

Race to Alaska

Race Packet

2023

You have found a vessel seaworthy enough to carry you northwards, and a crew with the reason and competence to endure all the knocks that R2AK can throw your way. Make no mistake - you have entered a competition that will grind your expectations into a fine powder, a powder that will vanish in 55 knot gusts or be carried away by a sea across your bow. You will be cold, your pedal drive will break, and you might lose your job when the 6 day plan becomes three weeks.

Contained herein is all the news that's fit to print - that is, all the information that we feel you'll need to start down this path of brutal self-reliance.

Ready, set go.

Love,



Calendar Of Events

All times Pacific Standard and subject to change due to: weather, whimsy, bad omens.

<i>Nuts and Bolts</i>		
September 9	8 pm	Application Period Opens
January 16		Slacker Tax Kicks In
February 16		Slacker Tax 2: The Return
April 15		Applications Closed
April 30		Registration Deadline
<i>Port Townsend Events</i>		
June 3	6pm	Racer Lamb Roast
June 4	9am	R2AK Ruckus!
June 4	9am-3pm	Registration
June 4	3pm	Skipper's Meeting
June 5	5am	Proving Ground Start
<i>Victoria and Beyond</i>		
June 6	5pm	Proving Ground End
June 7	6pm	Race Meeting and Dinner
June 7	3-6 pm	Victoria Open Boat
June 8	High Noon	Le Mans Start
June 21	High Noon	Grim Sweeper Departs
July 1	High Noon	Race Over
September 8	6pm	R2AK Blazer Party

Responsibility

Competitors in this event are participating **entirely at their own risk**. A team's decision to participate in the race, or to continue racing once they've begun, is theirs alone. By participating in this event, each competitor releases the race organizers and officials from any and all liability associated with such competitor's participation in this event to the fullest extent permitted by law.

Short version: This is dangerous. All of us at R2AK High Command advice that if you're not damned sure you've got all your ducks in a row, and all of them float, you shouldn't do this.

Overarching Rules for the R2AK

Race To Alaska High Command are no fan of rules. That said here they are:

This race complies and adheres to the USCG Navigation Rules and Regulations; we do not employ special racing rules. These "Rules of the Road" exist to keep you and everyone else on the water safe, and both Canadian and U.S. authorities expect them to be followed. Up to date rules (for both countries) can be found [here](#).

No Motors

No motors onboard, at all, even if they're disabled, not hooked up, filled with cottage cheese, etc. This includes motors and engines of any fuel type, and that includes fossil-fuel-powered generators to keep the lights on. Human and wind power only for propulsion. Solar, wind, and human power are okay for charging things—and no, not for charging a battery that powers propulsion of any kind. Bilge pumps are okay, unless it's really big and pointed aft (see Rule 8).

No Support

That means no pre-arranged support during the race. If the support is available to everyone, then you can avail yourself of it, otherwise you are to rely on your wits. You can buy things along the way, but no pre-mailed supply drops, staged personnel to assist you along the shoreline, and especially no chase boats—even if they end up not giving you any help, they are still supporting you by offering a safety net and peace of mind that other racers won't have. Same goes for getting a shore support team to send you weather maps, Google search repair places, arrange repairs, give you updates on other racers positions, etc.: don't do it! Your team is to be free range, free falling, independent souls. In general, if the help would be available to anyone in the race (weather radio updates, supermarkets,

random grandmas walking down the beach with apple pies, etc.) then it's fair game. Any doubts? See Rule 8.

Team Size and Composition

There's no adding crew along the way. You can subtract them for medical reasons, or if you decide you can't stand your brother-in-law that begged his way aboard. But once they're gone, they're gone - no coming back at a later point.

Anytime you lose crew you will be re-vetted to determine if it is safe for your team to continue the race. Contact the Race Phone immediately if your crew number changes.

Waypoint

Teams going all the way to Ketchikan must go through Bella Bella, BC. Why? Who knows.

Remember the whole world including your mother and the Pope are watching you on the tracker, so we'll know. No Bella Bella? No \$10,000.

Grim Sweeper

You're out of the race if you get passed by our sweep boat. It departs Port Townsend as soon as the first racer crosses the finish line **or** at High Noon on June 18 - whichever happens **LAST** and will log 75 miles a day until it reaches Ketchikan. If they catch up to you, you'll be tapped out and will be officially out of the race.

Stage 1 (Port Townsend to Victoria) is a funzie. Neither where you place nor your elapsed time in the first stage matters in terms of your overall finish in Ketchikan. Teams wishing to continue need to finish Stage One within the time allotted (36 hours) without getting rescued.

Portaging

It's okay to portage your boat, but no other vehicle can be involved, even a bike.

Vessel Traffic Services (VTS)

When near a Commercial Traffic Separation scheme (think traffic lane for big ships), all vessels are required to monitor the vessel traffic channel for that location.

COLREGS Rule 10

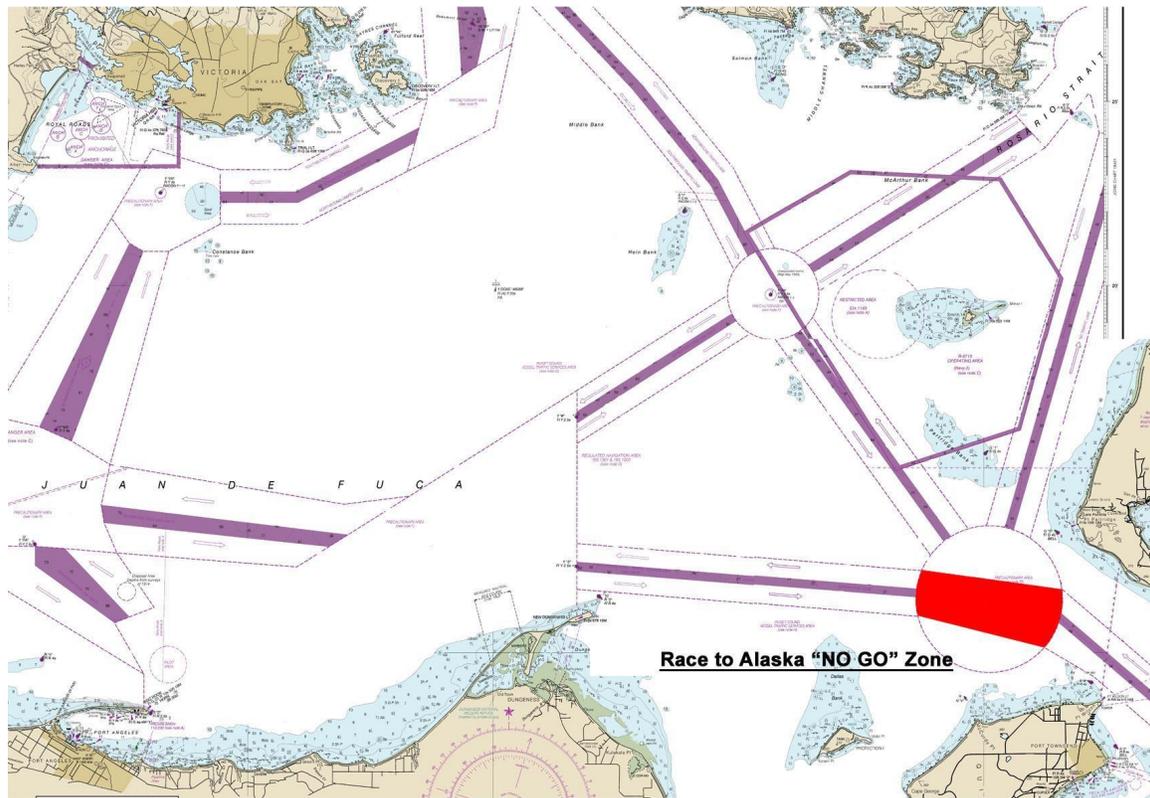
Unlike "R2AK Rule 8", COLREGS Rule 10 is part of the international law that governs how vessels of all sizes are supposed to behave on the water. Rule 10 is related to vessel separation schemes, and the good folks at Vessel Traffic have

asked us to make sure that all racers pay attention to this one. Rule 10 is pretty long (complete [text here](#): but here's a short version).

Stay out of the traffic lanes, and if you have to cross them, do so at right angles and as quickly as possible. "Impeding" a fully loaded tanker is not just bad form, it's really dangerous for the smaller boat. We call that the "law of asymmetrical consequences"...

VTS No Go Zone - Stage 1

They have made a body of water illegal for you (yes, Race to Alaska participants *specifically*) to enter and it's right near Port Townsend. Doing so will disqualify you from the race. Check out the image below.



Disqualification

Break your honor and one or more of our few rules

Any evidence of using outside help—for food drop-offs, swapping out team members, shipping parts to yourself ahead of time, it comes to light that your

boat is actually a remotely operated drone, etc.—will mean an automatic disqualification from the race. There is no way we can watch you all the time, but... cheating? Above all else this is a personal challenge, a record-making race, a good story to tell the young-uns you may one day bounce on your knee; please don't tarnish the spirit of this by cheating the actual challenge and giving yourself a false advantage over those who are legitimately trying. Resources available to all racers are available to you.

Again, if outside support can be obtained by anyone in the race, then it's ok for you to have too. This includes weather radio, tide info from apps on your phone (or programs on your ship-board super-computer?), supermarkets, machine shops along the route, etc. It doesn't include your America's Cup buddy who just happens to be looking at the weather patterns online and doing some calculations while waiting for you to check in. True, if the other people in the race knew him and had his number, they could call him too, but they don't so you shouldn't either. Same goes for your buddies from the rigging shop who just "happen" to be vacationing on the BC coast in their shop van.

Cheating is for wimps, cowards, and the morally bankrupt. Any doubts whether you are cheating or not—see Rule 8 (page 7 or 8, it moves around).

You did what? Or The Rod Price Rule

If you turn your tracker off for anything but to change batteries, the Race Marshal may disqualify you. That signal getting through means the Canadian Search & Rescue teams don't have to go looking for you. So let's just keep it on all the time, eh?

Returning to your senses (AKA "quitting mid-race")

This can happen. In fact, it's a more honorable option than pushing yourself into harm's way and burdening your family, the Race, and lifesaving forces by taking things too far. If you get tired of this crazy self-persecution of sleep deprivation, blisters, hypothermia, fatigue, and pain, you can quit at any time. It might also be that you realize you'd rather spend the next two months dinking around one fjord or another rather than completing the race. No judgment from us for why you are doing it, but whatever the reason, we only ask that you inform us ASAP that you're out. You can:

- 1) Call the Race Phone. (You'll get this phone number at the skippers meeting)
- 2) If no cell signal, contact us through VTS, or any other means that presents itself

Once you have left the race you will no longer be part of our race management safety systems, but please continue to use the SPOT until it is returned to us; we are curious where you end up.

Have Integrity

By participating, you are affirming to live to a higher standard and that you believe how things are done are as important as what is accomplished.

Registration Deadline

Applications must be received by April 15th, 2023. Tax day here in the U S of A.

All registrations & payments must be received in full by April 30th, 2023.

RULE 8

If we decide it's necessary to consult a lawyer to figure out if you are disqualified or not, you are automatically disqualified.

(the remainder of this page is intentionally blank for dramatic effect.)

The Winners

1st to Arrive

\$10,000

2nd to Arrive

A Set of Steak Knives

Any Vessel That Arrives

Victorious

Required Equipment

The only equipment that you **MUST** have aboard is that which is legally required by the agencies that have jurisdiction over a portion of the race course. Besides that, you must carry the SPOT Tracker (more later) and a registered PLB or vessel EPIRB.

Know the laws. Depending on your boat type you may be required to carry additional items such as: radar reflector, fire extinguisher, boarding ladder, anchor and rode, bailer/bilge pump or compass. (Really. Some nincompoop made a compass optional on some boats.)

PLB or EPIRB - This is an additional safety item that R2AK requires that you bring. It's a direct request from the Canadian Coast Guard, and they're awesome. If you are unfamiliar with these devices, pull up the ol' google machine. But let's be clear: EPIRBs and PLBs are **very specific devices** and Garmin InReaches or the like don't qualify.

Here is what we have distilled from safety requirements from both U.S. and Canadian laws. We are not the government! We could be wrong, so if you have questions, check it out for yourself.

The table just below is a brief overview of the things generally required by law. Note that requirements differ depending on who's flag flies off your masthead, and it's up to you to figure out what those are before our Inspectors get to you.

Item	Notes
VHF Radio	Required. As well as enough batteries or charging system.
Sound Signaling Device	A vessel of less than 12 meters in length shall not be obliged to carry the sound signaling appliances prescribed in Rule 33(a) but if she does not, she shall be provided with some other means of making an efficient signal. So, yes. Horn works.
Nav Lights	A sailing vessel of less than 7 meter in length shall, if practicable, exhibit the lights prescribed in Rule 25(a) or (b), but if she does not, she shall exhibit an all around white light or have ready at hand an electric torch or lighted lantern showing a white light which shall be exhibited in sufficient time to prevent collision. A vessel under oars may exhibit the lights prescribed in this rule for sailing vessels, but if she does not, she shall exhibit an all around

	white light or have ready at hand an electric torch or lighted lantern showing a white light which shall be exhibited in sufficient time to prevent collision.
Flares and/or Watertight Flashlight	Sail up to 19'8" – 3 flares or 1 flashlight. Sail 19'8" to 29'6" – 6 flares needed and a flashlight. Sail over 29'6" – 12 flares and flashlight. Neither are required if you are a sail or kite board. Red flares, by law, meet requirements as a day or night signal...though that is stupid. If you're not a CA flagged ship you can use an approved electronic distress light in lieu of flares if your country of origin allows it.
PFDs for All	Duh
Throwable Floatation w/ Line and/or Life Ring	Approximately 50' long heaving line. Human powered - N/A (unless you're from CA, then you do). Sail up to 19'8" – heaving line. Sail 19'8" to 29'6" – buoyant heaving line OR lifebuoy. Sail over 29'6" – BOTH heaving line AND lifebuoy.
Compass	A magnetic compass is not required if the boat is 8 m (26'3") or less and you operate it within sight of navigation marks. But what fool would do this trip without a compass or three?
Radar Reflector	Radar reflectors are required for boats under 20 m (65'7") and boats built of mostly non-metallic materials. A radar reflector is not required if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the boat is used in limited traffic conditions, daylight and favourable environmental conditions, and where having a radar reflector is not essential to the boat's safety; or • the small size of the boat or its operation away from radar navigation makes it impossible to install or use a radar reflector.
Bilge Pump or Bailer	A bailer or manual bilge pump is not required for a boat that cannot hold enough water to make it capsize or a boat that has watertight compartments that are sealed and not readily accessible. <u>Sail over 29'6" must have a bilge pump.</u>
Anchor and Rode (1)	If you are a sailboard or kiteboard it can be a "manual propelling device."
Reboarding Device	A reboarding device is <u>only required</u> if the vertical height that a person must climb to reboard the boat from the water (freeboard) is over 0.5 m (1'8").

There are some links on our website you will find helpful:

R2AK [equipment specs](#). R2AK [Damage Control checklist](#)

Additional Requirements for the Offshore Option

We're not about to give our blessing to any wingnut with an inflatable dragon to take the [outside route](#). Actually, dragons are out altogether.

For those looking westward, you've got several more flaming hoops to jump through. Those hoops are called the [R2AK Offshore Safety Equipment Requirements](#), and we're serious about them. They're extensive. There are separate sections for Mono and Multi-hulls. So make sure you're reading the right set.

You will be required to undergo a safety equipment inspection during the R2AK Ruckus on June 4th (or before if pre-arranged). You will be contacted by a Safety Inspector to set up your time slot.

In addition to what is required, prudent racers will at least consider the following equipment:

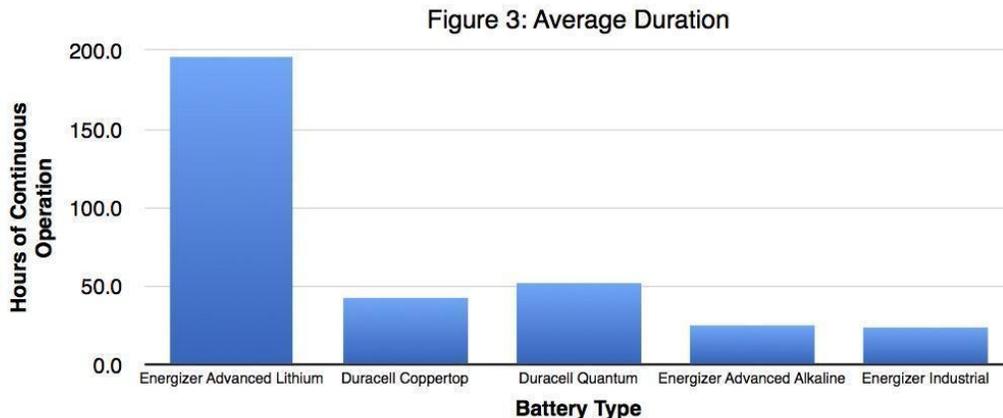
- Emergency smoke signals and dye markers
- Radar reflectors
- Emergency shelter
- Sufficient water and food
- Camp stove or some other way to make food hot (fossil fuels totally allowed here)
- Clothing and shelter systems that will retain heat when wet
- Adequate first aid supplies
- Charts and navigation equipment
- Anchor and line
- Redundant systems for safety, navigation, and emergencies
- Hypothermia recovery gear
- Compass!!

The SPOT Tracker

This handy doodad is part and parcel of R2AK. If you're in the race, you're carrying one. We will train you how to use it - probably more than once. It can't be overstated what an integral part of the safety structure of the race these little buddies are. With them, we (and Search and Rescue) can know where you are if things go foul. But maybe just as importantly, it's how your loving fans can know that you're attempting Seymour Narrows at 2am as they watch you from their cozy beds.

You are required (...huh... yeah that does look suspiciously like a rule. We'll look into it.) to carry this device and ensure that it is **on and transmitting** from the time it is issued at Registration on June 4 until you finish your race. If you finish somewhere besides where you were aiming at, you must notify Race High Command by voice call (like, you've got to talk to us..) at the Race Phone. The Race Phone number will be shared at the Skipper's Meeting.

The SPOT will come pre-loaded with 4 AAA Lithium-Ion batteries. *It is up to you to provide enough batteries to keep this sucker humming all the way to Alaska.* One set of batteries has been reported to last anywhere from 4-11 days. (wide range, eh? Well those numbers came straight from the manufacturer!) We don't know how fast you'll go, so we can't tell you how many you'll need. Only that they need to be **lithium or NiMH** or you might toast the guts of this thing. (and you probably want the refundable deposit back..)



The Lithium Primary Batteries provided by far the best performance, but nothing like the 10x performance gain over Alkaline batteries that the marketing hype brags about. This is because of the high current pulses pulled by the SPOT Transmitters. Depending on the environmental conditions, and on how well the user remembers to 'reset' the transmitters we can expect between four and eleven days of continuous operation when using a Lithium Battery.

If we lose your signal for more than 24 hours, we will start looking for you. Depending on what we know about you and how well we think you'll float, that may include anything from networking with local guides and diverting our media boats all the way up to pointing rescue helicopters and hovercrafts towards your last known location. (You're also headed towards disqualification.)

We cannot integrate any other trackers into the tracking system. If you have your own SPOT tracker, you **still** must lease a tracker from us to be included in safety and results tracking.

Closer to race time, you will need to pony up a \$200 **refundable** deposit. This will be collected either by an online form (sent to you later) or at the registration table during The Ruckus.

Your refund may take a few weeks to process after we have received your tracker back.

Chapter 2: Parties and Logistics Starting 3 June

Racers Only - Lamb Roast - 3 June

Of course we're going to make a sacrifice to the powers that be...in the form of lamb and whatever else you bring. R2AK Lead Instigator (and owner of the head from which R2AK sprang forth like some bass-ackwards Athena) Jake has this crazy crucifix contraption that roasts a whole lamb over about 6 hours. Creepy looking but uber tasty. He's inviting everyone over to his backyard to hang out and socialize on June 3rd. More info on that will come at a later date in a Racer email.

Port Townsend Check-in & Skippers' Meeting - 4 June

Check-in is June 4th and everything happens around the Northwest Maritime Center and the adjacent Pope Marine Park from 0900 to 1500. (See map below). During that time you will be given individual SPOT training and team registration. It is a requirement that all racers from each vessel attend the training. As a team, we'd like you to show up together sometime between 0900 and 1500 for training and registration at the Cotton Building. The Skippers' Meeting will begin at 1500 at the Northwest Maritime Center.

R2AK Ruckus - 4 June from 1200 to 2000

There will be a little shindig held in your honor. Some info [here](#). This is a chance for you to enjoy a drink, eat some fine food and meet the other intrepid adventurers who have decided that this one-of-its-kind race cannot be passed by.

Racers are invited to show off their boats on shore during the Ruckus! Let us know if you want to strut your stuff.

There will also be some townies and/or R2AK groupies who come and join us, a red carpet fashion boat walk, a beer garden, a band, some dancing—who knows! Also, get yourself an R2AK tattoo, and we'll pay for it.

Racer Dinner & Skippers' Meeting in Victoria - 6 June

There will be an awesome dinner and Skipper's meeting on 6 June. Not as raucous as the Ruckus, but way better than sitting on your boat adding more chafe gear to your standing rigging. Celebrate **the finish** of Stage One and send the racers off to Ketchikan with a story.

It will be held...somewhere. We'll let you know.

Victoria Open Boat - for the public - 7 June

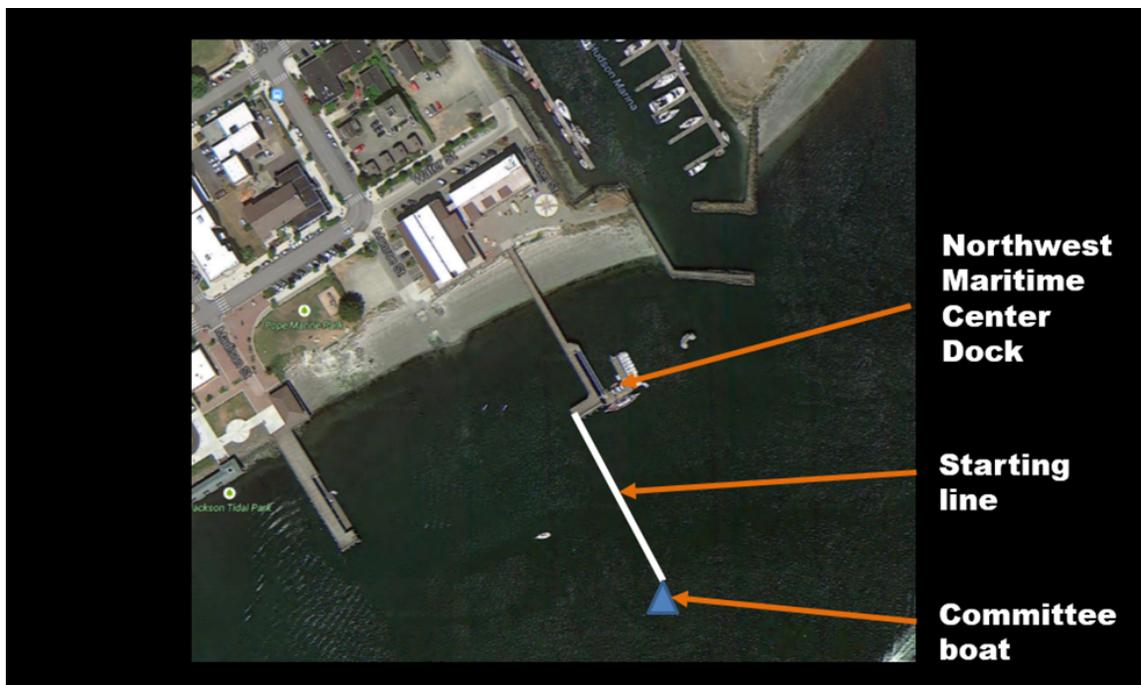
We invite all of your adorning fans to come down to the docks and meet you and your boats. This is a goodwill activity well received by Victoria. It'll be from 1500-1800. You are asked to have all or some of your crew on the docks to represent. You'll love it!

Race Starts

STAGE 1: Port Townsend to Victoria

Before departure, you **MUST** register your Canadian entry with Canada Customs using the [ArriveCan](#) app. Otherwise, no poutine for you.

The Proving Ground starts off the NWMC dock. There will be a starting sequence. The gun goes off at 0500 on June 5. All boats must cross the line within 30 minutes after the official start, but why the hell would you wait?! Get going! The race line will be between the dock and the Committee Boat.



The Committee Boat will mark the east end of the start line and the Northwest Maritime Center dock will mark the port end. You'll get the details at the Skippers' meeting. It's not that complicated, we're not super detailed about the "race" part of the race.

If you decide to cross the line and then go back to the dock to wait out a weather window (a choice we tend to applaud), it's up to you to arrange additional moorage. Remember, you can't "win" the Proving Ground, but you can certainly lose.

STAGE 2: Victoria to Ketchikan

Stage Two begins with a Le Mans start from street level above the Causeway Docks in Victoria. At High Noon on June 8, you will be dashing to your boat to get that 2-minute edge on this 700-mile leg of the race. Giddyup.

Race Finishes

Stage 1 Finish

All racers must make entry to Canada at the Canada Customs and Borders Dock located just west of Laurel Point before proceeding to:

The Causeway Docks. A vessel's ceremonial finish is declared when one of the crew members rings the bell located somewhere on Victoria's Inner Harbour. You'll get the exact dock at the Skippers' Meeting in Port Townsend.



STAGE 1: Proving Ground Time Limit:

All racers must finish Stage 1 by 1700 on Tuesday, 6 June. Finishing means you have passed the Ogden Point Breakwater. Racers finishing within the time limit without getting rescued are eligible to continue in Stage Two: Full Race. Yes, in this year's race. We're not going to let you finish this year's Stage One and race in the next one carte blanche. Why? Three reasons:

- 1) Because we said so.
- 2) We doubt our ability to remember that long.
- 3) Because we said so.

Victoria Harbor Rules and Restrictions As They Pertain to the R2AK:

There are some laws for Victoria Harbor relevant to the race. Again, these are from the Canucks, not us, and so are the consequences if you get caught in violation of Canadian laws. For a more thorough reading, go to this web page: <https://tc.canada.ca/en/marine-transportation/ports-harbours-anchorage/public-port-victoria-traffic-scheme>, but here is the gist of it:

Victoria Harbour Is An Airport: The Port of Victoria is home to a certified water airport and receives hundreds of aircraft arrivals and departures every day. There are designated runways in the center channel of the Outer Harbour and the Middle Harbour. Avoid entering the harbour on these runways - if you do, Royal Canadian Mounted Police will stop you, shout at you, cause you to be passed by everyone else - and all this while Mounted... on a harbor porpoise or something. Oh, also you might get hit by a freaking airplane. So use the traffic lanes marked on the charts, and keep yellow buoys to port when inbound, stbd heading out.

Speed Limit: All ships maneuvering in waters of the Port of Victoria shall proceed at a safe speed at all times and shall not exceed 7 knots. All ships maneuvering in waters east of Shoal Point shall proceed at a safe speed at all times and shall not exceed 5 knots. (And if you are worried about the speed limit... hats off to you.)

Minimize Wake: All vessels are required to minimize their wake in order to prevent damage to shore facilities and other vessels. (Ha!)

No Sailing: Sails shall not be used in the **MIDDLE, INNER** and **UPPER HARBOUR** and all sails shall be lowered even when under power. Just check out the map above.

The R2AK Race Marshal wants to make this really clear: It's by order of the Queen (or something...it's for sure a law) that there is no sailing inside of the Shoal Point breakwater. R2AK won't be enforcing any laws, only our own race rules. Canadian laws will be enforced by the Mounties (or whatever) and they have their own brand of punishment. Don't come crying to us if you get passed by a team who sailed and didn't get caught. By the same token, don't come crying to us if you try to sail illegally, get pulled over, are passed by everyone in the fleet, and end up waiting for your barrister (or whatever) in the basement of some dank medieval jail while everyone else makes miles north. Canadians are serious, karma is real, and that's on you.

Anchoring: No ship shall anchor in the Port of Victoria unless authorized by the Port Official. Race boats will be able to tie up on the Empress floating docks. If you..ahem...paid us for the space.

A Blackwater Discharge prohibition is in effect for all Port of Victoria waters north of Ogden Point as far as the Selkirk Trestle Bridge. Meaning...poo elsewhere.

STAGE 2: Full Race Finish (Ketchikan)

A vessel's finish is declared when they pass the breakwater of Thomas Basin (southernmost marina) in Ketchikan and a loud horn is sounded in your honor. Chuck Slagle, of the [Alaska Fish House](#), has generously offered his dock to tie up and clear customs, as well as to serve up some damn fine food. See the map for details.



Here at the end of all things, you will be looked upon in awe by your welcoming committee. Ketchikan knows how to welcome people. In fact, you don't know what welcome means until you have met your Ketchikan welcome committee. They will have all your answers and may even have a space for your boat to go after you have adequately celebrated. Maybe a beer! Maybe a fish taco! Who knows, it's Ketchikan!

Awards Ceremony: There is going to be one, and maybe more than one! And probably a party or two! But really, focus on getting there, a lot of teams don't make it.

Course Instructions

Stage 1

From Port Townsend to Victoria's Inner Harbor: Any route between the two is acceptable and there are no race marks or Call-in Points, but you should avoid the shipping lanes and **must** keep out of the aforementioned R2AK No-Go Zone.

Stage 2

From Victoria's Inner Harbor to Ketchikan's Thomas Basin: Any route between the two is acceptable as long as you pass through Bella Bella.

Grievances

Grievances for perceived race infractions can be made for either leg and are made directly to the Race Marshal. Any decision made by the Race Marshal is final.

As stipulated in Rule 8 (see Rule 8, page 3 or 4, it moves around), if we have to consult a lawyer about your grievance (or anything else during the race) you are automatically disqualified. Don't try to win by pushing the rules; you're better than that.

doing it, but whatever the reason, we only ask that you inform us ASAP that you're out. You can:

- 3) Call the Race Phone. (You'll get this phone number at the skippers meeting)
- 4) If no cell signal, contact us through VTS, or any other means that presents itself

Once you have left the race you will no longer be part of our race management safety systems, but please continue to use the SPOT until it is returned to us; we are curious where you end up.

Section 3: More Logistics and Helpful Hints

There are a few ins and outs of this race that aren't really part of the rules, but we figured that you might find it useful if we brought up some subjects you should think about.

You should, for sure, verify any of the information that relates to laws and governmental regulations. Definitely **don't take our word for it**; we wouldn't.

Crossing Borders

Here's the headline for this section: It's on you to be certain that you and your entire crew are **legally** eligible to enter... whatever country you're trying to get into. You know by now that we at Race Command aren't into rules. We're even less into wading into the murky waters of actual laws. So do some google searches and make sure that you've checked every box that needs checking.

COVID

Yep, this section is still here. We all know the deal at this point, but be sure to keep up on the current regulations. Some links below.

We'd like to impress this upon you: the small communities of the Inside Passage are fragile, and many of them are asking visitors to mask up regardless of vax status.

Canada

<https://travel.gc.ca/travel-covid>

USA

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/from-other-countries.html>

Entering Canadian and U.S. Waters

It is illegal to land on foreign soil or anchor in foreign waters before clearing Customs of that country. Again, these are laws, not race rules. We're leaving it to the pros to enforce them, so you won't be in trouble in terms of the race, but you might wind up in jail (or something). Having said all that, Alaska Customs has given permission to stop in the remote parts of Alaska (the Bush) on your way up to Ketchikan before clearing customs.

You will clear Canadian customs in Victoria at the Raymur Point Customs Dock located between Fisherman's Wharf and the Coast Harbourside Hotel marina. Once you're there, give a call to the Customs folks using the handy phone located there, or use your cell and punch in 1-888- 226-7277. Once they've blessed you to take advantages of all the pleasures of Canada, proceed to the Causeway Docks in front of the Empress Hotel to ring the bell and join the party.

Much further to the north, you'll be re-entering the States, and it's hard to overstate how much simpler it will be if you are able to use the ROAM app on your phone as you enter Tongass Narrows, and check yourselves in before you hit the dock. But if you don't do that, you can clear U.S. Customs once you hit the finish line in Thomas Basin. While it might be counter intuitive and less than celebratory, you'll pretty much need to wait onboard until they can walk down to you. We'll call them ahead of time so hopefully they are waiting for you there with your fabulous welcoming committee.

Below are reminders of how you will need to prepare for clearing customs.

Being Admitted into Canada and the U.S.

Just because you show up in a foreign country doesn't mean they have to let you in. Some offenses do prohibit individuals from entering Canada. These can include certain driving offenses and other crimes. If you wonder whether you are eligible to enter Canada, you can start your inquiry at this website. Entering this race does not guarantee you will get into Canada.

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/inadmissibility/conviction.asp>

How to Clear U.S. Customs at the beginning and after race!!

Anytime your vessel arrives in the United States after having been in a foreign port (Canada), you will have to report your arrival to U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP). They ask you to do this through the ROAM (Reporting Offsite Arrival) App on your phone. With this app, you can report your arrival immediately upon entering US territorial waters, and usually forego the in-person inspection upon arrival in port (No guarantees on that). You can also go old school and call the CBP officer in Port Townsend at 360-385-3777 Monday through Friday between 8am and 4pm to arrange a meeting at your vessel. Anacortes, Friday Harbor, Roche Harbor and Point Roberts are other designated ports of entry for reporting your arrival into the United States. Advance notification will expedite the process. Use the ROAM app. It'll save you a bunch of time.

Information on the ROAM app:

<https://www.cbp.gov/travel/pleasure-boats-private-flyers/pleasure-boat-overview/roam>

Other Border Do's and Don'ts

If you want to bring an animal - Just don't do it. It can be a hassle.

No weapons - No guns, automatic knives, crossbows, tasers, blowguns, spiked wristbands, manrikigusari or kusari, brass knuckles, nunchaku sticks, etc. Just, no weapons. The second amendment stops at the border. We hear that bear spray/mace/pepper spray/etc. are also illegal.

No weed - It may become legal in Canada. But you would be quite foolish to think they're going to let you haul some across the border. No weed.

No apples or avocados - There are a lot of weird rules about food crossing the border. Canadians have a zero tolerance policy for foreign apples and avocados, and a "more tolerance" policy about cheese and beef jerky: you can bring 44 pounds of each...either? We're not certain on the finer points, but cheese is freaking spendy in Canada. Canadian rules are [here](#).

Nothing made out of cat fur & no Haitian animal hide drums - Not sure why this was ever a problem, but it is a U.S. law.

A full list of what is prohibited to bring into the U.S. is listed and updated [here](#).

Unless you are lured in by the illicit cat fur markets of coastal British Columbia, generally speaking you ought to make it back into the U.S. if you made it into Canada.

Documents for Entering Canada and the U.S.

If you are a U.S. citizen, ensure you carry proof of citizenship such as a passport, birth certificate, a certificate of citizenship or naturalization, a U.S. Permanent Resident Card, or a Certificate of Indian Status, along with photo identification. If you are a U.S. permanent resident, ensure you carry proof of your status such as a U.S. Permanent Resident Card.

For other international travelers, you must present a valid passport because it is the only reliable and universally-accepted travel and identification document for the purpose of international travel.

If any of your crew are minors:

We recommend that parents who share custody of their children carry copies of their legal custody documents, such as custody rights.

If you share custody and the other parent is not traveling with you, or if you are traveling with minors for whom you are not the parent or legal guardian, you need to carry a consent letter to provide authorization for you to take them on a trip and enter Canada or to re-enter into the U.S. Start looking into it now, this is real.

Feeding Yourself

Like we mentioned, some foods can't come into Canada. See this [link](#).

Oh, and cheese is expensive in Canada, but they have way better Mars Bars and Ketchup potato chips...stock up.

If you plan on feeding yourself by fishing and wild harvesting (do you really have time for that?) you will need to obtain proper permits for Canadian and U.S. waters. You can start looking into how to obtain permits here:

Canada's National Recreational [Licensing System](#)

Alaska's Department of Fish and Game [Sport Fishing page](#).

Emergencies and Emergency Assistance

If you break down and/or need emergency assistance, you can go anywhere you like, but to continue the race you must begin where you left off. This will be easy to see on the SPOT tracker interface, so don't try no tricks.

Any instance requiring assistance must be well-documented and recorded by your SPOT tracker if you intend to continue racing. If you're quitting, you can do whatever you like...after you contact us, please.

Like we said, assistance in an emergency is understandable, and you may restart the race after the emergency is ameliorated. Things like being dismasted on a lee shore in a gale, capsizing, hull delamination, medical issues, or running aground all could be considered emergencies, or not. You know best what you, your team, and your vessel are capable of handling. This race is about being bold, not foolhardy. You're in an unsupported race, but not alone, don't forget. Running out of food or water is not an emergency; it's poor planning. Get to town before that happens. (We know, it's a fine line.)

Each vessel will need to provide the following information for the vessel and every racer if indeed emergency response is required. This information will be collected at the race check-in on June 4th if we don't have it already.

- Name of crew
- Emergency contact name, number & relationship
- Age
- Gender
- Physical description
- Pertinent health info
- Vessel being raced upon (including description of vessel)

In the event of an emergency, this is what rescue providers will want you to provide. You should just print this and laminate it somewhere by your VHF.

- Name of persons onboard, physical description and clothing, age, health info (underlying medical conditions?)
- Vessel description including color, length, registration numbers, etc.
- Next of kin/emergency contact name/number/relationship
- Safety equipment carried on board

Info on helping others:

Remember, this is only a race. If you find yourself considering what to do if you see a vessel in distress...let us take a page from the Canadian Shipping Act of 2001:

"Every qualified person who is the master of a vessel in any waters, on receiving a signal from any source that a person, a vessel or an aircraft is in distress, shall proceed with all speed to render assistance and shall, if possible, inform the persons in distress or the sender of the signal.... The master of a vessel in Canadian waters and every qualified person who is the master of a vessel in **any** waters shall render assistance to every person who is found at sea and in danger of being lost."

Lastly, you should know that this is International Law. If you do not properly respond to a distress call, you can be fined and even imprisoned. And it goes against the hallowed code of the sea...

A Note of the Use and Awesomeness of Vessel Traffic Services (VTS):

Vessel Traffic Services exists in both Washington and Canadian waters. They monitor and manage all commercial traffic along the race route—think of them as air traffic control for the sea. They also will be looking for you, and you can monitor their radio channels for information on approaching ships, tugs, and other commercial traffic. (See below). We'll be talking about how VTS is going to be supporting the race during our Skippers' Meetings.

Your VHF radio:

Use it. Keep it on. You know it's a law that you monitor channel 16 while underway. You should probably be scanning 16, 13 and the local VTS channel as well. If space is an issue, bring the spare batteries and leave the extra undies at home. One extra set of undies is not going to help, really.

For the race you will always use your team name for all VHF communication with race officials and search and rescue organizations.

Element 4: Contacts to Know

VHF Ch 16 - for all distress and reaching the Coast Guard in both countries

Phone - 911 for emergencies in both countries

Canada

Joint Rescue Coordination Center (JRCC) Victoria, British Columbia:
Toll-free number: 1-800-567-5111

Marine Communications and Traffic Services (MCTS):
Phone *16 (for emergencies only)
VHF 16 (for emergencies only)

Victoria Traffic, which covers the area from Victoria to Ballenas Island and which will be used for the second half of Stage 1 and the first portion of Stage 2:
VHF Ch 11

Comox Traffic, which covers the area from Ballenas Island to the north end of Vancouver Island (Port Hardy):
VHF Ch 71

Prince Rupert Traffic, which covers the rest of the coast all the way to Alaska:
VHF Ch 11 then back to Ch 71 up by Prince Rupert.

US

Seattle Traffic, which will be for the first part of Stage 1:
VHF 5a

SE Alaska does not have a VTS system to check into.

Getting Your Boat Home

From Victoria

Well, it's up to you. We recommend enjoying the splendors and sin dens of Victoria for a while and maybe stopping off on some perfect beach on your way home for a barbeque.

From Ketchikan

Other than doing the return trip or selling or abandoning the boat in Alaska, there are several options for shipping your boat home. The following companies operate terminals in Ketchikan:

- **Alaska Marine Lines (AML)** - These folks operate a container barge service with a couple sailings a week to Seattle. As long as your boat fits within the size guidelines (so far, most in this race look like they will) you can ship it home. The boat will need to either sit flat okay or have a trailer/cradle for it. If you have a trailer/cradle you can put it on a barge headed north and have it meet you in Ketchikan.
 - **Samson Barge Lines** - Basically the same deal as AML.
 - **Alaskan Marine Highway** - The state ferry system is probably a good option for people traveling with small hand carry boats and/or also want a ride home. Any boat needing a trailer can travel without an accompanying car as long as there is a car on each end to drop off and pick up. The trip from Ketchikan to Bellingham takes about 36 hours—we heard the bar is gone.
 - **Prince Rupert** - You can reach this town by car in Canada (hint, hint)...So you could leave a trailer in Prince Rupert and just sail down there..
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That's it! Good luck and we'll see you on 3 June for the Racer Roast and the 4th for sure!