



CLIPPER 2025-26 RACE

SECTION 3 – COURSE DETAILS

STAGE 11 – PANAMA TO WASHINGTON, DC

REFERENCES

The race will be sailed in accordance with the instructions below and the references included in them to:

- Clipper 2025-26 Race Notice of Race, FINAL dated 25 July 2025
- Clipper 2025-26 Race Sailing Instructions, FINAL V2.0 dated 14 October 2025

GENERAL INFORMATION

- All times are **local**, Panama (UTC -5 hrs) unless otherwise stated.
- Tidal Information on Tuesday 02 June 2026 at:
 - Colon HW 0130 0.39m
- Tidal Information on Wednesday 03 June 2026 at:
 - Colon HW 0210 0.38m
- Race distance is approximately 1530 nautical miles.
- The estimated finishing date is 14 – 16 June 2026
- All bearings shown are relative to True North.

ARRANGEMENTS PRIOR TO THE START

02 June 2026

- All Day Group 4 - Panama Canal transit
- 1200 Groups 1 to 3 - Immigration Clearance in Shelter Bay Marina (TBC)
- 1300 - 1400 Marina Groups 1 to 3 - Skippers & First Mates Briefing in Shelter Bay Marina
- 1500 Groups 1 to 3 – All Leg 7 Crew on board yachts in Shelter Bay Marina
- 1515 - 1550 Groups 1 to 3 - Individual Team Photos on Board
- 1600 - 1630 Groups 1 to 3 - Slip Lines in Shelter Bay
- 1800 (tbc) Group 4 - Exit Panama Canal and motor out of harbour
- 1800 (tbc) Fleet RV outside harbour breakwater and motor-sail to Le Man Start Area (approx. 245nm)

03 June 2026

- All Day Motor-sailing to Race Start location / MOB training drills. Refresher Sail Training en-route to Le Mans Start Area

04 June 2026

- 1100 Fleet RV in vicinity of 13°00.000N, 078°00.000W
- 1130 Roll call on VHF Ch 72 (conducted by Lead Skipper)

- 1200 Stage 11 Le Mans Start



STAGE 11 LE MANS START AND STARTING SIGNALS

The Le Mans Start for Stage 11 will be at approx. 1200 LT on Thursday, 04 June 2026.

The location will be approx. 245nm north-northeast from Shelter Bay Marina, Panama, in approx. position 13°00.000N, 078°00.000W

- The start will be conducted by the nominated Lead Skipper in accordance with Clipper 2025-26 Race Sailing Instructions Annex A – Clipper Race Le Mans Start Procedure.
- The start sequence will be called on VHF CH 72.
- The specific Le Mans start order will be drawn at the Skippers / First Mates pre-race briefing on Tuesday 02 June 2026.
- Lead Skipper will be Ella Hebron on CV26 Washington, DC

INFRINGEMENTS

As per the Sailing Instructions – Annex 1 – Clipper Race Le Mans Start Procedure.

RACE MARKS

Race marks will be established buoys, race marks, navigational marks and virtual waypoints.

COURSE

Ref	Mark	Rounding	Comments
1	Le Mans Start	START	In vicinity of position 13°00.000N, 078°00.000W
2	Virtual Mark Howard	PORT	17°20.000N, 075°50.000W Virtual Waypoint
3	Virtual Mark Smith	PORT	18°28.000N, 075°40.000W Virtual Waypoint
4	Virtual Mark Ackerley	STARBOARD	18°24.000N, 075°05.000W Virtual Waypoint
5	Virtual Mark Hall	PORT	20°00.000N, 073°55.000W Virtual Waypoint



6	Virtual Mark Bonus	STARBOARD	19°50.000N, 073°35.000W Virtual Waypoint
7	Mandatory Gate 1	BETWEEN	22°00.000N, 074°20.000W MG1 West and 21°45.000N, 074°00.000W MG1 East
	OR		
8	Mandatory Gate 2	BETWEEN	21°38.000N, 073°40.000W MG2 West and 21°30.000N, 073°10.000W MG2 East
	OR		
9	Mandatory Gate 3	BETWEEN	21°30.000N, 072°50.000W MG3 West and 21°35.000N, 072°35.000W MG3 East
10	Mandatory Gate 4	BETWEEN	22°32.000N, 073°22.000W MG4 West and 22°30.000N, 073°12.000W MG4 East
	OR		
11	Mandatory Gate 5	BETWEEN	22°14.000N, 072°40.000W MG5 West and 21°55.000N, 072°25.000W MG5 East
12	Virtual Mark Wharfe	PORT	23°04.000N, 073°30.000W Virtual Waypoint
13	Virtual Mark Bishop	PORT	35°15.000N, 075°00.000W Virtual Waypoint
14	In addition to the above, NO yacht is to be within 3nm of any coastline, island or off lying hazard (awash or above the water at chart datum) and not in	SEE BELOW	NOTE Between Le Mans Race Start and the Finish Line

	water of less than 10m deep (chart datum)		
15	Finish Line	SOUTH NORTH	to See Below

WARNINGS

- Traffic Separation Schemes – no TSS shall be entered by a Clipper Race yacht and should be considered an obstruction. If for safety reasons a yacht is compelled to enter a TSS then that yacht must comply with IRPCS Rule 10. To exonerate herself the yacht crossing into a TSS must return to the exact position they crossed into the TSS before resuming racing. For the avoidance of doubt, the magenta area of a TSS as shown on the chart shall constitute part of the TSS and shall not be entered.
- Positions of racing marks given are approximate. If a mark is out of position this will not be grounds for a yacht to protest the Race Committee or apply for redress. It is always the Skipper's responsibility to determine if any racing mark is surrounded by navigable water.
- If a racing mark is not present at all then the positions listed above will constitute the virtual positions that form the race course.
- Skippers should be aware of and must not impede the safe passage of any commercial traffic particularly when departing Panama, in the vicinity of the Le Mans start line, and also in the vicinity of the finish line and on the approaches to the Chesapeake Bay and Washington DC.
- Skippers are warned to beware of recreational boaters, in particular around the race start and finish areas and also within the Chesapeake Bay area.
- There is a possibility that yachts may be boarded by officials from USA and Central American and Caribbean countries. Skippers are to comply with the instructions given by these official authorities which may include officials boarding the yachts. No redress will be awarded for any delay caused by such a boarding.
- Skippers should be aware that due to the time of year there is a large amount of wildlife on the expected race route, in particular large whales and mammals that are prevalent in the area. A good lookout is essential.
- It should be noted that the charted positions of some reefs and underwater obstructions particularly in the Caribbean Island areas cannot be relied upon on as being accurate.
- Skippers shall be aware that many of the surveys / soundings taken on the charts for this race route were taken with lead line many years ago (some pre- 1900) and GPS Lat and Long positions cannot be accurately plotted on them and can cause significant navigational errors.
- Skippers shall not rely on GPS alone when navigating near coastlines and hazards and shall establish visual or radar fixes.
- Skippers shall review the warnings on charts and pilot books relevant to the area to be sailed. During daylight skippers shall avoid navigating too closely to any marked obstruction and at night significantly more sea room shall be given.

EXCLUSION ZONE

- There will be a 3nm exclusion zone from all coastline, islands and off lying hazards (awash or above the water at chart datum) between the Le Mans Race Start and the



Finish Line. This will apply from the Le Mans Race Start until crossing the Finish Line (in approx. position 36°45.000N, 075°38.000W).

- In addition to the above, no Clipper vessel is to roam into an area of less than 10m deep (chart datum) between the Le Mans Race Start and the Finish Line. This will apply from the Le Mans Race Start until crossing the Finish Line (in approx. position 36°45.000N, 075°38.000W).
- Penalties will apply for any infringements of these rules as directed by the Clipper Race Committee. Any penalties will be a minimum of 6 hours.
- The safe navigation of all Clipper Race Vessels is the responsibility of the Skipper or person nominated by the Skipper. All Skippers **MUST** navigate with caution using all available means at all times. Due regard must be taken given the prevailing conditions and circumstances at the time.
- Skippers are warned that marks of the course are not necessarily placed in safe navigable waters, in fact in some cases they are placed on land, and therefore, they should not be used as route waypoints. The safe navigation of the yacht is the sole responsibility of the Skipper and as such the Skipper shall ensure that when deciding on routing and selecting route waypoints consideration is given to all navigational hazards, crew strength, visibility and whether it is day or night.

STEALTH MODE

As per Clipper SI 9, each yacht shall have the opportunity to use one period (of 24 hours) of Stealth Mode during Stage 11.

SCORING GATES

As per Clipper SI 10, there will be one Scoring Gate during Stage 11. This is not a compulsory gate for the race but the first three yachts through the gate will be awarded three points, two points and one point respectively. Any other yachts that pass through the Scoring Gate will not be awarded any points. Skippers shall record the GPS time (UTC) of crossing the scoring gate and email / contact the Race Management Team with these timings within 3 hours.

The scoring gate shall be between SG11 West at position 24°00N, 072°00W and SG11 East at position 24°00N, 071°30W

A digital photograph clearly showing the exact position and GPS time (UTC) shall be taken when crossing the Scoring Gate and retained on board. This photograph will be used to confirm the timings, if required. The photographs from the first three boats to cross the scoring gate may be checked at the next stopover. Failure to produce the photographs when requested by a member of the Race Committee will result in disqualification from the scoring gate and the points will be awarded to the next team in line subject to examination of photographic evidence.

OCEAN SPRINT

As per Clipper SI 11, there will be an Ocean Sprint as part of Stage 11. The Ocean Sprint shall be in the North Atlantic Ocean between the lines of latitude 27°N and 30°N. Skippers shall record the GPS time (UTC) of crossing each of these lines of longitude and email /



contact the Race Management Team with these timings within 3 hours.

The first three teams with the shortest elapsed time between the two designated positions will receive three points, two points and one point respectively. The remaining yachts will receive no points for the Ocean Sprint.

A start and finish declaration must be submitted by each yacht regardless of whether it is the shortest elapsed time or not as this information is needed for a results table that will be published on the Clipper Race website.

A digital photograph clearly showing the exact position and GPS time (UTC) shall be taken when crossing the Ocean Sprint Start and Finish lines and retained on board. These photographs will be used to confirm the timings, if required. The photographs from the fastest three boats in the Ocean Sprint may be checked at the next stopover. Failure to produce the photographs when requested by a member of the Race Committee will result in disqualification from the Ocean Sprint and the points will be awarded to the next team in line subject to examination of photographic evidence.

JOKER

As per Clipper SI 12, each team is allowed to play their 'Joker' once only during the Clipper 2023-24 Race. It can be played in any individual race and in order to be eligible this request must be submitted to the Race Management Team in writing at the pre-race Skippers briefing on the day before departure of the nominated race. In the event that there is no planned Skippers briefing then a team must inform the Race Management Team in writing no later than 24 hours before departure of the nominated race.

The 'Joker' means that all points gained from the yacht's finishing position at the end of the nominated race will be doubled. e.g. if a team finishes 1st then they will be awarded 20 points and if a team finishes 10th then they will be awarded two points.

Any points gained from Scoring Gates or Ocean Sprints will be unaffected.

REPORTING POSITIONS

- Lead Skipper:
 - 04/06 – 11/06 Ella Hebron CV26
 - 12/06 – Finish Gavin Rees CV25
- As per Clipper SI 7, each skipper shall report the position of their yacht to the Race Management Team by email at 0600 and 1800 UTC each day at sea (whether racing or not). Amongst other things, this email shall contain DTF. The email shall be sent to racemanagement@clipper-ventures.com (do not copy in the Lead Skipper or other yachts).
- In the event of Satcom email failure the skipper shall endeavour to pass the scheduled reporting information and daily report back to the Race Management Team via the sat phone or the Lead Skipper or any other Clipper yacht on VHF.

FINISH LINE

- Skippers are to report their position, and ETA at the finish line, to the Race Management Team by phone or email when approx. 20 miles (or 2 hours) away from the line.
- The finish line is in an area approx. 28nm due southeast of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and entrance.
- The finish line is approx. 185nm from The Wharf, Washington DC.
- The finish line shall be between two virtual marks with the Western end of the line being in position 36°45.000N, 075°38.000W and the Eastern end of the line being in position 36°45.000N, 075°37.000W
- The length of the line is approx. 0.8nm in length.
- The finish line shall be crossed in a South to North direction.
- Skippers must record their own GPS time of crossing the finish line (UTC) and they must send this time to the Race Management Team via email or any other means within 10 minutes of finishing or as soon as practicable.
- There will not be a finish boat on station at the finish line. A digital photograph clearly showing the exact position and GPS time (UTC) shall be taken when crossing the finish line. This photograph will be used to confirm the timings, if required.
- In the event of a photo finish the actual positions given above will be used to verify the line.
- Skippers are to be aware of the commercial traffic on the approaches to, and around the vicinity of the finish line.
- Skippers are to be aware that the finish line is located in an area approx. 8nm southeast of the start of the Chesapeake Bay Traffic Separation Scheme (the main entrance channel to the bay) and therefore, must be aware of the high risk of commercial traffic in this vicinity.
- The Race Committee reserves the right to finish the race in whatever manner is deemed suitable to best achieve the aims of the race, due to weather conditions or safety considerations or for any reason.
- Typically, this will be either by changing the position of the finish line, or by introducing a time limit such that at the specified time of the finish, the distance (great circle) to the finish of each team shall be used to determine the overall finish order for that race, or a combination of both methods.
- In the event of a shortened course, the 'S' flag will not be flown and the sound signal will not be made (amendment to RRS 32).
- Additional gates may be added to the course after the start signal. Skippers will be advised by email of any such changes.
- In the event of a change to the course, the next mark on the leg currently being sailed may be changed (amendment to RRS 33).

ACTIONS AFTER THE FINISH

The finish line is located approx. 185nm from The Wharf, Washington DC. It is estimated that this motor-sail will take approx. 26 - 30 hours to complete.

Once finished each team shall navigate with caution to the vicinity of the entrance to the Potomac River at approx. position 37°53.000N, 076°07.000W (approx. 3nm due east of the Smith Point Light) and RV together as a fleet.



At the RV point ALL teams will drop mainsails and hoist flags and forestay banners (weather permitting) and prepare to transit the Potomac River.

Once the whole fleet are present at the above RV point, ALL Teams shall navigate with extreme caution, under engines, in line astern formation, up the Potomac River and to the vicinity of The Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge at position 38°47.500N, 077°02.250W. The distance is approx. 101nm and should take approx. 15 hours to complete.

The fleet will be led by CV26 Washington DC and then Stage 11 Finishing order behind.

The timing of arrival at the Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge is crucial and the fleet arrival time **MUST** be accurately timed to be marginally before 0445 LT on the arrival day.

The Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge will open at precisely 0445 LT on the arrival day to allow the whole fleet to pass through in line astern formation.

Once through the Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge the whole fleet will be in a tight Parade of Sail formation line astern and will proceed with extreme caution to the vicinity of The Wharf, Washington DC at position 38°52.758N, 077°01.672W

Once ready, each team shall make final preparations to their yacht for berthing and call 'Clipper Race Control' on VHF CH 72 and follow instructions issued by the Deputy Race Director.

Skippers are warned to be vigilant around the finish line and approaches to the Chesapeake Bay due to the high volume of commercial shipping in the area and particularly at night.

Skippers **MUST** remain vigilant due to the technical pilotage and the many shoal areas within the Chesapeake Bay and particularly within the close confines of the Potomac River and final approaches to Washington DC.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH OTHER CLIPPER RACE YACHTS AND RACE CONTROL

In addition to monitoring VHF CH 16 and relevant harbour channels, the Clipper Race yachts shall use the following VHF Channels:

- Primary VHF CH 72
- Secondary VHF CH 77

PASSAGE PLANNING

Passage planning is not only a legal requirement but is required under Clipper Race rules.

A complete and detailed passage plan on the form supplied at Annex E of the Sailing Instructions must be 'signed' by the Skipper and First Mate. This must be submitted to the Race Management Team by 1800 local time on the pre-departure day.

Failure to submit a complete passage plan will carry the penalties as per Clipper SI 16.



Dale Smyth
Clipper Race Director

24 May 2026