

## 1 NOTICES AND COMMUNICATIONS

Official notice board & SORC website

<https://www.offshoresolo.com/>

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VHF: SORC RACE CONTROL Preferred

Channel 72

Back-up

Channel 77

- a) Until 1200 on the day before the race (or the first race in a sequence run on successive days), amendments to Sailing Instructions (SIs) will if possible be distributed by email and may also be posted on the SORC website. If a competitor will not have access to their email, it is their sole responsibility to inform the Race Officer (RO), who will endeavour to communicate by other means.

Amendments made thereafter may be notified by Short Message Service (SMS) and will be broadcast on VHF before the start. Competitors will be given as much notice as is practicable.

- b) Competitors should ensure they have on board a functional mobile phone for the number provided for their boat.

## 2 CHANGES TO RULES

Changes to the rules are described as appropriate within this document. Additional changes are listed below. The race-specific SIs may change other rules.

- a) Racing Rules of Sailing (RRS) 44 is changed as described in Section 8e).
- b) RRS 56.2 is changed as described in Section 5; Section B of World Sailing Appendix TS, Traffic Separation Schemes (TSS), applies.
- c) RRS 63.1 and A5 are changed as described in Sections 4c), 5c), 8a) & b), and Appendix 1. A boat penalised without a hearing is entitled to one upon request.
- d) RRS 41(c) is replaced as described in Section 6a).
- e) The Race Officer (RO) shall protest a boat if a vessel, coastguard or Port Authority makes a complaint under the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (IRPCAS) or local by-laws. This changes RRS 60.2.
- f) If there is conflict between the SIs and the Notice of Race, the specific SIs for each event will prevail over the General SIs, which will prevail over the Notice of Race. This changes RRS 63.7.
- g) RRS 77 does not apply. Each boat shall display clearly a sail number or numbers as given on the entry form.

## 3 SAFETY

- a) The organisers reserve the right at their absolute discretion to abandon, amend or amalgamate races, giving as much notice as is reasonably possible. Starts may be postponed or brought forward, the start line moved and/or the course changed if the RO considers that this is advisable in the prevailing or forecast meteorological conditions. No decision taken by the RO, Race Director or Race Committee will in any way whatsoever affect or reduce the responsibility of individual skippers to decide whether to race or continue racing.

- b) In the event of being delayed significantly beyond other competitors eg gear failure, fouling a net, or any other reason that a boat's track may give rise to concern over the safety of the skipper, then every effort shall be made to get an appropriate message to the RO. If out of range for telephone contact, other methods should be used such as relaying a message via another competitor or contacting the coastguard using VHF.

**It is imperative that unnecessary safety alerts are avoided and that yachts that are no longer competing can be excluded from any Search and Rescue operation. Failure to comply with the requirements of this section may lead to exclusion from future SORC racing.**

- c) The organisers may involve the authorities and emergency contact if they have concerns for the safety of any competitor. Competitors are encouraged to contact the RO if their progress may give cause for concern.
- d) SORC strongly recommends wearing a life jacket and harness at all times whilst on deck. Therefore, the RO will not fly flag Y (RRS 40).
- e) An Automatic Identification System (AIS) transponder, a personal AIS beacon and a personal locator beacon (PLB) are strongly recommended for all races, whether or not required by the Offshore Special Regulations. It is strongly recommended that skippers carry the beacons on their person at all times when on deck and consider how they might reach and activate them when in the water with lifejacket inflated.
- f) No anchor shall protrude over the bow while racing.
- g) Boats are encouraged to use engines to avoid safety threatening situations. See Section 4 below for applicable rules.

#### **4 ENGINES & POWER**

- a) Sail handling must be performed by the manpower of the skipper alone.
- b) If a boat arrives in the start area after her preparatory signal under engine or tow, she must not start until at least 5 minutes after her start signal and at least 4 minutes after stopping her engine or dropping her tow. A boat that arrives in the starting area after completion of the start sequence may start by crossing the start line described in the specific sailing instructions.
- c) A boat that uses her engine to get clear after grounding shall stop using her engine as soon as she is clear, notify the use of her engine to the RO with her finish declaration, and accept a penalty of 30 minutes added to her elapsed time. This changes rules 63.1 and A5.
- d) A boat may use any form of propulsion to avoid commercial shipping, to comply with IRPCAS or government rules to cross or depart from a shipping channel, zone or lane, to avoid collision or in a grave emergency, or for other reason. When she initially gains a significant advantage from this propulsion, she may continue to use the propulsion to remove that advantage.

The facts, including exact time of engine start and finish, and exact distance and track covered whilst under power, must be recorded in the boat's log and notified in the finish declaration. Time spent not racing shall count towards the elapsed time of the boat. As permitted by rule 42.3(i), provided the boat did not gain a significant advantage, no penalty will be imposed. If the RO believes that an advantage may have been gained, the RO shall protest the boat.

#### **5 TRAFFIC SEPARATION SCHEMES**

Amending RRS 56.2:

- a) A TSS shall be understood to mean an area shown on a nautical chart as a TSS. All TSSs shall be designated obstructions.
- b) When racing, a boat shall not enter a TSS and, while near a TSS, shall not impede, or present a threat of impeding, a vessel using a TSS traffic lane.

- c) For a breach of this SI, the RO shall, without a hearing, apply a standard time penalty of 20%, unless the breach was unavoidable and unintentional and no advantage was gained. This changes RRS 63.1 and A5. Should the RO consider the standard penalty to be inappropriate, it may protest the boat.

## **6 OUTSIDE HELP**

- a) RRS 41(c) is replaced by the following:

help in the form of information which is freely available to all boats, which shall include navigational, weather, tide or current information from any source which is available to all boats whether or not by payment of a fee or subscription, but shall not include any information gathered or the subject of interpretation by, or any advice received from, any source not on board the boat and which is specific to the boat and her situation.

*By way of example and interpretation, downloading charts, weather and/or tidal GRIB files from subscription services, or having such information passed to the boat in its pure form, is permitted but receiving messages or information which is the result of interpretation as it applies to the boat is not permitted.*

## **7 DECLARATION, RETIREMENT AND REPORTING**

- a) After finishing, competitors shall text (SMS) a finish declaration to the RO. This text shall include:

- their finish time (in BST to the second), boat name and sail number;
- any penalty taken during the race;
- other matters in accordance with Sections 4b), 4c), 4d), 8a) and 8e).
- intention to protest, if applicable.

By sending this text, a boat is declaring that she completed the race in accordance with the rules.

- b) The finish declaration must be made as soon as possible and no later than 1 h after finishing.
- c) If the RO is observing the finish, times taken by the RO shall have precedence over those declared by competitors.
- d) In the exceptional event that a boat is unable to complete the text declaration as described above, she may declare to the RO using other means. This declaration shall be considered valid if accepted by the RO.
- e) **If retiring, the boat shall inform the RO as soon as possible using any means.** The message shall include the time, the boat name, sail number, the fact that she is retiring, and her intentions regarding onward passage. This final item is for information only and no inference of responsibility for monitoring the boat's onward passage shall be assumed.

If, after attempting contact with the RO, the boat does not get timely confirmation that her communication has been received, she should adopt alternative means to ensure the RO has been informed, if need be via another competitor or by informing the authorities directly.

## **8 PROTESTS, PENALTIES AND REDRESS**

- a) The RO may give time allowances to boats that have temporarily suspended racing to give aid to another vessel or similar circumstances. This changes RRS 63.1 and A5.
- b) Starting errors:  
Late to starting area: see Section 4b).

Other errors: If a boat makes other errors, provided that no significant advantage was gained, she will be penalised by adding at least 5 minutes to her elapsed time. If a significant advantage was gained, her penalty shall be to retire. This changes RRS 63.1 and A5.

- c) The protest time limit is four hours after the last boat finishes.
- d) Amending RRS 61.3, protests may be submitted to the RO by any written means including SMS and this shall constitute delivery to the race office.
- e) Amending RRS 44, the penalty for infringing a rule of IRPCAS between boats racing at night (see Notice of Race Section 7a) is 10 mins added to the boat's elapsed time. However, if the boat caused injury or serious damage or, despite taking a penalty, gained a significant advantage in the race or series by her breach, her penalty shall be to retire. The facts must be recorded in the boat's log and declared in the finish declaration.
- f) Other penalties are at the discretion of the protest committee and may be less than disqualification. The protest committee will refer to Royal Yachting Association guidance on discretionary penalties in assessing penalties.



## Competitor Start Boat Procedure

Version 1.0 - 3 April 2021

The competitor start boat (CSB) will be designated before the time check and will coordinate the starting procedure using announcements on VHF. Where possible, the CSB will fly a SORC battle flag from the backstay and transmit on AIS.

Competitors shall keep clear of the CSB from the Warning signal until the end of the start sequence, and the CSB shall be exonerated from any breach of a rule of Part 2 of the RRS. After the Preparatory signal until the end of the start sequence, any boat that impedes, or causes another boat to impede, the CSB will be subject to a penalty of at least 5 minutes added to her elapsed time and may be disqualified without a hearing (changes RRS 63.1 and A5).

The intended sequence of VHF announcements is as follows:

- 30 minutes before the start: time check; course
- 15 minutes before the start: start type; course
- 5 minutes to start: Warning signal
- 4 minutes to start: Preparatory signal
- 1 minute to start (if possible)
- Countdown to start (if possible).

Starts will use one of the following procedures.

### Gate start

- Fifteen minutes before the Start signal, the CSB will identify her intended position at the Start signal using an appropriate navigation mark, by giving a GPS position, or by circling in that area.
- Approximately 30 seconds before the Start signal, the CSB will begin sailing close hauled on port tack in the direction of the course.
- Competitors shall start by passing astern of the CSB on starboard tack after the Start signal.
- The CSB will hold the same close-hauled course for 3 minutes after the Start signal or until all competitors have passed astern of the CSB if shorter.
- At 3 minutes after the Start signal, any boat that is behind a virtual line drawn at 90 degrees to the CSB heading from the helm position on the CSB and to leeward of the CSB will be deemed to have started.
- Any other boat that has not started correctly (i.e., has not passed astern of the CSB within 3 minutes of the Start signal and is not behind and to leeward of the CSB at 3 minutes after the Start signal) may exonerate herself by rounding the position identified in a). Otherwise, she shall be scored OCS.

### Off-wind start

- Boats shall not hoist a spinnaker, including one furled or in a sock, until after the starting signal.
- Fifteen minutes before the Preparatory signal, the CSB will identify her intended position at the Preparatory signal using an appropriate navigation mark, by giving a GPS position, or by circling in that area.
- At the Preparatory signal, the CSB will start to sail in the direction of the course as slowly as practical.
- At the Start signal all boats behind a virtual line drawn at 90 degrees to the CSB heading from the helm position on the CSB and to leeward of the CSB will be deemed to have started.

- e) Any boat that is not in this quadrant may exonerate herself by sailing behind and to leeward of the furthest back boat in the start within 10 minutes of the Start signal before continuing. Otherwise, she shall be scored OCS.