



RACE WEEK BELLINGHAM 2026

Bellingham, Washington USA

July 20-24, 2026

NOTICE OF RACE

The Organizing Authority (OA) is Race Week Bellingham

1. RULES

- 1.1 The regatta is governed by the rules as defined in *The Racing Rules of Sailing*.
- 1.2 The US Sailing Prescriptions to The Racing Rules of Sailing shall apply and a link to them will be posted on the event website.
- 1.3 RRS Appendix T shall apply.
- 1.4 RRS Appendix V1 shall apply.
- 1.5 All boats shall conform to the current World Sailing Offshore Special Regulations - Category 4. If a One Design class wants an exception to this rule, the class can present their case to the Organizing Authority. If after review, the Organizing Authority may consider an amendment to this NOR for the appropriate class(es).
- 1.6 [DP] Competitors and support persons shall comply with any reasonable request from an event official. Failure to comply may be misconduct. Reasonable actions by event officials to implement COVID-19 guidance, protocols or legislation, even if they later prove to have been unnecessary, are not improper actions or omissions.
- 1.7 Competitors will find any/all current requirements and event documents posted on the official NOTICE BOARD located with a link at www.raceweekpnw.com.
- 1.8 All boats shall carry and monitor a functional VHF radio.

2. SAILING INSTRUCTIONS

- 2.1 Sailing Instructions (SIs) will be available on the official NOTICE BOARD (Link at NOR 1.7) by July 14, 2026. Copies of the SIs will also be distributed during Skipper Check In (See NOR 6.1 Schedule).
- 2.2 Fleets hosting fleet championships at Race Week Bellingham 2026 will receive a customized SI insert that addresses specific fleet championship Sailing Instructions.

3. ELIGIBILITY AND ENTRY

- 3.1 The regatta is open to One Design, PHRF, and ORC keelboats and multihulls. Four (4) boats are required to set a One Design, PHRF or ORC fleet. Small fleets may be combined in the starting sequences.
- 3.2 Handicap fleets will be split into classes that are no larger than 18 boats. These class breaks will be made as equitable as possible, and factors considered will be the boat's handicap, plus the boat's displacement and sailing characteristics. Class breaks will be published on the official NOTICE BOARD (Link at NOR 1.7) by July 14, 2026.
- 3.3 One Design fleets with eight (8) or more boats are invited to use Race Week Bellingham 2026 to conduct a Nationals or North American Championship. Contact the OA to discuss customized racing options, registration and course specifications (For contact, see NOR 20).
- 3.4 Race Week Bellingham 2026 is a PHRF-NW event. Boats racing under PHRF handicap shall have a valid PHRF certificate. Boats with a PHRF BC or PHRF rating from elsewhere in North America will be normalized to be consistent with the PHRF-NW database by the Event Handicapper at no charge.
- 3.5 Boats Racing under ORC Handicap shall have a valid ORC Club or ORCi Certificate.

- 3.6 In the event that a boat's rating has been changed after the entry has been accepted, the OA shall be notified (For contact, see NOR 20). After 1700 on July 14, 2026, rating changes will only be accepted if they indicate an increase in the boats speed.
- 3.7 Registration is online only, and the link can be found on the event website: www.raceweekpnw.com
- 3.8 Registration to Race Week Bellingham 2026 closes on July 14, 2026. Any entries after this time will be considered on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the OA.
- 3.9 To be considered an entry in the event, a boat shall complete all registration requirements and pay all fees.
- 3.10 [DP] Skippers will be required to keep a current crew log on board their boats at Race Week Bellingham 2026 at all times. The crew log will include the crew's full legal name, date of birth, and emergency contact information for each crew member who is racing at the event.

4. FEES

- 4.1 Race Week Bellingham 2026 registration is \$600 USD for entries received up to midnight May 31, 2026.
- 4.2 For any entries received on June 1, 2026 and beyond, a \$150 USD late entry fee will be charged.
- 4.3 Registration cancellations up to May 31, 2026 will be refunded. No refunds will be granted after June 1, 2026.

5. ADVERTISING

- 5.1 Advertising shall comply with World Sailing Regulation 20 (See Rule 6 and the World Sailing Advertising Code). Boats must inform the OA of their intent to use advertising, and advertising material must be approved by the OA by July 14, 2026. If approved, no advertising fee will apply (For contact, see NOR 20).
- 5.2 Competitors are reminded of the brand exclusivity of official sponsors of the event, and advertising that competes with the official sponsors will not be approved by the OA and therefore must not be displayed at the event.
- 5.3 [DP] If provided, all boats shall display Race Week Bellingham 2026 sponsor advertising on bow stickers for the duration of the event. If bow stickers are being used, they will be supplied free of charge and found in the Skipper Bag at Skipper Check In (See NOR 6.1 Schedule).

6. SCHEDULE: July 19 – July 24, 2026

6.1

DATE	TIME	EVENT
Sun, July 19	0900 – 2000 1730 – 2000	Skipper Check In & Skipper Bag Pick-Up at Bellingham Yacht Club Skipper & Competitors Meeting/No-Host Bar Location: Bellingham Yacht Club
Mon, July 20	1000 1630-1900	Warning signal for the first race of the day Daily Awards/Party Location: Fisherman's Pavilion at Gate 5 Squalicum Harbor
Tues, July 21	1000 * 1030-1230 1630-1900	Warning signal for the first race of the day Race Week Spectator Cruise Daily Awards/Party Location: Fisherman's Pavilion at Gate 5 Squalicum Harbor
Wed, July 22	1000 * 1030-1230 1630-1900 1930-2130	Warning signal for the first race of the day Race Week Spectator Cruise Daily Awards/Party Location: Fisherman's Pavilion at Gate 5 Squalicum Harbor Race Week Campfire Location: Outdoors at Zuanich Point Park at Gate 5 Squalicum Harbor
Thurs, July 23	1000 * 1630-1900	Warning signal for the first race of the day Daily Awards/Party Location: Fisherman's Pavilion at Gate 5 Squalicum Harbor
Fri, July 24	1000 * 1500 1630-1900	Warning signal for the first race of the day No new races started after this time Overall Awards/No-Host Bar Location: Bellingham Yacht Club

** The warning signal for the first race of the day may be modified to 0900 if a Pursuit Race or Distance Race is added to the schedule. Changes to the schedule for the Pursuit Race or Distance Race will be announced on the official NOTICE BOARD by 1700 the day before the Pursuit Race or Distance Race is planned.*

- 6.2 The cover charge for the daily party bracelet is \$25.00 for parties happening Monday, July 20 through Thursday, July 23 at Fisherman's Pavilion and covers live music and open bar. Children under 12 are FREE. Party bracelets may also be purchased in advance in skipper registration, or on site at the party venue.
- 6.3 The Skippers Meeting and Party on Sunday, July 19, 2026 at Bellingham Yacht Club, and the Overall Awards and party on Friday, July 24, 2026 at Bellingham Yacht Club, will feature a no-host bar, and are open to all event participants with no cover charge required for admittance.
- 6.4 The Bellingham Yacht Club maintains a cashless bar. Only debit and credit cards will be accepted.

7. VENUE

- 7.1 Racing will take place in Bellingham Bay outside of the Squalicum Harbor. If weather permits, there may be a Pursuit Race or Distance Race planned to a destination beyond Bellingham Bay. Details of a Pursuit Race or Distance Race will be posted on the official NOTICE BOARD the day before this race and may affect the warning signal (See NOR 6.1 SCHEDULE Warning Signals).

8. COURSES

- 8.1 Courses will be defined in the Sailing Instructions and will include short courses around inflatable and permanent marks.
- 8.2 There may be up to two race circles at Race Week Bellingham 2026. The number of race circles will be determined by the number of registered boats and fleets, and final details will be defined in the Sailing Instructions.
- 8.3 If conditions are suitable, Pursuit Race or Distance Race may be conducted one day. For the Pursuit Race, each boat will be assigned a starting time based on their PHRF NW or ORC rating and the length of the course (See NOR 6.1 SCHEDULE Warning Signals).

9. PENALTY SYSTEM

- 9.1 In an effort to maintain fair and equitable racing and mitigate the number of protests, some form of on the water umpiring may be used. If applicable, specific details will be included in the Sailing Instructions.

10. SCORING

- 10.1 A maximum of fifteen (15) races are scheduled depending on fleet requirements, of which three must be scored to constitute a series.
- 10.2 A minimum of one race per day shall be scored per fleet for daily trophies to be awarded.
- 10.3 When less than five races have been scored, a boat's score will be the total of her race scores. When five or more races have been scored, a boat's series score will be the total of her race scores excluding her worst score.
- 10.4 For boats racing under the PHRF handicap system, results will be calculated by Time on Time, except for a Pursuit Race which will calculate results by Time on Distance.
- 10.5 For boats racing under the ORC handicap system, results will be calculated by Time on Time using the 5-Band Windward/Leeward scoring coefficient except for the pursuit race which will calculate results based on Single Number All Purpose rating.
- 10.6 If a boat races with sail numbers other than those with which she registered, she must request the approval of the Race Committee in writing. The notice needs to state the boat name, the boat class, the registered sail number and the alternate sail number and can be delivered to PRO Charley Rathkopf at the Skippers Meeting on Sunday, July 19, 2026 (See NOR 6.1 SCHEDULE). An email can also be sent with the required information to the Race Committee at charley@rathkopf.org. For email requests to be valid, a reply must be received from the Race Committee.
- 10.7 The Race Committee may reject any requested alternate sail numbers that are duplicates of another registered boat. A boat that fails to comply with this instruction or is denied approval by the Race Committee may be scored DNC without a hearing. This changes RRS A5.
- 10.8 The Low-Point Scoring Systems as defined in RRS Appendix A4 will be used with the following modification: Scores of DNF, NSC, and RET shall be scored the number of boats finishing and not retiring or being disqualified plus two. Scores DNC, DNS, OCS, UFD, BFD, DSQ and DNE shall be scored the number of starters plus two.

11. SUPPORT BOATS

- 11.1 Competitors using coach and/or support boats shall register the boat with the OA at Race Week Bellingham 2026 at the Skipper's Meeting (See NOR 6.1 SCHEDULE).
- 11.2 Coach and/or support boats must display the identifying flag that will be provided by the OA at all times while near the race area(s). A deposit will be required for the flag, and the deposit will be returned when the flag is returned.
- 11.3 Each participating support boat shall be insured with a valid, third-party liability insurance with a minimum coverage of \$400,000 USD per event or the equivalent. Drivers must be prepared to show their insurance certificate, if requested.
- 11.4 [DP] Failure of a support boat to comply with NOR 11.1 through 11.3 may result in a protest against the boat associated with that support.
- 11.5 Boats without motors are required to provide support boat(s) for their fleet. The number of support boats required is based on the class rules and boat ratings.

12. BERTHING

- 12.1 Registration to Race Week Bellingham 2026 does not include guest moorage for race boats and tenders at Squalicum Harbor in Bellingham.
- 12.2 The cost for guest moorage is \$1.25 per foot per day. To make guest moorage arrangements, call (360) 676-2542 at Squalicum Harbor or email squalicum@portofbellingham.com.

13. HAUL-OUT RESTRICTIONS

- 13.1 Boats shall not be hauled out during the regatta except with and according to the terms of prior written permission from the Principal Race Officer (PRO).

14. DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY

- 14.1 Competitors participate in the regatta entirely at their own risk. (See RRS 3 DECISION TO RACE). The Organizing Authority, Race Week PNW, Whidbey Island Race Week LLC, Race Week Bellingham, its Sponsors, their employees and volunteers do not accept any liability for material damage or personal injury, or death sustained in conjunction with or prior to, during, or after the regatta.
- 14.2 The safety of a boat and its crew is the sole and inescapable responsibility of the Skipper who shall ensure that the boat is fully sound, thoroughly seaworthy, and manned by an experienced and physically able crew. Neither the establishment of regulations or inspection of a boat in any way limits or reduces the complete and unlimited responsibility of the Skipper.
- 14.3 The Skipper shall be responsible for the conduct of his/her crew. In the event of a serious breach of conduct, the destruction of property or the failure to comply with a reasonable request of any Race Officer or Committee Member or representative of the Organizing Authority, the Skipper will be responsible for all damages and the boat may be subject to protest, which may include disqualification from the regatta. [DP]

15. INSURANCE

- 15.1 Each participating boat shall be insured with a valid, third-party liability insurance with a minimum coverage of \$400,000 USD per event or the equivalent. Skippers must be prepared to show their insurance certificate, if requested.

16. PRIZES

- 16.1 Daily fleet awards will be presented at the post-race party to the top 3 finishers in each fleet (See NOR 6.1 SCHEDULE).
- 16.2 Overall awards will be presented to the top 3 boats in each fleet at the Overall Awards Ceremony (See NOR 6.1 SCHEDULE).
- 16.3 A Yacht Club Team Trophy may be awarded. A yacht club may enter one team of 3 boats from 2 or more different fleets to compete for the Yacht Club Team Trophy. The winning team will be determined by the best combined scores of the team's members as a percentage of the number of boats in their fleet. Yacht club teams must register at the Skipper Meeting to be eligible (See NOR 6.1 SCHEDULE).

- 16.4 The Philip Wise Sportsmanship Award is a perpetual award that will be given to the yacht or individual who shows exemplary sportsmanship at the regatta as determined by the Race Week Bellingham 2026 Race Management Team.
- 16.5 The Molly Kool Cup Trophy is a perpetual award that will be given to a woman skipper who shows exemplary performance by a woman who is at the helm for the entire duration of racing at Race Week Bellingham 2026.
- 16.6 Fleets conducting fleet championships at Race Week Bellingham 2026 will provide specific fleet prizes for daily and overall winners.

17. EVENT NAME AND LOGO

- 17.1 Any commercial or editorial reference to this event must use the regatta's official name, Race Week Bellingham 2026. Any commercial video of the event, including website productions, must be licensed by Whidbey Island Race Week LLC. Any use of the event logo on merchandise or gear without license by Whidbey Island Race Week LLC is prohibited.

18. RACE WEEK KIDS CAMP

- 18.1 In partnership with Bellingham Yacht Club's Youth Sailing Program, Race Week Bellingham 2026 will offer Kids Camp July 20-24, 2026 to the children of racers participating in Race Week.
- 18.2 The cost of Kids Camp is \$695 per child, and kids will sail on Optimis, FJs under the leadership of US Sailing Certified Instructors, and enjoy many fun Kids Camp activities. The cost includes sailing instruction, lunch and all activities. Drop off is at Bellingham Yacht Club, and Pick Up is at the post-race party and daily awards at Fisherman's Pavilion (with the exception of Pick Up on Friday, July 24 which will be at Bellingham Yacht Club).
- 18.3 Register for Race Week Kids Camp at this <https://byc.org/register/camp/aayCUREHpp/class>

19. SOUTHERN RESIDENT ORCA PROTECTION FROM VESSELS

- 19.1 Washington Senate Bill (SB) 5371 governs this event (see the definition Rule (g)). SB 5371 states: Operators of motorized vessels, non-motorized vessels and paddlecrafts must stay 1,000 yards (approximately one-half nautical mile) away from southern resident killer whales (SRKW) in all directions. If the SRKW approaches within 400 yards of any vessel, state law requires that the vessel disengages the transmission, luffs sails, or stops paddling (if it is safe to do so) until the animal(s) moves away. Boaters who think they may be closer than 1,000 yards to SRKW, but not within 400 yards, should attempt to navigate out of the path and away from SRKW at a speed of 7 knots or less. However, for this event the requirements of SB 5371 shall apply to all orca whales; not just SRKW.
- 19.2 If an orca is seen by the crew of a boat, the boat shall not enter the circular area within 1000 yards of the orca (therefore, that area is an obstruction); and if the boat is within 400 yards of an orca, she shall, as soon as reasonably possible, luff (or, if motoring before or after racing, disengage her transmission) to slow to the slowest safest speed, which may be to stop, until they are no longer within 1000 yards of any orca.
- 19.3 Add to RRS Rule 32.1 if an individual orca or orca pod is found to be in, near, or approaching the race area.
- 19.4 Add to RRS Rule 61.4 (b): reasonable actions she took to comply with NOR 19.
- 19.5 Boats may be protested for breaking rules defined in NOR 19.1.

20. MORE INFORMATION

- 20.1 Race Week Bellingham 2026 advises that all registered skippers review boating safety protocols and Man Overboard (MOB) drills with their crews prior to the event.
- 20.2 Race Week Bellingham 2026 Headquarters (HQ) will be located at the following locations:
Bellingham Yacht Club (July 19, 2026 and July 24, 2026)
Fisherman's Pavillion (July 20, 2026 – July 23, 2026)
See NOR 6.0 SCHEDULE for hours of operation
- 20.3 Race Week Bellingham 2026 Contact: Schelleen Rathkopf, Event Producer, 6042 Seaview Ave NW, Unit 301, Seattle, WA 98107 schelleen@gmail.com (206) 384-5254
- 20.4 The Race Week Bellingham 2026 Race Management Team is Charley Rathkopf (PRO) and Paul Evenden (RO).

21. INFORMATION LINKS

21.0 Links:

Race Week Bellingham 2026 Registration

<https://www.raceweekpnw.com>

PHRF NW

<http://phrf-nw.org/>

PHRF BC

<http://bcsailing.bc.ca/racing/phrf-orc/>

ORC

www.OC.org/clubapplication.

ORC Explained

<https://www.ussailing.org/competition/offshore/orc/>

Camping in Bellingham

<https://www.bellingham.org/summer-camping-in-whatcom-county-washington>

Port of Bellingham / Squalicum Harbor

<https://www.portofbelllingham.com/DocumentCenter/View/7738/Squalicum-Harbor-Map>

Bellingham Yacht Club

<https://www.byc.org/>

Bellingham Chamber of Commerce

<https://belllingham.com/>

Bellingham & Whatcom County Resource Guide

<https://belllingham.com/community-resource-guide/>

Request Information About Bellingham

<https://www.bellingham.org/request-information>

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