

2026 SAILING INSTRUCTIONS | OFFICIAL PROGRAM GUIDE

race week

July 20-24, 2026 **BELLINGHAM**



John Hoag and crew of *Shrek* (1D35) took the title of Overall Winner at Race Week in 2025. Hoag's crew included Della Hoag, Bob Combie, Paul Carter, Larry Butchart, Ric Peterson, Kevin Jones, Tim Player, Rex Armor, Bayard Johnson, and Emily Gosling.

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Welcome to Race Week 2026!

Let's race, party, and play! Best wishes for a safe and memorable week ahead!
Schelleen Rathkopf, Producer

Schedule

All post-race parties will be held at the Bellingham Yacht Club (BYC), where there will be music, a no-host bar, and some good eats! As a reminder, BYC maintains a cashless bar, and only debit and credit cards will be accepted.

Sunday July 19 / 9 am to 5:30 pm Skipper Check In
5:30 pm Skipper Meeting. BYC bar closes at 8 pm.

Monday July 20 / Racing on Bellingham Bay, followed by Daily Awards & Anything But Clothes Night at BYC from 4:30 pm - 7 pm. BYC bar closes at 8 pm.

Tuesday July 21 / Racing on Bellingham Bay, followed by Daily Awards & Christmas in July Night at BYC from 4:30 pm - 7 pm. BYC bar closes at 8 pm

Wednesday July 22 / Racing on Bellingham Bay, followed by Daily Awards & Vintage Swing Night at BYC from 4:30 pm - 7 pm. Music Jam at BYC until 9 pm. BYC bar closes at 9 pm.

Thursday July 23 / Racing on Bellingham Bay, followed by Daily Awards and ABBA Night at BYC from 4:30 pm - 7 pm. BYC bar closes at 9 pm.

Friday July 24 / Racing on Bellingham Bay, followed by Overall Awards from 4:30 pm - 7 pm. BYC bar closes at 9 pm.

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2026 Race Week Bellingham / July 20-24, 2026
Sailing Instructions

1. RULES

- 1.1 This event is governed by the rules as defined in *The Racing Rules of Sailing*.
- 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 47: Trash shall include water balloons.
- 1.3 US Sailing Prescription RRS V1 and V2 are in effect.
- 1.4 PHRF boats are governed by PHRF-NW class rules.

2. CHANGES TO SAILING INSTRUCTIONS

- 2.1 Any change to the sailing instructions will be posted before 0800 on the day it will take effect, except that any change to the schedule of races will be posted by 1700 on the day before it takes effect.
- 2.2 Oral changes on the water will be signaled with code flag 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 72 and sent out over the Whatsapp channel as a courtesy. Failure to receive any such broadcast will not be ground for redress.

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. These communications are a courtesy only.
- 3.2 The official notice board will be online at <https://www.yachtscoring.com/emenu/50583>, and as a courtesy, on a notice board at Bellingham Yacht Club.
- 3.3 The regatta office location will be located inside the Bellingham Yacht Club.
- 3.4 There will be a Race Week WhatsApp group for courtesy communications among the race committee, the fleet and spectators. Instructions to join the group will be posted on the regatta website.
- 3.5 As a courtesy, the WhatsApp group may reproduce official communications.
- 3.6 [DP] While racing, except in an emergency, a boat shall not make voice or data transmissions and shall not receive voice or data communications that are not available to all boats.
- 3.7 Communications described in SI 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.5 are provided as a courtesy only. Failure to receive these communications will not be grounds for redress.

4. CODE OF CONDUCT

- 4.1 [DP] Competitors and support persons shall comply with reasonable requests from race officials.

5. SIGNALS MADE ASHORE

- 5.1 Signals will be displayed from a flagpole near Bellingham Yacht Club
- 5.2 When flag AP is displayed ashore, "1 minute" is replaced with "not less than 60 minutes." This changes RRS Race Signal AP.

6. SCHEDULE OF RACES

- 6.1 There will be up to three races per day.
- 6.2 The first warning signal each day will be at 1000.
- 6.3 To alert boats that a race or sequence of races will begin soon, a series of 5 sounds will be made one minute before a warning signal is made.
- 6.4 On Friday July 24 no warning signal will be made after 1500.

7. CLASS FLAGS

- 7.1 Class flags will be numeral pennants. Class numbers will be published with the class breaks.

8. RACING AREA

- 8.1 The racing area is Bellingham Bay and adjacent waters.

9. COURSES AND MARKS

- 9.1 For mark descriptions and course layout, see Addendum A.
- 9.2 No later than the warning signal, the race committee signal vessel will display the course to be sailed.
- 9.3 A course display will comprise one or more fleet numbers and the course designation.
- 9.4 The course designation will be a number or letter corresponding to a course described in Addendum B.

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9.5 If the conditions permit, a pursuit race may be conducted on one day of the Race Week for all competitors. The announcement of a pursuit race will be made before 1900 hours the day before the race is scheduled. Competitors will be notified of the pursuit race with a post on the official notice board.

9.6 See Addendum C for pursuit race details.

9.7 Boats not wishing to participate in the pursuit race will race on a separate course managed by a different RC vessel. Details will be posted on the official notice board.

10. [DP] DAILY CHECK IN

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

10.2 Competitors may hail the RC with their boat name and sail number on VHF channel 72, or sail by the stern of the RC signal vessel.

10.3 From 10 minutes before the first start onward, boats may only check in by radio with the RC finish vessel Fox Trot. Check-ins by radio or at the stern of the RC signal vessel are not permitted and will not be acknowledged after this point.

11. THE START

11.1 The starting line is between and orange flag on the RC signal vessel and the course side of the starting mark.

11.2 For the first race of each day classes will start in ascending numerical order.

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

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

11.5 If any part of a boat's hull is on the course side of the starting line at her starting signal and she is identified, the race committee will attempt to hail her sail number on VHF 72. Failure of the race committee to hail her number, failure to hear such a hail, or the order in which boats are hailed shall not be considered as grounds for redress. This changes RRS 61.2.

11.6 A boat that does not start within 4 minutes of her starting signal will be scored DNS without a hearing. This changes RRS A5.

12. CHANGE THE NEXT LEG OF THE COURSE

12.1 To change the next leg of the course, the RC will move the original mark or the finish line to a new position. This changes RRS 33.

13. THE FINISH

13.1 The finish will be between a blue flag on the finish vessel and the course side of the finish mark as described in Addendum A.

14. TIME LIMITS

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

14.2 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.

14.3 In the event of a pursuit race, the time limit is 1630 on the day of the start. Boats not finished by 1630 will be scored DNF without a hearing. This changes RRS 35, A4 and A5.

15. RESTRICTION OF THE START AND FINISH LINES

15.1 [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 either finish line.

15.2 A boat who violates this rule will be scored a 30% scoring penalty, calculated as stated in RRS 44.3(c), without a hearing if observed by the RC, or through a protest. This changes RRS A5.

16. SCORING

16.1 Three races are required to be scored to constitute a series.

16.2 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.

16.3 One race must be completed each day for the daily prizes to be awarded.

16.4 Except for the Pursuit Race, ORC fleets will be scored using the five-band windward/ leeward ratings.

16.4.1 The median wind speed at the time of a fleet's start will be used.

16.4.2 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.

16.4.3 The RC will announce the starting wind range over VHF 72 and through the WhatsApp chat group within 15 minutes of an ORC class start.

16.4.4 Adjustments made during the race will be announced over VHF.

16.4.5 The RC's decision on which rating to use is final and not subject to redress. This changes RRS 61.4(b)(1).

17. HEARING REQUESTS

17.1 The protest time limit is 45 minutes after the RC signal boat docks. This time will be posted on the official notice board.



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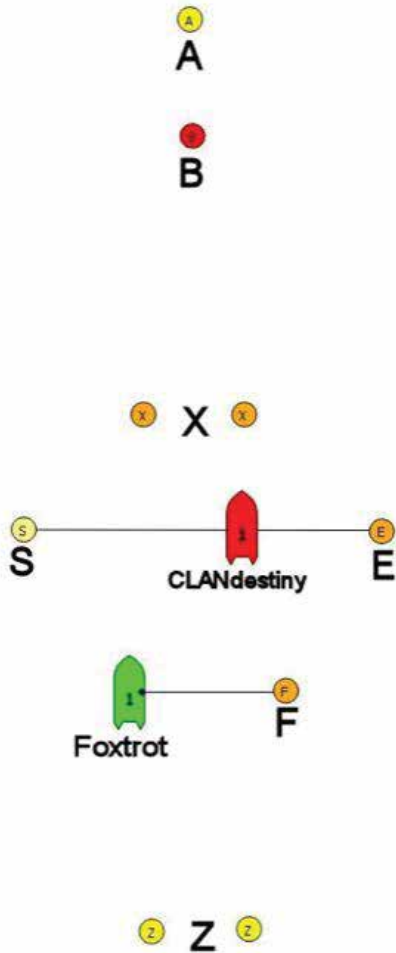
- 17.2 Hearing requests must be filed electronically at <https://www.yachtscoring.com/emenue/50583>. As a courtesy, there will also be QR codes posted at BYC.
- 17.3 Notices will be posted on the official notice board no later than 30 minutes after the protest time limit to inform competitors of hearings in which they are parties or named as witnesses.
- 17.4 Hearings may be held either in the evening after racing, or the following morning before racing.
- 17.5 Hearings will be held at the Bellingham Yacht Club and will begin at the time posted.
- 17.6 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.
- 17.7 Scoring inquiry forms will be available and must be submitted online at <https://www.yachtscoring.com/emenue/50583>.

18. [DP] SAFETY REGULATIONS

- 18.1 A boat that retires from a race shall notify the RC at the first reasonable opportunity.
- 18.2 An emergency Action Plan (EAP) is defined in Addendum D, and shall be reviewed by all skippers and crew.

Addendum A
Race Course and Marks Descriptions

Mark	Description
RC	RC Signal Boat "CLANdestiny"
Finish Boat	RC Finish Boat. "Foxtrot"
S	YELLOW Cylinder
A	YELLOW tetrahedrons
B	RED tetrahedron
X	ORANGE tetrahedrons (may be a gate)
Z	YELLOW tetrahedrons (may be a gate)
F	ORANGE BALL
E	ORANGE BALL



Addendum B

Course #	Marks - All rounding marks taken to PORT, EXCEPT Mark X and Z may be set as a gate, in which case boats shall sail between the gate marks and out either side. This will not be displayed on the course board.
1	S - A - Z - A - Z - F
3	S - A - Z - B - Z - F
4	S - B - Z - B - Z - F
5	S - A - X - A - Z - F
6	S - A - X - B - Z - F
7	S - B - X - B - Z - F
8	S - A - Z - F
9	S - B - Z - F
0	S - A - Z - A - E
A	S - A - Z - B - E
b (lower case)	S - B - Z - B - E
C	S - A - X - A - E
E	S - A - X - B - E
F	S - B - X - B - E

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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.

ADDENDUM D

Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

CALL 911 and REPORT MEDICAL EMERGENCIES on VHF CHANNEL 16 & 72 In the event of a life-threatening emergency:

1. **Call 911** via cell phone and be prepared to report your name, location, and the nature of the emergency
2. If the emergency is on the racecourse, and/or during a race, also report your emergency to the **US Coast Guard VHF Channel 16** and to the **Race Week (RW) Principal Race Officer (PRO) and Race Committee on VHF Channel 72**
3. In addition to life-threatening emergencies, the RC will take appropriate actions, which may include informing the fleet, coordinating support boats, coordinating with emergency responders, and abandoning or postponing one or more races and fleets if there are other emergencies involving collisions and/or sinking boats reported on the course, or weather and/or environmental emergencies
4. The RW Race Committee will stay in radio contact on Channel 72 with the distressed boat at all times to monitor the situation
5. 911 dispatchers will notify local authorities if additional emergency response is required and instruct you to meet emergency responders at one of two locations in Squalicum Harbor: 1) Day Moorage Dock (inside breakwater at the Zuanich Point Park), or 2) Sawtooth Dock (between Gate 3 and Gate 5 in the commercial area).
6. The RW Race Committee will notify the RW Organizing Authority immediately by cell phone for additional emergency monitoring and possible assistance
7. The RW Organizing Authority will notify all emergency contacts listed below at the Port of Bellingham and provide details concerning the emergency
8. Once the patient is under treatment and/or the situation has stabilized, an Accident Report Form will be provided to all individuals involved in the incident and collected by the RW Organizing Authority

Emergency Contacts:

Dial 9-1-1 in the event of an emergency

US Coast Guard VHF Channel 16

US Coast Guard Sector Puget Sound: (833) 449-0369

Whatcom County US Coast Guard: (206) 815-6862

Race Week Principal Race Officer (PRO): Paul Evenden (604) 816-3043

Race Week Organizing Authority (OA): Schelleen Rathkopf (206) 384-5254

Port of Bellingham Emergency Management and Security Officer: Ryan Rockom (360) 715-7398 Port of

Bellingham Squalicum Harbor Harbormaster: Aaron Bisson (360) 715-7384 or (360) 676-2542 Port of

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Since its inception in 1983, Race Week has been a beloved summertime tradition for so many in the PNW sailing community. What is your favorite memory of Race Week? Please share! This page can be removed and added to the memory banner inside Bellingham Yacht Club anytime this week!





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