



ROYAL HONG KONG YACHT CLUB

Rolex China Sea Race 2026

Starts Wednesday 4 March 2026



SAILING INSTRUCTIONS

1. RULES

- 1.1 The event is governed by the rules as defined in The Racing Rules of Sailing (RRS) and as listed in NoR 1.
- 1.2 Any Marine Department Notices or Notices to Mariners that may have an impact on racing are available at www.mardep.gov.hk/en/notices/notices.html and shall be deemed as rules governing the event. Competitors are strongly advised to take note of the construction works areas in Victoria Harbour. In accordance with RRS 56.2, a boat shall comply with the Traffic Separation Scheme regulations.
- 1.3 When the protest committee decides that a boat which is party to a protest has broken a rule and is not exonerated, it may impose a scoring penalty (which may be no penalty) at its discretion, as an alternative to disqualification. This changes RRS 60.5(c).

2. CHANGES TO SAILING INSTRUCTIONS

Any change to the SIs will be posted before 0900hrs on the day it will take effect.

3. COMMUNICATIONS WITH COMPETITORS

Notices to competitors will be posted on the ONB located at www.rolexchinasearace.com/competitors.

4. SIGNALS MADE ASHORE

- 4.1 Signals made ashore will be displayed on the flag poles on the RHKYC Kellett Island hardstanding near the eastern pontoon access steps.
- 4.2 When AP over H is displayed ashore or on the race committee signal vessel, 'Further signals ashore' is replaced with 'Further signals posted on the ONB' in Race Signals AP over H.

5. SCHEDULE

- 5.1 The skippers' briefing will be held at 1830hrs on Tuesday 3 March 2026 at RHKYC Kellett Island, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong.
- 5.2 The scheduled time of the warning signal for all classes/divisions is 1110hrs on Wednesday 4 March 2026.
- 5.3 To alert boats that the race will begin soon, the orange starting line flag will be displayed with one sound at least five minutes before the warning signal is made.

6. CLASS FLAGS

IC flag W will be used for all classes/divisions.

7. STARTING AREA

The starting area will be in Victoria Harbour.

8. COURSE

The course will be:

Starting Line	
TCS4	Port - passing
TCS3	Port - passing
TCS2	Port - passing
Waglan Island	Starboard - passing
Tan Kan Shan (Dangan Dao)	Starboard - passing
Finishing Line	(see SI 13)
Approximate course length	565 nm

9. EXCLUSION ZONE

While racing, a boat shall not enter the exclusion zone set out below:

Tathong Channel Exclusion Zone

This exclusion zone is a polygon defined by points A, B, C, D whose coordinates are as follows:

Tathong Channel TCS4: 22° 16.243'N, 114° 15.647'E

Tathong Channel TCS3: 22° 14.025'N, 114° 16.564'E

Tathong Channel TCS2: 22° 13.158'N, 114° 17.614'E

Tathong Channel TCS1: 22° 13.158'N, 114° 20.147'E

10. MARKS

- 10.1 Inflatable marks, fixed navigation marks and geographical features will be used.
- 10.2 For a club line start, the Outer Distance Mark (ODM) will be a yellow inflatable Rolex branded buoy laid roughly to the north of the RHKYC Kellett Island clubhouse. The Inner Distance Mark (IDM) will be an orange inflatable buoy.
- 10.3 For a committee vessel start, the starting marks will be the race committee signal vessel at the starboard end of the line and a yellow inflatable Rolex branded buoy at the port end.
- 10.4 The finishing marks are described in SI 13.1.

11. PROHIBITED AREAS AND OBSTRUCTIONS

- 11.1 These rules apply at all times while afloat.
- 11.2 Buoys (usually yellow or orange, but may be other colours) may be laid adjacent to construction sites. An area bounded by virtual lines between such buoys and, where appropriate, the nearest point of the shore shall be considered a prohibited area.
- 11.3 Marine works areas as described in current Marine Department Notices (see SI 1.2) shall be considered prohibited areas.
- 11.4 Commercial vessels underway and vessels engaged in towing shall be considered a 'Moving Prohibited Area' as follows:
- (A) In Victoria Harbour:
- Ahead of the vessel, 100 metres or one length of the vessel, whichever is greater. For vessels under tow, 100 metres.
 - Abeam of the vessel, 50 metres or one width of the vessel, whichever is greater.
 - Astern of the vessel, 25 metres.
- (B) Outside Victoria Harbour:
- Ahead of the vessel, 200 metres or two lengths of the vessel, whichever is greater. For vessels under tow, 100 metres.
 - Abeam of the vessel, 100 metres or two widths of the vessel, whichever is greater.
 - Astern of the vessel, 50 metres.
- 11.5 Boats shall not enter any prohibited area.
- 11.6 At all times boats shall keep clear of commercial traffic.
- 11.7 All prohibited areas defined in this rule shall also be considered 'obstructions' (as provided for in the RRS definition of 'Obstruction') and applicable to RRS 19 and 20.

12. THE START

- 12.1 The race will be started by using RRS 26 with the warning signal made **TEN** minutes before the starting signal.
- 12.2 The location of the starting line will be posted at least one hour before the warning signal.
- 12.3 For a club line start, the starting line will be between the white staff with a yellow triangle on the Starter's Box and the course side of the ODM. Boats shall start by passing between the IDM and ODM in the direction to the first mark of the course.
- 12.4 For a committee vessel start, the starting line will be between a staff displaying an orange flag on the starting mark at the starboard end and the course side of the port-end starting mark.

- 12.5 A boat that does not start within 60 minutes after her starting signal will be scored Did Not Start (DNS) without a hearing.
- 12.6 The race committee may broadcast on VHF Ch 72 the sail numbers of boats failing to start correctly. Failure to transmit or receive such broadcasts will not be grounds for redress. This changes RRS 61.4(b)(1).

13. THE FINISH

- 13.1 The finishing line will be in the vicinity of Latitude 14° 46.6'N, Longitude 120° 13.2'E to the northwest of Grande Island at the entrance to Subic Bay. The finishing marks will be a race committee vessel at the starboard end of the line and a yellow inflatable Rolex branded buoy at the port end. The finish vessel may display a white flashing light at night.
- 13.2 If the location of the finishing line needs to be moved, the new position will be broadcast on YB Connect to the race fleet in advance. Failure to receive this information will not be grounds for redress. This changes RRS 61.4(b)(1).
- 13.3 The finish vessel will be on station from 1300hrs on Thursday 5 March 2026 until 1600hrs on Monday 9 March 2026.
- 13.4 Boats shall call the finish vessel on VHF Ch 72 approximately one hour before their anticipated finish, giving their boat name and sail number. If the race committee cannot be reached by VHF, boats shall call the race committee on +852 6465 4131 (RHKYC Sailing Manager).
- 13.5 Boats shall enter their finish time on the online Race Declaration Form. Times taken by the race committee will take precedence over declarations and will not be grounds for redress. This changes RRS 61.4(b)(1).
- 13.6 Boats finishing in darkness shall illuminate their sail numbers as they cross the line and call the race committee on VHF Ch 72. In the event of no response, boats shall call the race committee on the mobile number detailed in SI 13.4.

14. PENALTY SYSTEM

- 14.1 RRS 44.1 applies up to one hour from the warning signal.
- 14.2 Subsequently and for the remainder of the race, RRS 44.3 applies. However a boat need not display a yellow flag. This changes RRS 44.3(a) and (b).

15. TIME LIMIT

The time limit is 1600hrs on Monday 9 March 2026. Boats failing to finish within the time limit will be scored Did Not Finish (DNF) without a hearing. This changes RRS 35, A5.1 and A5.2.

16. RETIREMENT

Boats retiring shall report their retirement and give their position via YB Connect. Boats must continue to operate their YB Connect unit until they reach a safe haven and then call the race committee on the mobile number outlined in SI 13.4.

17. DECLARATION

- 17.1 The person in charge, navigator and one crewmember of each boat shall sign the online Race Declaration Form that they have completed the race and shall report any infringements on the declaration. For Two-Handed Class boats both crew members shall sign the declaration.
- 17.2 The declaration shall be completed as soon as possible but in any case within 4 hours of finishing.

18. HEARING REQUESTS

- 18.1 Hearing request forms are available at www.rhkyc.org.hk/sailing/race-management/race-management.
- 18.2 Protests under RRS 78 shall be lodged by 1800hrs on Friday 27 February 2026, and the protest fee will be US\$250 or HK\$2,000 which may be refunded at the discretion of the protest committee.
- 18.3 Other protests and requests for redress shall be lodged online within 4 hours of the boat's finishing time.
- 18.4 Notices will be posted within 6 hours of the finishing time of whichever boat involved in the incident is the last to finish. Notices will inform competitors of hearings in which they are parties or named as witnesses.
- 18.5 If a boat does not finish the race but wants to lodge a protest or request for redress, the hearing request form may be emailed to sailingoffice@rhkyc.org.hk by 2000hrs on Monday 9 March 2026.
- 18.6 Protest hearings will take place in Hong Kong on Monday 16 March 2026 at 1830hrs in the Protest Room, RHKYC Kellett Island, Causeway Bay.

19. SCORING

See NoR 14.

20. RADIO/DATA COMMUNICATIONS

20.1 While racing, a boat shall keep a listening watch on DSC on their VHF radio and have a satellite phone and their YB Connect unit switched on at all times.

20.2 While racing, a boat shall switch on her designated mobile phone in time to receive the race committee communications specified in SI 21.1. The phone shall be the one linked to the boat's YB Connect unit.

20.3 [DP] While racing, except in an emergency and as permitted by these SIs, a boat shall not receive voice or data transmissions that is not available to all boats.

20.4 RRS 41(c) is amended as follows:

RRS 41 – A boat shall not receive help from any outside source, except

(c) [DP] Help in the form of information which is freely available to all boats, which shall include navigational, weather, tide or current information from any source which is available to all boats whether or not by payment of a fee or subscription, but shall not include any information gathered or the subject of interpretation by, or any advice received from, any source not on board the boat and which is specific to the boat and her situation. A drone operated by the boat is permitted.

20.5 There are no specific restrictions on radio and electronic aids to navigation that may be used while racing, or on the linking of such aids.

20.6 [DP] All radio messages received, transmitted, or attempted to be transmitted shall be entered in the boat's log, or in a separate radio log.

20.7 As the race committee may broadcast information to the fleet on VHF Ch 72 at the start and finish of the race, boats are strongly advised to monitor VHF Ch 72. A boat may, without infringing RRS 41 (outside help), request and receive repetition of information broadcast by the race committee, or be told whether or not a broadcast has been made.

21. REPORTING SCHEDULE

21.1 The race committee will send boat position reports and weather updates to the fleet at 0900hrs (Hong Kong Time) and 1900hrs (Hong Kong Time) during the race.

21.2 While racing, when the wind strength exceeds 30 knots, a boat shall report wind strength and wave heights to the race committee via YB Connect.

22. SAIL LIMITATIONS

Sail limitations will be in accordance with the IRC/HKSF Prescriptions under which the boat is racing.

23. ENGINES

23.1 An engine may be used for charging batteries, winches, halyards, pumping bilges or supplying power for weighing anchor or refrigeration while in neutral.

23.2 [DP] An engine may be used for propulsion while racing to avoid collision or in an emergency. This changes RRS 42.1.

23.3 If SI 23.2 applies, the full facts of the incident shall be reported on the boat's declaration.

24. SELF-STEERING AND POWERED DEVICES

The use of electronic, mechanical and wind-vane devices for steering is prohibited except by Single and Double-Handed Class boats.

25. FLAGS AND DECALS ON BOATS [DP]

25.1 The Rolex Backstay Flag provided to each boat shall be flown at a height of 2 metres from the working deck on the backstay or port/starboard mizzen shroud of each boat from the time the boat approaches the start area until the boat finishes the race.

25.2 The Rolex Battle Flag provided to each boat shall be flown from 1200hrs on 2 March 2026 until 1800hrs on 9 March 2026 except while the boat is racing.

26. PRIZES

26.1 See NoR 16.

- 26.2 Battle Flags will be awarded at the location prize giving at 1700hrs on Sunday 8 March 2026 at Subic Bay Yacht Club (SBYC).
- 26.3 Trophies and prizes will be presented at the Rolex China Sea Race prize giving at 1900 - 2100hrs on Wednesday 18 March 2026 at RHKYC Kellett Island, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong.

27. DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY

Competitors participate in the event entirely at their own risk. See RRS 3, Decision to Race. The organising authority (RHKYC, SBYC, the Rolex China Sea Race 2026 race committee, the sponsor(s) (including any affiliated companies), their respective staff, members, volunteers or persons working for or on behalf of the above will not accept any responsibility for any loss of life or injury to members of crew or other parties, or for the loss of, or damage to a vessel sustained in conjunction with or prior to, during, or after the event.

28. INSURANCE

All boats shall be insured with valid third-party liability insurance of at least the minimum cover required by HKSAR law. Due to the nature of this race, the organising authority advises all boats to take out additional insurance.