



HUNTER 19 SAILING YEAR 2026–2027

MORE BOATS. MORE RACING. MORE FUN.

With the new racing year ahead we're determined to bring the fleet back to life and we're hoping that this sailing programme will get you excited about sailing more often and involve more new people to help keep the club alive!

It's straightforward formula ...

More boats create more competition.

More boats create races within races.

More boats create more opportunities to improve your sailing skills

More boats create more opportunities to yell 'STARBOARD'.

More boats create more atmosphere at the club afterwards.

More boats make racing more fun.

THE CHALLENGE

There is no doubt that our racing environment has changed. Over the past two years we have lost too many races to strong winds. This has had an impact far beyond the individual races that were cancelled.

Sustaining an active fleet requires momentum. If weather conditions start to impact how often we can sail, fewer races leads to fewer boats and racing becomes less compelling.

There's also a flip side to this. Often the forecast says its going to blow the morning before the race and we decide not to go. Then the wind moderates and a handful of faithful sailors get out on the water and have a fantastic race.

We cannot control the weather. But we can control how we respond to it.

We also recognise that everyone has busy lives. Work, family, travel and crew availability all compete for our time and ability to sail.

So for the year ahead we've looked at how to create more opportunities to sail, more reasons to come racing and more opportunities to get back into the action if you have missed part of the year.

For 2026 - 2027 we are moving away from thinking about the year as simply one long summer season followed by one long winter season.

Instead of seasons we've divided the year into four different series.

- Each series has its own character.
- Each series has its own winner.
- Each series gives sailors another opportunity to get involved.

FOUR OPPORTUNITIES TO GET BACK IN THE GAME

A long sailing season puts a lot of pressure on a decision to go for it and remain competitive.

Four stand alone race series changes this.

- Miss one series? There is another one coming.
- Had a bad run? There is another series to win.
- New to racing? You don't sit at the bottom of the rankings, joining mid season.

The four series also allows us to make each part of the sailing year different, responding to the conditions and making the racing as enjoyable as possible.



1. Summer South-Easter Series

2. Summer Sunset Series

3. Winter Warm-Up Series

4. Winter Sprint Series

You'll find full details of each series later in this document.

BLOWN OUT THURSDAYS

If strong winds prevent us from racing on Tuesday, we don't want to automatically lose the opportunity for a week-day race. It has been suggested by a number of experienced sailors that we should bring back **Blown Out Thursdays**. Rolling the Tuesday night race over to Thursday when it's likely the weather will be sailable.

The counter argument to this has been - if people are busy, how can we expect everyone to keep another evening free each week just in case?

Blown Out Thursdays are not intended to become another compulsory race day. The overall aim is to make sure we don't lose race days due to bad weather. To make a switch from Tuesday to Thursday, it would make it easier if we give people more opportunity to plan ahead.

So here's the plan ... **THE GO / NO GO DECISION for Tuesday night racing will be made on The Sunday Evening prior**

This gives sailors a reasonable opportunity to plan their week rather than discovering on Tuesday that they suddenly need to rearrange Thursday.

A DISCARD EVERY FOUR RACES

We also recognise that not everyone will be able to make a Thursday. By having a discard every four races reduces the impact of an unavoidable DNC and gives sailors who cannot make every race, a better opportunity to remain competitive.

Remember, the objective isn't to make everyone sail more days. It is to give the fleet more opportunities to actually get racing when the weather turns ugly!

WHAT ABOUT THE HUNTER SAIL PLAN?

This has been an ongoing debate for many years and although a decision was made to use the National Hunter Class sail plan (mainsail, blade / genoa and spinnaker), this was not a unanimous decision. In recent months it has again been pointed out that the

original plan was to keep Hunters affordable and there are those who need to sail without a spinnaker to make their boat easier to manage and those who simply can't justify the extra cost. Sailing with a spinnaker adds another level of skill and fun and for many people this adds the level of spice they are looking for in their sailing. However if we are going to grow the fleet we need to be mindful of newcomers, less experienced sailors and those who may need to sail single-handed at times. Whilst you still have a lot of fun and perhaps feel more secure sailing without a spinnaker, being competitive does add an extra dimension.

Globally, the solution is to have a fleet within a fleet ... often described as a white sails fleet. Both categories have the same start time. The challenge is knowing who's who, to be able to record and recognise the lead boats in each category. This does increase the workload for race administration, however with the decline we are experiencing at HBYC with the number of Hunters sailing each week, if this is one way to motivate more people to sail more often, then it's going to be worthwhile.

ACTION

If your preference is to sail with white sails, let Richard Rohan know and if we have enough people to make up a worthwhile fleet, then we'll make it happen.

WHAT ABOUT THE GENOA?

Again, this has been brought up as part of the sail plan debate. In this case the discussion isn't so much about should we have a Genoa, it's focused on when should we use a Genoa? On the one hand it can be argued that the decision for each race to use the blade or genoa is tactical. The counter argument is that the Hunter is a one-design boat. Adding the genoa adds over 70% more sail area which changes the racing dynamic considerably.

Back in 2017 when the fleet first started racing in Hout Bay we had a simple solution. Sailors made a collective decision use a genoa race prior to each race based on expected wind speed. This decision was also made on the basis of safety, making sure people didn't push themselves to be overly competitive and break boats in the process.

ACTION

If you feel this makes sense then again let Richard Rohan know and we'll implement this.

ACTION

If you have a second hand Genoa you are willing to donate or sell please also let us know, to help people equip themselves without breaking the bank!

LEOPARD CHALLENGE - Club Championship

In parallel with the new racing series, the Leopard Challenge Club Championship will also have four legs. But remember this is a year-long club championship, recognising the individual sailing performance of helm and crew, rather than the performance of a boat.

Together, the two programmes are designed to keep the fleet racing throughout the year, with aim of giving sailors multiple opportunities to compete, improve and achieve something meaningful.

You'll find dates for the last two legs of 2026 and the first three legs of 2027 alongside details of the four series.

here's an overview of the Leopard Challenge format

FOUR EVENTS. ONE CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP.

The Leopard Challenge is our Club Championship.

It is designed to offer a series of competitive events that ultimately recognise the sailing skills of the people in our Hunter 19 fleet.

It is a chance for experienced sailors to compete at a high level, but equally an opportunity for newcomers to develop their racing skills, learn from others and become part of the competitive spirit of the fleet.

A HUNTER DOESN'T SAIL ITSELF.

The crew member is just as important as the helm in getting a boat consistently around the course and onto the podium.

Points earned in each leg are attributed to both the helm and crew. Your points belong to you, not simply to the boat you happened to be sailing.

YOUR CHAMPIONSHIP FOLLOWS YOU

THE HELM

You sail your own boat but may have different crew throughout the championship. Your points accumulate with you.

THE CREW

You might sail on different boats during the year. Your points accumulate with you.

The overall Leopard Challenge winner could therefore be a helm, a crew member, or both.

FOUR LEGS. ONE DISCARD.

The Leopard Challenge is made up of four stand-alone events spread throughout the year.

We know that life happens. You may be away, have a work commitment, have a boat problem, or simply not be able to sail every event. So each sailor can discard one leg of the four-part championship.

Your best three results determine your overall championship position.

If you only manage to sail three of the four events, you are still completely in the running.

If a leg is cancelled because of adverse weather, every effort will be made to reschedule it.

If only three legs ultimately take place, no discard will apply.

PROVISIONAL 2026/2027 HBYC SAILING CALENDAR.

This calendar covers the new sailing series ahead and the coming year's Leopard Challenge. A number of other events are planned and will be added to the calendar when finalised.





SOUTH-EASTER SERIES

Starts: Tuesday 27 October 2026

Ends: Tuesday 8 December 2026

Racing: Tuesdays and Saturdays

Start Times: Tues 6pm / Sat 2.30pm

Blown Out Thursdays: Yes

... decision by preceding Sunday

Scoring: All races scored

Discard: Every four races

This is typically our windiest time of the year. The South Easter Series is about getting maximum boats racing and making racing safer and more manageable in stronger wind conditions.

The South Easter Series ends on Tuesday 8 December 2026 with prize giving combined with the Leopard Challenge prize giving 12 or 13 December 2026

LEOPARD CHALLENGE legs 3 and 4

The Leopard Challenge events are stand-alone Club Championship events and are not part of the series scoring. NORs will be issued well ahead of each event.

31 October / 1 November 2026 - Leg three

(one day event - keep both days open as weather options)

12 / 13 December 2026 - Leg four (final)

(one day event - keep both days open as weather options)



SUMMER SUNSET SERIES

Series Starts: Saturday 9 January 2027

Series Ends: Sat 20 March 2027

Racing: Tuesdays and Saturdays

Start Times: Tues 6pm / Sat 2.30pm

Blown Out Thursdays: Yes

... decision by preceding Sunday

Scoring: All races scored

Discard: Every four races

As summer progresses, we move towards slightly lighter winds and we're planning longer races to give you more tactical decisions.

Sunset Series ends: **Saturday 20 March 2027** and prize giving will take place directly after the final race.

LEOPARD CHALLENGE leg one 2027

6 / 7 March 2027 (one day event - keep both days open as weather options)

This is a stand-alone Club Championship event and is not part of the Sunset Series. NOR will be issued well ahead of the event.



WINTER WARM-UP SERIES

Series Starts: Saturday 3 April 2027

Series Ends: Saturday 12 June 2027.

Racing: Saturdays only

Start Times: 2.30pm

Discard: Every four races

As summer fades, the Northwester starts creeping in. Flat water. Longer beats. Longer runs and wicked wind shifts! With less daylight hours, we move from Tuesday and Saturday racing to Saturday racing only.

Winter Warm-Up Series ends: **Saturday 12 June 2027** and prize giving will take place directly after the final race.

LEOPARD CHALLENGE leg two 2027

22 / 23 May 2027 (one day event - keep both days open as weather options)

This is a stand-alone Club Championship event and is not part of the Winter Warm-Up Series. NOR will be issued well ahead of the event.



WINTER SPRINT SERIES

Series Starts: Saturday 3 July 2027

Series Ends: Saturday 28 August 2027.

Racing: Saturdays only

Start Times: 2.30pm

Discard: Every four races

This Sprint series is all about shorter courses, nailing the start, great tactics, boat handling and consistency. The aim is to run two races each Saturday with both races counting toward points for the series.

LEOPARD CHALLENGE leg three 2027

7 / 8 August 2027 (one day event - keep both days open as weather options)

This is a stand-alone Club Championship event and is not part of the Winter Sprint Series. NOR will be issued well ahead of the event. Prize giving will take place after the final race.

HBYC Club Racing is special.

The anticipation before the start the banter on the dock, the final minutes before the gun. The first beat. The tactical decisions. The close mark rounding. The boat just ahead that you know you can catch. The boat behind that is getting closer. The final approach to the finish becomes a drag race!

And then back at the club ... the stories begin!

Sometimes you won. Sometimes you didn't. Sometimes you made the perfect tactical call. Sometimes you got it completely wrong.

But there were boats on the water. There were people racing. And there was something to talk about afterwards.

That is what we want to create more of. **SO LET'S GET BACK ON THE START LINE.**

The sailing year ahead gives us more opportunities to do exactly that.

Four series ... mean four opportunities to compete.

Blown Out Thursdays ... means fewer lost races.

More frequent discards ... mean less impact when life gets in the way.

Leopard Challenge ... recognises both helm and crew regardless of the boat sailed.

The HBYC Hunter Charter (see next page)

... keeps us focused on the things that matter:
Competitive racing. Fairness. Fun. Affordability.

But ultimately, none of this works without the most important ingredient.

YOU.

Let's get **MORE BOATS. MORE RACING. MORE COMPETITION. MORE STORIES.**

and **MORE FUN** to happen!



The Hunter fleet at HBYC was established in 2016, to introduce a small, affordable easy to sail and easy to maintain one-design keelboat, that offered fun, friendly, close racing. To ensure the growth and sustainability of the fleet this charter was developed to encourage everyone involved to uphold the founding principles.

CLASS CHARTER

HBYC Hunter Owners and the Hunter Committee pledge to uphold the national and local racing rules and base every decision and action that affects the success of our one design fleet, on these 5 key principles.

- Does this contribute to helping everyone be equally competitive?
- Does this make the boat easy to sail for all?
- Does this make sailing the boat fun for all?
- Does this contribute to fair play and friendly competition?
- Does this keep the boat affordable for all?

By applying these simple principles, we look forward to celebrating each anniversary of our Hunter one-design class at HBYC, being recognised as the most successful and friendliest fleet in South Africa.

