

2025 SAILING INSTRUCTIONS | OFFICIAL PROGRAM GUIDE

# race week

July 21-25, 2025

BELLINGHAM



Tom Greetham and crew of *Distraction* (Melges 24) took the title of Overall Winner at Race Week in 2024. Greetham's crew included Alan Barnes, Laurie Anna Kaplan, Krak Arntson, and Carol Greetham.

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## Welcome to Race Week 2025!

We are all very pleased to have landed in a new venue as gorgeous as Bellingham Bay! With the incredible shoreside experience at Squalicum Harbor Marina, combined with the active sailboat racing community and resources in Bellingham – the stage is set for many years of new memories and traditions to build in beautiful Whatcom County!

History is also in the making this week, as Goslings Rum has created a unique signature cocktail for Race Week Bellingham 2025 called the Bellingham Bell that makes its debut right here!

It takes a village to produce an event like Race Week, so big thanks to our sponsors, event partners, race committee, staffers, volunteers, heroes, and of course our competitors who all work together to make the magic happen at Race Week!

Best wishes for a safe and memorable week ahead!

*Schelleen Rathkopf, Producer*

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## **SAILING INSTRUCTIONS**

### **1. RULES**

- 1.1 The event is governed by the rules as defined in *The Racing Rules of Sailing 2025-2028*
- 1.2 The following rules are changed:
  - 1.2.1 RRS 60.4(a)(2) is changed as follows: “if it is from a boat that alleges a breach of a rule of Part 2 or rule 31, and it is from a boat that was not involved in and did not see the incident, or”.
  - 1.2.2 RRS 34(b): Changed to read “substitute an object displaying flag M,” striking out “and make repetitive sound signals”.
  - 1.2.3 RRS V1 and V2 are in effect.
  - 1.2.4 RRS T2 is changed: “will” replaced by “may” in the first sentence.
  - 1.2.5 RRS 47: Trash shall include water balloons.
  - 1.2.6 Additional rule changes appear elsewhere in these Sailing Instructions.
- 1.3 US Sailing Prescriptions apply: <https://bit.ly/2025-Prescriptions>.
- 1.4 All boats must carry a working VHF radio and monitor Channel 72.
- 1.5 PHRF boats are governed by PHRF-NW class rules.
- 1.6 In case of conflict, these Sailing Instructions take precedence over the NOR, class rules, and PHRF-NW rules. This changes RRS 63.5 (c).

### **2. CHANGES TO SAILING INSTRUCTIONS**

- 2.1 Any change to the sailing instructions will be posted before 0900 on the day it will take effect, except that any change to the schedule of races will be posted by 1800 on the day before it takes effect.
- 2.2 Oral changes on the water will be signaled with code flags L over C and one sound. Competitors should come within hail of the RC vessel to receive instructions. Instructions will also be broadcast on VHF channel 72. As a courtesy they may be sent to the official WhatsApp group. (See SI 3.4 and 3.5)

### **3. COMMUNICATIONS WITH COMPETITORS**

- 3.1 On the water, the race committee intends to monitor and communicate with competitors via VHF radio on channel 72. Other than changes to the SIs under SI 2.2, these communications are courtesy only.
- 3.2 Notices are posted online at: <https://bit.ly/rwpnw2025> (“Notice Board” link, top of center column) and, as a courtesy, on a notice board at Gate 5 of the marina.
- 3.3 Regatta Office location:
  - 3.3.1 Sunday, July 20 and Friday, July 25 near the entrance inside of Bellingham Yacht Club.
  - 3.3.2 Monday, July 21 through Thursday, July 25 inside Fisherman’s Pavilion at the Race Week merchandise sales tent.
- 3.4 There will be a Race Week WhatsApp group for courtesy communications between the race committee and the fleet and spectators. Instructions for joining the group will be posted on the regatta website. All boats are encouraged to follow the official Race Week WhatsApp group.
- 3.5 As a courtesy, the WhatsApp group may reproduce official communications.
- 3.6 From the first warning signal until the end of the last race of the day, except in an emergency, a boat shall not make voice or data transmissions and shall not receive voice or data communication that is not available to all boats.

### **4. SIGNALS MADE ASHORE**

- 4.1 Signals will be displayed from a flagpole near Fisherman’s Pavilion and Gate 5.
- 4.2 AP flag ashore: “1 minute” is replaced with “not less than 60 minutes.” This changes the RRS-race signal AP.

### **5. SCHEDULE OF RACES**

- 5.1 There will be up to three races per day.
- 5.2 First warning signal: 1100 daily.
- 5.3 Subsequent races may follow immediately.
- 5.4 Friday, July 25: No warning signal after 1500.

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## **6. CLASS FLAGS**

6.1 Class flags will be numeral pennants. Class numbers will be published with class breaks.

## **7. RACING AREA**

7.1 The racing area is Bellingham Bay and adjacent waters.

7.2 The RC may relocate the racing area via L flag, VHF Channel 72, and repositioning.

## **8. COURSES AND MARKS**

8.1 Mark descriptions and racecourse layout are attached in Addendum A.

8.2 No later than the warning signal, the race committee signal vessel will display the courses to be sailed.

8.3 A course display will comprise one or more fleet numbers followed by a colon and the course designation.

8.4 The course designation will be a number or letter corresponding to a course described in Addendum B, which will be included in the Sailing Instructions distributed at regatta check-in and posted as an amendment to the Sailing Instructions.

8.5 Letters in the course descriptions in Addendum B indicate marks to be rounded to port unless otherwise specified.

8.6 Courses may finish at one of 2 possible locations:

8.6.1 "F" = finish at *Fox Trot*.

8.6.2 "E" = finish at the RC Signal Vessel.

8.7 If the conditions allow for it, a pursuit race may be conducted on one day of Race Week for all competitors except for the J70s and Melges 15s. The announcement of a pursuit race will be made before 2000 hours the day before the pursuit race. Competitors will be notified of the pursuit race plan in the following ways:

8.7.1 An announcement made at the Daily Awards and Post-Race Party.

8.7.2 A post on the online notice board.

8.8 See Addendum C for Pursuit Race details.

8.9 On days when there is a pursuit race, boats not participating in the pursuit will race on courses managed by the vessel *Fox Trot* as both the RC signal boat and the finish boat.

## **9. DAILY CHECK-IN [DP]**

9.1 Before the first race each day, competitors must check in with the RC vessel and receive acknowledgement.

9.2 Competitors may hail the RC on VHF Channel 72, or sail by the stern of the RC Signal Vessel.

9.3 From 10 minutes before the first start onward, boats may only check in by voice hail while sailing by the stern of the RC Finish Vessel, *Fox Trot* near the "F" finish. Check-ins by radio or at the RC Signal Vessel are not permitted at that point. This is to keep the VHF channel open for communication with competitors from the race committee.

## **10. THE START**

10.1 Races will start using RRS 26.

10.2 The starting line is between an orange flag on the RC signal boat (starboard end) and the course side of a port-end starting mark.

10.3 For the first race of the day, classes will start in ascending numerical order.

10.4 Subsequent races may start classes in any order based on when boats have finished the prior race.

10.5 [DP] Boats whose warning signal has not been made shall avoid the starting area during the starting sequence for other classes.

10.6 If a boat is subject to RRS 29.1, the RC may attempt to hail her sail number and/or boat name on Channel 72. Failure to hail, or to hear the hail, or the order of hail, will not be grounds for redress. This changes RRS 61.4 (b)(1).

10.7 If rolling starts are used, and the starting class has a general recall, then the next class's start is abandoned and their flag removed. This changes RRS 27.3.

10.8 A boat that does not start within 5 minutes of her starting signal will be scored DNS without a hearing. This changes RRS A5.1.

## **11. CHANGE OF THE NEXT LEG OF THE COURSE**

11.1 To change the location of a mark, the RC will move the original mark or the finish line and signal as defined in RRS 33.

## **12. TIME LIMITS**

12.1 The time limit for the first boat in a class to finish is 3 hours.



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- 12.2 Any boat that fails to finish within 30 minutes after the first boat in her class sails the course and finishes will be scored DNF without a hearing. This changes RRS 35, A4, and A5.
- 12.3 In the event of a Pursuit Race, the time limit is 1730 on the day of the start. Boats not finished by 1730 will be scored DNF without a hearing. This changes RRS 35, A4, and A5.

### **13. THE FINISH**

- 13.1 The finish may be at either the RC Signal Vessel or *Fox Trot*, depending on the course designation. See SI 8.6 and Addendum A.

### **14. RESTRICTION OF THE START AND FINISH LINES**

- 14.1 [DP] From the time a boat rounds the first rounding mark until she rounds the last rounding mark she shall not cross the start line or her finish line. After rounding the first rounding mark a boat shall never cross a finish line that is not part of her course. See SI 8.6.
- 14.2 Violation of this rule may result in a 30% scoring penalty calculated as stated in Rule 44.3 (c), assigned without a hearing if observed by the RC, or through a protest. This changes RRS A5.
- 14.3 The start line and both finish lines are designated as obstructions. See SI 8.6.

### **15. SCORING**

- 15.1 Three races are required to be completed to constitute a series.
- 15.2 If fewer than five races are completed, a boat's series score shall be the total of her race scores. When five or more races have been completed, a boat's series score shall be the total of her race scores excluding her worst score.
- 15.3 The Low-Point Scoring System as defined in RRS Appendix A4 will be used with the following modifications:
  - 15.3.1 Scores of DNF, NSC, and RET shall be scored the number of finishers plus two.
  - 15.3.2 Scores of DNC, DNS, OCS, UFD, BFD, DSQ, and DNE shall be scored the number of starters plus two.
- 15.4 Except for the Pursuit Race, ORC Fleets will be scored using Five Band Windward/Leeward ratings
  - 15.4.1 The median wind speed at the time of a fleet's start will be used.
  - 15.4.2 If the wind changes significantly for more than half the race, the new wind speed will be used and announced prior to the first boat finishing.
  - 15.4.3 The RC will announce the starting wind range over VHF and, as a courtesy on the WhatsApp Announcements group within 15 minutes of an ORC class start.
  - 15.4.4 Adjustments made during the race will be announced over VHF.
  - 15.4.5 The RC's decision on which rating to use is final and not subject to redress. This changes RRS 61.4(b)(1).

### **16. HEARING REQUESTS**

- 16.1 The protest time limit is 45 minutes after the RC Signal Boat ties to the dock after each day of racing, or 15 minutes after the protest time limit is posted, whichever is later.
- 16.2 Hearing request forms can be picked up and submitted at the Regatta Office, or submitted electronically at <https://bit.ly/rwpmw2025>.
- 16.3 Notices will be posted on the official notice board no later than 30 minutes after the protest time limit to inform competitors of hearings in which they are parties or named as witnesses.
- 16.4 Hearings may be held either in the evening after racing, or the following morning before racing.
- 16.5 Hearings will be held at the Bellingham Yacht Club and will begin at the time posted.
- 16.6 Arbitration meetings and hearings will begin 15 minutes after the protest filing deadline. If all parties are present and ready, they may begin earlier. Arbitration will also take place at the Bellingham Yacht Club.
- 16.7 Scoring inquiry forms can be picked up and submitted at the Regatta Office, or submitted electronically at <https://bit.ly/rwpmw2025>. They must be submitted by the protest time limit or within 30 minutes after scores are posted on Yacht Scoring (<https://bit.ly/rwpmw2025>), whichever is later.
- 16.8 The RC will review each scoring inquiry and inform the submitting and affected boat(s) of their findings and any resulting actions.
- 16.9 The original scoring inquiry submission time will be used for the timing requirements of RRS 61.2 (b)(1).

### **17. IDPI SAFETY REGULATIONS**

- 17.1 A boat that retires from a race shall notify the RC at the first reasonable opportunity.
- 17.2 An Emergency Action Plan (EAP) has been included as an insert in the SIs and shall be reviewed by all skippers and their crew.

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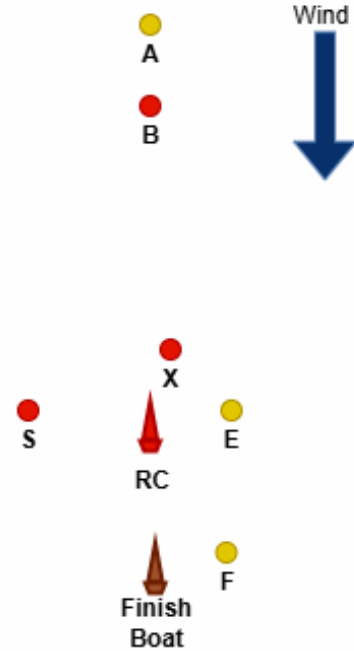
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## Addendum A

### Race Course and Dropped Marks Descriptions

Mark	Description
RC	RC Signal Boat at Start and Alternate Finish (E)
Finish Boat	RC Finish Boat. May be windward or leeward of marks Y and Z
S	RED/ORANGE Starting Mark
A	YELLOW Weather Mark
B	RED/ORANGE Weather Mark
X	RED/ORANGE Leeward Mark to weather of RC
Y	RED/ORANGE Leeward Mark
Z	YELLOW Leeward Mark
F	YELLOW Finish Mark at Finish Boat
E	YELLOW Finish Mark at RC



### Addendum B

(Addendum B has been included as an insert in the SIs)

### Addendum C

#### Pursuit Race

1. The Race Course will be announced pursuant to sailing instruction 8.8. It will start and finish at the RC Signal Boat in Bellingham Bay.
2. Start times will be calculated based on each boat's PHRF or ORC rating. ORC GP Time on Distance ratings will be used. The boat *Absolutely's* GP ORC and PHRF ratings will be used to normalize ORC and PHRF start times.
3. Boats will start at their assigned start time, which will be calculated based on each boat's handicap rating and the course distance.
4. The Pursuit Race Course, start times and offsets from the first pursuit start will be posted using the communication channels defined in SI 3 by 2030 on the day before the Pursuit Race.
5. The first pursuit start is scheduled to be at 1100 hours.
6. The race will be started with the following signals:
  - 1055: Warning signal for the first start (RW Pursuit Flag with one sound).
  - 1056: Preparatory signal for the first start (P Flag with one sound).
  - 1059: Preparatory signal dropped (P Flag down with one long sound).
  - 1100: First start signaled (RW Pursuit Flag will remain flying with one sound).
7. The Pursuit Flag will be displayed continuously throughout the starting sequence until the starting signal for the last boat scheduled to start has been made. This changes RRS 26.
8. When boats are scheduled to start, there will be a single horn. Immediately before or after the start time, the RC will attempt to announce the time offset from the first start time as a courtesy. This announcement will not be grounds for redress. This changes RRS 61.4(b)(1).
9. [DP] The time of each boat's preparatory signal will be 4 minutes before her starting time. Boats whose preparatory signal has not been made shall avoid the starting area. A breach of this instruction will not be grounds for protest by a boat. This changes RRS 60.1(a).
10. If there is a postponement before the first start, all starts will be later than their published time by the length of the postponement. Any postponement time will be announced on the radio and in the WhatsApp Announcement channel.
11. Individual recalls will be signaled with 1 long sound. The X flag will not be displayed. This changes RRS 29.1 and RRS Signals. The RC will attempt to hail the sail numbers of boats that have been identified OCS on VHF 72. Failure of equipment, failure to hear a hail, delay in hailing, or the order in which boats are hailed will not be grounds for redress. This changes RRS 61.4 (b)(1).
12. The finish is a line between a blue flag on the RC Signal Vessel at the port end of the line, and the course side of the starboard end finish mark.





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# MAN OVERBOARD RETURN AND RECOVERY

A summary of the current thinking about MOB Return and Recovery

Every Man Overboard (MOB) incident is different, but some principles still hold. Add these skills to your seamanship and you will have a better chance of recovering an MOB.

The key principles: **FIRST**, drop flotation to help the MOB and mark the spot. **SECOND**, quickly stop the boat near the MOB. **THIRD**, return the boat in a controlled manner, being careful you do not hit the MOB with the boat. **FINALLY**, pick up the MOB with a LifeSling (or other means).

**It is important that you practice a variety of MOB maneuvers with your own crew aboard your own boat, as each boat is different.** Practice the principles, use your seamanship skills, and you can tailor your return and recovery for the specific conditions.



## UPWIND QUICK STOP, USING A LIFESLING RECOVERY

**POSITION 1:** Shout "Man Overboard!" Pull the pin on the MOM 8; throw other flotation. Assign one crew as "Pointer", who shouts the bearing and range to the MOB continuously. The helmsman or navigator shall push the "MOB button" for five seconds. Begin your quick stop by having the helmsman shout "Hold on! Tacking!"

**POSITION 2:** Tack the boat. In the tack, the jib sheet is not released, nor is the main. With a backed jib the boat "heaves to", and slows and stays close to the MOB—the desirable position. Start the engine, but keep it in neutral (check for lines in the water before putting it in gear!).

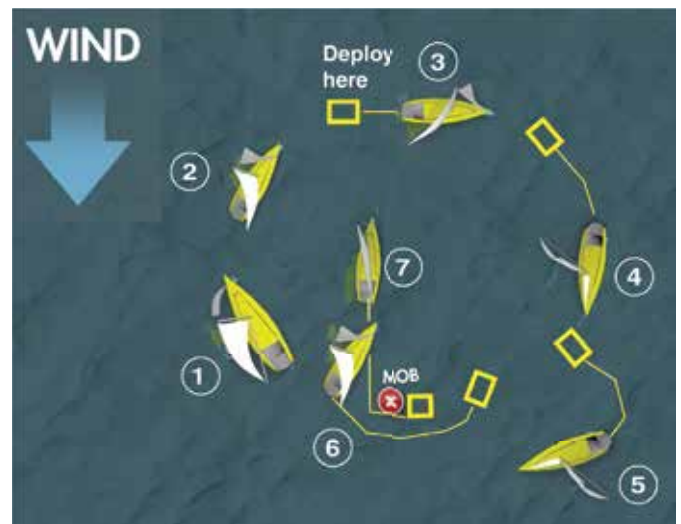
**POSITION 3:** Launch the LifeSling. As soon as the crew on deck is prepared, begin to bear off, staying about 2-4 lengths from MOB. Keep the jib cleated and backed.

**POSITION 4:** Bear off to a dead run, and gybe the main.

**POSITION 5:** When the boat is 1-1.5 boat lengths below the MOB, the helmsman luffs toward the MOB, onto a close reach,

using the engine as needed. (The Pointer should move forward to the mast to keep MOB in sight and to guide the helmsman). Begin to luff and circle the MOB staying away from them; keep the boat from hitting the MOB.

**POSITION 6:** Circle the MOB "water skier pickup style", without touching the sheets insofar as possible. Once the MOB makes contact with the floating line, free sheets to stop the boat immediately; you don't want to pull the MOB with the boat at speed. The MOB should slip the sling part of the Lifesling over their head and under their armpits.



**POSITION 7:** Douse, furl or flog all sails. Pull the MOB to amidships where you can secure the MOB next to the boat. Attach a halyard to the Lifesling bridle (or a knot you tied about 12 feet above the bridle). Hoist the MOB on deck.

**If you are NOT using the Lifesling for a pickup, then:**

**In POSITION 4:** Strike or furl the jib on the run. (n.b. some boats may need to leave it up for control.)

**In POSITION 6:** Decide whether to pick up the MOB on the windward or leeward side and tell your crew. Foredeck readies the throw bag. Trim and ease the mainsail to control speed, and/or use the engine engaged to control boat speed (1-2 knots maximum as your bow passes the MOB).

POSITION 7: As your bow passes MOB, toss the throw bag; the MOB will be pulled in amidships as they move aft. Stop the boat. Lower the Lifesling to MOB and with a halyard on the Lifesling bridle (or a knot on the line above the bridle), hoist the MOB on deck. Or, grapple the MOB aboard (less recommended as you may lose contact with MOB)



## QUICK STOP RECOVERY WHEN SAILING DOWNWIND

POSITION 1: Shout “Man Overboard!” Pull the pin on the MOM. Throw flotation. Hit the MOB button. Assign the “Pointer”. The helmsman shouts: “Hold on! Coming up!”

POSITION 2: On boats with poles: Ease pole to headstay, trim foreguy. On both pole and sprit boats: do not let the tack run. The trimmer should give a quick luff to the spinnaker sheet to unload the sail. Crew holds on as helmsman luffs up until the spinnaker is flying just off the spreaders.

POSITION 3: Quickly ease the spinnaker halyard, assuring there are no jams! Pull the spinnaker sheet tight as the crew grabs the foot of the chute and pulls it on deck. Control it with the guy until you can stuff it below.

POSITION 4: Start the engine and keep it in neutral; check for lines in the water. Tack up towards MOB using the engine to gain speed and steerage.

FOLLOW POSITIONS 5, 6 & 7 as in the previous recovery — Upwind Quick Stop Return.



**PRACTICE THESE SKILLS ON YOUR BOAT WITH YOUR CREW IN DIFFERENT CONDITIONS—ONLY THEN YOU WILL BUILD YOUR SKILLS**

## MORE INFORMATION: LIFESLING, DOWNWIND QUICK STOP

### The Lifesling is a floating sling,

connected by a bridle to a long, yellow, floating line.

- We recommend you tie a figure-8 or other loop knot about 12 to 20 feet above the sling's bridle. This will let you secure the MOB to a cleat and at the same time have a length of line on which to clip the halyard.
- Also, add a water-activated light on the sling if you will be sailing at night.

The Lifesling is required for all coastal and ocean races, and it is a “must-have” for any short-handed crew, double-handers, or cruisers. Just a few advantages include: The Lifesling does not require a precise, close approach; once the MOB is in the Lifesling, you won't lose contact with them; and it is easier to get the MOB aboard if they are in the sling. Fully crewed race boats should practice recoveries with and without a Lifesling.

Shorthanded and cruising crew should focus on Lifesling recoveries.

**Use your engine appropriately** to provide critical maneuverability during a recovery. The racing rules allow this.

**If the MOB is unconscious** or weak, the MOB will not be able to grab and secure the Lifesling. If the MOB appears compromised once close aboard, a fully-crewed boat may lower a tethered “Rescue Crew” in a bosun's chair or foredeck harness by halyard to water level as you come alongside the MOB. This crew can clip onto the MOB and then you hoist both aboard.

**For Downwind Recoveries in heavy air.** Depending on your boat's characteristics, a downwind Quick Stop in heavy air (over 25 knots more or less) could risk serious damage or injury, delaying the return

to the MOB. Each boat and crew must establish their own threshold of wind and waves. Before these takedowns (both routine and emergency), we recommend an extra sheet be rigged to the clew and over the boom for a “letterbox” takedown.

### GO TO THESE KEY RESOURCES

- US Sailing Safety at Sea Courses [www.ussailing.org/education/adult/safety-at-sea-courses-2022](http://www.ussailing.org/education/adult/safety-at-sea-courses-2022)
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