



2026 SEAS General Sailing Instructions (GSI)

The GSI are to be read together with the Specific Sailing Instructions (SSI) for the SEAS Cup, Admiralty Island Rally & Spirit of Admiralty races.

1 RULES

- 1.1 All races will be governed by the Racing Rules of Sailing (RRS) 2025-2028 (<http://www.sailing.org/documents/racingrules/>), including US SAILING Prescriptions, except as amended by these General Sailing Instructions (GSI) and Specific Sailing Instructions (SSI) contained in individual Race Notices. This GSI supersedes any previous instructions and apply to all SEAS racing events in this calendar year. In case of conflict between the GSI and the SSI for an event, the SSI shall govern.
- 1.2 The USCG Navigation Rules (COLREGS) govern interactions with non-competing vessels at all times.

2 ELIGIBILITY AND ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

- 2.1 SEAS races are open to all sailing yachts that meet the eligibility requirements below and submit registration form and fees prior to the respective race. Individual race registration forms must be **received** online prior to OR at the Skipper's Meeting, with applicable entry fees. See Specific Sailing Instructions for race fees. Yachts not registered are not eligible to compete.
- 2.2 Eligible sailing yachts shall be at least 20' LOA with a properly installed, functional engine. It is recommended that participating sailing yachts meet PIYA (*Pacific International Yachting Association*) *Safety Equipment Requirements* (<https://piya-sailing.com/sers/>) as follows:

Race Type	PIYA SER Category
Juneau Harbor Buoy Races	Nearshore
SEAS Cup Races Other Than Buoy Races	Nearshore
Spirit of Admiralty and Admiralty Island Rally	Coastal

The SEAS Race Committee will have final authority on eligibility.

- 2.3 Adequate insurance is both prudent and mandatory for racing. All yachts competing in events sponsored by SEAS shall be properly insured for racing by protection and indemnity (liability) insurance in the amount of not less than \$300,000 and the policy shall cover racing activities. **NOTE:** While encouraged, PHRF and US SAILING membership are not required for participation in SEAS races. *However, in support of the sport of sailing, we strongly recommend membership.*

3 CHANGES TO THE SAILING INSTRUCTIONS

- 3.1 Changes affecting the GSI and/or SSI must be posted on the SEAS website by the scheduled time of the Skippers' Meeting on race day. Changes may also be announced at the Skippers' Meeting. Failure to attend a Skippers' Meeting is not grounds for a protest. Any changes in accordance with this provision are binding on all competitors.

4 RATINGS

- 4.1 All handicapping will be based on PHRF Speed Potential ratings. Any sailboat that does not have a current PHRF rating will be assigned an appropriate rating by a SEAS Handicapper. Entrants must notify the appropriate Club Handicapper of any changes affecting their rating by the race entry deadline. See the PHRF Northwest website for more information: <http://www.phrf-nw.org/>



- 4.2 Unless otherwise indicated in specific sailing instructions for the event, races are sailed using the Time-on-Time correction method using the equation:

$$T_c = T_e \cdot (650 / (520 + \text{PHRF}))$$

Where **PHRF** is the boat's rating, T_e is the elapsed time in seconds, and T_c is the final corrected time in seconds.

- 4.3 All boats must sail in their standard configuration. Removal of tables, galley or other equipment, which is normally a part of the boat's standard configuration, is not permitted.

5 RACING DIVISIONS

- 5.1 No flying sails (NSF) divisions: No headsail may be used that is not hanked on to a permanent headstay with a minimum of eight hanks or inserted into a luff groove headfoil. Whisker poles may not exceed 80% of the LP of the largest rated headsail in accordance with PHRF Rules. (PHRF rules state that a pole can be used *only* on the side of the boat opposite the main boom.) A headsail must be lowered onto the deck before another is hoisted.
- 5.2 Flying sails (FS) divisions: Intention to sail in optional flying sails divisions (when offered) must be clearly indicated on the race registration form. NFS restrictions for changing headsails listed above do not apply to FS classes. However, PHRF rules governing FS boats are applicable.

6 IDENTIFICATION

- 6.1 Proper sail numbers shall be carried on mainsails, spinnakers and all headsails that exceed 130% of "J" measurement if possible.

7 TIME REFERENCE

- 7.1 All time references shall be GPS local time.

8 RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

- 8.1 Any boat that did not have a representative at the Skippers Meeting shall hail the Race Committee on **VHF channel 16** of their intentions to race at least 1 hour prior to race start. All boats shall monitor channel 16 until hailed by the Race Committee 30 minutes prior to race start.
- 8.2 The Race Committee shall move all pre-race radio transmissions to **VHF channel 68** to communicate GPS local time, race start signals, postponements, cancellations, recalls, changes in racing instructions, etc. A boat shall not make radio transmissions on channel 68 that may interfere with radio transmissions made by the Race Committee.
- 8.3 All boats shall return to **VHF Channel 16** following any communications on channel 68, especially if any commercial traffic is in the vicinity. A boat shall neither make radio transmissions while racing nor receive radio communications not available to all boaters.

9 STARTING TIME AND STARTING SIGNALS

- 9.1 The starting time will be as shown in the Race Notice unless there is a delayed start as prescribed in these rules. Refer to the RRS flag colors and meanings of other flags.
- 9.2 The Race Committee shall announce over channel 68 the following times until race start: 10-minutes (engines off), 5-minutes, 1-minute, and a 10-second count-down. Race start shall begin on a single sustained horn blast.



10 CANCELLATION AND ABANDONMENT

- 10.1 The Race Committee shall signal race cancellation or abandonment by three blasts of the safety horn/start gun. A race canceled or abandoned may be rescheduled. Registered entrants will receive notification by phone, mail or e-mail of the rescheduled date and start time. Entry fees for cancelled or abandoned races will not be refunded.

11 STARTING

- 11.1 The start line shall be between the Race Committee and a shore-based landmark, as designated in the individual Race Notice. After starting, racers may not pass between the Race Committee Boat and the mark except when finishing.
- 11.2 Any sailboat, while racing, that touches the Race Committee boat on station is automatically disqualified from the race unless caused to do so by another boat as substantiated by normal protest procedures. The disqualified boat is liable for any damages to the Race Committee boat.

12 RECALL SIGNALS

- 12.1 INDIVIDUAL RECALLS - Sail numbers and/or boat names will be announced by VHF channel 68 for each yacht over ahead of her starting signal.
- 12.2 GENERAL RECALL - There will not be a general recall.

13 FINISHING

- 13.1 Racers shall cross the finish line in the normal direction to the last mark, regardless of which end of the line the Race Committee Boat is on. Boats participating but not racing, and boats that have finished racing, must remain clear of the start-finish area. **Each participant shall record their finish time to the nearest second (HH:MM:SS) using GPS.** It is strongly suggested that participants maintain a GPS track line history and have that data available. GPS data may be requested by the race committee at the finish to be used for race analysis and playback at the awards ceremony.

14 SHORTENED COURSE

- 14.1 Where an Individual Race Notice provides an intermediate race mark, participants are required to record their rounding/crossing time in the same format as a finish time. In the event the race committee decides to end the race at the intermediate mark, notice will be made by the Race Committee on VHF Channel 68 and the intermediate time will be considered the finish time.

15 TIME LIMIT

- 15.1 A race shall be extended 30 minutes for all remaining boats when the first boat finishes within the designated time limit. See Individual Race Notices for time limits and extensions applicable to each race.

16 WITHDRAWALS

- 16.1 Boats that start and choose not to finish must notify the Race Committee at the earliest opportunity (via VHF channel 16 or in person) before leaving the course. Boats that do not comply will be scored "DSQ" instead of "DNF."

17 PROTESTS

- 17.1 Protests will be processed in accordance with Racing Rules 60-66. For convenience, when no serious damage is caused, the 720° Turns Penalty described in Racing Rule 44 may be used for



purposes of exoneration. To comply with the Penalty, a boat acknowledging a right-of-way infringement must sail clear of other yachts as soon as possible after the incident and complete her required turns as prescribed in the same Rule.

- 17.2 During a race, a sailboat intending to protest another boat shall conspicuously display Code Flag "B" or a red rectangular flag. Either flag is acceptable, regardless of any alteration to this rule made in the sailing instructions. The flag shall be displayed at the first reasonable opportunity, which normally is immediately after the incident. The protesting boat must also hail its intention at the first reasonable opportunity after the infraction and comply with the provisions of Racing Rule 61. The Race Committee must be notified of the protest on completion of the race. Protest must be delivered in writing to the Race Committee within 2 hours after finishing. It is each skipper's responsibility to respond to a protest in person at the time and place specified by the Race Committee.
- 17.3 The Race Committee may disqualify sailboats without protest for infringement of the GSI, the SSI or Individual Race Notice. (Amends Racing Rule 63.1).

18 SCORING FOR INDIVIDUAL RACES

- 18.1 Finish places will be computed based upon corrected time. Participants will receive points for finishing position based on Racing Rule A4 Low Point System.

NOTE: Special scoring rules in effect for series races are covered under "Series Scoring", below in these GSI.

19 SERIES SCORING FOR MULTIPLE RACE REGATTAS

- 19.1 A race that is officially cancelled or abandoned by the Race Committee (when no boats in any division finish) will not be used in computing series results. Similarly, a cancelled or abandoned race will not be counted in the total number of races in a series for the purpose of determining the number of series throw-outs allowed.
- 19.2 Finish places will be computed based upon corrected time. Boats will receive points for finishing position based on Racing Rule A4 Low Point System.
- 19.3 Series results will be scored based on Racing Rule A9. For purposes of posting mid-season results, the previous year's total number of boats entered will be used to calculate DNC points in each race.
- 19.4 Boats tied on cumulative points (or selective points where throw-outs are allowed and used in determining a boat's total points for a series) will be ranked by applying Racing Rule A8.1

20 TROPHIES

- 20.1 Only properly registered boats will be recorded in the race results. The boats will be competing for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place trophies. At the discretion of the Race Committee, the number of trophies for an event may be limited as follows:
- 1-3 boats starting: 1st Place
 - 4-5 boats starting: 1st and 2nd Place
 - 6 or more boats starting: 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place
- 20.2 Trophy presentations will occur at the post-season Awards Party (time & place TBD), subject to timely completion of any protest hearings.



Safety Guidance

See "PIYA SER Version 2024.0" for recommended safety equipment. Also:

- A satellite positioning system (GPS) is required onboard all racing vessels.
- All waste & water tanks, batteries & other heavy ship's gear shall be securely fastened.
- Belt pack life-jackets are not permitted. Personal floatation devices shall meet USCG regulations for Type III or higher, and be worn at all times during a sanctioned race.

1 ADDITIONAL SAFETY GUIDANCE

- All boats participating in SEAS events must meet US Coast Guard requirements for safety equipment, seaworthiness, and environmental concerns. It is strongly recommended that each boat pass a USCG Auxiliary Vessel Safety Check. See <http://www.safetyseal.net/> for more information.
- It is the responsibility of each racing skipper to be familiar with and observe the Racing Rules of Sailing, the USCG COLREGS (rules of the road), the GSI, the SSI, and applicable Juneau Harbor rules. Violations of any of these provisions can result in a warning, disqualification, or non-acceptance in future competition, depending on the severity of the violation. (This amends ISAF racing rule 63.1.)
- Maintaining a bow watch prior to the start signal is very strongly advised.
- Boats must not sail across a topline, too close ahead, or too close alongside of commercial traffic. Deep draft vessels have limited ability to change course and speed. Barges under tow can yaw unexpectedly well out to the side at speeds essentially the same as they are being towed. Recommendations for a safe distance (danger area) are at least ½ mile ahead and ¼ mile to the side.
- A boat in position where it may impede commercial vessel traffic must exit from the "danger area" immediately, under auxiliary power if necessary. If power is used, it must be reported to the Race Committee at the finish line. Also, a written report must be made on a protest form showing the location, time, duration of power use, speed, direction of exit, and that the competitive position of the boat was not improved. If the last item cannot be demonstrated adequately, a time penalty may be imposed. IMPORTANT: In order to meet this requirement, your engine must be able to start promptly. If your engine is an outboard, it must be mounted and ready to start.
- Commercial vessels may sound whistle signals. 5 short blasts means "get out of my way now!"
- Radar reflectors must be flown at all times when racing and be installed not less than 4 meters (13 ft.) above the water.
- Navigation lights must be shown between sunset and sunrise as required by the International Rules of the Road.
- Each boat shall have a functioning GPS device for navigational safety purposes, and the skipper/navigator shall know how to use it. The device shall have updated marine charts for providing location of known marine hazards. Back up paper navigation charts of the area are recommended.
- Observed and/or reported violations of the safety regulations will be handled by the Race Committee with the exception that the Race Committee shall have the option of issuing a "warning" when



deemed appropriate. Warnings are recorded; they may be considered in judging any future reports.

- A boat may be disqualified without a protest hearing for infraction of the above safety regulations. (Amends Racing Rule 63.1).
- The above safety regulations shall not be changed without coordination with other organizations involved, such as U.S. Coast Guard.

2 DISCLAIMER ON INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The skipper of each sailboat is responsible for any unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of the boat's crew. Infringement of Racing Rules 2, 3, or 69 (Gross Misconduct) may result in a competitor being excluded from further participation in the SEAS racing program.

Occasionally, sailboat racing has resulted in injury or loss of life. All competitors of SEAS events participate at their own risk. It is the responsibility of the skipper to inform the crew of the risks of sailboat racing; to make sure they understand and accept those risks; to determine the seaworthiness of the boat; to determine whether the crew is competent and adequate for the event under existing weather/sea conditions; and to decide whether to start or continue in a race.

3 SPECIAL NOTES & POINTS OF EMPHASIS

Following is a frank discussion of several problems that seem to plague SEAS races every year with some suggestions to make your sailing a little safer and much more satisfying.

This is a unique sport in which the competitors are responsible for being their own referees, umpires, and traffic cops! Initially SEAS had very few rules. However, with the increasing number of sailboats and the potential for serious damage, we now have rules and hear protests.

The intent of the rules is to prevent collisions and provide a safe environment for competitors. The protest process assures that the rules are followed. As a skipper participating in racing, it is your responsibility to read, understand, and follow the rules, including Part Two of the *Racing Rules of Sailing* (to which the US SAILING prescriptions are applied). These changes alter some prior practices.

The SEAS GSI provide for acknowledgment of a violation of the rules of "When Boats Meet" (RRS Part 2) by immediately sailing clear and doing two full turns (720° including 2 tacks and 2 gybes per Racing Rule 44.2) in the same direction. However, a competitor who causes serious damage or gains a significant advantage is required to retire (Racing Rule 44.1).

We strongly encourage this alternative penalty in lieu of a protest hearing. It keeps boats racing. However, if the offending boat does not respond to your hail, you do have the option of filing a formal protest in accordance with Racing Rule 61. If you pursue this avenue, keep in mind the following:

- You must fly a red protest flag *immediately* and hail the offending boat, saying "Protest" loudly. If you don't own a red flag, buy one or make one. (Code Flag "B" is always acceptable.) If you fly a red object other than a flag, your intention to protest may not be understood and is not valid.
- You are responsible for notifying the Race Committee of your protest at the time of your finish; for providing the boat name and sail number of the boat being protested; and for filing a written protest on time at SEAS website.



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- The other boat may file a counter protest.
- You must attend the Protest Hearing on time: bring all your witnesses with you. Protest times/locations will be posted at the SEAS website following filing.
- You may lose your protest or the other boat's counter protest may prevail.
- The race awards may be delayed, frustrating lots of anxious SEAS members.

If you hit a mark, the rules require you to sail clear of the mark and do *one* full turn (instead of two) as described above to exonerate yourself. You have no rights but you can get out of the way of other boats before starting your turns. However, given the rather unforgiving nature of most SEAS marks, the best advice is to allow plenty of room for rounding in the first place!

Avoid port-tacking the start unless you are very late, you are the only boat in your division, or you have warp boat speed and the tactical skills of Dennis Conner. In any event, make sure your insurance is paid up!

When used to wing out a jib in NSF events, spinnaker and whisker poles are allowed to extend only on the side ***opposite*** the boom, as prescribed by PHRF.

Only one sail may be carried forward of the mast unless the boat is specifically rated as a cutter or otherwise for double headsails. Boats rated with stays'ls may fly sails appropriate to that rating. In NFS classes, they also must lower one sail onto the deck before hoisting another *on the same stay*.

You must have an installed motor that works in order to race in SEAS events.

Respect tonnage. Don't push your "rights" with a cruise ship, a ferry or a tugboat towing 2 barges. *Know the ColRegs intimately.*

If you are fortunate enough to have boats starting ahead of you, use them to help you understand Juneau's currents – especially in the vicinity of Downtown Juneau, Marmion Island, and Point Retreat. Those boats ahead of you are also a very accurate wind indicator. Are they going faster or sailing higher? Would you rather be where they are?

Southeast Alaskan waters are very forgiving: you can usually navigate close to most shorelines without much trouble. However, unless you are planning an unscheduled bottom cleaning, pay particular attention to the tide level when sailing near Sandy Beach., Lucky Me, Battleship Island, and Strauss Rock (some boats find the submerged rocks every year).

If the Wind Gods fail you and discretion causes you to withdraw from a race, notify the Race Committee so they won't worry about you or disqualify you for failure to notify them of your withdrawal.

SEAS's race entry form requires you to have valid insurance; don't race without it. The form also asks that you monitor VHF Channel 16 when in or near the shipping lanes. This will not only help you make more informed tactical decisions regarding commercial traffic; it could also help to ensure your boat's safety.

ABOVE ALL, THE SKIPPER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SAFETY OF THE CREW AND BOAT.



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