

2026 Cock Island Race

SAILING INSTRUCTIONS

Sponsored by: Portsmouth Boat Club and Safety Town



Friday and Saturday, June 12th and 13th, 2026
Official Sailing Instructions, updates and other information posted at
www.cockislandrace.com



1. **RULES:** The 2025-2028 Racing Rules of Sailing (RRS) and US Sailing Prescriptions, as modified by these Sailing Instructions (as modified from time to time).
2. **NOTICES TO COMPETITORS:** Copies of the Notice of Race, Sailing Instructions and amendments will be posted on the Official Notice Board (ONB) located on-line at <https://www.cockislandrace.com/>. The official versions of the Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions shall be based solely upon the versions on the ONB. Nevertheless, purely as a courtesy, the RC will endeavor to furnish unofficial “hard” copies (e.g., in PDF format) by e-mail to a requesting competitor within 72 hours of the RC’s receipt of e-mail request therefor sent to garybahena@windspirits.us.
3. **AMENDMENTS TO SAILING INSTRUCTIONS:** Amendments to the Sailing Instructions shall be in writing and posted to the ONB before **2030, June 12, 2026**. Skippers are responsible for complying whether or not they attend the Skippers’ Meeting on June 12th.
4. **CLASSES:**
 - 4.1. **PHRF Classes.** Open to all self-righting monohull sailboats 20’ LOA or longer with a current PHRF of the Chesapeake Valid Ratings for sailboats racing in PHRF Classes A, B, C, N (non-spinnaker/single headsail) and CC NS. Boats must meet applicable US Sailing and USCG Regulations. Boats will display the applicable PHRF of the Chesapeake class flag from their backstays. PHRF N and CC-NS are limited to sailboats using a single headsail and not using a spinnaker.
 - 4.2. **Non-PHRF “Cruising” Classes.** Open to all self-righting monohull boats 20’ LOA or longer. Boats must meet USCG safety and equipment criteria and other PHRF requirements. Cruising Class boats will be assigned a courtesy rating which may not be appealed, and shall display assigned color streamers (provided in the skipper’s bag at registration) from their backstay:

CC1	Purple
CC2	Orange
CC3	Green
 - 4.3. **Non-PHRF “Schooner Class”.** Open to all self-righting Schooner boats 20’ LOA or longer. “Schooner” refers to classic schooners and not to modern ketches or yawls. Boats must meet USCG safety and equipment criteria.
 - 4.4. **Non-PHRF “Multihull Class”.** Open to all self-righting multihull boats, 20’ LOA or longer, with two or three parallel hulls and an engine or other mechanical propulsion. Boats must meet USCG safety and equipment criteria.
 - 4.5. **Trophies.**
For 2026, trophies shall be awarded as follows:
 - PHRF A, B and C Classes. 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place trophies shall be offered for PHRF A, B and C Classes as a combined single Fleet.
 - PHRF N Class. A 1st Place trophy will be awarded. A 2nd Place trophy will be awarded if there are 3 or more registrants in this Class and a 3rd Place trophy will be awarded if there are 5 or more registrants in this Class.

- PHRF CC-NS Class. 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place trophies shall be offered for this Class.
- Non-PHRF CC1, CC2 and CC3 Classes. 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place trophies shall be offered for each of these Classes.
- Schooner Class. A 1st Place trophy will be awarded. A 2nd Place trophy will be awarded if there are 3 or more registrants in this Class and a 3rd Place trophy will be awarded if there are 5 or more registrants in this Class.

Multi-hull Class. A 1st Place trophy will be awarded if there are 2 or more registrants in this Class, a 2nd Place trophy will be awarded if there are 3 or more registrants in this Class and a 3rd Place trophy will be awarded if there are 5 or more registrants in this Class.

5. SCHEDULE OF RACES:

- 5.1. The 2026 Cock Island Race will be held on June 13, 2026.
- 5.2. The RC will attempt to give an Attention signal, consisting of a VHF 72 call and multiple horns, at approximately 0855. The first Warning will occur at 0900 local time. All times in these Instructions are local time.
- 5.3. Anticipate starts as follows (use only as a guide; refer to RC flags, Appendix A Cock Island Racing Divisions, to determine actual start times). **Racers are responsible for checking ONB after 2030, June 12, 2026 for final adjustments in starting classes and times.** The RC reserves the right to combine classes.

Class	Class Flag	Warning	Prep Up	Prep Down	Start
A	No. 9	0900	0901	0904	0905
B	No. 6	0905	0906	0909	0910
C	No. 7	0910	0911	0914	0915
N	No. 5	0915	0916	0919	0920
CC NS	No. 8	0915	0916	0919	0920

Note: PHRF N and CC NS will Start together

CC1	Purple	0920	0921	0924	0925
CC2	Orange	0925	0926	0929	0930
CC3	Green	0930	0931	0934	0935
Schooner	Blue	0935	0936	0939	0940
Multihull	Blue	0935	0936	0939	0940

- 5.4. If the RC postpones a start or abandons a race, the decision for subsequent starts will be at RC discretion. The RC will resume starts in accordance with the sequence above with timing adjusted as required.

6. RESTRICTIONS:

- 6.1. All boats must be capable of transmitting and receiving VHF Channel 16 and 72.
- 6.2. Boats in the PHRF-N, PHRF-CC NS Class and Cruising Classes are restricted from using Spinnakers/ drifters/bloopers/gennakers/Code Zero sails. Boats in these Classes are also restricted to one headsail only (exception: two headsails are permitted briefly during sail changes). Maximum unpenalized length of whisker poles is J. Maximum unpenalized genoa LP is 155%.

PHRF-Chesapeake Rating Rules and Adjustments, Rule 16 applies, and cutter rigs may simultaneously fly a single headsail from the headstay and a staysail from the inner-forestay.

7. RACING AREA / COURSES:

- 7.1. Refer to Appendix B. Marks denoted "(p)" are to be left to Port and marks designated "(s)" are to be left to Starboard.
- 7.2. The RC will designate the course(s) to be sailed on the course board located at the RC station on the Portsmouth Seawall. Boats shall sail the course designated by the letter by their class flag depiction as posted on the course board. Skippers can anticipate a maximum of 3 courses: PHRF A and B shall sail the longest course; PHRF C, N, CC NS and Non-PHRF Schooners and Multihulls, can anticipate sailing an intermediate course; Cruising Classes can anticipate sailing the shortest course (subject to weather conditions). **THE CLASS-DESIGNATED COURSE CANNOT BE SHORTENED AFTER THE START FOR THAT CLASS.**

8. THE START:

- 8.1. RRS 26 procedures, as modified by Appendix C of these Sailing Instructions, shall apply (see Appendix C). Boats in classes not yet in sequence should remain clear of the starting area to avoid interfering with boats in their start sequence. An interfering boat is subject to protest under RRS 23.1.
- 8.2. The starting line will be between the Orange flag at the RC tent on the Portsmouth Seawall, near Tidewater Yacht Marina, and the starting drop mark (Yellow Cylinder) on the Southern Branch of the Elizabeth River across from the RC tent.
- 8.3. **INDIVIDUAL RECALLS.** Per RRS 29.1. In addition, the RC may attempt a hail to OCS boats on VHF 72. 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.
- 8.4. **GENERAL RECALLS.** Per RRS 29.2. The starting sequence will resume with the recalled class. All remaining start times will be delayed by the time necessary to restart the recalled class.

In addition, the RC may attempt a hail to all OCS boats on VHF 72. 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.

- 8.5. **POSTPONEMENT.** The RC may postpone starts to allow for commercial shipping or to deal with safety issues. All start times for classes not started will be delayed as necessary. The start sequence will resume one minute after the AP flag is lowered.

9. THE FINISH:

- 9.1. The finishing line will be the line between the Yellow Cylinder drop mark on the Southern Branch of the Elizabeth River and the Orange flag at the RC station on the Portsmouth Seawall.
- 9.2. Boats are also required to display their assigned bow number as provided in the skipper's bag upon finishing until acknowledged by the RC. Boats who fail to comply may not be scored.
- 9.3. Boats shall steer clear of, and shall not re-cross, the finishing line after finishing.

10. PENALTY SYSTEM:

- 10.1.** A retiring boat shall advise the RC as soon as practical. Notification shall be by radio call on VHF 72 and by text to 202-236-7012.
- 10.2.** When a boat breaks a Right of Way (Part II) Rule and the infraction has not caused injury or damage, she may absolve herself by completing a Two Turns penalty. RRS 44.3 (alternative Scoring Penalty) is not applicable.
- 11. TIME LIMITS:**
- 11.1.** The time limit for all races is 3:00 PM. Boats not finished by 3:00 PM should retire and inform the Race Committee on VHF 72 and by text (see Instruction 10.1 above). Racers on retired boats should still attend and enjoy the post-race party.
- 11.2.** Deadline to submit protests or requests for redress is 4:00 PM at the Portsmouth Boat Club.
- 12. PROTESTS AND REQUESTS FOR REDRESS:**
- 12.1.** The decision to protest rests with competitors. The RC will refrain from filing protests on behalf of boats. However, the RC may testify at protest hearings regarding incidents witnessed if requested.
- 12.2.** A boat wishing to protest another boat shall promptly hail the boat being protested and display a red flag. She shall keep this red flag flying until she finishes or retires. RRS 60 applies.
- 12.3.** A boat desiring to protest shall
- notify the RC by radio call to VHF 72 when crossing the finishing line, or when retiring, of the protesting boat's identity (including sail number) and the protested boat's identity (including sail number), and
 - file a written protest before the protest deadline with the RC at the Portsmouth Boat Club. Use US Sailing Hearing Request Form.
- 12.4.** Protests and requests for redress will be heard by a Protest Committee appointed by the RC. Upon the filing of a timely protest or request for redress, the RC will coordinate with the parties and Protest Committee. Hearings will be scheduled as needed following the races. Hearings shall take place at the Portsmouth Boat Club and hearing schedules will be posted on the front door of the Club by 4:30PM. Unless the affected parties and the RC agree, it is the intent of the RC that immediate protest hearings only be held for contested Finish/Trophy outcomes so as to allow the Award Ceremony to proceed as scheduled and that other protest hearings be held reasonably promptly following the Race.
- 12.5.** Arbitration will not be offered.
- 13 SCORING:**
- 13.1.** This regatta will be scored using the RRS Appendix A Low Points scoring system.
- 13.2.** The Hanbury Cup will be awarded to the boat in a PHRF Class (A/B/C/N/CC NS) winning her Class by the greatest corrected margin.
- 14. SAFETY:** The decision to race or continue racing or retire rests with an individual skipper. Should prevailing or forecast conditions be questionable, the RC will be available via Race Channel (**VHF 72**).
- 15. COMMERCIAL TRAFFIC AND NAVAL VESSEL PROTECTION ZONES:**
- 15.1.** Any attempt by a contestant to exercise right of way, to cross in close proximity to or to interfere with the reasonable transit of the race area by commercial freighters, tugs, tows or other vessels which are unable to respond readily will be grounds for a protest.

Should such a protest occur, the burden of proof is on the boat allegedly interfering. Contestants must take evasive action well in advance of any potentially dangerous situation.

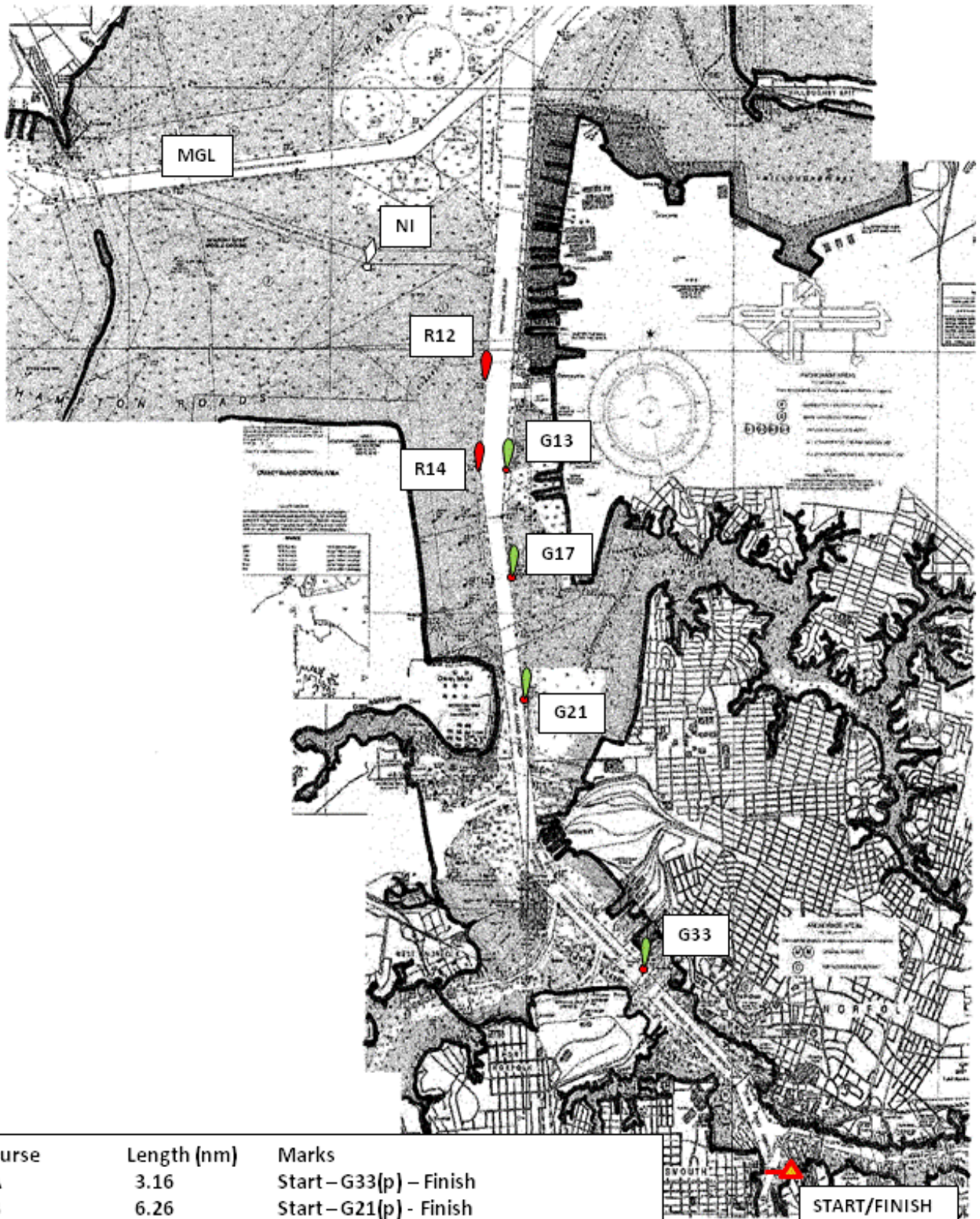
- 15.2. Under RRS 42.3(h) and (i), a boat may use any means necessary, including an engine, to clear right of way traffic in established shipping channels, provided she does not gain significant advantage through her actions. While she is subject to protest, Rule 62.1 is modified to consider her request for redress under these circumstances.
- 15.3. All contestants will remain clear of Naval Vessel Protection Zones and United States Government restricted areas at all times. This includes naval vessels moored to piers and in shipyards located along the River. All contestants will also comply with all directions of any governmental boat, including any security or Coast Guard vessel. If warned to clear the area by a security boat, or to take other action by a governmental boat, – a contestant must do so at the first safe opportunity.

A violation of this Rule may result in disqualification, including upon the self-determination by the RC.

If warned to clear the area by a security boat – do so at the first safe opportunity.


16. **RADIO COMMUNICATION: Racers** will monitor **VHF 72**. While racing, competitors shall not obtain navigational or weather information that is not available to the general public by any means (e.g. VHF, cell phone or Internet). Boats should monitor VHF Channel 72 during the start for recalls and any other information the Race Committee may issue. It is suggested that boats racing monitor VHF Channel 16 and the NOAA Weather Broadcasts and make contact with commercial traffic on VHF Channel 13 as appropriate to maintain safety.
17. **MEDIA RIGHTS:** By their entry, competitors give absolute right and permission for any photograph or video footage of themselves or the boat they are sailing to be published in any media the regatta organizers see fit.
18. **DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY: Competitors** participate in the regatta entirely at their own risk. See RRS, Rule 3, Decision to Race. Neither the Portsmouth Boat Club, Inc., the City of Portsmouth, Virginia, the United States Coast Guard, the Harbor Patrol and local law enforcement agencies, the Race Committee nor any race volunteers (the **“Released Persons”**) accept liability for any damage, personal injury, death sustained or other injury suffered in conjunction with or prior to, during, or after the regatta and each contestant, including each of their crew, by virtue of their participation in the race and any pre- or post-race events, hereby waive and release the Released Parties from any and all liability on account of any such damage, personal injury, death or other injury.

APPENDIX B – COCK ISLAND MARKS AND COURSES



Course	Length (nm)	Marks
A	3.16	Start – G33(p) – Finish
B	6.26	Start – G21(p) - Finish
C	8.10	Start – G17(p) - Finish
D	9.78	Start – G13(p) - Finish
E	11.22	Start – R12(p) - Finish
F	13.60	Start – R12(p) – NI(p) – R14(s) - Finish
G	15.98	Start – R12(p) – MGL(p) – R14(s) - Finish

APPENDIX C – RRS 26 STARTING PROCEDURES

<p>Warning</p>	<p>5-minutes to Start</p>	<p>Class Flag Up (A Fleet Shown)</p> 	<p>Cannon</p>	
	<p>4-minutes to Start</p>	 <p>Prep Flag Up</p>	<p>Short Horn</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racing Rules in effect; • Motor out of gear or off; • Boats may protest Rules infractions
	<p>1-minute to Start</p>	 <p>Prep Flag Down</p>	<p>Long Horn</p>	<p>One Minute</p>
<p>Start</p>	<p>Start</p>	 <p>Class Flag Down</p>	<p>Cannon</p>	<p>Start</p>

Note: The RC may signal starting penalties by using the Z, or Black Flag in lieu of the Prep. In this case, the One Minute signal starts the time in which these penalties may be applied to boats which cross the line early.

Note: The “I” Flag (RRS 30.1) starting penalty will not be used – “round the ends” is impractical.

Note: The RC will lower any remaining Over Early signals from the preceding start at the One Minute signal whether boats have cleared or not to ready for the next class’ start.

A boat competing in a class listed below shall clearly display a class flag or class streamer - at the stern approximately 5 feet up on the backstay if available.