



SAILING INSTRUCTIONS AROUND FRENCH ISLAND

NATIONAL CATAMARAN CHALLENGE

To be held Saturday 23rd March 2024

Organizing Authority and Host Club: **Cowes Yacht Club Inc. (CYC)**

1 RULES

- 1.1 The event is governed by the rules as defined in [The Racing Rules of Sailing \(RRS\)](#) and the Australian Sailing (AS) Special Regulations, and each Yacht Class Association concerned, except as any of these are altered by the race sailing instructions. The safety regulations prescribed in RRS Australian Sailing Special Regulations Part 2 (Off the Beach Boats) shall apply to all Off the Beach Boats competing in this event.

2 CHANGES TO SAILING INSTRUCTIONS

- 2.1 Any change to the sailing instructions will be posted on the downstairs windows at Cowes Yacht Club and on the official notice board (www.cowesyachtclub.com/afi/), before 10.00 a.m. on the day of the race and code flag "L" will be flown from the signal mast.

3 COMMUNICATIONS WITH COMPETITORS

- 3.1 Notices to competitors will be posted on the official notice board located at www.cowesyachtclub.com/afi/. On Race Day, they will also be posted on the downstairs windows at Cowes Yacht Club.
- 3.2 The race office is located at Cowes Yacht Club, Osborne Ave, Cowes, 3922, email AFI@COWESYACHTCLUB.COM
- 3.3 On the water, the race committee intends to monitor and communicate with competitors on VHF radio channel 73. This may be changed at the discretion of the Race Officer either at Race briefing or on the water.
- 3.4 An information session will be conducted by the officer of the day (OOD) or their deputy. This will be done approximately 2 hours before the start of the race. Notice of the commencement of this session will be given by an announcement over the loudspeaker at Cowes Yacht Club.

4 CODE OF CONDUCT

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



- 4.2 Competitors and support persons shall handle any equipment or place advertising provided by the organizing authority with care, seamanship, in accordance with any instructions for its use and without interfering with its functionality.

5 SIGNALS MADE ASHORE

- 5.1 All signals made ashore will be displayed on the signal mast at Cowes Yacht Club.
- 5.2 Code flag "AP" with two (2) sound signals means the race is postponed. The postponement period ends when code flag "AP" is lowered with one (1) sound signal. A warning signal to begin the starting sequence will be made no later than 10 minutes after the "AP" is lowered. This changes RRS 27.3.
- 5.3 Code flag "Q" with one (1) sound signal means no boat shall leave the beach or if already at sea shall return to shore without delay.

6 SCHEDULE OF RACES

- 6.1 The race is scheduled to take place at Cowes Yacht Club as per Notice of Race. A re-sail shall be held as advised in the Notice of Race, if required.

7 CLASS FLAGS

- 7.1 All boats will be divided into Divisions according to AS Yardstick. Division Yardstick criteria and class flags are as follows:
- 7.2 Division 1 – Yardstick less than 69.5 - Class Flag Numeral Pennant 1
Division 2 – Yardstick between 69.6 to 79.5 - Class Flag Numeral Pennant 2
Division 3 – Yardstick between 79.6 to 83 - Class Flag Numeral Pennant 3

8 RACING AREA

- 8.1 The racing area is North and East of Cowes on Westernport in the waters surrounding French Island.
- 8.2 Please see [Addendum 1](#) for defined exclusion zones. Boats observed or found to be sailing in any exclusion zone may be penalised at the sole discretion of the Race Officer. The GPS tracking system may be utilised for this purpose.
- 8.3 The Western side of French Island contains a designated shipping channel, Port Rule 62B for Victorian Proclaimed Ports, including the waters of Western Port, requires small vessels **IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES** to keep clear of Commercial Shipping.

9 EXCLUSION ZONES

- 9.1 Westernport Bay has a significant tidal variation and numerous marine hazards including rocks, mud flats and shallow sea grass areas. Some of these areas are a hazard to centreboard/daggerboard yachts and rescue boats and as such have been designated as "Exclusion Zones" (See diagram in Addendum 1).



- 9.2 All racing is prohibited within the defined Exclusion Zones (see Addendum 1 – Exclusion Zones). Any boat detected sailing deliberately within the exclusion zones while racing (by the Race Committee) may be penalised or disqualified.
- 9.3 The Parks Victoria 5 knot inshore restricted zones are also classed as exclusion zones for racing. Please refer to the Parks Victoria website (<https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/>) for details of the restricted zones and signage. All racing marks are located outside these zones.

10 COURSES

- 10.1 The course will involve the circumnavigation of French Island in the direction determined by the Organising Authority and displayed with a course flag flying from the signal mast at Cowes Yacht Club, on the start boat and outlined at the race briefing.

Green flag - leave French island and rounding marks to starboard.

Red flag - leave French island and rounding marks to port.

A rounding mark and an official boat will be positioned at the approximate half-way mark of the race (north eastern mark), or such shorter distance in the case of a shortened course as noted in 10.2.

Maps will be available at the Clubhouse on the morning of the race.

- 10.2 If a Shortened Course is required, a rounding mark will be dropped at a position before the "north eastern mark"-see 11.3. The position will be chosen by the Race Committee and defined with a mark displaying code flag "S" and an official boat nearby the mark. A sound signal MAY be made as the lead boat and subsequent boats pass the rounding mark. Competitors will round this mark on the side required according to the course flag and then proceed to the finish at CYC as per Section 13. This changes RRS 32.2.

11 MARKS OF THE COURSE

- 11.1 The rounding marks shall be yellow inflatable buoys anchored within close proximity to the official boat in that area.
- 11.2 One or more rounding marks may be laid shortly after the start line (depending on wind direction). The location of these marks (if used) will be provided at the briefing
- 11.3 The north-eastern rounding mark shall be a buoy anchored to the northeast of Palmer Point, in close proximity to an official boat - as noted on Addendum 1,
- 11.4 The north-western turning area is designated by gate marks consisting of 2 yellow inflatable buoys approx. 500 meters apart (1 with red rings, keep mark to port and 1 with green rings, keep mark to starboard). This gate will be located approx. midway between Eagle Rock and Crawfish Rock (unless there is a shortened course).



NOTE: KEEP WELL CLEAR OF EAGLE AND CRAWFISH DUE TO ADJACENT ROCKS.

- 11.5 A straightening mark will be set to the northeast of the Cowes Yacht Club approximately 100 metres due east of the finish mark. This mark shall be left to starboard prior to heading for the finish line.

12 THE START

- 12.1 Races will be started in accordance with Rule 26 with the warning signal given 5 minutes before the first starting signal. Starting times between divisions will be announced at the briefing.
- 12.2 Start Line - The starting line will be between an orange flag displayed on the race committee boat and the pin end mark (orange inflatable buoy). The race committee boat may stream a barging buoy, which will be considered an extension of the race committee boat.
- 12.3 The Race Officer at their discretion will inform skippers at briefing if a multiple division start will be applied. This will be based on the total number of entrants.

Division 3 will start first followed by Division 2, followed by Division 1. If required, Divisions may be combined for the start (depending on number of entrants), this will be advised at the pre-race briefing with Division flags flown on the start boat. Division 3 will start at the published start time unless signalled otherwise.

13 THE FINISH

- 13.1 The finish mark will be a black and white chequered "Purple Hen" inflatable buoy, set approximately 100 metres off the beach in front of Cowes Yacht Club in line of sight with the race control room. The finish line shall be crossed from East to West (keep the finish mark to starboard) to complete the race after rounding the straightening buoy as defined in 11.5 above. This shall be the same if the race is shortened.

See item 9.3: *Yachts while racing must stay outside the Parks Victoria 5 knot inshore zones.*

- 13.2 After finishing the race, boats are not permitted to re-cross the finish line deliberately. Any boat so crossing the finish line after their original finish line crossing shall be scored the time of their subsequent and or/ latest finish.
- 13.3 Boats that have finished are to land on the western side of the Cowes Yacht Club boat ramp to keep the finish line clear.

14 PENALTY SYSTEM

- 14.1 RRS 44.1 is changed so that the Two-Turns Penalty is replaced by the One-Turn Penalty.



- 14.2 A boat that has taken a penalty or retired under rule 31 TOUCHING A MARK, or 44.1 Taking a Penalty, shall complete an acknowledgement form at the race office within the protest time limit.

15 TIME LIMITS

- 15.1 The time limits defined below may be changed or overridden at the discretion of the Race Officer in response to changes in the prevailing weather conditions.
- 15.2 The North East Mark Time Limit, Shortened Course Time Limit and Race Time Limit (see RRS 35) are shown in the table below.

North East Mark Time Limit	Shorten Course Time limit	Race Time Limit
3.5 HOURS (From last start)	3.5 HOURS (From last start)	7 HOURS (From last start)

- 15.3 The time limit for boats to pass the North East rounding mark (as defined in Section 11.3 Marks of the Course) shall be 3.5 HOURS from the last division starting time of the race or they will be disqualified.

If a shorten course has been signalled, the time limit to round the shorten course mark (as defined in Section 10.2) shall be 3.5 HOURS from the last division starting time of the race or they will be disqualified.

If no boat has passed the North East mark or the Shorten Course mark within the mark time limit, the race will be abandoned.

- 15.4 The total time limit for all boats to complete the race shall be 7 HOURS from the starting time of the last start of the race. The time limit may be changed at the discretion of the Race Officer. This change will be communicated by VJ3CK on the VHF race frequency from the Race Committee. Competitors on the water will be advised (where possible) by committee boats.
- 15.5 In the case of a multiple division start, the time limit for all divisions will commence from the start time of LAST start.
- 15.6 Boats that fall behind the fleet by an excessive distance will be finished on the water as DNF. This is a safety call to be made by the OOD and is not up for discussion. The boat will receive instructions from an official boat based on its position on the course and must follow these instructions without question.

16 HEARING REQUESTS

- 16.1 Protests and requests for redress shall be lodged in writing on a [AS protest form](#) (available at race control) with the Officer of the Day within one hour of the protesting yacht arriving back at CYC.



- 16.2 The time and place of protest hearing(s) shall be posted on the notice board by 1900 hours. Protests shall be heard not later than the following day.
- 16.3 The Protest Committee will consist of a chairman and at least two members, convened by the Officer of the Day in consultation with the sailing committee.
- 16.4 Requests for redress against the race committee may be heard by a protest committee comprising club members, who do not have an interest in the outcome, subject to approval by the protester and race committee, otherwise a protest committee from outside the club will be appointed.

17 SAFETY REGULATIONS

- 17.1 The safety regulations prescribed in RRS Australian Sailing Special Regulations Part 2 (Off the Beach Boats) shall apply to all Off the Beach Boats competing in this event.

All boats entering are subject to the direction and control of the Sailing Committee and all boat owners shall make a declaration of safety compliance when registering their boat for the race. Cowes Yacht Club Inc reserves the right to inspect all competing boats for safety and reserves the right to refuse entry if the boat is deemed, for any reason, not to be fit to race. Acceptance of an entry is in no way a validation by Cowes Yacht Club Inc of the seaworthiness of a boat.

- 17.2 It is a condition of entry that all boats have adequate functional righting lines and that at least 3 litres of water per person is carried on board. One waterproof LED torch is required to be carried. Failure to comply with these conditions will result in the entry being denied. (All boats will be checked before the start.)
- 17.3 Hydration packs ('Camelbaks') will be allowed during this race for hydration purposes only (up to 2 litre capacity). Penalties (up to and including disqualification) may apply for packs exceeding this size. Competitors should also consider the increased potential for injury if using these items due to the extra weight being carried for a sustained period of time (particularly on younger competitors).
- 17.4 The installation and use of the GPS based tracking system is mandatory. Supplier staff will issue the units and assist with any questions. Boat crews shall be solely responsible for the loss or damage to a tracking device supplied.
- 17.5 All skippers of boats that have entered MUST SIGN ON at time of issue of the tracking system unit and when finished MUST SIGN OFF by returning the Tracking unit to the supplier representative within 30 minutes of the last boat finishing. Failure to comply will result in disqualification.
- 17.6 The skipper or crew of boats that do not finish or wish to indicate retirement, shall do so as soon as possible by contacting an official boat that acknowledges this retirement.

Similarly, boats that enter but do not start, shall SIGN OFF by returning the Tracking unit to the supplier representative and registering as DNS as soon as possible.



If a boat is unable to finish or to make it back to Cowes Yacht Club, they should inform Cowes Yacht Club via VHF radio (VJ3CK) or by telephone before 1800 hours on (03) 5952 2330 and talk directly to the Officer of the Day to explain why.

It is the entrant's responsibility to return the Tracking unit to the supplier representative.

- 17.7 In the interests of safety, the race committee reserves the right to postpone or abandon the event at any time.
- 17.8 Racing for the day will be abandoned if a Gale Force or higher warning is current on the morning of the race (as issued by the Bureau of Meteorology).
- 17.9 All boats should report to Cowes Race Control any observed significant circumstances that may adversely affect the safety of any of the competitors in the race.
- 17.10 Boats shall report to Cowes Race Control all incidents that have resulted in injury or serious damage or are of an adverse nature that could affect the safety of the boat or crew while racing. Boats involved in the incident shall lodge with the CYC an Incident Declaration at the first reasonable opportunity.
- 17.11 The carrying of a VHF Marine hand-held radio and/or a personal locator beacon and strobe beacon light is highly recommended but not mandatory for this event. Race Control should be notified of these devices prior to the race if any of them are to be utilised.

18 REPLACEMENT OF CREW OR EQUIPMENT

- 18.1 Substitution of competitors or boat is not allowed without prior written approval of the Cowes Yacht Club Sailing Committee.

19 EQUIPMENT AND MEASUREMENT CHECKS

- 19.1 A boat or equipment may be inspected at any time for compliance with the class rules, notice of race and sailing instructions.
NOTE: A BOAT THAT DOES NOT COMPLY WITH CLASS RULES WILL RESULT IN THE ENTRY BEING DENIED.

20 OFFICIAL VESSELS

- 20.1 Official vessels will be identified as follows: Flying Cowes Yacht Club burgee or any other Westernport Yacht club's burgees (E.g., Somers YC, Westernport YC, etc.).

21 RUBBISH DISPOSAL

- 21.1 Rubbish may be placed aboard official [or support person] vessels or brought back to CYC, but must not be dropped overboard.



22 PRIZES

- 22.1 The winner and minor placings shall be determined on finishing position and corrected time using the current AS yardstick.

Note: All boats who finish in a prize-winning position will be inspected to ensure they conform to the appropriate class rules. Any boat that does NOT conform to these class rules will be disqualified without REDRESS. Refer RRS 78.2

All race prizes are to be presented at the conclusion of the race at the post-race meeting. Perpetual Trophies will be engraved with winners' names and remain at Cowes Yacht Club.

Please see [Addendum 2](#) for Prize Money and Allocation of Prizes.

23 RISK STATEMENT

- 23.1 RRS 3 states: 'The responsibility for a boat's decision to participate in a race or to continue to race is hers alone.' By participating in this event each competitor agrees and acknowledges that sailing is a potentially dangerous activity with inherent risks. These risks include strong winds and rough seas, sudden changes in weather, failure of equipment, boat handling errors, poor seamanship by other boats, loss of balance on an unstable platform and fatigue resulting in increased risk of injury. **Inherent in the sport of sailing is the risk of permanent, catastrophic injury or death by drowning, trauma, hypothermia, or other causes.**

All those taking part in this race conducted by Cowes Yacht Club Inc do so at their own risk and responsibility. Cowes Yacht Club Inc is not responsible for the seaworthiness of a boat whose entry is accepted, or for the sufficiency or adequacy of its equipment or its crew. In accordance with Rule 76 EXCLUSION OF BOATS OR COMPETITORS, Cowes Yacht Club Inc reserves the right to refuse entry to any boat, subject to the conditions of Rule 76.

Attention is drawn to RRS 3 "Decision to Race" which states, "*The responsibility for a boat's decision to participate in a race or to continue racing is hers alone.*"

No liability is accepted by Cowes Yacht Club Inc, its officers, members and volunteers for the loss of life or property, personal injury or damage caused by participation in or arising out of this race. These sailing instructions in no way limit or reduce the complete and unlimited responsibility of a competitor being solely and entirely responsible for the management of the boat they are sailing.

24 INSURANCE

- 24.1 Each participating boat shall be insured with valid third-party liability insurance with a minimum cover of \$10,000,000 per incident or the equivalent. Evidence of current and valid insurance compliance shall be provided at time of online race entry.

North West turning gate (btw Eagle Rock & Crawfish Rock)

North East turning point

YARINGA

FAIRHAVEN

FRENCH ISLAND

McLEODS

GRANTVILLE

QUEENSFERRY

CORINELLA

RHYLL

COWES

STONY POINT

TANKERTON

SHIPPING ANCHORAGE

PORT

ELIZABETH IS.

COBB BLUFF

REEF ISLAND

RED ROCK POINT

WATERLOO CREEK

RADIO TOWER

OBSERVATION POINT

RAIL LANE

ACCESS LANE

HASTINGS PORT LIMIT

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Addendum 1 – Exclusion Zones





ADDENDUM 2 – PRIZE MONEY AND ALLOCATION OF PRIZES

Prizes will be awarded as per the following if entries received number 50 or more.
Other than line honours, all categories must have a minimum of 3 boats in the division

NOTE: A lower number of entries (49 or less) will result in a reduced total prize pool. This lower prize pool will be announced at the pre-race briefing. An entry may be eligible for multiple prizes. For example: 1ST Corrected time AND 1st all female crew on corrected time.
Division prize money may be adjusted at the discretion of the organizers if there are low/high numbers of entrants in a division.

CORRECTED TIME (HANDICAP) RESULTS

1st entrant in each Division to complete the course and cross the finish line (on corrected time) as per Australian Sailing's current handicaps as at [AS yardsticks](#). The entrant must have satisfied all requirements of the Sailing Instructions.

1st PRIZE OF \$1,500.

2nd entrant in each Division to complete the course and cross the finish line (on corrected time) as per Australian Sailing's current handicaps as at [AS yardsticks](#). The entrant must have satisfied all requirements of the Sailing Instructions.

2nd PRIZE OF \$750.

3rd entrant in each Division to complete the course and cross the finish line (on corrected time) as per Australian Sailing's current handicaps as at [AS yardsticks](#). The entrant must have satisfied all requirements of the Sailing Instructions.

3rd PRIZE OF \$350.

1st entrant overall to complete the course and cross the finish line (on corrected time) as per Australian Sailing's current handicaps as at [AS yardsticks](#). The entrant must have satisfied all requirements of the Sailing Instructions.

1st PRIZE OF \$1000 plus ISLE OF WIGHT PERPETUAL TROPHY

1ST ALL FEMALE CREW

1st all female entry and crew to complete the course and cross the finish line (on corrected time) having fulfilled all the requirements of the Sailing Instructions.

PRIZE OF \$500.

1ST FEMALE SKIPPER

1st female skipper (must helm at all times) and crew (can be male) to complete the course and cross the finish line (on corrected time) having fulfilled all the requirements of the Sailing Instructions.

PRIZE OF \$500.

LINE HONOURS - FASTEST FINISH TIME

Outright Line Honours Winner - fastest entrant to complete the course and cross the finish line, the entrant must have satisfied all requirements of the Sailing Instructions.

1st PRIZE OF \$1,000



2ND FASTEST FINISH TIME

2nd fastest entrant to complete the course and cross the finish line, the entrant must have satisfied all requirements of the Sailing Instructions.

2nd PRIZE OF \$350

3RD FASTEST FINISH TIME

3rd fastest entrant to complete the course and cross the finish line, the entrant must have satisfied all requirements of the Sailing Instructions.

3rd PRIZE OF \$200

SPECIAL PRIZES.

Special Prizes may be awarded at the discretion of the race committee.

Note: AS Yardstick URL = <https://www.sailingresources.org.au/ratings-hub/yardsticks/>