OCC SAILING INSTRUCTIONS 2026/27 SEASON

Version 6 – Updated October 2024

1. GENERAL AUTHORITY

The Organising Authority is The Opua Cruising Club Inc

2. RULES

2.1 The event is governed by the rules as defined in The Racing Rules of Sailing.

2.2 SKIPPER'S RESPONSIBILITY

2.21 The safety of a vessel and her crew is the sole and inescapable responsibility of the skipper who must do their best to ensure that the vessel is fully sound, thoroughly seaworthy and manned by an experienced crew who are physically fit to face bad weather. The skipper must be satisfied as to the soundness of hull, spars, rigging, sails and all equipment. The skipper must ensure that all safety equipment is properly maintained and stowed and that the crew know where it is kept and be trained in its use.

2.22 The Maritime Transport Act 1994 states that the master of the vessel or skipper is at all times responsible for the safety of the vessel, the safety of those on board, discipline on board and for complying with all maritime rules, regulations and bylaws.

2.23 Neither the establishment of these safety regulations and their use by organising authorities, nor the inspection of a yacht under these regulations in any way limits or reduces the complete and unlimited responsibility of the skipper.

2.24 It is the sole and exclusive responsibility of the skipper of each yacht to decide whether to start or continue the race or voyage.

2.25 Skippers and crews - the Maritime Transport Act 1994 states that it is an offence to operate, maintain or carry out any other act involving any vessel or maritime product that creates an unnecessary risk or danger to persons or property.

2.3 SAFETY

2.31 Yachting New Zealand Safety Regulations - Part II, Category 5 shall apply.

2.32 For Trailer Boats & Sports Trailer Boats – Yachting New Zealand Safety Regulations Part V Category C shall apply.

2.33 For Sport Boats - Yachting New Zealand Safety Regulations Part VI and the NZ Sport Boats Association Rules, regulations and bylaws shall apply.

2.34 For Centreboard, Open Yachts and Sailboards, Yachting New Zealand Safety Regulations Part 1 and their respective Class Association Rules, regulations and bylaws will apply.

2.35 For Sports Multihulls Yachting New Zealand Safety Regulations Part I shall apply, unless the entrant supplies their own safety boat, in which case the Yachting New Zealand Safety Regulations Part VII will apply.

2.36 Safety and racing information is to be communicated on VHF Channel 77. Skippers are advised to always maintain a listening watch on VHF Channel 77 while racing.

2.2 CHANGES TO THE RACING RULES

The Rules will be modified in accordance with Rule 86 as follows:-

2.2.1 Rules of RRS Part 2 will be altered during the race between the hours of official sunset and sunrise to give precedence to the International Regulations for the Prevention of Collisions at Sea and Local Harbour Regulations will apply.

2.2.2 For any protests where only a rule of Part 2 is alleged to have been broken, an arbitration hearing will be offered prior to any formal hearing.

2.2.3 Rule 44.1 is changed so that the 720° turn is replaced by a 360° turn.

2.2.4 Rule 32 is amended by 8. Shortening Courses.

2.2.5 Rule 42.1 is amended by allowing the use of an engine while racing

a) **if the boat has run aground.**
b) **to avoid running aground.**
c) **to avoid a collision.**

The engine use must be logged, and a declaration made at the race office as soon as possible after finishing.
The race committee will decide what action will be taken. Breaches of this rule may only be protested by the race committee. This alters RRS 60.1 and 60.3

3. NOTICE TO COMPETITORS

Notices to Competitors will be posted on the Club notice board and will be available from the start box.

4. CHANGES TO SAILING INSTRUCTIONS

Any changes to the sailing instructions will be posted a minimum of 30 minutes prior to the race start.

5.0 ELIGIBILITY AND ENTRY

5.1 To be eligible to compete an entry form must be completed either manually or online.

5.2 To be eligible to compete in these events, each entrant boat shall have an owner or skipper who is a full financial member of OCC or a club recognised by the entrant's national authority.

5.3 A season entry fee as set by the club covers all club races. However, no fee is payable by entries from local clubs for weekend sponsored racing. Entries will be accepted by completing the entry form and forwarding the appropriate fee to the Opua Cruising Club Inc. PO Box 1 Opua 0200. The committee reserves the right to exclude results of boats that have not paid the appropriate entry fee.

6. COURSES

Courses will be notified by displaying on the start box wall a lettered board indicating division and the number to indicate the course. The selection of the course is the sole responsibility of the OOD. Course Sheets will be provided online advising race marks.

7. TIME LIMITS

7.1 Twilight Racing –Wednesday/Friday: The first boat must finish before 7:45 to constitute a race. Any boats finishing after 8:15 pm will be scored DNF.

7.2 Weekend Races: Any boat finishing after 5.00pm is to be marked DNF.

8. SHORTENED COURSES

The OOD may shorten the course, from any mark of the course. This will be done by VHF transmission on **Channel 77** by the OOD when the leading yachts are approaching a mark. After rounding/passing the mark, competitors should proceed directly to the finish line and cross it from the direction of the last mark.

Where a course contains a leg in which competitors pass through the finish line, the Race Officer may elect to shorten the course to finish at that point and shall indicate this decision by making two sound signals as the leading yacht approaches the finish line and by making a sound signal when each yacht then crosses the finish line.
Failure of sound signals will not be grounds for protest.

Shorten Course Note for Wednesday and Friday evening races: Some courses on the course sheet have marks underlined. If the first boat of each division (if more than one division) is not past the underlined mark within 1 hour from the start, proceed from the underlined mark directly to the finish after rounding/passing the mark.

9. RETIREMENTS

If a yacht retires from a race for any reason whatsoever, a serious attempt must be made to notify the OOD of its actions. The OOD is monitoring **Channel 77** during race times. –or email raceofficer@opuacruisingclub.co.nz

10. SCHEDULE OF RACES

Race series, race dates and scheduled start times advised and amended in the Club Calendar and may be amended by Notice of Race posted on Notice Board and/or the club website.

10.1 Week-end Racing

If week-end racing utilises an on-the-water start / finish, an amendment to these racing instructions will be posted on the Club Notice Board and/or the club website prior to the race.

11. START & FINISHING LINES – Club Start

11.1 Starting

a) The start line for all divisions is an imaginary transit line between an orange diamond marker above the window of the starter box and a marker mounted on the top of the northern post pole of the club pontoon/dinghy dock.

b) The start line transit length is limited by an outer distance mark (ODM). The ODM will be close to the line, but not necessarily on the line. Boats approaching the line to start or starting shall pass to the channel side of the ODM. If ODM is on course side (OCS), then 14.3 will apply.

c) If an inner distance marker (IDM) is laid off the dock, yachts in all divisions shall pass to the channel side of the IDM when starting. The IDM will be close to the line, but not necessarily on the line.

d) Any division that has not entered its start sequence must stay well clear of the division that is starting. In the start sequence period, boats in other divisions are expected to be in a position that avoids interfering with racing yachts.

11.2 FINISHING

a) The finish line is a line between the orange diamond marker above the window of the starter box and the ODM (not the transit).

b) After a finish to avoid interfering with yachts still racing, stay clear of the finish line.

c) Weekend Races – The leading boats MUST advise the Race Officer 30 minutes from the finish, on Channel **77** to ensure your finish times are recorded.

d) In the event of poor visibility, it is the responsibility of skippers to make the Race Officer aware of the presence and identity of the finishing yacht by whatever means is appropriate to the circumstances. Should a skipper suspect that the Race Officer is unaware for any reason of the identity and finish of a competing yacht, then it is the responsibility of the skipper to as accurately as possible time the finish and communicate that in a timely fashion to the Race Officer.

Note: The RSS definitions for Starting and Finishing have changed. It is now Hull only..

12. SCHEDULED START SEQUENCE

12.1 2026-2027 Season: 1 Division start

One Division Races

5-minute Warning Signal,	3 lights on
4-minute Preparatory Signal	2 lights on
1-minute Signal	1 Light on
START (advertised time, normally (18:00)	0 Lights on

12.2 Multiple Division start (if used)

The start sequence of a **2 or 3 division** race is as follows:
The club has an electronic timer, started according to the clock in the start box. Once started subsequent divisions will start at six minute intervals.

12.3 2026-2027 Season: Friday Night Mixed Fleet Mark Foy start

* **This start procedure is for the first boat only**
* **Please refer to the separate OCC Pursuit Race Instructions for the Mark Foy start instructions**

13. RECALLS

13.1 Single /Multiple Yachts

In the need of a recall the procedure will be as follows:
One light on accompanied by one sound will signify that an identifiable yacht or yachts are over the line and must return and start correctly. The light will remain on until all offending yachts have started correctly or one minute after the start whichever first occurs. The OOD will attempt to contact the Yachts in question on Channel 77

A yacht or yachts that do not return to start correctly will be scored OCS.

13.2 General Recall

Two lights on accompanied by two sound signals will signify that there is a General Recall, and all yachts must return for a new start. The lights will remain on for one minute. After another minute a new start sequence will commence.

A yacht or yachts that do not return to start correctly will be scored OCS.

Note: if 2 or more divisions are racing, the fleet that caused a general recall is the next fleet to start

14. RESTRICTED AREAS

14.1 All yachts when racing must pass on the channel side of all moorings west of the Start line. These individual moorings west of the start line are hereby defined as obstructions (but not a continuing obstruction).

14.2 All moorings to the east of the start line may be ignored (Waikare side). Yachts racing must give adequate room to any yacht in the proximity of moored or anchored boats, or other structures in the water. The clear intention is that we will race in open water, while accepting there are moorings and anchored boats around our racing area to the east of our start line.

14.3 All yachts, after starting, shall pass the ODM to the channel side when racing

15. DEFINITION OF COMPETITORS AND OF A RACE

15.0 Any properly entered yacht shall be a competitor for scoring purposes if it is in the vicinity of the starting area and crosses the starting line within the period of the start time and 15 minutes thereafter and makes a reasonable effort to complete the course.

15.1 For a race to be scored, there must be at least two competitors, irrespective of whether any finish the course.

16. SCORING

16.0 The low Point scoring system of Appendix A 4.1 will apply.

16.1 Appendix A9 will apply-Race scores in a series longer than a regatta:

For a series that is held over a period of time longer than a regatta, a boat that came to the starting area but did not *start,* did not *finish*, retired after *finishing* or was disqualified shall be scored points for the finishing place one more than the number of boats that came to the starting area. A boat that did not come to the starting area shall be scored points for the finishing place one more than the number of boats entered in the series.

16.2(a) When fewer than 4 races have been completed, a boat's series score will be the total of her race scores.

16.2(b) When 4 to 9 races have been completed, a boat's series score will be the total of her race scores, excluding her worst score.

16.2(c) When 10 or more races have been completed , a boats series score will be the total of her race scores excluding her two worst scores.

16.2(d) Sailors competing in recognised regattas may apply for average points for OCC events where dates clash. Approval will be granted at the discretion of the OCC Race Committee. Examples where this could apply would include, Auckland Regatta, offshore and coastal events and class regattas.

16.3 HANDICAPS

TCF Handicaps will be applied to the elapsed time. TCF handicaps will be periodically recalculated according to announced policies.

TCF Policy New Entries: In general, the starting TCF allocated to a new boat entering at OCC will be determined in the following order:

i. If the boat has a PHRF issued to it, the Inshore PHRF will be used for its first race.
ii. If no PHRF, then the class Base Inshore PHRF will be used if any available.
iii. If it has raced at another local club, then its results measured against other interclub boats may indicate its starting handicap
iv. If no information is available, a TCF factor will be applied after the race, that positions the boat roughly in the middle of the corrected time results for that first race at OCC.

It is expected at least 3 races will be required to indicate an appropriate handicap for a new entry if limited information is available. However, evident errors in handicaps or suspected manipulation will result in the handicap being amended at the Race Committee's sole discretion.

Automated TCF: If immediately after the race the provisional results are calculated for whatever reason using a TCF not determined by the automated system, the result will be amended to the automated TCF when the result is published. However, any prizes presented on the day will stand.

PHRF Series: A boat's most recent PHRF will be used for a series. As an interim measure, to encourage participation, if a boat had a PHRF for the previous season, this may be used until 31 December. After 31 December a current PHRF is required. If a PHRF is obtained or renewed prior to the end of a series, the boat will be included and the results will be updated for the entire series.

Modifications to original class/yacht designs:

Details of any alterations to a yacht's hull, sail plan, spars, engine, propeller, rudder, keel or ballast shall be notified in writing to the race committee/handicapper not less than 24 hours before the start of any race for the purpose of re-handicapping where necessary. YNZ to be advised of all modifications for PHRF handicaps. Failure to do so may render the yacht liable for disqualification from all races concerned.

17. RESTRICTED PARTICIPANT RACING

17.1 Women's Racing – The skipper must be a female and at least 50% of the people aboard must be female.

17.2 Two-handed Racing

17.21 Boats must be sailed with no more than two people aboard.

17.22 Yachts may use an autopilot or other self-steering device. This changes RRS 52.

18. SPINNAKERS

Spinnakers and/or gennakers may be used in all races, except those that are specified as "Two Sail No Extras Races". In a Two Sail No Extras Division Race, all headsails must be hanked onto the boats centreline.

19. RADIO COMMUNICATION

A boat shall neither make radio transmissions while racing nor receive radio communications not available to all boats. This restriction also applies to mobile telephones unless allowed in these sailing instructions. Race officers call on **Channel 77**

20. PRIZES

1st prize will be awarded where there are 3 or 4 boats in a division

1st & 2nd prizes will be awarded where there are 5, 6 or 7 boats in a division

1st, 2nd & 3rd prizes will be awarded where there are 8 or more boats in a division

The Rum Race winner is excluded from the lucky draw for second rum race prize, if any. A variety of prizes and awards may be made. These will be announced in the clubrooms. In the event of a protest not resolved prior to prize giving, provisional race results will be made and prizes withheld until final race results are posted.

21. INSURANCE

Each participating boat shall be insured with valid marine third-party liability insurance with a minimum cover of $1,000,000 for dinghies and a minimum of $5,000,000 for keelboats per incident or the equivalent. This should be extended to include racing cover. Remember your YNZ Membership card provides a special price on insurance

https://www.yachtingnz.org.nz/racing/insurance

22. PROTESTS AND REQUESTS FOR REDRESS

Protest requirements as per Rule 61 apply. The protest time limit per Rule 61.3 is 2 hours after the last boat to finish. Protest shall be in writing (including electronic email and TXT), identify the incident and the protestor and protestee as set down by Rule 61.2 . Should a protesting boat anticipate being unable to comply, they should notify the Race Committee or OOD. The protest committee shall extend the time if there is good reason to do so, but note OCC precedent 29/3/22 indicates it is unlikely to be extended. The target time frame for all protest hearings – heard within 14 days after lodged if possible.

23. DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY

Competitors participate entirely at their own risk. See RRS Rule 4, Decision to Race and YNZ Safety Regulations Rule Part 2 Rules 2.0 to 2.5 The Organizing Authority or Sponsors will not accept any liability for material damage or personal injury or death sustained in conjunction with, prior to, during or after the race or series. Owners shall accept full responsibility for the seaworthiness and safe navigation of their boats and the competence of their crews.

24. SAFETY OFFICER

A safety officer may be appointed by the club to inspect and classify yachts that enter races and must be allowed to inspect any vessel before or after a race. YACHTING NEW ZEALAND Safety Regulations 2021 – 2024 requirements for each race must be met and are the responsibility of the skipper.