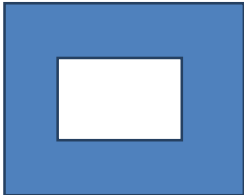
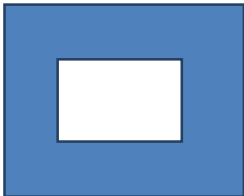
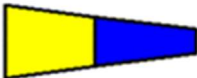
21.4 Protests and requests for redress will be heard by a Protest Committee appointed by the Organizing Authority (OA). Upon the filing of a protest or request for redress, the OA will coordinate with the parties and Protest Committee for scheduling.

21.5 RRS 60.4(a)(2) is changed as follows: *(2) if it alleges a breach of a rule of Part 2 or rule 31 and is from a boat that was not involved in, and did not see, the incident, or....*

22. **Disclaimer of Liability:** Competitors participate in the regatta entirely at their own risk. See Rule 4, Decision to Race. The organizing authority will not accept any liability for material damage or personal injury or death sustained in conjunction with or prior to, during, or after the regatta.

23. **Insurance:** Each participating boat shall be insured for racing with valid third-party liability insurance with a minimum cover of \$100,000 per event or the equivalent.

APPENDIX A – RRS 26 STARTING PROCEDURES

Warning	5-minutes to Start	Class Flag Up (NS Fleet Shown) 	Short Horn	
	4-minutes to Start	 Prep Flag Up	Short Horn	• Racing Rules in effect; • Motor out of gear or off; • Boats may protest rules infractions
	1-minute to Start	 Prep Flag Down	Long Horn	One Minute
Start	Start	 Class Flag Down Next Class Flag Up (If Applicable)	Short Horn	Start