

Blue Ridge Regatta
Smith Mountain Lake, VA

April 25/26, 2026

Organizing Authorities: Blackwater Yacht Racing Association (BYRA)
Virginia Inland Sailing Association (VISA)

KEEL BOAT SAILING INSTRUCTIONS (SI)

1 RULES

1.1 The event is governed by the Rules as defined in *The Racing Rules of Sailing for 2025-2028* including US Sailing Prescriptions (RRS).

1.2 Wind Rules

a) No racing class will be started unless, in the judgement of the Race Committee, the consistent wind is sufficient for boats to maintain enough headway that a race can be successfully completed.

b) 20 MPH (17 knots) Rule: No class will be started if the consistent wind exceeds 20 mph or gusts exceed 25 mph (22 knots).

2 RISK STATEMENT

2.1 RRS 3 states: “The responsibility for a boat’s decision to participate in a race or to continue racing 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 damage or permanent, catastrophic injury or death by drowning, trauma, hypothermia or other causes.**

The race organizers (organizing authorities Blackwater Yacht Racing Association and Virginia Inland Sailing Association, race committees, protest committees, host clubs Virginia Inland Sailing Association and Pelican Point Yacht Club, Inc., sponsors, or any other organization or official) will not be responsible for damage to any boat or other property or injury to any competitor, including death, sustained as a result of participation in this event. By participating in this event, each competitor agrees to release the race organizers from any and all liability associated with such competitor’s participation in this event to the fullest extent permitted by law.

3 EQUIPMENT

3.1 All boats shall carry a VHF radio capable of communicating on all standard US VHF radio channels for pleasure use.

3.2 All boats shall carry equipment required by Virginia law and the RRS, and it is recommended that each boat carry a bucket, knife and anchor with anchor line.

3.3 Boats and their equipment may be inspected at any time.

4 ENTRY

4.1 Entry forms are available on the Event website www.BlueRidgeRegatta.org. Signed and initialled entry forms must be submitted to the Event organizers prior to participating in the Event.

5. SCHEDULE OF RACES

5.1 Five or more races are planned for Saturday and three or more races for Sunday, wind permitting.

5.2 The warning signal for the first race on each day shall be:

Class	Saturday, April 25	Sunday, April 26
Keelboat Class	1000	1100

5.3 Due to wind and/or course considerations the race committee may not be able to make the first warning signal at the scheduled time. The first warning signal will be made as soon as practical after the committee boat has been anchored.

5.4 To alert boats that a race or sequence of races will begin soon, the “Come within Hail” L flag will be displayed with one short sound at least five minutes before a warning signal is made and an announcement shall be broadcast via VHF radio.

5.5 On the last scheduled day of racing no warning signal will be made after 1445.

6 CLASSES AND HANDICAPS

6.1 Classes shall be established and races handicapped using the Performance Handicap Racing Fleet (PHRF) handicap system. Boats without BYRA PHRF handicaps will be assigned a PHRF handicap by the BYRA Fleet Captain.

6.2 Classes will generally be assigned as follows. Adjustments may be made at the discretion of the Fleet Captain.

6.3 Boats may appeal their class assignment and/or handicap by a submission in writing to the Fleet Captain.

Class Designation	General Description
Class I	Boats designed for racing and cruising using spinnakers if owned
Class II	Heavier displacement boats designed for club racing and cruising using spinnakers or not

6.4 Should there be insufficient entries for more than one class, classes may be combined.

7 VENUE/COURSES

7.1 The event races will be sailed on Smith Mountain Lake in the main body of the lake. The choice of course type and racing area will be subject to wind conditions on the day of racing. On Saturday, competitors will rendezvous off Virginia Inland Sailing Association for the day’s events. On Sunday, competitors will rendezvous off Pelican Point Yacht Club for the day’s events. The racing area for upwind/downwind/reaching “around the buoys” races will generally be in the main body of the lake.

Distance “Road” courses will generally start in the vicinity of the host club and be run around government marks or dropped marks.

A chart of the racing area can be located on the Official Notice Board.

8 OFFICIAL NOTICE BOARD

8.1 The Official Notice Board shall be the website www.BlueRidgeRegatta.org.

9 COMMUNICATIONS WITH COMPETITORS/CHANGES TO SAILING INSTRUCTIONS

9.1 Notices to Competitors and Changes to the SI shall be posted on the Official Notice Board one hour before they are to take effect. Any change to the schedule of races will be posted on the Official Notice Board before 20:00 of the day before it will take effect.

- 9.2 A Skipper's Meeting will be held on Saturday at VISA at 0930, and on Sunday at PPYC at 1030.
- 9.3 The race committee shall communicate oral changes to the SI on the water by broadcasting the change via VHF Radio.
- 9.4 Physical copies of the SI, Notices to Competitors and Changes to the SI may be given to all boats in person at the skippers' meeting. Failure to receive copies in person or failure to hear or understand the information provided by VHF or failure to carry a VHF radio shall not be grounds for a request for redress. This changes RRS 61.4 (b) (1).
- 9.5 On the water, the race committee intends to communicate on VHF radio channel 09. Should channel 09 be in use, the race committee may announce a change of channel.
- 9.6 From the first warning signal until the end of the last race of the day, except in an emergency or to request chase boat services, a boat shall not make voice or data transmissions by radio or mobile telephone and shall not receive voice or data communication by radio or mobile telephone containing information that is not available to all boats.
- 10 CLASS FLAGS**
- 10.1 The Class flag for the Keel Boat Class shall be "O" Oscar (red and yellow diagonal).
- 11 COURSE.**
- 11.1 The RC may set a road course or and around the buoys course.
- 11.2 When the RC sets a road course the course board shall list the marks to be rounded in the order they are to be rounded using their government mark number.
- 11.3 Marks displayed on the course board with a plain letter are to be left to port. Marks displayed on the course board with a circled letter are to be left to starboard.
- 11.4 The course board will indicate the starting order of classes horizontally by line. The top line shall show the first class or classes to start and the course to be sailed by them. The second line shall be the second class or classes to start and the course to be sailed by them, and so on.
- 11.5 Around the buoys races shall race around inflatable marks on upwind/downwind/reaching courses. The marks to be rounded shall be displayed on the course board in the order they are to be rounded. Marks which do not begin, end or bound a leg may be left to either side. The start/finish line is not an obstruction.
- 11.6 If courses are set which require boats to sail through the start/finish line to allow shortening of the course, "S/F" on the course board will designate that on every upwind leg, boats on the designated course shall sail through the start/finish line. "S/F" will be displayed after the course letters immediately before "F" (for Finish) or "2X" or "3X" if used as described below.
- 11.7 If courses are set on the course board which require multiple laps of the designated course, "2X" or "3X" displayed on the course board immediately in front of "F" (for finish) will designate the number of times boats shall sail the designated course.
- 11.8 Courses and other information concerning a race may be broadcast by VHF radio by the race committee. Failure to hear or understand the information provided or failure to carry a VHF radio shall not be grounds for a request for redress. This changes RRS 61.4 (b) (1).

12 MARKS

12.1 For around the buoys races:

The weather mark will be an inflatable orange tetrahedron labelled A on the course board.

The leeward mark will be an inflatable orange tetrahedron labelled C on the course board.

The reaching mark, if used, will be an inflatable orange cylinder labelled B on the course board.

A weather offset mark, if used, will be an inflatable orange ball.

A leeward gate, if used, will be an inflatable orange tetrahedron on one side and an inflatable orange cylinder or ball on the other side and shall be denoted as C on the course board.

The race committee may change the shape and/or color of a mark, and if so, shall confirm the change at the Skippers' Meeting or orally on the water by VHF radio.

Under certain wind conditions, government marks may be substituted for the weather, reaching or leeward marks. In case government marks are substituted they will be identified on the course board by their government mark number and the change may be confirmed via VHF radio.

12.2 For road courses:

Government marks will be used or an inflatable mark may be placed in close proximity to the specified government mark. If inflatable marks are used, boats shall round the inflatable mark leaving it on the side specified.

12.3 To change the next leg of the course, the race committee may move a mark or will lay a new mark (or move the finishing line) and remove the original mark as soon as practicable.

12.4 Changes to courses or shortening of courses shall be signalled as described in RRS 32 and 33 and RRS Race Signals.

13 SAFETY REGULATIONS

13.1 Boats shall check in with the race committee signal boat in person before the first race of any day announcing their name, sail number, and intention to race with or without a spinnaker.

13.2 Boats with spinnakers shall be rated as spinnaker boats for all races. Boats without spinnakers shall be rated non-spinnaker. Boats may not declare spinnaker or non-spinnaker on a race by race basis.

13.3 A boat that retires from a race shall notify the race committee at the first reasonable opportunity either in person, or by advising the chase boat, or by VHF radio.

13.4 Boats requiring assistance from the race committee or chase boat shall contact the race committee by VHF radio giving their sail number and location and the type of assistance required, including a description of illness or injury if medical assistance is required.

13.5 In case of dangerous weather such as thunderstorms the Race Committee may postpone or abandon races which shall be announced by VHF radio.

14 THE START

14.1 Races will be started using RRS 26 with the warning signal made 5 minutes before the starting signal.

14.2 The starting line is between a staff displaying an orange flag on the pin end of the line and the Class flag on the committee signal boat.

14.3 Boats whose warning signal has not been made shall make every possible effort to avoid the starting area during the starting sequence for other races.

14.4 Individual Recall When any part of a boat's hull is on the course side of the starting line at her starting signal and she is identified and the race committee displays the Individual Recall flag X with a single sound signal per RRS 29.1, it will attempt to hail her verbally or via VHF radio. Failure to hail her number, failure of her to hear such a hail, or the order in which boats are hailed will not be grounds for a request for redress. This changes RRS 61.4 (b) (1).

14.5 General Recall When the race committee signals a General Recall per RRS 29.2 and displays the First Substitute with two sounds, the class or classes recalled will start last, after all other classes have started. This changes RRS 29.2.

15 THE FINISH

15.1 The finishing line is between the pin end of the finish line and a staff displaying a blue flag on the committee signal boat.

16 PROPULSION

16.1 While racing, a boat may not use her engine after her class preparatory signal except to get clear after grounding or a collision, provided the boat does not gain a significant advantage in the race. This changes RRS 42.3 (h) and RRS 42.3 (i).

17 TIME LIMITS

17.1 The Mark 1 Time Limit, Race Time Limit (see RRS 35), and the Finishing Window are shown in the table below.

Course Type	Mark 1 Time Limit	Race Time Limit	Finishing Window
Around the Buoys	30 minutes	75 minutes	20 minutes
Road Courses	No limit	2 ½ hours	1 hour

17.2 If no boat has passed the first mark within the Mark 1 Time Limit, the race may be abandoned. The time limit for all classes commences at the first starting signal.

17.3 If no boat has finished within the Race Time Limit, the race shall be abandoned.

17.4 The Finishing Window is the time for boats to finish after the first boat in their class starts, sails the course and finishes. Boats failing to finish within the Finishing Window, and not subsequently retiring, being penalized or given redress, will be scored Time Limit Expired (TLE) without a hearing. A boat scored TLE shall be scored points for the finishing place one more than the points scored by the last boat that finished within the Finishing Window. This changes RRS 35, A5.1, A5.2 and A10.

18 HEARING REQUESTS

18.1 Any boat protesting another boat shall notify the race committee as soon as practical after finishing or retiring.

18.2 The Protest Time Limit is 30 minutes after the race committee boat has returned to the dock at the end of racing for the day. The race committee shall record the time the race committee boat has returned to the dock and the time the protest was received. This adjusts RRS 60.3(b).

18.3 A protest may be withdrawn by the Protestor at any time prior to the announcement of the Protest Committee decision.

18.4 Decisions of the protest committee will be final as provide in RRS 70.3(b).

19 OFFICIAL BOATS

19.1 The Race Committee Signal Boat and Race Committee Chase Boat for the Keel Boat Classes will be marked "BYRA".

20 REPLACEMENT OF CREW OR EQUIPMENT

20.1 Substitution of competitors and equipment is allowed without prior approval of the race committee.

21 SIGNALS TO BE MADE ASHORE

21.1 On Saturday signals made ashore will be displayed on the main flag pole on the docks below the VISA clubhouse.

- 21.2** When flag AP is displayed ashore, “1 minute” is replaced with “not less than 30 minutes” in the race signal AP.
- 21.3** On Sunday no signals will be made ashore.