



The Keelboat General Sailing Instructions

Version 9.3 Issued 26 September 2026

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1. ORGANISING AUTHORITY

(a) The Organising Authority is the Sailing Sub-Committee of the Russell Boating Club ("the Club").

2. WHAT RULES APPLY

(a) All the Club's keel boat races except the Tall Ships and Classic Invitation races will be sailed under the current operative Racing Rules of Sailing, including the Yachting New Zealand prescriptions, ("the Racing Rules") and under the current operative Safety Regulations of Sailing, including the Yachting New Zealand prescriptions ("The Safety Regulations") as further

amended and added to by these Sailing Instructions, and by applicable Notice of Races.

(b) Where there is a conflict between these Sailing Instructions and the Racing Rules or the Safety Regulations, these Sailing Instructions shall apply.

(c) Where a specific Notice of Race or set of Sailing Instructions or Course Sheet is issued for a particular race or series of races, this shall take precedence over these General Sailing Instructions.

(d) These Sailing Instructions do not apply to the Tall Ships or Classic Invitation races.

(e) Between sunset and sunrise Part 2 of the Racing Rules shall cease to apply and will be replaced with the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea.

(f) Competitors in the sport of sailing are governed by a body of rules that they are expected to follow and enforce. A fundamental principle of sportsmanship is that when competitors break a rule they will promptly take a penalty or retire.

(g) If a competitor contravenes any rule in Part 2 of the Racing Rules while racing, it can exonerate itself by getting well clear of other boats as soon after the incident as possible and taking a one turn penalty. This modifies rule 44.1 in the Racing Rules. If a competitor touches a mark while racing, a one turn penalty applies. If serious damage or a significant advantage results from a rule contravention, the competitor must retire.

(h) Rule 44.3 of the Racing Rules, which provide for scoring penalties, shall not apply.

(i) Notices to competitors will be posted on the Club's Race Announcements WhatsApp Group, in Racing News, and, where relevant to the running of a specific race, on VHF Channel 77 by the Officer of the Day at least 10 minutes before the scheduled race start time. Notices to competitors may also be posted on the Club Notice Board.

3. SKIPPER'S RESPONSIBILITY

(a) Competitors participate in the Club races at their own risk, see racing rule 3, *Decision to Race*. It is the sole responsibility of each competing skipper or other competitor to decide whether or not to start and to continue to race. By participating in Club races 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.** The Club will not accept any liability for material damage or personal injury or death sustained in conjunction with or prior to, during or after any race.

(b) It is the responsibility of all skippers to ensure that their vessel and equipment is, at all times, satisfactory and maintained to a standard to ensure the safety of crew and of other competitors.

(c) Competitor's attention is drawn to the fundamental rules of racing in Part 1 of the Racing Rules. *These cover helping those in danger, life-saving equipment and personal buoyancy, fair sailing, acceptance of the rules, the decision to race, rules governing organising authorities and officials, and application of world sailing regulations.*

(d) The Club and its Sailing Sub-Committee are not responsible for the actions of any vessel either participating in the races or not, except for committee and/or patrol boats.

4. SAFETY STANDARDS

(a) The following safety standards must be complied with:

- i. For keel boats and multihulls: Category 5 of Part II of the Safety Regulations.
- ii. For sports boats: Category B of Part VI of the Safety Regulations with the addition of a waterproof vhf radio and a second means of communication such as a mobile phone.
- iii. For trailer and sports trailer yachts (includes Elliott 5.9s): Category C of Part V of the Safety Regulations with the addition of a waterproof vhf radio and a second means of communication such as a mobile phone.
- iv. For Etchells: the safety equipment listed in the Appendix to these Sailing Instructions *Additional requirements are listed that apply when racing beyond a line between Tapeka Point and Brampton Buoy.*
- v. For unballasted centreboard and open yachts, sailboards, and ballasted yachts not covered by i to iv above (includes Tornado catamarans): Part 1 of the Safety Regulations with the addition of a waterproof vhf radio and a second means of communication such as a mobile phone. Where any race goes beyond the line between Tapeka Point to Brampton Buoy these vessels shall be accompanied by a motorised support boat carrying adequate safety gear when no official RBC safety boat is present. One support boat can support more than one competitor.
- vi. It is recommended that all personal floatation devices are at least to Type 402 (inshore waters) standard and have a whistle attached.

(b) All competitors are to sign a declaration that they comply with the relevant safety standards before the racing for the season. Failure to provide this declaration shall result in disqualification from races. *The RBC website has registration form for the season's racing which includes a declaration of compliance with required safety standards.*

(c) The Officer of the Day or any member of the Sailing Committee may inspect any competitor for compliance with safety standards and/or request a declaration from the skipper that the relevant safety standard is met. Where a declaration is requested it shall be supplied within 48 hours of the request. Failure to comply with the relevant safety standard may result

in disqualification from races.

(d) It is recommended that yachts with vhf radios maintain a listening watch on channels 16 and 77 while racing.

(e) On any boat sailing single handed a personal flotation device with a whistle attached must be worn at all times while racing.

(f) A personal flotation device with a whistle attached must be worn by each crew member on a sports boat or Etchell while racing where the wind speeds exceed 20 knots.

(g) The Officer of the Day may, at their discretion, stipulate that personal floatation devices must be worn by all crew on all boats participating in a race. All competitors shall be advised of such a stipulation on VHF Channel 77 at least 10 minutes before the scheduled race start. Code flag "Y" may also be displayed.

5. IDENTIFICATION OF VESSELS

(a) All competing vessels should be registered with Yachting New Zealand and display their Yachting New Zealand sail number in accordance with rule 77 of the Racing Rules, or have some other means of clearly identifying the competitor to the satisfaction of the Officer of the Day. *Failure to comply with this rule may result in the starter/finisher being unable to identify the competitor and a finish time not being taken.*

6. RACES

(a) Notice of Races shall be displayed on the Russell Boating Club notice board, and published on the Club website. *The notice board is located in the club house.*

(b) The Notice of Races shall identify races that comprise a series, specify the number of races in the series that shall be counted towards the final points, and specify any other eligibility restrictions applying to the series.

(c) Where it is specified that a race is a non-spinnaker race, all headsails must be hanked onto the forestay or have their luff attached by a foil. Poles used to support clews are to be attached to a mast. A spinnaker, as defined by the Equipment Rules of Sailing, shall not be used. *The Equipment Rules of Sailing is available on the World Sailing web site.*

(d) Where it is specified that a race is a women's race, a woman must helm the vessel for the entire duration of the race, from five minutes before the start until the finish. This does not mean the same woman must helm for the whole race. If this rule is breached during a race, a full report on the incident must be made to the Officer of the Day within the protest period. The Officer of the Day may, at his or hers discretion, impose no penalty, may impose a time penalty

or may disqualify the boat concerned.

(e) Failure to comply with eligibility restrictions applying to any race or series of races may result in disqualification from that race or series at the discretion of the Sailing Committee.

(f) Where a race date or start time is changed from the race date and/or start time shown in the Notice of Race, the new date and/or time shall be posted in the Club's Race Announcements WhatsApp Group, and in Racing News at least 24 hours beforehand. Where relevant to the running of a specific race, the Officer of the Day shall announce any change on VHF channel 77 at least 10 minutes before the scheduled race start time. *Changes to race dates or start times may also be posted on the Club Notice Board.*

7. COURSES

(a) Numbered and specified courses for races starting and finishing at Russell are published from time to time.

(b) Where published evening courses are being used, the particular course number for a race from the published evening courses shall be displayed from the start box or start boat and/or announced over VHF channel 77 at least 10 minutes prior to the start of the race.

(c) Numbered and specified evening courses have marks underlined. If the first keel boat is not past the underlined mark with 1 hour from the start, proceed to the underlined mark and directly to the finish after rounding the mark. Code Flag "S" may be displayed if a shortened evening course applies. *Competitors may also be advised of a shortened course over VHF channel 77.*

(d) In the event of a conflict between the numbered course in the most recent version of the published evening courses for a particular course and the same course as shown on any chart, map or diagram, the written instructions specified in the most recent published courses shall prevail.

(e) Nothing in these Sailing Instructions shall prevent the Sailing Committee or the Officer of the Day setting a course not found in the published evening courses or setting a course to alter or replace the published course sheet for the particular race, as the case maybe. Any unpublished evening course shall be described over VHF channel 77 between 10 and 15 minutes before the scheduled start of the race. Any replacement of, or amendment to, the published course sheet shall be described over VHF channel 77 between 10 and 15 minutes before the scheduled start of the race. *Race-specific course sheets are published in Racing News.*

(f) Notwithstanding the above, The Officer of the Day can amend any course identified under 6(b) or (e) above if all competing boats are informed at least 5 minutes before the scheduled start of the race. *VHF Channel 77 may be used to inform competing boats of an*

amendment to a course.

- (g) Marks given in courses are turning marks unless otherwise stated.

8. ENTERING RACES

(a) Competitors must have registered their boat(s) and signed a declaration that they comply with the relevant safety standards before the racing for the season. *The RBC website has registration form for the season's racing which includes a declaration of compliance with required safety standards.*

(b) Competitors shall enter their vessel before a race by either notifying the Officer of the Day before the race, or entering their vessel at the Club House before the race or by informing the starter at the wharf or on VHF channel 77 prior to the 10 minute gun. Failure to enter may result in a competitor's time not being taken. *Note: The OOD uses a handheld VHF radio and may not be able to receive VHF calls from competitors in the outer Bay of Islands. For weekend races the course sheet will include a mobile phone number for the OOD.*

- (c) A minimum of 2 yachts must start to make a race.

9. STARTING AND RECALLS

(a) (i) For wharf starts, unless otherwise specified, the start and finish line shall be a line between the 5 yellow knot buoy and the pole on the Russell Wharf either with the Russell Boating Club pennant or an orange shape on it.

(ii) For on the water starts, the start line will be the line from the pole with an orange shape or flag on the start boat and a red buoy. Competitors will be advised on VHF Channel 77 at least 5 minutes before the start whether this line will also be used as the finish line or whether the finish line will be the line used for wharf starts.

(b) No competitor shall be under power or under tow or other propulsion other than sails within five minutes of the start, or, in the case of a multi-division start, within five minutes of the start of the division within which the competitor is racing.

(c) The following starting sequence will apply to all races except where the Officer of the Day specifies otherwise:

Time to Start	Wharf Start	On The Water Start
10 minutes to start	• Sound signal • VHF Countdown	• Sound signal • VHF Countdown
5 minutes to start	• Sound signal • VHF Countdown • Division Flag or Shape <u>may be displayed</u>	• Sound signal • VHF Countdown • Division Flag Displayed
4 Minutes to Start	• Sound signal • 'P' or 'I' Code Flag or Shape <u>may be</u> displayed	• Sound signal • 'P' or 'I' Code Flag displayed
1 minute to start	• Sound signal • 'P' or 'I' Code Flag or Shape removed (if displayed)	• Sound signal • 'P' or 'I' Code Flag removed
Start	• Sound signal • Division Flag or Shape removed (if displayed)	• Sound signal • Division Flag removed

(d) For a two division start, the start sequence for the first division is as given in the table in (c) above. The start of the first division will also be 5 minutes to the start of the second division, and will follow the 5 minutes to the start, 4 minutes to the start, 1 minutes to the start and start sequence set out in the table in (c) above except that no countdown will be given. *As a general guide, having a two division start may be considered where there are at least 10 competitors, at least 4 of which are Etchells.*

(e) Where there is a two division start the Officer of the Day will describe the division flags or shapes on VHF Channel 77 between 10 and 15 minutes before the scheduled start of the first division.

(f) Where a different start sequence is specified by the Officer of the Day, this different start sequence may be described on the course sheet for the race (where relevant), and shall be described over VHF channel 77 between 10 and 15 minutes before the scheduled start of the race.

(g) These starting instructions modify rule 26 of the Racing Rules.

(h) A general recall will be indicated by the sounding of two sound signals. This modifies rule 29.2 of the Racing Rules. At the starter's discretion, a general recall message may be broadcast on vhf channel 77. The first substitute code flag may also be flown. A restart will be made as soon as practicable thereafter.

(i) An individual recall will be indicated by the sounding of one sound signal. This modifies rule 29.1 of the Racing Rules. No recall numbers will be displayed, the offending competitor or competitors must return and restart. At the starter's discretion, an individual recall

message may be broadcast on vhf channel 77. Code flag "X" may also be flown.

(j) At the starter's discretion competitors subject to an individual recall may be identified on VHF channel 77.

(k) Any competitor that starts prematurely and that fails to return and restart when recalled shall either incur a penalty equivalent to ten percent of the competitor's actual elapsed time for a race starting at 1700 hrs or later and five percent of the competitor's actual elapsed time for all other races or disqualification, at the officer of the day's discretion

10. FAIRWAY MARKS AND RESTRICTED AREAS

(a) Yachts, when racing, must pass:

- to the west of Kaiaraara (Mill) Island
- to the north and west of Fraser Rock and not between Fraser Rock and Tapeka Point
- to seaward of all the Black Rocks (which are to the north and east of Moturoa Island up to but not including Flat Island)
- to seaward of all the islands along the northern side of Moturoa Island between Kent Passage and (but not including) Flat Island
- to the south of Pakatahi Island (southern end of Moturua Island)
- to the south of all rocks off the south eastern end of Motukiekie Island
- to the north of Motutara Islands (northern end of Motukiekie Island, in Army Bay passage)
- to the west of Motukauri Island (northern entrance to Manawaora Bay)
- to the channel side of registered moorings at Opuia, Tapu Point and Okiato

(b) Yachts, when racing, shall not pass between Motuarohia (Robertson) Island and Moturua Island.

11. TIME LIMITS

(a) Unless otherwise specified by the Officer of the Day, a race will be abandoned if the first boat does not complete the course and finish :

- within seven hours where the race starts between 9 am and 10 59 am inclusive; or
- within five hours where the race starts between 11 am and 1 pm inclusive; or
- within two hours where the race is an evening race.

(b) The Officer of the Day shall specify the time limit for any other race.

12. RETIREMENTS

(a) If any competitor retires from the race, for whatever reason, then the skipper must inform the Officer of the Day or the starter at the earliest opportunity. A competitor that retires from the race must not cross the finish line.

13. PROTESTS

(a) Protests by racing yachts will be heard provided that the protesting boat complies with rule 60 of the Racing Rules and informs the Officer of the Day on completion of the race, fills in the appropriate form and delivers that form to the Officer of the Day within two hours of finishing the race.

(b) The Protest Committee will hear the protest at a time and place to be decided by them.

(c) The protesting boat shall inform the other boat(s) of the protest on VHF channel 77 at the first reasonable opportunity. This applies in addition to rule 60.2 of the Racing Rules.

14. HANDICAPS

(a) Any changes to larger sails or spars or to the propeller or to the trim of a vessel which may enhance the performance of the vessel should be reported to the Handicapper at least 24 hours before the start of the race.

(b) In any races conducted by the Russell Boating Club to the PHRF handicap system or ORC handicap system or the IRC rating system, yachts must sail in the trim specified on their PHRF Certificates or ORC Certificates or Endorsed IRC Certificates, as the case may be.

(c) Where a boat is sailing under IRC, the IRC Rules Parts 1,2 and 3 shall apply.

15. POINTS AND TROPHIES

(a) Except as provided for in paragraph 14(b) & (c) of these Sailing Instructions, for a competitor to qualify for points or trophies, the skipper must be a current Full, Family Full, Life or Honorary member of the Russell Boating Club and the racing fee for season must be paid in full.

(b) Points and trophies will only be awarded to competitors in races held from the day the membership and racing fees are fully paid, unless the Sailing Sub-Committee agrees to award series points for up to 3 races before the membership and racing fees are fully paid.

(c) For a competitor to qualify for points or trophies in any race or series of races run by the Russell Boating Club that is identified in the Notice of Races as being open to the members of other specified yacht clubs in the Bay of Islands, the skipper of the competitor must, at the time of the start of the race, be a current racing member of the specified yacht club in the Bay of Islands.

(d) For series results the low point scoring system shall be used as set out in Appendix A of the Racing Rules. *This provides that any DNF boat is scored at the number of yachts in the series that finish the particular race plus one, and that any DNS boat is scored at the number of yachts in the series plus one.*

APPENDIX – Etchell Safety Standards

Safety Plan

Minimum safety equipment required for all Etchells participating in club racing in the inner bay (inside Tapeka point) This is also a minimum requirement for the Etchells Cup Regatta.

Equipment Description	Required Y/N
PFD for each crew Type 403 with minimum 50N of buoyancy	Yes
Manual bilge pump, at least one	Yes
4kg Anchor, 2m X 6mm anchor chain and warp	yes
Tow Rope 25m - not less than 12mm min.	Yes
2 x Paddles 1200mm long	Yes
Flashlight or signalling device	Yes
Hand held Orange Flares x 1 or Equivalent electronic flare	Yes
Heaving Line	Optional
Medical Kit	Yes
Bucket with Lanyard	Yes
Knife, sheathed and secured in or near the cockpit	Yes
Drinking water (Sufficient for crew)	Yes
VHF Radio and Cell phone	Yes
V Sheet	Optional
Sound Signalling Device	Optional
Shackle key or tools to effect minor repairs and disconnect rigging	Yes

Additional Requirements

For Etchells and any other open boats sailing beyond Tapeka point.

Maximum wind strength	Max 20 knots average wind speed
Type 402 PFD with minimum 71 N of buoyancy for each crew member	Required
Whistle attached to each PFD	Required

For single handed races beyond Tapeka point.

Maximum weather conditions	Max 15 knots average wind speed
Type 402 PFD with minimum 71 N of bouyancy	Required
Hand held VHF and signalling device/whistle attached to PFD	Required
Safety Patrol boat to accompany these races	Required

Version Changes

Version	Changes
9.1	Original document
9.2	Sponsor block added to first page Paragraph numbering corrected in section 9, Starting and Recalls
9.3	Sponsor block updated for 2026-2027 season