

RANELAGH SAILING CLUB DOWNRIVER MERLIN OPEN MEETING 19th July 2026

SAILING INSTRUCTIONS

1 RULES

- 1.1 The event will be governed by the rules as defined in The Racing Rules of Sailing (RRS) and supplemented by these Sailing Instructions.
- 1.2 The International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGS), the Port of Thames Byelaws (Thames Byelaws), and the Port of London Authority General Directions (PLA Regulations) apply and, in the event of any conflict with RRS, take precedence over RRS. Competitors taking reasonable action following an instruction from a PLA vessel will be deemed not to be in breach of RRS.

2 COMMUNICATION WITH COMPETITORS

- 2.1 Event Safety Boats may provide on the water communication by means of hailing competitors either to enforce SI 6.8 or SI 11.5 or to instruct competitors to return to Putney following application of RRS 32 or for any other communication required by the Race Committee.

3 CHANGES TO SAILING INSTRUCTIONS

- 3.1 Subject to SI 3.2, any change to the sailing instructions will be posted on the Ranelagh Sailing Club website by 2000 on Friday 17th July 2026.
- 3.2 Changes to sailing instructions may be made on Sunday 19th July 2026 by IC flag L being flown from the Ranelagh Sailing Club (RSC) flag pole accompanied by a sound signal and the changes advised by a notice posted outside the RSC boathouse

4 SIGNALS MADE ASHORE

- 4.1 Signals made ashore will be displayed from the RSC flag pole. These include race signal flags defined in RRS.

5. RACE SCHEDULE

- 5.1 The event consists of a single race, starting and finishing at Putney, with the start no earlier than 12.45.

6. COURSE

- 6.1 The course starts at the RSC start line, between the flagpole in front of the RSC club house and an orange mark painted on the river wall on the Fulham bank of the Thames.
- 6.2 The course is downriver from the start line to a laid turning mark which must be left to port. The mark will be placed abreast of the Battersea Pagoda on the north

side of the channel. In the event that the wind drops and it does not look as though the fleet will make the mark before the tide turns, the mark may be placed before the Pagoda, on the north side of the channel.

- 6.3 Competitors should take particular care to maintain a 360-degree look-out when crossing the river in the vicinity of the turning mark as they pass from the south side of the river for the downriver leg to the north side of the river for the upriver leg to return to Putney.
- 6.4 On the downriver leg, competitors should pass through the arches of the river bridges as indicated in Appendix 1. (Downstream of Putney (road) and Fulham (rail) bridges, competitors are required to pass through the starboard navigable arch of bridges with multiple arches, or keep to the starboard side when passing under bridges with a single navigable arch).
- 6.5 On the downriver leg, while keeping to the starboard side of the river, competitors should maintain a minimum distance of 40 metres from the Battersea Helipad. Failure to take reasonable efforts to observe this SI will result in the competitor being protested by the Race Committee and disqualified if the protest is upheld.
- 6.6 Following the turning mark, the course is upriver to Putney. Competitors should keep to the starboard (north side) of the Thames until the finish.
- 6.7 On the upriver leg competitors should pass through the arches of the river bridges as indicated in Appendix 2. (Competitors are required to pass through the starboard navigable arch of bridges with multiple arches, or keep to the starboard side when passing under bridges with a single navigable arch).
- 6.8 Competitors failing to keep to the starboard side of the river (and failing to move further to starboard to allow another non-racing boat through) will be warned by the event safety boats of the obligation to keep to the starboard side of the river under COLREGS, Thames Byelaws and PLA Regulations. Repeated failure to take reasonable efforts to comply with this SI will result in the competitor being protested by the Race Committee and disqualified if the protest is upheld.
- 6.9 Competitors will not sail within 5m of a pier, a combined sewage outfall (CSO) or a moored boat. The only CSO on the course is that at Putney Embankment which is located just downriver of Putney Pier.
- 6.10 In addition, according to the Thames byelaws 27, all sailing boats are required not to impede the passage of a vessel of 20 metres or more in length. However; When a vessel is approaching from the other direction and wanting to cross the channel (for example as a Thames Clipper may do when heading upstream and wanting to berth on a pier on the Wandsworth side) Thames Byelaw 24 also applies (and takes priority over 27) whereby a vessel must not cross or enter a

fairway so as to obstruct another vessel proceeding along the fairway. This means that sailing boats may carry on in the starboard channel and the Thames Clipper will wait for a gap to cross.

7. THE START

7.1 The start will be conducted in line with RRS 26.

7.2 The Class Flag will be IC Flag O.

7.3 RRS 29.1 (Individual Recall) shall not apply. Instead, any boat on course side at the start shall be subject to a time penalty. A boat that is between the RSC start line and the downriver end of the Putney Embankment hard (by London Rowing Club and the adjacent trees) at her start will be subject to a 5-minute penalty to be applied before application of handicaps where applicable. A boat that is between the downriver end of the Putney Embankment hard and Putney Pier at her start will be subject to a 10-minute penalty to be applied before application of handicaps. A boat downriver of Putney Pier at her start will be deemed not to have competed.

8. THE FINISH

8.1 The finishing line is between the post on the RSC starting box at the upriver end of the RSC clubhouse and orange mark painted on the river wall on the Fulham bank of the Thames.

8.2 In the event that the race is shortened under RRS 32.2, the finish line will be between the RSC Committee Boat flying IC flag S and either a laid mark or an event safety boat.

9. TIME LIMITS

9.1 Boats failing to reach the turning mark within thirty minutes of first boat rounding the turning mark or before the tide has fully turned may be determined to have retired without a hearing.

10. HEARING REQUESTS

10.1 Boats intending to protest or request redress for an incident on the water shall indicate this intention to the Race Committee on coming ashore after finishing and no later than thirty minutes after finishing.

10.2 Protest cases with potential outcomes that do not affect eligibility of either party for prizes may be heard after the prize giving.

11. SAFETY

11.1 Competitors are required to comply with any instruction made by an official of the PLA or an Event Safety Boat.

- 11.2 Boats are subject to the conditions of entry set out in the Notice of Race, including carrying the equipment listed in the Notice of Race.
- 11.3 Boats may be subject to scrutineering prior to launching and subject to disqualification for failure to carry the equipment specified in the Notice of Race.
- 11.4 Competitors must be alert to the strength of the tide and the need to keep clear of bridges, piers, barges and other moored vessels and vessels that are restricted in their ability to manoeuvre. If necessary to avoid danger, boats should anchor, paddle or head ashore until it is possible to continue safely. This instruction is an exception permitted under RRS 42.3 (i). Receiving outside help to keep clear of bridges, piers, barges and other moored vessels and vessels that are restricted in their ability to manoeuvre shall be deemed an exception to RRS 41 provided that the boat does not gain a significant advantage in the race.
- 11.5 Competitors are reminded of the caution stated in paragraph 1.3 of the Notice of Race (*“Competitors should be aware that sailing on the Tideway is inherently dangerous and requires experience of sailing in currents, variable winds and busy waterways. They should have the adequate experience, skill and capability to take part in the event and be excluded by the organising authority or its representatives from competing or be disqualified if they fail to comply with regulations applying to vessels using the Tideway if they do not appear to be capable of safely navigating the course.”*). Competitors may be excluded from competing or disqualified by the Race Committee for failure to comply with regulations applying to vessels using the Tideway or failing to demonstrate capability of safely navigating the course and maybe required on instruction from an Event Safety Boat to return without delay to Putney.

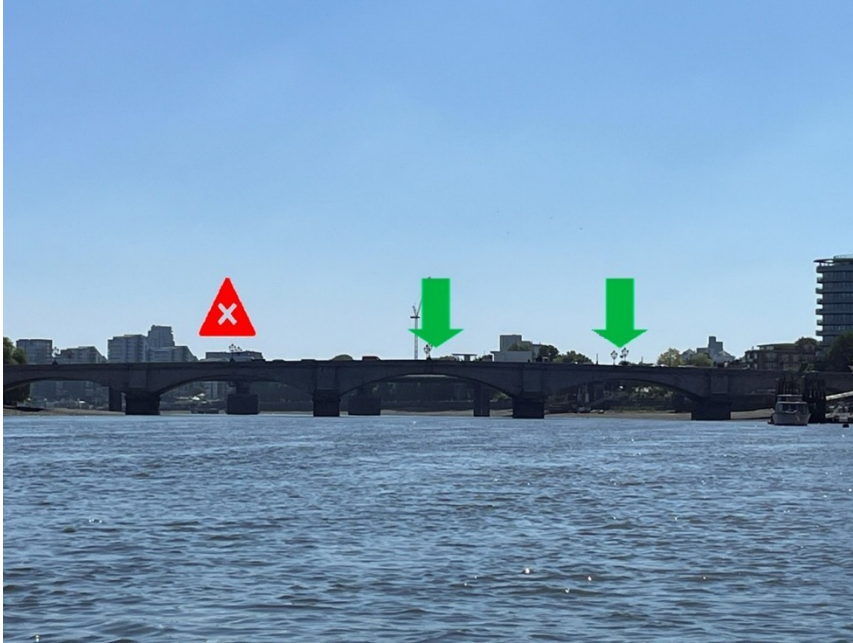
12. RUBBISH

- 12.1 Litter should be retained during the race and disposed of responsibly after coming ashore.

Appendix 1 – Course: downstream (outbound) leg

Putney Bridge - OUTBOUND

There are 5 arches of which 3 are navigable at low tide. Competitors are instructed to use the Central (outbound only) and Starboard navigable arches. *Perspective: **from upstream***



Fulham Railway Bridge - OUTBOUND

There are 5 arches, 3 of which are navigable at low tide. Competitors are instructed to use the Central (outbound only) and Starboard navigable arches.

*Perspective: **from downstream***



Wandsworth Bridge - OUTBOUND

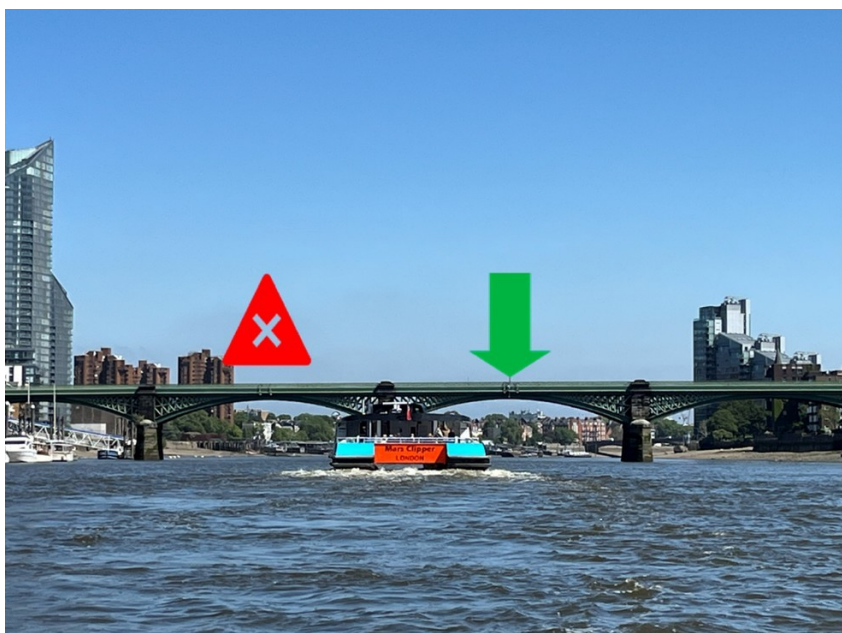
There are 3 arches, only 1 of which is navigable at low tide. The wide central arch will be shared between participants and other river traffic. Participants must pass to Starboard of any Event Safety Boat on station as the fleet passes through in the middle of the arch.

Perspective: from upstream



Battersea Rail Bridge - OUTBOUND

There are 5 arches, 3 of which are navigable at low tide. Competitors instructed to keep to the Starboard navigable arch. *Perspective: from upstream*



Battersea Bridge - OUTBOUND

There are 6 arches, 3 of which are navigable to dinghies at low tide (2 are navigable to commercial traffic). Competitors instructed to keep to the starboard navigable arch.

*Perspective: **from downstream***



The Turning Mark

The turning mark will be laid opposite Battersea Park Pagoda on the opposite side of the river. The turning mark must be left to port.

Appendix 2 - – Course: upstream (return/inbound) leg

Battersea Bridge – INBOUND

There are 6 arches, 3 of which are navigable to dinghies at low tide (2 are navigable to commercial traffic). Competitors instructed to keep to the starboard navigable arch.

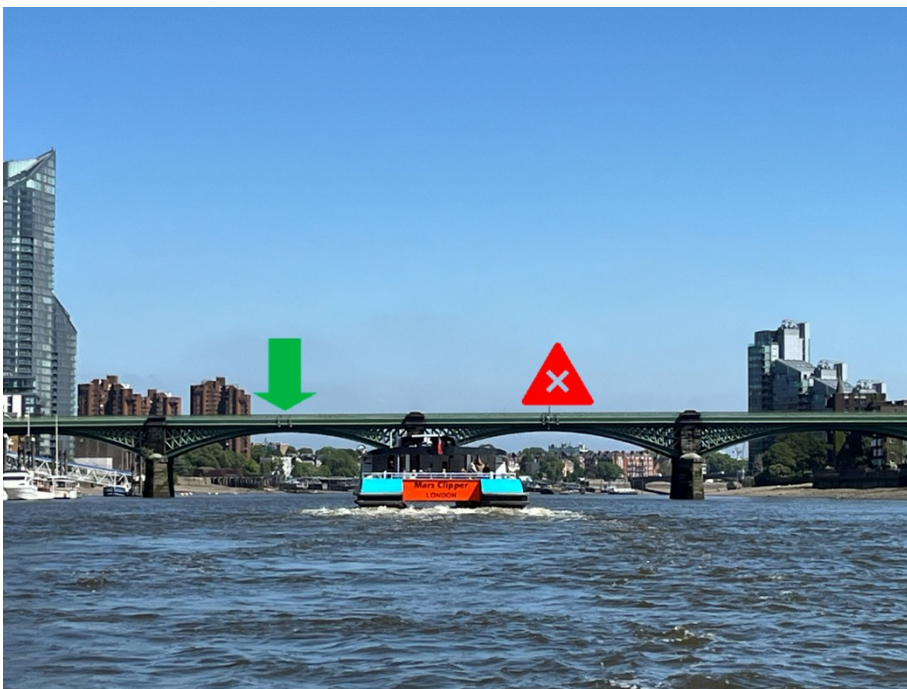
*Perspective: **from downstream***



Battersea Railway Bridge – INBOUND

There are 5 arches, 3 of which are navigable at low tide. Competitors instructed to keep to the Starboard navigable arch.

Perspective: from upstream



Wandsworth Bridge – INBOUND

Only one of the 3 arches is navigable at low tide. Participants must pass to Starboard of any Event Safety Boat on station as the fleet passes through in the middle of the arch.

Perspective: from upstream



Fulham Railway Bridge – INBOUND

There are 5 arches, 3 of which are navigable at low tide. Competitors instructed to keep to the Starboard navigable arch.

Perspective: from downstream



Putney Bridge – INBOUND

There are 5 arches of which 3 are navigable at low tide. This bridge is 400m from the finish line. Competitors instructed to keep to the Starboard navigable arch.

Perspective: from upstream

