



## 2023 ROLEX FASTNET RACE FACTS & STATS *(as at 15 June 2023)*

#RolexFastnetRace <http://www.rolexfastnetrace.com/>

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### THE RACE:



- **50** - Celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> edition of the biennial Rolex Fastnet Race in 2023
- **1925** - This legendary race is organised by the Royal Ocean Racing Club (RORC), based in London and Cowes, UK. It was founded following the first Fastnet Race in 1925 with a mission to encourage long-distance yacht racing and excellence in design, building, and navigation
- **Largest** - The start of the world's biggest offshore yacht race will take place on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> July, 2023 from Cowes, UK and finish in Cherbourg-en-Cotentin, France
- This sporting institution is the world's largest offshore race. It is Europe's oldest offshore race and one of sailing's greatest contests

- **494** - boats have entered the 2023 race – Making it a record-breaking entry this year (2021 - 363 entries)
- **300** Entries reached 300 within 10 minutes of online entries opening on SailRaceHQ - with 400 entries reached within 30 minutes (half the time it took to reach in 2021!)
- **3,500** - crew members will be competing in the 'Everest of sailing' - for most the race is a personal challenge and a 'bucket list' race
- **695** - The non-stop race course is 695 nautical miles (1,287 km) from Cowes, Isle of Wight, UK to Cherbourg-en-Cotentin, France – via the Fastnet Rock
- **7** - Seven boats took part in the first race in 1925 and it has been held every two years since the 1930s - apart from war times
- **8** - Provisional start order. There will be 8 class starts. The whole start sequence lasts 2hrs 20mins. 1300 BST is the 1<sup>st</sup> class start, with the multihull fleet setting off first. The last start - IRC Zero is at 1520. NB: These times are provisional and subject to change.

Class	Class Flag	Warning Signal	Preparatory Signal	1 Minute Signal	Start
Multihull	Pennant 8	1250	1256	1259	1300
IMOCA 60	Pennant 7	1310	1316	1319	1320
Class40	Pennant 6	1330	1336	1339	1340
IRC 4	Pennant 4	1350	1356	1359	1400
IRC 3	Pennant 3	1410	1416	1419	1420
IRC 2	Pennant 2	1430	1436	1439	1440
IRC 1/Figaro 3	Pennant 1	1450	1456	1459	1500
IRC Z	Pennant 0	1510	1516	1519	1520

- **Live** - The start sequence on Saturday 22 July will be broadcast live and streamed on:-  
**RORC Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/RoyalOceanRacingClub>,  
**RORC YouTube:** <https://www.youtube.com/rorcracing>  
**Race website:** <http://www.rolexfastnetrace.com/>
- **1230 BST** –the Rolex Fastnet Race Start Show will be on air 30 minutes before the first start. Expert commentary from on-and off the water, race pundits and guests will share all the action and atmosphere with those watching from home
- The race attracts a diverse fleet of yachts; from beautiful classics, to some of the fastest racing machines on the planet – and everything in between



2023 Rolex Fastnet Race – Facts & Stats

- Cherbourg-en-Cotentin will once again host the finish of the race in France - (2021 was the first time that the race finished in Normandy).

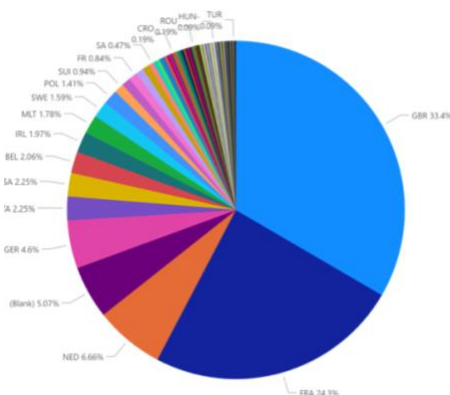


- The Rolex Fastnet Race is considered to be one of the most complete and demanding offshore classics. The race serves as a rite of passage for sailors, testing their abilities in relentless and often brutal conditions.
- Rolex has been Title Sponsor of the race since 2001. The 2023 Rolex Fastnet Race marks the 12th edition since the partnership began. The Overall Monohull and Line Honours Monohull will be presented with a Rolex Timepiece

- **24** - At least 24 countries (by sail number) from 5 continents will be represented by boats and crews in the race. There will be crews from many more countries

- Entries by flag (Sail No.)  
Australia (5), Austria (2), Belgium (15), Canada (1), Cayman (1), Denmark (2), Spain (2), Finland (5), France (152), GBR (174), Germany (27), Hungary (20), BVI (1), Isle of Man (2), Ireland (10), Italy (3), Japan (1), Malta (1), Netherlands (26), Norway (2), New Zealand (1), Poland (5), Switzerland (4), Slovakia (1), Sweden (7), USA (9)  
NB. These numbers are subject to change.

- Countries taking part (%) by Yacht Sail Number

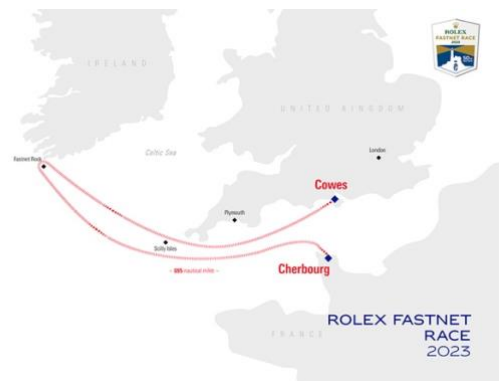


- **32** – Crew nationalities. Competitors from 32 different countries will be racing on boats throughout the fleet
- **12** – Years Old to **80** – Years young! Crew from all age groups will be competing
- **174** - Great Britain (approx. entries by boat sail number) and France (152) have the greatest number of entries at time of writing. French boats have won overall title five times: 1965, 2005, 2013, 2015, 2017



Rounding the Fastnet Rock is a pivotal moment for crews participating in the Rolex Fastnet Race.

- **Route** - The race starts from the Royal Yacht Squadron line off Cowes and then heads west down the Solent before exiting into the English Channel at Hurst Point. Notable landmarks along the course are: The Needles, Portland Bill, Start Point, the Lizard, Land’s End, the Fastnet Rock, Bishop’s Rock off the Scillies, Channel Islands and Cherbourg Peninsula. After crossing the Celtic Sea and rounding the Fastnet Rock off the coast of Ireland, the return leg takes the fleet via the Scillies to the finish in Cherbourg-en-Cotentin, Normandy, France. The course offers a demanding and symbolic challenge



- The leg across the Celtic Sea to (and from) the Fastnet Rock is known to be unpredictable and challenging. The competitors are exposed to fast



moving Atlantic weather systems and the fleet often encounter tough conditions

- Rounding the Fastnet Rock is a pivotal moment for crews participating in the Rolex Fastnet Race



**Distances between notable points on the course:**

- Cowes, Royal Yacht Squadron Start Line: 0 nm
- Cowes - Needles 16 nm
- Needles - Portland Bill 34 nm
- Portland - Start Point 54 nm
- Start Point - Lizard 60 nm
- Lizard – Land’s End 22 nm
- Land's End - Fastnet 170 nm
- Fastnet Rock - Scillies 150 nm
- Scillies - Cherbourg 189 nm
- Finish in Cherbourg after 695 nautical miles
- Flawless decision-making, determination and total commitment are the essential requirements. Crews have to manage and anticipate the changing tidal and meteorological conditions imposed by the complex course
- The symbol of the race is the Fastnet Rock, located off the southern coast of Ireland. Also known as the Teardrop of Ireland, the Rock marks an evocative turning point in the challenging race
- The Fastnet Rock lighthouse first shone its light on New Year’s Day in 1854. It originally had six keepers (now unmanned)

**RACE HISTORY:**

- Only 7 boats raced in the first edition held in 1925 and Jolie Brise, a gaff-rigged pilot cutter was the first winner, completing the course in 147 hours (just over 6 ½ days). The event was one of the earliest true tests of offshore sailing
- The Ocean Racing Club, later becoming the Royal Ocean Racing Club, was formed immediately after the first race

**TROPHIES**

- The main trophy for overall winner of the Rolex Fastnet Race is called the Fastnet Challenge Cup
- Only monohull yachts racing under IRC are eligible to win this prestigious award
- The race’s heritage and history are deeply ingrained, evident in the engraved names on the Fastnet Challenge Cup. The significance and legacy of the race are cherished by participants and sailing enthusiasts
- There is an additional 30+ trophies presented at the prizegiving in Cherbourg - many to class winners and special awards
- A Rolex Chronometer is awarded to the Overall Monohull and Line Honours Monohull



- The 1979 race goes down in history for its tragic outcome. Nineteen people lost their lives (fifteen competing yachtsmen and four rescuers) following a ferocious storm and less than a third of the 303-strong fleet finished the race. After the event, numerous safety changes were introduced. The RORC responded to a tragic storm by driving significant improvements in yacht design, safety equipment, qualifications, and race management. Today, the RORC remains a leading authority in the sport

**RECORDS:**

Cowes-Cherbourg-en-Cotentin via Fastnet Rock:

**Monohull: 2 days, 8 hours, 33 minutes, 55 seconds**  
 56 hours, 33 minutes, 55 seconds  
**ClubSwan 125 - Skorpios**, owned by Dmitry Rybolovlev, skippered by Fernando Echavarri (2021)

**Multihull: 1 day, 9 hours, 14 minutes, 54 seconds**  
 33 hours, 14 minutes, 54 seconds  
**Ultime 32m Maxi Edmond de Rothschild**, co-skippered by Charles Caudrelier and Franck Cammas (2021)



## 2021 RACE WINNER:

### Fastnet Challenge Cup - IRC Overall winner in 2021 Rolex Fastnet Race:

Sunrise (GBR) - JPK 11.80 – Tom Kneen

## 2021 CLASS WINNERS:

### COWES TO CHERBOURG-EN-COTENTIN:

#### IRC Overall (and IRC Two):

Sunrise (GBR) - JPK 11.80 – Tom Kneen

**IRC Zero:** Tala (GBR) Botin 52 – David Collins

**IRC One:** INO XXX (GBR) - HH42 – James Neville

**IRC Three and Two-Handed:** Léon (FRA) JPK 10.30 – Alexis Loison/Guillaume Pirouelle

**IRC Four:** Trading-advice.com (FRA) X-332 - Alain Guelennoc

**IMOCA 60:** Apivia (FRA) – Verdier foiler - Charlie Dalin/Paul Meilhat

**Class40:** Palanad 3 (FRA) – Mach 40.4 Antoine Magre

**Figaro 3:** AD Fichou - Innovéo / Bihannic (FRA) - Yael Poupon/Victor Le Pape

**MOCRA:** Allegra (SUI) – Irens 84 catamaran - Adrian Keller

**Open Multihulls:** Maxi Edmond de Rothschild (FRA) – Verdier foiling Ultim trimaran – Charles Caudreler/Franck Cammas

## ENTRIES BY CLASS:

494 entries as at 13 June – NB: *Subject to change*

- IRC Super Zero –10 entries
- IRC Zero – 48 entries
- IRC 1 – 93 entries
- IRC 2 – 101 entries
- IRC 3 – 92 entries
- IRC 4 – 41 entries
- IRC Two-Handed – 106 entries
- MOCRA (Multihulls) – 28 entries
- Multihull - Ocean Fifty – 9 entries
- Ultim – 2 entries
- IMOCA – 31 entries
- Class40 – 26 entries
- Figaro 3 – 1
- IRC All Entries - 405

*\*NB: Some yachts have not yet been allocated a class and some boats compete in more than one class ie Two-Handed and IRC class.*

- The majority of the fleet will be competing under IRC and eligible to win the overall trophy – the Fastnet Challenge Cup
- The RORC has also been a leader in yacht rating systems and in co-operation with the French offshore racing club, UNCL, YCF Race Pole created the International Rating Certificate - IRC. IRC is a World Sailing recognised rating system and the

principal yacht measurement system for the rating of racing yachts worldwide

- The IRC rating rule is administered jointly by the RORC Rating Office in Lymington, UK and UNCL Centre de Calcul in Paris, France
- The IRC handicap system accounts for the size and speed of each boat to achieve a truly democratic result. This means the overall winner can spring from any IRC class and be any size - i.e: Father and son, Pascal and Alexis Loison made history in 2013 by being the first doublehanded entry to win IRC Overall

12.9 m is the average length of boats competing in this year's Rolex Fastnet Race, but below are details of the biggest and smallest boats in the record-breaking fleet

## LARGEST BOATS:

IRC Rated – Monohull:

- Lucky (*ex Rambler*) – 27m/88ft Reichel/Pugh – Bryon Ehrhart (USA)

Non-IRC Rated:

- 32m/105ft - SVR Lazartigue, Ultim, Tom Laperche (FRA)
- 32m/105ft – Banque Populaire, Ultim, Armel Le Cléac'h (FRA)

## SMALLEST BOATS:

- 9m (29.52ft) - Maluka, 1932, Ranger, Sean Langman
- 9.14m (29.98ft) – Black Betty, Dehler 30 OD, Ian Griffiths
- 9.15m (30.01ft) – Hultaj, Figaro One, Szymon Kuczyński

## OLDEST BOATS:

- 1903 gaff yawl Fife – Moonbeam (24.66m). In 1988 she was 'saved' in Cyprus and underwent a thorough refit in the UK, including a change to her present cutter rig
- 1932 Maluka, Ranger design (is the smallest boat in the race at 9m), Sean Langman
- 1939 – Amokura is classic yawl owned by Paul Moxon and in the 2021 race was sailed Two-Handed

## COMPETITORS: CORINTHIAN + PRO

- The sponsored, professional classes with 'rock star' sailors on board attract the limelight and offer a real spectacle: (IMOCAs, Ultims, Class40s, Ocean Fifty's and Maxi Multihulls)
- The race attracts both fully professional and amateur sailors, including many of the 4,000 RORC members who race regularly with the Club



- Corinthian sailors from all walks of life are drawn to the legendary status of the event, some sailing for the first time and embarking on a personal challenge, others seeking adventure through this classic offshore race
- The race gives the opportunity for amateur /Corinthian sailors to compete in the same event and on the same course as their sailing legends. Something that is not possible in most other sports

### **PRESS CONFERENCE:**

**Friday 21<sup>st</sup> July, RORC Clubhouse, Cowes – 1100 BST**

1100 BST – Press Conference (approx. 1 hour)  
+ streamed live in Cherbourg and online (RORC Facebook, RORC YouTube and website).

Confirm your attendance: [press@rorc.org](mailto:press@rorc.org)

### **SKIPPER'S BRIEFING:**

**Friday 21<sup>st</sup> July, RORC Clubhouse, Cowes – 1200 BST**

1200 BST – Weather & Skippers Briefing – streamed live – online and in Cherbourg

The day before the start, a Press Conference will be held at the RORC Cowes Clubhouse and also broadcast live - with featured guests and sailors from across the fleet being interviewed on stage. This will be followed by the Weather and Skippers Briefing.

Interview and photo opportunities for accredited media.

All enquiries: [press@rorc.org](mailto:press@rorc.org)

### **LIVE BROADCAST SHOW - START**

50<sup>th</sup> Rolex Fastnet Race – Saturday 22 July

- The entire 2 hour start sequence will be broadcast, with expert commentary from the RYS platform and media boat, plus guests, will be backed up by live footage from on the water, from ashore and from the air.
- The live show will be broadcast and streamed from 1230 BST with a preview and build-up features, weather, expert guests and stories from the various classes in the 30 minutes before the first start at 1300 BST

### **HOW TO WATCH THE LIVE:**

Race website: <https://www.rolexfastnetrace.com/>

RORC Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/RoyalOceanRacingClub/>

RORC YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/RORCRacing>

- An international feed will be available to broadcasters on request

**Requests from broadcasters/websites etc to take the live feed; please contact:**

Trish Jenkins - [press@rorc.org](mailto:press@rorc.org)

### **MEDIA ACCREDITATION:**

Please accredit online:

<https://www.rolexfastnetrace.com/en/media-accreditation>

#### **MEDIA CENTRES:**

Cowes Media Centre

Sir Max Aitken Museum,  
High Street,  
Cowes

(Next to RORC Race Office) will be open on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> July from 1000 to Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> July

Media Registration:-

Cherbourg Media Centre will be situated at:

Plage Verte

50100 Cherbourg-en-Cotentin

(Open from 17<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> July -1000-1900 and late, as required for first arrivals)

#### **TV/Broadcast will be based at:**

École de voile /Sailing School, Place Napoléon

50 100 Cherbourg-en-Cotentin

This is next to the Race Village and Race office

### **RACE WEBSITE:**

Latest press releases, race news, images, video, tracking, Live race updates in the blog and the Virtual Regatta can all be found on [www.rolexfastnetrace.com](http://www.rolexfastnetrace.com)

All boats will be fitted with a fleet tracker:

<http://www.rolexfastnetrace.com/competitors/race-documents/fleet-tracking>

### **TRACKING:**

Competing Boats in the 2023 Rolex Fastnet Race will be fitted with tracking beacons from YB Tracking. Individual boats, classes or the whole fleet can be followed via the YB Races App or via the race website.

<https://www.rolexfastnetrace.com/en/competitors/race-documents/fleet-tracking>



## LIVE BLOG:

<https://www.rolexfastnetrace.com/en/live-en>

As well as daily race reports and updates during the event, a Live Blog on the race website will be updated. Crews will be sending in photos, audio, video and blogs to the Media team and these will be posted to bring the race alive to those following from the comfort of their own home.

## VIRTUAL REGATTA:

A Virtual Regatta will also be run during the race for armchair sailors wishing to test themselves on the same 695nm race course - (details on the race website -to follow) + <https://www.virtualregatta.com/en/>

## RACE WEBSITE + SOCIAL MEDIA:

#RolexFastnetRace

Website: <https://www.rolexfastnetrace.com>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/RoyalOceanRacingClub>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/rorcracing/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@RORCRacing>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/RORCRacing>

TikTok: <https://www.tiktok.com/@rorcracing>

Linkedin:

<https://uk.linkedin.com/company/royaloceanracingclub>

### Association Arrivée Fastnet Cherbourg – Social Media:

@RolexFastnetRaceCherbourg

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn

**@RolexFastnetRaceCherbourg**

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Youtube

L'arrivée de la légende – Cherbourg:

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