



THE ROYAL WESTERN YACHT CLUB OF ENGLAND

The RWYC PLYMOUTH FASTNET 500 RACE 2026

PLYMOUTH - FASTNET ROCK - PLYMOUTH

NOTICE OF RACE

SUNDAY 16th August 2026

RWYC PLYMOUTH FASTNET RACE 2026 NOTICE OF RACE

1. ORGANISATION

The Organising Authority (OA) will be the Royal Western Yacht Club of England (RWYC).

2. OBJECT

The Race is intended to be a sporting event and to provide a sailing challenge to Corinthian sailors over a traditional course. A test of skill and endurance; safer by modern design, innovation, standards and training but not without risk and the need for excellent seamanship.

3. COURSE

The course will be from a Start Line in Plymouth Sound, around the Fastnet Rock, to the Finish Line in Plymouth Sound. Marks of the course will be defined in the Sailing Instructions (SI's).

4. RULES AND REGULATIONS

- 4.1 The event shall be governed by the following documents, complemented and/or modified by the SI's:
- a. The World Sailing (WS) Racing Rules of Sailing (RRS) (<https://www.sailing.org/inside-world-sailing/rules-regulations/racing-rules-of-sailing/>) and the RYA Prescriptions, except in the rules modified in Notice of Race (NoR) rule 4.2.
 - b. The current WS Offshore Special Regulations (OSR) Category 2 (<https://www.sailing.org/inside-world-sailing/rules-regulations/offshore-special-regulations>), except in the regulations modified in NoR 4.3.
 - c. International Rules for the Prevention of Collisions at Sea Part B (Steering & Sailing) (COLREGS).
 - d. Class Rules as recognised by WS.
 - e. The RWYC NoR and any amendments.
 - f. The RWYC SIs and any amendments.

4.2 The following RRS have been modified:

- a. Under World Sailing Test Rule DR21 – 01, change the definition **START** as follows:
START: A boat starts when her hull having been entirely on the pre-start side of the starting line, and having complied with Rule 30.1 if it applies, any part of her hull crosses the starting line from the pre-start side to the course side either
 - a) at or after her starting signal, or
 - b) during the last minute before her starting signalWhen a boat starts in accordance with item b) of the definition **START**, she shall not return to the pre-start side of the line, and the starting penalty shall be 30 minutes added to her elapsed time. This changes Rules 29.1, 30, A5.1
- b. Rule 44.1 is deleted.
- c. Rule 52 (Manual Power) is deleted.
- d. Rule 56.2 is changed to:
56.2 (a) A Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) shall be understood to mean an area shown on a nautical chart, or in the notice of race, as a TSS.
(b) 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.
- e. Part 2 rules are replaced by the right-of-way Rules of the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGS) between the times of local sunset and sunrise.
- f. Rule 41c is deleted

4.3 The following OSR have been modified:

- a. Regulation 3.07.3 (Escape Hatches - multihulls) modified in NoR 6.5.1.
- b. Regulation 3.29.13 (AIS) extended in NoR 6.5.2
- c. Regulation 4.01.2 (Sail Number) extended in NoR 11.
- d. Regulation 5.01 (Lifejacket) extended in NoR 6.5.3.

4.4 The following IRC rules have been modified:

- a. IRC Rule 15.2d shall not apply to Double-handed or Single-handed classes.
- b. IRC Rule 22.4.2 is deleted and replaced by “The maximum number of crew while racing shall be the Crew Number printed on her certificate plus two. There is no weight limit.”

4.5 The current OSR Category 2 rules shall be followed as closely as possible. Where a boat is unable to comply with a particular rule the boat may be permitted to compete at the discretion of the RWYC provided that an alternative measure is incorporated or embarked in the boat that provides equivalent safety and does not confer a racing advantage. In these circumstances, full details shall be submitted to the RWYC for approval when applying for entry.

4.6 Boats may be inspected to check compliance with OSR.

5. SCHEDULE

- 5.1 Entries open Monday 3rd November 2025.
- 5.2 The Entry Date by which all entries must be received is Tuesday 30th June 2026.
- 5.3 The Closing Date by which the boat and crew must have qualified, all required documents submitted, and payments made is Friday 31st July 2026. The "Early Bird" date by which 10% discounted entry fees must be paid is 31st March 2026.
- 5.4 The Qualification Date by which the boat and crew must have sailed the qualifying distance (NoR 6.7.2) is 31st July 2026.
- 5.5 Registration must be completed by 1800 on Friday 14th August 2026.
- 5.6 The Person in Charge must attend the Skippers Briefing at 1000 on Saturday 15th August 2026. Time and Location TBC
- 5.7 The Start of the Race will be at 1200 British Summer Time (BST) on Sunday 16th August 2026.

6. ELIGIBILITY

- 6.1 The Race is open to monohull and multihull boats with a minimum LOA of 27ft (8.23m) and a maximum LOA of 70ft (21.34m).
- 6.2 Boats may race fully crewed, two-handed or single handed. At least one of the crew shall be over the age of 18 by the Start date.
- 6.3 Boats may sail rated (IRC / MOCRA), unrated, or Level. Monohull boats not racing under IRC shall satisfy the RWYC that they meet the requirements of other stability indices for the category of race.
- 6.3.1 Rated and Level rated boats shall submit a copy of their current rating or class certificate to the RWYC and keep a copy on board during the race.
- 6.4 Boats must conform to the requirements of the rules in NOR 4. The RWYC reserves the right to exclude any boat which fails to meet these criteria.
- 6.5 Responsibility for compliance with the OSR rests with the Person in Charge. However the RWYC will endeavour to help Competitors to understand the OSR and reserves the right to conduct an OSR inspection on any boat at any time. The following extensions to the safety regulations are required for the Race.
- 6.5.1 Escape Hatches - Replace OSR 3.07.3 with: Multihulls shall have escape hatch(es) as detailed in OSR 3.07.2
- 6.5.2 The Automatic Identification System (AIS) transponder (required by OSR 3.29.1) must be active (switched on, transmitting and receiving) at all times during the Race. The racing name of the boat must be transmitted in addition to the MMSI number.
- 6.5.3 Safety and Life Saving Equipment - lifejackets (OSR 5.01) must be worn, and crew overboard beacons (OSR 4.22) must be carried, at all times while on deck.
- 6.5.4 Monohull boats not racing under IRC shall satisfy the RWYC that they meet the requirements of other stability indices for a Category 2 race.
- 6.6 Boats shall have a minimum Third Party Liability insurance of at least £3,000,000.

6.7 Experience:

- 6.7.1 The RWYC Plymouth Fastnet 500 Race is not a race for novices. Every crew member must have experience of sailing a boat offshore and be prepared to encounter heavy weather. Competitors may be required to provide evidence of their offshore experience.
- 6.7.2 The minimum qualifying experience requirement is 200 nautical miles of offshore sailing on the boat entered into the Race within 18 months of the start of the Race. This may be completed in one race, two races one of which must be overnight, or a single offshore cruise of 200 miles measured between not more than 2 turning points. Qualifying must be completed Solo sailors and both double handed sailors or at least 30% of the boats crew (but no fewer than 2) including the Person in Charge.
- 6.7.3 Neither the setting of this minimum nor the acceptance of an entry by the RWYC implies any warranty by the RWYC that a crew's experience is in fact adequate.

6.8 Training:

6.8.1 Offshore Personal Survival Training:

At least 30% of the boat's crew (but no less than 2), including the Person in Charge, must have completed training to Section 6 of the World Sailing Offshore Special Regulations and gained a certificate from a World Sailing approved Offshore Personal Survival Training Course. Training must have taken place within 5 years of the start of the race.

6.8.2 First Aid Training:

At least one member of the boat's crew must have completed a First Aid Training Course and hold an in-date certificate. The course shall comply with OSR and have been completed within five years of the start of the race. The qualifications of Doctors, Paramedics or similarly trained medical professionals will be accepted, provided they are familiar with the topics in OSR Appendix H.

7. DIVISIONS

7.1 Monohulls

7.1.1 Fully – Crewed IRC

7.1.2 Half – Crewed IRC

Crew limited to the lesser of 6 or half the crew number on the certificate.

7.1.3 Two-Handed IRC

Entries must satisfy the committee that they have suitable and adequate experience and that their boat is appropriately organised for two-handed sailing.

7.1.4 Single Handed IRC

Entries must satisfy the committee that they have suitable and adequate experience and that their boat is appropriately organised for single-handed sailing.

7.1.5 Unrated

7.1.6 Level

Class 40 / Open 60. Open/ One-Design classes may be added if at least 4 entries request it.

7.2 Multihulls

7.2.1. MOCRA – fully crewed

7.2.2 Two-Handed MOCRA Division Entries must satisfy the committee that they have suitable and adequate experience and that their boat is appropriately organised for two- handed sailing.

7.3 Divisions may be split into classes depending on the number of entries. IRC and MOCRA classes shall be determined by ratings on the Closing Date or soon as possible after that date.



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8. ENTRY

- 8.1 Each boat shall enter using the [online entry system](#). **Entry Form** link is on the race page website. Submission of an entry will not guarantee a place in a race; all other entry requirements must be completed to the satisfaction of the RWYC.
- 8.2 £250 deposit shall be paid on entry. Payment of the full race entry fee shall be received by the RWYC on or before the Closing Date. The "Early Bird" offer is as per 5.3.
- 8.3 Payment may be made by bank transfer. Credit/debit cards only in person at the RWYC. The RWYC may accept other payment methods.
- 8.4 The entry application shall include:
 - a. A digital photograph of the Skipper for safety, security and publicity purposes (minimum of 1MB).
 - b. A digital photograph of the boat under sail for safety, security and publicity purposes (minimum of 1MB).
 - c. One hundred words in English each about the Skipper and the boat which may be used in the race programme, website and for publicity purposes.
- 8.5 A Person in Charge whose entry is rejected by the RWYC will be informed of the reason as soon as possible and Fees returned. The decision of the RWYC to reject an entry shall be final. In the event of rejection, payment shall be limited to the return of the Entry Fees paid.

8.6 Entry Fees –

The Royal Western Yacht Club of England Ltd. - Queen Anne's Battery - Plymouth PL4 0TW
Secretariat: 01752 660077. admin@rwyc.org www.rwyc.org



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Early Bird Offer is 10% discount from all fees if paid in full by 31st March 2026

£250 booking fee					
PF500 2023		member		non member	
Solo 2H					
30 feet	£	450.00		£	625.00
35 feet	£	550.00		£	725.00
40 feet	£	650.00		£	825.00
45 feet	£	750.00		£	925.00
50 feet	£	850.00		£	1,025.00
55 feet	£	950.00		£	1,125.00
60 feet	£	1,050.00		£	1,225.00

£250 booking fee				
PF500 2023				
½ or Fully Crewed				
Member		Non member		
30 feet	£ 650.00		£ 825.00	
35 feet	£ 750.00		£ 925.00	
40 feet	£ 850.00		£ 1,025.00	
45 feet	£ 950.00		£ 1,125.00	
50 feet	£ 1,050.00		£ 1,225.00	
55 feet	£ 1,150.00		£ 1,325.00	
60 feet	£ 1,250.00		£ 1,425.00	

8.6.1 The entry fee covers:

Crew T shirts, trackers, pre race breakfast, mooring fees for designated period before and after the race, finishing gift, race flag, BBQ tickets for crew.

8.7 Cancellations and Refunds

Cancellations before the Closing Date will be eligible for a refund of the race entry fee.

The full fee will be refunded if the OA has to cancel the race.

9. ACCEPTANCE

- 9.1 Competitors who have satisfied/completed the following requirements by the Closing Date will be accepted to race:
- a. Entry Fee is paid
 - b. Qualifying Evidence
 - c. Third Party Liability Insurance
 - d. Current IRC / IMOCA / MOCRA / Class Certificate as appropriate
 - e. Approved Offshore Personal Survival Training Certificate
 - f. National authority approved First Aid Certificate
 - g. Life-raft Certificate
 - h. EPIRB (406) Registration Certificate and PLB
 - i. VHF Ship Radio Licence
 - j. OSR Checklist (NoR 9.2)
 - k. Evidence of Structural (Keel and Rudder) Inspection as specified in OSR 3.02 and appendix L carried out by a qualified person.

At registration the Person in Charge shall confirm and sign the following:

- l. Offshore Race Information Form (completed by OA)
 - m. Race Declaration (NoR 9.3)
- 9.2 If an entry is not accepted (NoR 9.1) by 1800 on registration date, the boat shall not be allowed to start and the Entry Fee shall be forfeit.
- 9.3 The Person in Charge shall, by Closing Date, complete an Offshore Special Regulations (OSR) Checklist Category 2. An amended checklist is required if changes are made to the equipment onboard or the yacht changes ownership or charterer.
- 9.4 No boat will be permitted to race unless the Person in Charge has, before the start of the race, signed a declaration acknowledging their Responsibilities (NoR 15) and confirming their conformance to the Rules.

10. PENALTIES / ALLOWANCES

- 10.1 The breaking of any Rules shall be declared after finishing, turns (RRS 41) are not required.
- 10.2 Time penalties may be applied by the OA for Rule infringements.
- 10.3 Time allowances may be awarded by the OA for any time lost when going to the aid of other seafarers in distress.

11. SAIL NUMBERING AND FLAGS

- 11.1 The boat's existing sail number shall be used and displayed throughout the Race. No other number may be displayed. The number shall be on both sides of the mainsail, spinnaker, the topsides port and starboard
- 11.2 Numbers on the hull shall either be painted on or applied using an approved semi- permanent system which will not be removed by the action of the sea.
- 11.3 All boats may be issued with Race Flags. These flags shall be flown at all times. Failure to display Race flags may incur a penalty.

12. BERTHING

- 12.1 The RWYC will provide 48 hours of berthing prior to the race and from the time a boat finishes in Plymouth.

13. TRACKER SYSTEMS

- 13.1 Person in Charge shall fit the satellite tracker provided by the RWYC at registration. The RWYC shall claim payment from the competitor for the cost of the tracker if it is not returned at the end of/retirement from the Race.

14. PRIZES

- 14.1 Prizes will be awarded in each Class.
- 14.2 Prizes will be awarded at the RWYC on Friday 21st August 2026 and again at the RWYC annual Prize giving

15. RESPONSIBILITY

- 15.1 Rule 4 of the Racing Rules of Sailing states: "The responsibility for a boat's decision to participate in a race or to continue racing is hers alone." and Special Regulation 1.02.1 begins: "The safety of a yacht and her crew is the sole and inescapable responsibility of the Person in Charge...." Sailing is by its nature an unpredictable sport and therefore involves an element of risk. By taking part in the event, each competitor agrees and acknowledges that:
- a) They are aware of the inherent element of risk involved in the sport and accept responsibility for the exposure of themselves, their crew and their boat to such inherent risk whilst taking part in the event;
 - b) They are responsible for the safety of themselves, their crew, their boat and their other property whether afloat or ashore;
 - c) They accept responsibility for any injury, damage or loss to the extent caused by their own actions or omissions;
 - d) Their boat is in good order, equipped to sail in the event and they are fit to participate;

- e) The provision of a race management team, patrol boats if any, and other officials and volunteers by the organiser does not relieve them of their own responsibilities;
 - f) The provision of patrol boat cover is limited to such assistance, particularly in extreme weather conditions, as can be practically provided in the circumstances;
 - g) They are responsible for ensuring that their boat is equipped and seaworthy so as to be able to face extremes of weather; that there is a crew sufficient in experience and fitness to withstand such weather; and that the safety equipment is properly maintained, stowed and in date and is familiar to the crew
- 15.2 Starting and Continuing to Race the Race Committee will make starting signals unless in their opinion it is manifestly unsafe for any of the boats entered to remain in the vicinity of the starting line. Each boat shall exercise her responsibility under RRS Fundamental Rule 4 and decide whether or not to start or to continue to race.

16. APPLICABLE LAW

- 16.1 These Rules shall be interpreted in accordance with the Laws of England and Wales and the RWYC submit, or will submit, themselves only to the jurisdiction of the Courts of England and Wales as may be necessary to permit the resolution of legal actions with regard to these Rules, the conduct and organisation of the Race.

17. MEDIA RIGHTS

- 17.1 Competitors automatically grant to the OA, and any party to which it may delegate this right, without payment the right in perpetuity to make, use and show (including via the internet), any data, motion pictures, live, taped or filmed television or any other form of media, of or relating to the event.

18. FURTHER INFORMATION

- 18.1 For further information please visit the event website or send email to:

rcoceanic@rwyc.org
<https://rwyc.org/plymouth-fastnet-500-race/>

Competitors will be temporary members of the RWYC, and they and their families and friends are invited to make full use of the RWYC bar and catering facilities during the race.

The Race Office will be open from 1000 to 1600 from Wednesday 12th August to Saturday 15th August 2026 at the RWYC.

Competitors should note that The Royal Western Yacht Club implements the RYA Racing Charter and that they will be required to undertake to sail in compliance with the Charter, which can be found at the front of the RYA rule book (Racing Rules of Sailing), on the club website or at <https://www.rya.org.uk/racing/rules/racing-charter>