

SAILING INSTRUCTIONS

2026 Great Pumpkin Regatta

Birmingham Sailing Club

October 17-18, 2026

1 RULES

The Regatta will be governed by the "rules" as defined in the Racing Rules of Sailing (RRS).

2 NOTICES TO COMPETITORS

Notices to competitors will be posted on the official notice board online at [Great Pumpkin Notice Board](#).

3 CHANGES TO SAILING INSTRUCTIONS

Any change to the sailing instructions will be posted at least 1 hour before the first scheduled race on the day it will take effect, except that any change to the schedule of races will be posted by 2000 on the day before it will take effect.

4 VHF RADIOS

The Race Committee will use VHF radios to inform competitors of safety information and to hail boats that are on course side of the starting line (OCS) at the start. Transmissions on the competitor's channel (68) from the Race Committee to assist in the management of the event are permitted.

5 SIGNALS MADE ASHORE

5.1 Signals made ashore will be displayed at the flagpole near the launching ramp.

5.2 When flag AP is displayed ashore, '1 minute' is replaced with 'not less than 30 minutes' in race signal AP.

6 SCHEDULE OF RACES

6.1 A series of five races is planned. Warning for the first race on Saturday is 1300 and for the first race on Sunday is 0930. No race will be started after 1230 on Sunday.

6.2 For subsequent races to be held on the same day, the warning signal for each succeeding race will be made as soon as practicable. To alert boats that another race is about to start, multiple sound signals will be used to alert boats of an upcoming warning signal.

7 CLASS FLAG

The class flag will be the Thistle Class logo on white background.

8 THE COURSES

8.1 The course will be displayed on plaques on the side of the race committee boat. "A" shall represent the weather mark. "B" shall represent a reaching mark or an offset mark. "C" shall represent the leeward mark. "X" shall represent the finishing mark. For example, a course designation of "ACACX" would signal a typical windward-leeward-windward-leeward-windward course.

8.2 The starting line will be set to leeward of mark "C".

9 MARKS

Mark A – 3' Red tomato

Mark A' (change course mark) – 4' yellow cylinder

Mark B – small Orange tetrahedron

Mark C – 3' Red tomato

Start marks – Orange flag on RC vessel and buoy with orange flag

Finish marks – Blue flag on RC vessel and small buoy with a blue flag (X) or the A mark when finishing at the A mark.

10 CHANGE OF COURSE

When changing the course after the start, in addition to following RRS 33, the Race Committee will set a new mark A' and will lift the original mark A as soon as practical. In a subsequent change of course, the new mark A' will be replaced by the original mark A.

11 CHECK-IN

Each boat shall check-in at the Race Committee boat before the start of the first race each day by sailing on starboard tack past the stern of the boat and hailing their sail number.

12 THE START

12.1 The starting line will be between a staff on the Race Committee boat displaying an orange flag and the course side of nearby buoy with an orange flag. Buoy may be replaced by a Race committee boat with an orange flag. The RC boat at each end may have a stand-off buoy.

- 12.2** Race Committee will attempt to hail OCS, but failure to do so or competitor's failure to hear a hail are not grounds for redress.

13 THE FINISH

The finishing line shall be between a blue flag/shape on a Race Committee vessel and the course side of the nearby mark.

14 TIME LIMITS

- 14.1** The time limit shall be two hours from the start of the race for the first boat to finish. If no yacht has rounded the first mark within 45 minutes the race shall be abandoned.
- 14.2** Boats failing to finish within 30 minutes after the first boat sails the course and finishes will be scored TLE (Time Limit Expired) and will receive a score equal to the number of boats that have finished within the time limit + 2 not to exceed the number of boats registered to race. This changes RRS 32.

15 PROTESTS

- 15.1** Protest forms are available at the BSC club house. Protests and requests for redress or reopening shall be delivered there within the appropriate time limit.
- 15.2** The protest time limit is 60 minutes after RC boats docks.
- 15.3** Notices will be posted no later than 30 minutes after the protest time limit to inform competitors of hearings in which they are parties or named as witnesses and where the hearings will be held.

16 PENALTIES AT THE TIME OF THE INCIDENT

Appendix V1 will apply.

17 PENALTIES TAKEN AFTER A RACE

Appendix V2 will apply.

18 SCORING

- 18.1** All races sailed will be scored.
- 18.2** One race is required to be completed to constitute a series.

19 SAFETY

It is each competitor's un-shared responsibility to provide for their personal safety and to observe the requirements to operate a yacht in Alabama. The wearing of life jackets and the decision to start or continue a race is the sole responsibility of each competitor. Each yacht must conform to the safety equipment specified in the TCA By-Laws.

