

# Medway Cruising Club

## 2026 SAILING INSTRUCTIONS

Dates of Racing; **All races from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026**  
Organising authority; **Medway Cruising Club**

### 1. Rules

- 1.1. The races will be governed by the current ISAF Racing Rules of Sailing (RRS), the prescriptions of the RYA and rules of the ORC, RORC IRC 2013 Parts 1, 2 and 3 and other rating authorities and classes, Medway Ports and The Port of London Authority Regulations, except as any of these are changed by these Sailing Instructions (see sections 6 & 7 below), and by the Notice of Race and these Sailing Instructions including any Supplementary Sailing Instructions issued at a later date.
- 1.2. All competitors shall comply with ISAF Advertising Code Category C and IRC2014 Part 3 (IRC-C) applies.

### 2. Disclaimer of Liability

- 2.1. The attention of all competitors is drawn to **RRS Fundamental Rule 4 'Decision to Race' and IRC Rule 3.**

### 3. Entries.

- 3.1. The race or races for Div 1 & 2 are designated as Category 4 plus a in the ORC Special Regulations. The race or races for Div 3 are designated as Category 5 plus a VHF radio in the ORC Special Regulations.
- 3.2. Eligible boats shall be entered by completing a Cruiser Class entry form for each race or series of races.
- 3.3. All entries must be equipped with a fully operational marine band VHF transceiver radio, it is to be kept turned on and monitored at all times while racing.
- 3.4. Competitors shall inform the Race Officer of the number of people on the boat prior to the start of the race.
- 3.5. Eligibility requirements for boats are as follows:
  - Cruiser Class Div 1** is open to mono hull Cruisers having a **NHC** rating.
  - Cruiser Class Div 2** is open to **novice** crews of mono hull Cruisers having a **NHC** rating.
  - Gaffer Class Div 3** is open to all mono hull Gaffers having a **MCC PN** rating.
- 3.6. A boat's handicap will be adjusted after each race. An adjustment in handicap number is not grounds for redress, this changes RRS 62. Where a boat has an established NHC handicap with MCC this will be used unless a change of ownership has occurred, in accordance with NHC guidelines. The MCC Sailing Committee will use their discretion to set an appropriate handicap when necessary, this may include special consideration for novice competitors.
- 3.7. The Cruiser Class Div 2 will start 10 minutes after Div 1. The results for the Cruiser Classes will be combined to give overall results, based on corrected elapsed times.
- 3.8. The Cruiser Class Divisions 1 & 2 will sail the same course.
- 3.9. Competitors that have sailed in Div 2 may transfer to Div 1 starts mid series.

#### 3.10. Conditions of Entry

No boat will be accepted as an entry unless the owner/person in charge has **before the start of the race** signed the declaration on the relevant MCC Race Entry Form, agreeing to be bound by the rules and accepting responsibilities in the terms set out under Rules and Safety and Responsibility above. Boats must race in rating trim, carry a copy of their rating certificate on board, if appropriate, and be available for inspection. The race committee reserves the right to refuse any entry.

4. **Notices to Competitors** will be posted on the official notice board at the MCC.

### 5. Changes in Sailing Instructions.

- 5.1. Any change to the sailing instructions will be posted ashore before 0830 hours on the day it will take effect, except that any change to the schedule of races will be e-mailed by 1400 hours on the day before it will take effect.

## 6. Changes to Rules

6.1. **The Start.** Changes RRS rules 26, 29.2 and 30. See Section 14 below.

6.2. **Time Limits.** Changes RRS rule 35. See Section 18 below.

6.3. **Crew Limits.** IRC Rule 22.4.2 shall not apply.

### 6.4. Propulsion / Use of Engine.

6.4.1. **In emergency.** Changes RRS rule 42.

An engine may be used when appropriate to recover a man overboard, to render assistance, or in any other grave emergency, such as avoiding commercial shipping in confined waters and light winds. Full details must be declared to the race committee. The race committee may hold a protest hearing and apply a time penalty.

6.4.2. An engine or power pump may be used for charging batteries, pumping bilges, or supplying power for weighing anchor.

6.4.3. **Manual Power** RRS 52 Manual Power, and ERS B.5 shall not apply. This rule may be amended by Notice of Race.

## 7. Use of VHF Radio.

Changes RRS rules 29, 41 and 88.2.

7.1. The Principal Race Officer or Race Committee may broadcast information concerning the conduct of the race to the fleet on VHF radio, Channel 37(M1). A listening watch must be kept at all times.

8. **Signals** made ashore will be displayed in the vicinity of the start line.

## 9. Schedule of Races.

The schedule of races are as specified in the Notice of Race for that race or series of races. See also the Cruiser Class Race Program.

## 10. Class Signals

Cruiser Class **Div 1** Numeral Pennant 1

Cruiser Class **Div 2** Numeral Pennant 2

Cruiser Class **Div 3** Numeral Pennant 3

Class flags shall be flown from the back stay or equivalent rigging whilst racing.

## 11. Racing Area

The racing area will be the River Medway and the Thames Estuary.

## 12. Courses

12.1. **The Course**, designated by a number, may be selected from the **MCC Cruiser Course Sheet 2026 or MCC Gaffer Course Card 2019**; except in the case of the **Estuary Race** when the **MCC Estuary Race Course Sheet 2026**.

12.2. The course number or letter for each race will be displayed in the vicinity of the starting line. The course number or letter for each Class may also be announced on VHF radio, Channel 37.

### 12.3. Fixed Marks and Standing Instructions that apply to ALL Courses:

**Folly Beacon and Darnet Beacon:** Courses shall be sailed leaving Folly Beacon to Port and Darnet Beacon to Starboard sailing down river and Darnet Beacon to Port and Folly Beacon to Starboard sailing up river.

**Yellow Sewer Outfall Buoy off Garrison Point:** No boat shall pass between this buoy and the Kent shore.

**Boats on moorings or at Anchor** are deemed to be an obstruction for the purposes of RRS. If a boat or its crew make physical contact with a moored or anchored boat she shall declare the contact to the race off as soon as possible and accept a 20% Scoring Penalty pursuant to RRS 44.3(c). If a boat caused injury or serious damage, her penalty shall be to retire. A boat deemed to have contravened this instruction will be subject to protest and liable to be scored DNE. A mooring or anchor line or chain or an object accidentally attached to a moored or anchored boat is not part of it.

## 13. Racing Marks.

Marks are charted navigational buoys and beacons, except for the MYC / MYA club racing marks which are yellow drum buoys.

13.1. If a mark of the course is missing than you should sail to its approximate position.

13.2. Please be aware of the notice to mariners regarding exclusion zone around the gas terminal.

- 14. The Start.** This changes RRS rules 26, 29.2, and 30.
- 14.1. **Visual Signals** may be used.
  - 14.2. The Race Committee may use VHF Channel 37 (M1) without visual signals.
  - 14.3. **Start Time Sequence** RRS rule 26 applies, with the Class warning signal being 5 minutes before the Start. ("5,4,1,Go" sequence).
  - 14.4. **Confirmation of General Recall and Individual Recalls by VHF Radio.** This changes RRS rule 41. The race committee may announce general and individual recalls by VHF radio.
  - 14.5. **Start following a General Recall or Postponement.** RRS rule 29.2 applies
  - 14.6. **Keeping Clear at Start.** Boats whose warning signal has not been made shall keep clear of the starting area and of all boats whose warning signal has been made.
  - 14.7. **Yachts coming to the Line** are requested to radio the starting box confirming their **Sail Number**, intention to race and the number of persons on board.
- 15. The Start Line** will be that line that runs approximately through the transit of two white posts with triangles located on the shore at the Starting Box on the club premises or from a committee boat (see Notice of Race).
- 16. The Finish.**
- 16.1. **The Finish Line** will be that line that runs through the transit of two white posts with triangles located on the shore at the Starting Box on the club premises. (competitors are requested to make sure the line can see your sail number as you cross the finish line).
- 17. Shortened Course.**
- 17.1. Courses may be shortened at any charted navigational mark of the River Medway.
  - 17.2. The Shortening of a Course may be announced over the radio, on VHF Channel 37(M1). This changes RRS rule 41.
  - 17.3. For the purpose of RRS rule 32 all marks are considered rounding marks.
  - 17.4. If boats are requested to self-finish at a mark when a course is shortened, they should record the time, referenced to the speaking clock and preferably with a mobile phone photo, as their bows cross any point of an imaginary line from the mark at right angles to an imaginary line from the most recent turning point of the course.  
**e.g.** If a course were shortened at Buoy 25 sailing upstream, then the last turning point is Darnett Ness Beacon. The bearing from Darnett Ness to Buoy 25 is 221°, therefore the perpendicular bearing is 331° if passing Buoy 25 to starboard or 131° if passing it to port. Competitors may choose which side to pass the shortening mark in order to minimize the effects of adverse tidal flow.
  - 17.5. When they have re-entered the River Medway competitors in the **Estuary Race** are to make a note of their time as they pass the North Kent buoy before continuing to the Club line, they may choose whether to pass to the north or south of the buoy. If they pass to the north they are to take their time when the buoy is on a bearing of 315°, if they pass to the south then the bearing is 125°. This is in case of a need to shorten course.
- 18. Time Limit** will be 1700 hrs, except for the Estuary Race when it will be 1900 hrs and evening races when it will be 2200 hrs. This may change RRS rule 35 See also the **Notice of Race** for the race or series of races.
- 19. Retirement**  
On retirement, the boat shall inform the PRO / Line Staff **as soon as possible**, by VHF radio, telephone or any other means (see contact details below).
- 20. Protests** shall be submitted in writing within one hour of the last boat in the race finishing.
- 21. Scoring for Race Series.**
- 21.1. ISAF appendix A will be used. The Low Point scoring system and paragraph A9 will apply.
  - 21.2. The number of races scheduled, the number which shall be completed to constitute a series and the number of scores to be excluded will be as stated in the Notice of Race for that Series.
  - 21.3. In the event of a tied series place number aggregate, ISAF Appendix A 8 shall apply.
- 22. Trophies and Prizes.**
- 22.1. Trophies and prizes will be awarded as stipulated in the Notice of Race for each race or series of races.

### **Contact Information**

[mccsailingsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:mccsailingsecretary@gmail.com)

**VHF Channel 37 M1 - "Gillingham Line"**