



**East Dorset Sailing Club**

352 Sandbanks Road

Poole

Dorset

BH14 8HY

---

## **East Dorset Sailing Club Cruiser & Dinghy Sailing Instructions for Racing Season 2026**

**1. Rules.** All races will be held under the current Racing Rules of Sailing, the prescriptions of the RYA, the EDSC Sailing Instructions and the Notice of Race.

**2. Alterations to instructions.** The Sailing Committee reserves the right to vary and alter these instructions at any time. Check with the Race Officer before each race for information regarding alterations to courses and sailing instructions. If the race has already started, all endeavours will be made to notify the boats of any alterations but the race organisers will bear no responsibility for failure in communication.

**3. Indemnity.** The race organisers shall not be liable for any loss, damage, death, or personal injury howsoever caused to the owner/competitor, skipper or crew, as a result of their taking part in the race or races.

A boat is entirely responsible for her own safety, whether afloat or ashore, and nothing, whether in the Notice of Race or Sailing instructions, or anywhere else, reduces this responsibility. It is for the boat to decide whether she is fit to sail in the conditions in which she will find herself. By launching or going to sea, the boat confirms that she is fit for those conditions and her crew is competent to sail and compete in them.

The boat is required to hold adequate insurance and, in particular, to hold insurance against third party claims in the sum of at least £2 million. Nothing done by the organisers can reduce the responsibility of the boat nor will it

make the organisers responsible for any loss, damage, death, or personal injury, however it may have occurred, as a result of the boat taking part in the racing. The organisers encompass everyone helping to run the race and the event, and include the organising authority, the race committee, and the race officer and patrol/support boats.

The provision of patrol/support boats does not relieve the boat of her responsibilities.

**4. Safety.** The boat is responsible to ensure that she is equipped and seaworthy so as to be able to face any type of weather, that there is a crew sufficient in number, experience and fitness to withstand such weather and that the safety equipment is properly maintained, stowed and in date and that the crew know how to use it. All competing cruisers shall carry a working VHF radio.

**5. Entries.** For the Friday Evening Series, or any in-harbour race, the entry list at the Clubhouse shall be completed before the start. Alternatively, skippers may radio EDSC Race Control on Channel M1 or 37A, call sign 'East Dorset', if already on the water (or via safety boat for dinghies).

For Bay Races, all participating cruisers shall radio the committee boat or start boat, and radio their finishing times to the Race Officer as soon as possible after the race, unless a committee boat is still stationed on the finishing line. Any skipper who is not able to get back to the clubhouse immediately after the race may telephone the Sailing Secretary within two days to advise him of his elapsed time.

**6. Eligibility.** Unless a race is classified as 'Open' in the Sailing Programme or in a Sailing Instruction amendment, yachts shall be steered by a member of EDSC or LSC although the helm can be taken temporarily by another hand.

**7. Handicaps.** Every cruiser competing shall have a current Poole Harbour Handicap System certificate. Before participating, cruisers shall declare whether they will be racing with or without spinnaker. In the case of a race series, this shall be done before the commencement of the series. The craft shall be handicapped appropriately for all races and cannot be changed after declaration.

Cruisers with **lifting keels** may not adjust their keels during the course of a race. Adjusting the depth of the keel during a race will result in disqualification. If a cruiser with a lifting keel should run aground and lifts her keel to get off, she shall retire.

Dinghies shall have a current Portsmouth Yardstick Number for the rig and crew configuration that they are declaring, and if they change it during the series, they will be handicapped for all races on the lower Portsmouth number.

The Friday Evening Series will be divided into two fleets for dinghies. In the event of less than 3 boats in either fleet, the fleets will be combined into a single fleet.

With effect from the 2023 season on a Friday night the Cruisers will race as a single fleet. For Bay Races, the established single fleet system remains in place and all boats shall sail the same course on their declared handicap.

As a general rule dinghies with a Portsmouth Yardstick number below 1250 should sail in the A (fast) dinghy fleet and dinghies with a Portsmouth Yardstick number above 1250 should sail in the B (slow) dinghy fleet. However, dinghy competitors can choose to sail in either fleet on their Portsmouth Yardstick handicap but shall declare this for the whole series. Novices and juniors have the option of sailing a single lap of the course to gain race experience and having their time recorded, but they can only be placed in the series by completing the full number of laps for any race.

Both fleets will sail together and the number of required laps for each fleet will be shown on the course board at the end of the pier.

There will be awards for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> in both fleets for dinghies and cruisers in both the Spring and Summer series. Also, an overall cup, (Spring and Summer combined) between EDSC and LSC.

**8. Communication.** The clubhouse VHF call sign is 'East Dorset' and Race Control will be using VHF channel M1 or 37A.

**Commercial Shipping.** There is a moving exclusion zone of 500m ahead, 50m on either side, and 50m astern of commercial vessels. Yachts must monitor VHF Ch14, avoid inhibiting shipping (COLREG Rule 9), and respect Poole Harbour Commissioners' Sail Racing Procedures.

Any vessel impeding commercial shipping/passenger vessels whilst racing will be disqualified from that race and will have to appear before the sailing committee, who may increase the penalty to disqualification from the series or a ban from club racing for a period that is appropriate to the severity of the incident.

Any vessel finding itself in a position where it may impede a commercial vessel may use its engine to evacuate the danger area and then continue racing. Any vessel taking this course of action shall immediately report the fact to the Race Officer (CH 37A / M1) who may impose a time penalty if it is felt a gain was made.

**10. Identification/Class Flags.** Cruisers participating in the Friday evening series will fly a Class 1 or Class 2 code flag (or Code E flag) above the club burgee on their backstay. For Bay Races they may fly either a Class code flag or Code flag E above the club burgee. Class flags shall be removed once a yacht has retired from a race.

Dinghies shall display a sail number or, at the discretion of the race officer, a clear means of identification

**11. Friday Evening Series.** The Friday Evening Series is held jointly with Lilliput Sailing Club and races are conducted under EDSC Sailing Instructions. The races, which are open to both dinghies and cruisers, start and finish at the EDSC transit lines.

**12. Race Officer.** It has been agreed that EDSC will set the course and time for both the dinghy and cruiser races.

If while doing a Race Officer, Safety Boat or other duty your yacht or dinghy cannot compete in that race due to the duty, then your yacht's average points will be awarded to your yacht for that race.

**13. Average Points.** "Average points" are the average of all races sailed within that series.

**14. Start & finish line.**

**FOR CRUISERS:-** will be a transit of the yellow triangle on the clubhouse and a red triangle mounted on the pier head, extended across the North Channel. The Basket Boom buoy will be the outer limit mark. A buoy marked "EDSC RACE" will define the inner limit

**FOR DINGHIES:-** will be a line between the yellow triangle on the clubhouse and a buoy marked "EDSC RACE". The inner distance mark will be the pier head.

**15. Starting procedure.** Start sequence will commence 5 minutes before scheduled start times according to GPS time, although may be delayed at the discretion of the Race Officer. Race watches should be synced at the 5-minute warning. Cruisers and dinghies will not be starting at the same time. The starting procedure for both cruisers and dinghies will be as follows:

	<b>Cruisers</b>	<b>Dinghies</b>
Horn + Green light only	5 minute warning	10 minute warning
Horn + Red & Green together	4 minute warning	
Horn + Red light only	1 minute warning	
Horn + Green light only	<b>START</b>	5 minute warning
Horn + Red & Green together		4 minute warning
Horn + Red light only		1 minute warning
Horn + Green light only		<b>START</b>

After the start, Red + Blue lights will be displayed; if the race is shortened, only a Red light will be displayed and an announcement will be made on VHF Channel 37A (M1).

For the **Round The Islands Race** it will be 5 -> 4 -> 1 -> **START for all boats.**

#### **FOR DINGHIES:**

**Individual Recall:** If any part of a boat, crew or equipment crosses the start line before the start signal, you must re-start. While returning to the start line, you must keep clear of any boats that are not returning.

If any boats are course side of the line at the start signal, the race officer will sound one blast on the horn immediately after the start. If you think you might have been over, it is best to start again. If possible, the race committee will inform a safety boat to relay a message to boats involved.

The penalty code for anyone who does not comply with the above rules is OCS [On Course Side] and points given will be number of boats in race +one.

**FOR CRUISERS:** Crossing the line in **either direction after 5 minute signal** shall result in a **5 minute time penalty** being added to the yacht's **elapsed time**.

Any boat **using its engine after the 5 minute preparatory signal** will result in a **5 minute time penalty** being added to the yacht's **elapsed time**.

**There will be no general or individual recalls.** Any boat deemed to be over the start line at the starting signal shall incur a time penalty of 5 minutes. **No boat shall exonerate herself from the time penalty by returning to the start line.**

**16. Starting procedure for Bay Races.** Unless-specified otherwise by the Sailing secretary, a Gate Start, will be used for all Bay races.

The starting procedure

5 minute preparatory signal	Horn	Code E Flag displayed
4 minute warning	Horn	Code E & P Flags displayed together
1 minute warning	Horn	Code P removed
<b>START</b>	Horn	Code E flag removed

Boats shall congregate on the starboard side of the course, to starboard of the start boat's anticipated track. Boats start by sailing on starboard tack across an imaginary line between the stern of the start boat and the starting mark. (see Guidance on the use of Gate starts)

Any boat using its engine after the 5-minute preparatory signal will incur a time penalty of 5 minutes added to their elapsed time. Unless they are late for the start and have notified the Race Officer.

Any boat finding itself on the wrong side of the course at the start shall have made a false start and **may exonerate itself by rounding the Start mark to port.** Late starters shall also round the Start mark to port before joining the race

PYRA starts. PYRA (Poole Yacht Racing Association) may be using The Rig Shop mark (formerly named Vinyl Solutions) as a start line. It has been agreed that they will have priority and EDSC boats will keep clear. Should boats from different clubs be rounding the same mark during a race, normal right of way rules will apply.

## **17. Finishing time.**

With effect from the 2023 season on a Friday evening all cruisers must record their own GPS times. This will mean either taking the GPS time on your chart plotter **or** synchronizing the time on your mobile phone with the atomic clock (there is an app called ClockSync which does this).

To cater for fading wind conditions, races may be shortened by the Race Officer in which case Cruisers must take their own times when they reach a specified mark e.g. when Bell Race Mark bears 270 degrees or when NC12 bears due South).

If the race officer takes the decision to shorten a race, they will communicate this on VHF channel 37A (M1) and will specify the details of which mark and bearing will serve as the finish.

The Race Officer may communicate details of a provisional finish timing mark and bearing before the start of the race if wind conditions are predicted to fade.

**For these reasons we need to reiterate the requirement of all cruisers to have VHF communications on VHF Channel 37A (M1).**

Cruisers should write down their finish times and must communicate them to EDSC race control – call sign “East Dorset” VHF Channel 37A/ M1 within one hour of finishing the race

For Bay races and in the absence of a committee boat, all boats will take their own finishing time. A boat completes the last leg of the course when she rounds the FINISH mark on the correct side and her bow crosses the extension of the line from the previous mark through the finishing mark.

**18. Time Limits.** To qualify, the leading boat shall finish within the following time limit from the start.

Cruiser In Harbour Races - First boat 2½ hrs. All other boats within 3 hrs.

Cruiser Bay Races - First boat 4 hrs. All other boats within 5 hrs.

Dinghy race time limits will be 2½ hours maximum.

All boats finishing outside these limits will be deemed to have retired. If no boats finish within the time limit, the race will be abandoned.

**19. Retirements.** In the event of retirement from the race:

- **CRUISERS** - Lower class/code flags and notify EDSC race control (“East Dorset”) on VHF channel 37a (M1).
- **DINGHIES** - Notify the Race Officer as soon as possible either via the safety boat or at the end of the race.

**20. Points system.** Points for each race will be awarded as follows:

Position 1st = 1 Point, 2<sup>nd</sup> = 2 points, 3rd = 3 points etc.

Boats starting but not finishing a race will be awarded points equal to the number of starters in that race plus one.

Non-starters and disqualified boats will receive points equal to the number of starters in that series plus two.

**21. Discards.** Boats will be allowed discards as follows:

Number of races held: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

Races to count: 1 2 3 3 4 5 5 6 7 8 8 9 10 10

In the event of a tie, discarded races will be taken into consideration.

**22. Cancellation.** If the race is cancelled, for any reason, then Code flag ‘N’ will be flown from the clubhouse when possible.

**23. Protests.** Protests shall be submitted to the Race Officer in writing as soon as possible but no later than two hours after the race.

**24. Results.** Provisional results will be displayed on the race results page of the club website as soon as possible after the race

**25. Race Officer’s discretion.** All races will be held at the absolute discretion of the EDSC Race Officer and Race Committee

Reviewed April 2026