



2026 TOYOTA NEW ZEALAND OPTIMIST NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP



2026 Toyota Optimist National Championship

and NZIODA Ranking Regatta

3 April 2026 - 7 April 2026

Organising Authority: New Plymouth Yacht Club
Ocean View Parade, New Plymouth, New Zealand

SAILING INSTRUCTIONS

Optimist Open & White Fleet

ABBREVIATIONS

The notation '[NP]' in a rule of the sailing instructions (SIs) means that a boat may not protest another boat for breaking that rule. This changes RRS 60.1(a).

The notation '[DP]' are rules for which the penalties are at the discretion of the protest committee. Scoring abbreviation is DPI. Penalties for breaches of Class Rules and Yachting New Zealand Safety Regulations are also at the discretion of the protest committee.

1. RULES

- 1.1** The event is governed by the rules as defined in The Racing Rules of Sailing 2025 - 2028
- 1.2** [DP] The Yachting New Zealand Safety Regulations Part 1, shall apply.
- 1.3** RRS Appendix P, *Special Procedures for rule 42, will apply.*
- 1.4** RRS Appendix T, Arbitration, will apply.
- 1.5** RRS Appendix G3, Chartered or Loan Boats will apply.

2. CHANGES TO SAILING INSTRUCTIONS

2.1 Any change to the sailing instructions will be posted before 0900 hours on the day it will take effect, except that any change to the schedule of races will be posted by 2000 hours on the day before it will take effect.

3. NOTICE TO COMPETITORS

3.1 Prior to the event, the Official Notice Board will be located online at <https://www.npyc.co.nz/events/opti-nats>

3.2 Notices to competitors that are posted during the event, will be posted on the physical Official Notice Board at the New Plymouth Yacht Club.

4. SIGNALS MADE ASHORE

4.1 Signals made ashore will be displayed on the NPYC Flagpole in front of the clubhouse

4.2 When flag AP is displayed ashore, '1 minute' is replaced with 45 minutes in Race Signals AP.

4.3 [NP][DP] Flag D with a sound signal means 'the warning signal will be made not less than 45 minutes after Flag D is displayed.'

Boats shall not go afloat until this signal is made.

5. REGISTRATION AND BRIEFINGS

FLEET	DATE REGISTRATION / INSPECTION	WELCOME AND BRIEFING
Optimist Open	Friday 3rd 0800 - 1800	Saturday 4th 0900
Optimist White	Friday 3rd 0800 - 1800	Saturday 4th 0900

6. SCHEDULE OF RACES

6.1 No practice race is scheduled

6.2 12 races are scheduled for the event

6.3 Schedule:

Date	Fleet	Scheduled races per day	Time of first warning signal
Saturday 4th April	Open & White	3	1100
Sunday 5th April	Open & White	3	1000
Monday 6th April	Open & White	3	1000
Tuesday 7th April	Open & White	3	1000

6.4 One extra race per day may be sailed, provided that no class becomes more than one race ahead of schedule and the change is made according to SI 2.1.

6.5 To alert boats that a race or sequence of races will begin soon, the orange starting line flag

will be displayed with one sound at least five minutes before a warning signal is made.

6.6 On the last scheduled day of racing no warning signal will be made after 1500 hrs.

6.7 If the fleet is split the format for racing is described in **Addendum A**.

6.8 12 races are scheduled for Open and White fleets. If the fleets are split, Boats **may** be split into Finals Fleets after the earlier of (a) the completion of six qualifying races or (b) 1700hrs on Sunday 5th April 2026. Until that time, all boats will race in qualifying fleets.

7. CLASS FLAGS

7.1 Optimist Open fleet flags will be:

QUALIFYING SERIES FLEET	FINAL SERIES FLEET	FLAG
Yellow (or if single fleet)	Gold	Yellow with class insignia
Blue	Silver	Blue with class insignia
Red	Bronze	Red with class insignia

7.2 The Optimist White fleet flag will be the Optimist insignia on a white background.

8. RACING AREA

8.1 The racing area will be the waters off Port Taranaki, New Plymouth, New Zealand. Refer to **Addendum D**.

9. COURSES

9.1 The diagrams in Addendum B show the course, including the approximate angles between the legs, the order in which marks are to be passed, and the side on which each mark is to be left.

10. MARKS

10.1 Marks are described in **Addendum B - Courses**

11. THE START

11.1 The starting line is between two staffs displaying orange flags on the Race Committee Start Vessels.

11.2 No warning signal will be made less than 5 minutes after the preceding start.

11.3 [DP][NP] Boats whose warning signal has not been made shall avoid the starting area during the starting sequence for other races.

11.4 A boat that does not start within 4 minutes after her starting signal will be scored Did Not Start without a hearing. This changes RRS A5.

12. CHANGE OF THE NEXT LEG OF THE COURSE

12.1 Except at a gate, boats shall pass between the Race Committee vessel signaling the change of the next leg and the nearby mark. Leaving the mark to Port and Race Committee vessel to Starboard.

13. THE FINISH

13.1 The finishing line is between two staffs displaying blue flags on the Race Committee Finish Line Vessels or Pin.

13.2 [NP][DP] Boats that have finished will return directly to either starting area or ashore, keeping well clear of all boats still racing and all boats whose warning signal has been made.

14. PENALTY SYSTEM

Appendix P, *Special Procedures for Rule 42*, will apply with the following changes:

14.1 P2 Penalties: RRS P2 *Penalties is changed to: "When a boat is penalised under RRS P1.2, her penalty shall be a Two-Turns Penalty under RRS 44.2. If she fails to take it, she will be disqualified without a hearing. If a penalty is signaled after a boat has crossed the finish line, the boat will be given a scoring penalty of 10% calculated as stated in RRS 44.3*

14.2 RRS P4, *Redress Limitation*, is replaced with "An action by the Protest Committee or its designated observer under Appendix P1, *Signaling a Penalty*, shall not be grounds for a request for redress by a boat unless the action was improper due to a failure to take into account a race committee signal or a class rule. The Protest Committee may initiate a redress hearing and may give redress for an action by a member of the Protest Committee or its designated observer under Rule P1". This changes RRS 60.1(b), *Right to Protest; Right to Request Redress or Rule 69 Action*.

14.3 A list of boats that have been penalised under Appendix P will be posted.

15. WHISTLE SYSTEM

15.1 To encourage boats to take penalties afloat, **protest committee members** may blow a whistle when they see what they believe to be a breach of a rule.

16. TIME LIMITS [AND TARGET TIMES]

16.1 The Race Time Limits (see RRS 35), Target Times and the Finishing Window are shown in the table below.

Fleet	Target Maximum Time on water for Fleet per day	Target Time for race for First Finisher	Mark 1 Time Limit	Race Time Limit for First Finisher	Finishing Window
Open	5 Hours	40 minutes	20 minutes	60 minutes	20 minutes
White	5 Hours	30 minutes	20 minutes	50 minutes	20 minutes

16.2 If no boat has passed Mark 1 within the Mark 1 Time Limit, the race will be abandoned.

16.3 Failure to meet the target time will not be grounds for redress.
This changes RRS 61.

16.4 Boats failing to finish within 20 minutes after the first boat in its fleet sails the course and finishes will be scored SRS, "Still Racing Score". This changes RRS's 35, Time Limit Scores, and A4, Low Point System and A5, Scores Determined by the Race Committee. The end of the 20 minute window will be indicated by the removal of the appropriate fleet flag

with one sound on the Race Committee vessel at the finish line. The score will be calculated to be 3 points more than the last boat to finish in the fleet of that race, **but will be not worse than the score Did Not Finish.**

17. HEARING REQUESTS

- 17.1** Immediately after finishing a boat intending to protest shall, in addition to the requirements of RRS 60.2(a)(1), inform a Race Committee vessel at the finishing line of her intention to protest and the identity of the boat(s) protested. The protesting boat must receive an acknowledgement from the Race Committee. This changes RRS 60.2, *Intention to Protest*.
- 17.2** Hearing Request forms are available at the Race Office. Protests and requests for redress or re-opening shall be delivered there within the protest time limit.
- 17.3** The protest time limit will be set by the Protest Committee each day and may be different for each fleet. This changes RRS's 60.3(b), *Delivering a Protest*. Protest time limits will be posted on the official notice board.
- 17.4** Notices will be posted within 15 minutes of the protest time limit to inform competitors of hearings in which they are parties. Hearings will be held in the Protest Committee designated area. Except on the last day of the event no hearing will start after 2030.

18. SCORING

- 18.1** In accordance with RRS A4.1, *Low Point System*, boats will be scored points based on their finishing position in their fleet.
- 18.2** To request the correction of an alleged error in posted race or series results, a boat shall complete a Scoring Enquiry Form available at sign on/off desk.

19. [DPI][NP]SAFETY REGULATIONS

- 19.1** All boats intending to race shall complete the sign-on process prior to going afloat for any races.
- 19.2** Immediately on returning to shore, all boats shall complete the sign-off process.
- 19.3** A boat that retires from a race or returns to the launching area before they have finished the last race of the day shall notify the Race Committee as soon as possible.
- 19.4** A boat that breaks SI 19.1, 19.2, or 19.3 will be given a scoring penalty of 10%, calculated as stated in RRS 44.3. However the Race Committee may protest the boat instead of applying the score penalty if it so decides.
- 19.5** Competitors who require assistance shall blow a whistle or wave the paddle or one arm. The Race Committee reserves the right to assist competitors who in their opinion require assistance, regardless of the wishes of the competitor. This will not be grounds for redress. This changes RRS 62.1(a), *Redress*.
- 19.6** RRSs 27.1, *Other Race Committee Actions Before the Starting Signal*, and 40, *Personal Flotation Devices*, are changed to require that personal flotation devices shall always be worn while

afloat, except briefly while changing or adjusting clothing or personal equipment. Wetsuits and drysuits are not personal flotation devices. Flag Y will not be displayed.

20. REPLACEMENT OF CREW OR EQUIPMENT

- 20.1** Substitution of competitors will not be allowed. The person on board shall be the person named on the entry form.
- 20.2** In the event of damage to boats and/or loss of equipment may only be substituted with the written permission of the Technical Committee. If the damage occurs later than 90 minutes before the first scheduled start on a racing day, and before the start of the last race of the day, provisional verbal permission shall be obtained from the Technical Committee, Protest Committee or Race Committee and the written permission of the Technical Committee shall be applied for before the protest time limit at the end of the day in which the substitution takes place.
- 20.3** Change of sail numbers will not be allowed without prior written approval of the Race Committee or Technical Committee.

21. EQUIPMENT AND MEASUREMENT CHECKS

- 21.1** A boat or equipment may be inspected at any time for compliance with the class rules, Yachting New Zealand Safety Regulations, notice of race and sailing instructions.
- 21.2** [DP] On the water, a boat can be instructed by a member of the Race Committee, Protest committee or Technical Committee to proceed immediately to a designated area for inspection. **No adjustments shall be made to the boat until the inspection is complete.**
- 21.3** If, when inspected, a boat is found to have breached the Class Rules or Yachting New Zealand Safety regulations, the infringement will be classified as either performance or safety related.
- 21.3.1** Performance related infringements will receive a 10% scoring penalty, calculated as stated in RRS 44.3(c). This changes RRS A5.1, Scores Determined by the Race Committee.
- 21.3.2** A maximum of one performance related infringement penalty will be applied per race, however, the Technical Committee may protest a boat instead of applying the scoring penalty if it so decides.
- 21.3.3** Each Safety related infringements will receive a 2 points penalty. Multiple safety related infringements may be applied in a single race.

22. OFFICIAL VESSELS

- 22.1** Race Committee vessels will fly a white flag with "RC".
- 22.2** Protest Committee vessels will fly a yellow flag with a black "J".
- 22.3** Technical Committee vessels will fly a white flag with a black "M"
- 22.4** Media vessels will fly a white flag with the word "media"

23. [DP][NP] COACH AND SUPPORT VESSELS

- 23.1** All support vessels shall register with the organising authority at registration and provide the names and sail numbers of the competitors they are supporting.
- 23.2** The area designated as the Coach and Support Vessel Zone is described in Addendum C and marked

on the race area map.

- 23.3** When the Zone marks are laid, all support vessels must proceed directly to the zone after launching and remain there while racing is in progress, unless directed otherwise by the Race Committee.
- 23.4** The Race Committee may signal that the Coach and Support Vessel Zone is not in effect ("folded") by displaying flag V (Victor) with one sound signal.
- When flag V is displayed, support and coach vessels may move freely but only outside the course area, at no wake speed, and are not permitted within the course area unless specifically instructed by the Race Officer.
 - The course area is defined as the area within all course marks and within 100 metres of any boat racing, starting line, finishing line, or any course mark.
- 23.5** Unless flag V is displayed, vessels must remain within the designated zone and may only leave in the following circumstances:
- After the last boat in the final race of the day finishes
 - If directed or permitted by the Race Committee
 - If racing is postponed (AP/H or AP/A) or abandoned (N/H or N/A)
 - To leave the race area permanently by motoring away at a safe distance
 - If assigned specific safety duties by race management
- 23.6** Sufficient personal flotation devices (PFDs) must be carried or worn in all support vessels at all times, according to New Zealand Maritime Law.
- 23.7** [DP] All support person vessels must have a kill cord attached to the driver while the engine is running.
- 23.8** All support and coach boats must have VHF communication, monitor the designated Race Committee channel, and assist race management if required.
- 23.9** Unless authorised by the Race Committee, towing of competitors is prohibited.
- 23.10** Even when the Zone is folded (flag V displayed), support vessels must:
- Remain at least 100 metres from any boat racing, except for emergency assistance
 - Stay outside 100 metres from the starting line and marks, and the finishing line and marks, while boats are starting or finishing
 - Not position themselves between any boat racing and the next mark of the course
 - Not enter between trapezoid courses when boats are racing on both courses
 - Navigate to minimise wash to racing and official vessels; when motoring above five knots, remain at least 100 metres from any boat racing

24. MOORING

- 24.1** [DP][NP] Boats shall be kept in their assigned places while in the compound.

25. PRIZES

- 25.1** Prizes will be given as per NZIODA guidelines <https://optimist.org.nz/trophies/>
- 25.2** Spot prizes may be presented to those competitors present at prize givings during the event.

26. RISK STATEMENT

- 26.1** RRS 3 states: 'The responsibility for a boat's decision to participate in a race or to continue racing is theirs alone.' By participating in this event each competitor agrees and acknowledges that sailing is a potentially dangerous activity with inherent risks. These risks include strong winds and rough seas, sudden changes in weather, failure of equipment, boat handling errors, poor seamanship by other boats, loss of balance on an unstable platform and fatigue resulting in increased risk of injury. Inherent in the sport of sailing is the risk of permanent, catastrophic injury or death by drowning, trauma, hypothermia or other causes.

27. INSURANCE

27.1 Yachting New Zealand recommends that for national championships, each participating boat shall be insured with valid marine third-party liability insurance with a minimum cover of \$1,000,000 per incident or the equivalent.

ADDENDUM A

Sailing Instructions Format for Qualifying and Final Series Racing

1. INTRODUCTION

This Addendum applies when boats are divided into fleets to sail a Qualifying Series and a Final Series.

2. QUALIFYING SERIES

2.1 For the Qualifying Series boats will be assigned to fleets of, as nearly as possible, equal size and ability.

2.2 Initial assignments will be made by a seeding committee appointed by the organising authority and will be posted by 0900 hours on the first day of racing and will be used for that day.

2.3 In the Qualifying Series boats will be reassigned to fleets after each day of racing, except if on the first day only one race is completed. If all fleets have completed the same number of races, boats will be reassigned based on their ranks in the series. If all fleets have not completed the same number of races the series scores for reassignment will be calculated for those races, numbered in order of completion, completed by all fleets.

2.4 Reassignments will be made as follows:

RANK IN SERIES	TWO FLEET ASSIGNMENT	THREE FLEET ASSIGNMENT
1st	Yellow	Yellow
2nd	Blue	Blue
3rd	Blue	Red
4th	Yellow	Red

5th	Yellow	Blue
6th	Blue	Yellow
7th	Blue	Yellow

2.5 Reassignments will be based on the ranking available at 2100 hours that day regardless of protests or requests for redress not yet decided.

2.6 If all fleets have not completed the same number of races by the end of a day, the fleets with fewer races will continue racing the following day until all fleets have completed the same number of races. All boats will thereafter race in the new fleets.

2.7 12 races are scheduled for Open and White fleets. If the fleets are split, Boats may be split into Finals Fleets after the earlier of (a) the completion of six qualifying races or (b) 1700hrs on Sunday 5th April 2026. Until that time, all boats will race in qualifying fleets.

2.8 If at the end of the Qualifying Series some qualifying fleets have more race scores than others, any extra races will be abandoned so that all boats in the Qualifying Series have the same number of race scores

3. FINAL SERIES

3.1 Boats will be assigned to Final Series fleets based on their ranks in the Qualifying Series.

3.2 There will be the same number of fleets in the Final Series as there were in the Qualifying Series.

3.3 The Final Series fleets will be, as nearly as possible, of equal size but so that the Silver Fleet is not larger than the Gold Fleet and the Bronze Fleet (where it exists) is not larger than the Silver Fleet and the Diamond Fleet (where it exists) is not larger than the Bronze Fleet. Boats with the best Qualifying Series ranks will race all Final Series races in the Gold Fleet; boats with the next best Qualifying Series ranks will race in the Silver Fleet; boats with the next best Qualifying Series ranks will race in the Bronze Fleet (where it exists); and boats with the next best Qualifying Series ranks will race in the Diamond Fleet (where it exists).

3.4 Any recalculation of Qualifying Series ranking after boats have been assigned to Final Series fleets will not affect the assignments except that a redress decision may promote a boat to a higher fleet.

3.5 Different Final Series fleets need not have completed the same number of Final Series races. The boats in the Gold Fleet will be ranked highest, except for a boat disqualified from a finals race under RRSs 6, *World Sailing Regulations*, or 69, *Allegations of Gross Misconduct*.

4. SCORING

- 4.1** A boat that did not start, did not finish, retired after finishing or was disqualified will be scored points for the finishing place one more than the maximum number as per Addendum A. 4.2. This changes RRS A5.2, *Scores Determined by the Race Committee*.
- 4.2** When a Qualifying/Final Series is sailed the maximum number is:
(a) For races in the Qualifying Series one more than the maximum number of boats in any fleet.
(b) For races in the Final Series one more than the number of boats in her fleet.
- 4.3** During the Qualifying Series only races that have been completed by all fleets will be included in the series scoring.
- 4.4** When a Qualifying/Final Series is sailed one race score will be discarded when calculating the division into final series fleets.
- 4.5** When a Qualifying/Final Series is sailed the Qualifying Series races and the Final Series races will count for total points in the championship.

5. FLEET IDENTIFICATION

- 5.1** While racing each boat shall display a coloured ribbon and a mast sleeve corresponding to the fleet to which she has been assigned. The ribbon shall be placed at the top end of the sprit, and not folded in half, so that it flies conspicuously.
- 5.2** Each boat will be issued their corresponding fleet ribbon and mast sleeve at the Sign On Tent daily. The daily fleet assignment posted on the official notice board.
- 5.3** At the end of the Final Series competitors shall return the coloured ribbons and mast sleeve to the Sign On Tent at the end of the last race.

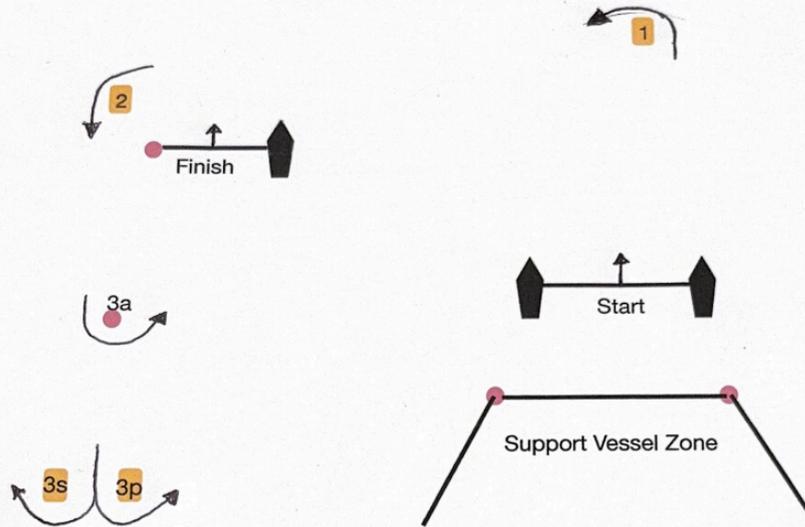
6. REQUESTS FOR REOPENING

- 6.1** On the last day of the Qualifying Series a request for reopening a hearing shall be delivered: (a) within the protest time limit if the party requesting reopening was informed of the decision on the previous day.
(b) no later than 15 minutes after the party reopening was informed of the decision on that day.

This changes RRS 63.7 *Re-opening a Hearing*.

ADDENDUM B - COURSES

ADDENDUM B - Courses



Course:

	Mark Rounding Order
Optimist - Open	Start - 1 (port) – 2 (port) – 3s/3p (gate) - Finish
Optimist - White	Start - 1 (port) – 2 (port) – 3A (port) - Finish

Marks	Description
1, 2, 3S, and 3P	Large orange cylindrical buoys
3A	Orange cylindrical buoy
Change of Course mark	Yellow cylindrical buoys
SS - Starting mark starboard end	Race committee vessel
SP - Starting mark port end	Race committee vessel
FS - Finishing mark starboard end	Race committee vessel
FP - Finishing mark port end	Race committee vessel or Orange buoy with blue flag.

ADDENDUM C

Support Vessels

Note: All support vessel personnel are reminded that this Addendum forms a part of the Sailing Instructions. You are also reminded that breaches of Sailing Instructions by persons on a support boat could impact on the sailing results of sailors associated with your support boat.

For the purpose of this event, any person on a support vessel is defined as a “*Support Person*” as per the definition offered in the RRS.

Addendum C: Coach and Support Vessel Zone Specification

- The Coach and Support Vessel Zone is identified in the course map in Addendum B and marked by floating marks as described at the event briefing.
- When Victor flag is displayed by the Race Committee, this zone is not in effect and boats may move freely *outside* the course area and marks, always at no wake speed and not within the course area at any time except by direct instruction from the Race Officer.
- All other provisions and penalties for breaches of SI 23 apply.
- Examples of prohibited areas for support vessels are illustrated on the event map.

ADDENDUM D

Course Illustration - Racing Area



Red Zones - Out of Bounds (Port and reef)
Yellow Zone - Indicative Racing areas for Open / White Fleets
Orange – Public Launching Ramp

Dark Blue – Vehicle and Trailer Parking
Pale Blue - Indicative Racing areas for Green Fleets

