

# St. Michaels Wednesday Night Racing 2026

## Sailing Instructions

### 1. Rules

The season shall be governed by the rules as defined in the *Racing Rules of Sailing*.

Racing Rules shall be changed as follows:

35 / A4 / A5 – boats must start within 10 minutes of their start time

35 / A4 / A5 – any boat not finishing within 45 minutes of the first boat in her class shall be scored DNF

See below for full descriptions of the changes.

### 2. Notices to Competitors

Notices to competitors shall be posted on the official noticeboard of St Michaels Wednesday Night Racing located at: [nextsailor.com/regatta/1266](http://nextsailor.com/regatta/1266)

### 3. Changes to Sailing Instructions

Changes to the Sailing Instructions shall be posted on the noticeboard at least 2 weeks prior to the day they take effect.

### 4. Signals Made Ashore

Competitors are advised to monitor VHF radio channel **78** for communications. Competitors may also call the hotline at **410-745-4983** for announcements. Any announcements made ashore shall be made at least 45 minutes before the first scheduled warning signal.

### 5. Schedule of Races

One race is scheduled each Wednesday from May 6, 2026, until October 7, 2026 (except July 1).

**Holidays** – There will be **no racing** on **July 1<sup>st</sup>**.

1st warning signal (Cruising Handicap Class)

1755 hours from May through August

1735 hours in September and October (earlier starts)

Special Events:

James H. Wilson Round the Island Race

September 2, 2026, 1735 hrs warning

Guest Skippers Race

August 12, 2026

Annual Awards Party

October 30, 2026, 1800 hrs warning

Three Series – we will run three series:

- 7 races – May 6<sup>th</sup> to June 17<sup>th</sup>
- 7 races – June 24<sup>th</sup> to August 19<sup>th</sup>
- 7 races – August 26<sup>th</sup> to October 7<sup>th</sup>

### 6. Class Flags

Class flags shall be:

			Warning	Start
Handicap Cruising	Bravo (B) flag		~ 1755	~ 1800
Handicap Racing	Alpha (A) flag		~ 1800	~ 1805
Star Class	Star Class Flag		~ 1805	~ 1810

## 7. Race Area

The Race Area shall be the Miles River off the entrance to St. Michaels harbor. Attachment A shows the location of the race area with approximate government mark locations.

## 8. Courses

**Handicap:** The course for the Handicap classes shall be designated on the Race Committee's course board using the marks defined in **Marks** (9) and as shown on the attached chart (Appendix A).

**Stars:** The course shall be port-rounding windward/leeward laps around club drop marks.

- The course shall be designated on the Race Committee's course board by a red star followed by the number of laps to be sailed followed by the letter L indicating that an orange club mark is the leeward mark.
- If no orange club marks are available to be a leeward mark, the course shall be designated on the Race Committee's course board by a red star followed by a letter indicating the windward mark followed by the number of laps to be sailed. The starting pin shall double as the leeward mark.

## 9. Marks

**Handicap:**

- Your starting pin is a yellow tetrahedron.
- The **X mark** is an orange tetrahedron to windward of the starting line - it doubles as the windward mark for the Stars.
- The **Y mark** is a tetrahedron to leeward of the finish line - it doubles as the leeward mark for the Stars.
- The **F mark** is a yellow tetrahedron 7-10 boat lengths from the Race Committee boat - it acts as a finishing pin. The finish line will likely move to windward from the starting position to lengthen the last windward leg.
- Other marks shall be designated by green letters (leave mark to starboard), or red letters (leave mark to port) as shown on the attached chart (Appendix A).
- Remember: you share these marks with Star boats, so use caution when approaching and rounding.

**Stars:**

- Your starting/finishing pin is a yellow tetrahedron. Your turning marks are orange tetrahedrons. The finish line will likely move to windward from the starting position to lengthen the last windward leg.
- If orange tetrahedrons are unavailable, a government mark shown on the attached chart (Appendix A) shall be the windward mark and the finishing pin, and the starting pin shall double as the leeward mark.
- Remember: you share these marks with Handicap boats, so use caution when approaching and rounding.

## 10. The Start

The classes shall be started in the following order:

- Cruising Handicap class, then
- Racing Handicap class, then
- Star class

An attention signal (many repetitive sounds) will be made one minute before the warning signal for the Cruising class. Races will be started by using rule 26 with rolling 5-minute starts. This means the start of the Cruising class is the warning for the Racing class, and the start of the Racing class is the warning for the Star class.

The starting line shall be between the yellow flag on the Race Committee boat and the adjacent yellow tetrahedron.

**10.1** A boat whose warning signal has not been made shall avoid the starting area during the starting sequence for other classes. That means if it is more than 5 minutes to your start, you should be far away from the starting line and its extensions.

**10.2** A boat starting later than 10 minutes after her starting signal shall be scored Did Not Start without a hearing. This changes rules 35, A4 and A5.

For your information, here is Rule 26:

Minutes before starting signal	Visual signal	Sound signal	Means
5	Class flag	One	Warning signal
4	P, I, Z, Z with I, or black flag	One	Preparatory signal
1	Preparatory flag removed	One long	One minute
0	Class flag removed	One	Starting signal

When we have a **General Recall**, we will follow rule 29.2 meaning we will restart the recalled class first. Here is the relevant part of 29.2 for your reference:

[...]The warning signal for a new start for the recalled class shall be made one minute after the First Substitute is removed (one sound), and the starts for any succeeding classes shall follow the new start.

## 11. The Finish

The finish will usually be between the yellow flag on the Race Committee boat and the mark 7-10 boat lengths away. The finish line will likely move to windward from the starting position to lengthen the last windward leg.

## 12. Penalty System

Breaches of sailing instructions 10.1, 16.1, 16.2, 17, and 19 may be less than disqualification if the protest committee so decides. The scoring abbreviation for a discretionary penalty imposed under this instruction shall be DPI.

## 13. Time Limits

13.1 If no boat in your class has finished within two (2) hours, your race shall be abandoned.

13.2 If you do not finish within 45 minutes after the first boat in your class, you shall be scored DNF without a hearing. This changes rules 35, A4 and A5.

## 14. Protests and Requests for Redress

**Handicap:** Competitors must submit a written protest form to a member of the Race Committee within 24 hours of the Handicap class starting time. Alternatively, an email with the protest form must be sent within 24 hours to:

marshall.patterson@gmail.com

Your protest will be heard at 9pm on the following Wednesday night at MRYC. If you file a protest, or are being protested, the date and time of your hearing is set. The Protest Committee will contact the protestee, but protestor and protestee are responsible for contacting and organizing witnesses.

**Stars:** Competitors must submit a written protest form to a Mid-Eastern Shore Star Fleet (MES) Officer on the same night as the race to which the protest applies.

## 15. Scoring

Time on time ratings for handicapped boats include 6 course configurations and 5 wind speeds. These ratings are listed on the EZ certificate labeled **Standard 5 Winds** for spin and non-spin. A preliminary wind rating will be announced prior to the first warning. This may change prior to the first handicap finish. A change will be posted on the signal boat and announced on VHF. The course shall be Random Leg unless specifically noted on the VHF. Failure to send or receive the VHF announcement is not grounds for redress.

The wind speed shall be displayed by hoisting a "L" Lima flag over a number pennant.

Lima over "1" means very light < 5 knots

Lima over "2" means light 5-7

Lima over "3" means light medium 7-9

Lima over "4" means medium 9-15

Lima over "5" means heavy > 15

Handicap boats wanting to use a non-spin rating for racing without a spinnaker must notify the Race Committee before the Cruising class warning signal by hailing the Race Committee. Boats may hail the Race Committee over the water or on VHF channel 78. The Race Committee will acknowledge the request by returning hail. This returned hail will be the indication that you are going to be scored using an alternate rating. Do not hail the Race Committee during the starting sequences - You will not receive a return hail. You cannot change your mind after the Race Committee acknowledges your alternate rating.

Class series shall be scored using the Low Point System of Appendix A with the following changes:

- Rule A5.3 shall apply.
- One race shall be excluded from a boat's series score after 5 completing races.
- If a boat and crew acts as mark boat instead of racing, she shall be scored an average of all her races for the series. Boats may only act as mark boat once in the season.
- Guest Skipper Night shall be excluded from series and season scores.

Two races are required to constitute a series and a season.

15.1 The "most competitive class" shall be defined as the class that has the smallest number of points between the 1<sup>st</sup> place season competitor and the 5<sup>th</sup> place season competitor. There must be 5 boats registered in your class for your class to qualify. Ties shall be broken as prescribed in Appendix A8.

## 16. Safety Regulations

16.1 If you choose not to finish, inform the Race Committee on channel 78 or ask a competitor to do so for you.

16.2 All Handicap vessels are required to use regulation running lights after sunset.

## 17. Radio Communication

Except in emergencies, a boat shall neither make nor receive radio communications not available to all boats. This restriction also applies to mobile telephones, text messaging, and portable Internet devices.

## 18. Prizes

1<sup>st</sup> place prizes shall be awarded to the 1st place boat for three boats in a class, 1st and 2nd for four-six boats in a class, 3rd/9, 4th/12, etc. The "Highpoint" Trophy shall be awarded to the boat that wins the most competitive class as defined in **Scoring 15.1**. Additional prizes may be awarded at the discretion of the Miles River Yacht Club Sail Committee.

Handicap boats must have a valid 2025 or 2026 EZ Certificate to be eligible for a trophy.

The Miles River Yacht Club will award nightly 1<sup>st</sup> place trophies to class winners. You must be present at MRYC to receive the nightly trophy.

## 19. Replacement of Equipment

Skippers must notify the Race Committee before the start **and** after the finish if a sail number other than your registered number is flown. We don't care if you register the real number for your boat. We only care about the number on your sail - Register using the number on your sail.

## 20. Disclaimer of Liability

Competitors participate in the regatta entirely at their own risk. See rule 3, Decision to Race. The organizing authority shall not accept any liability for material damage, personal injury, or death sustained in conjunction with, prior to, during, or after the regatta.

Appendix A: Race Area and Course Marks

- A - Red flasher "4" (Ashcraft)
- C - Green flasher "1" (Deep Water Point)
- E - Red nun "12" (Scotland)
- X - Orange tetrahedron to windward

- B - Green day mark "5" (Gibson Flats)
- D - Green flasher "7" (Long Point)
- F - Finish mark, yellow tetrahedron
- Y - Orange tetrahedron to leeward

