2026 Laser Gorge Blowout

July 30, 2026
Columbia Gorge Racing Association
Hosted by *Skamania Coves Resort*, Stevenson, WA

NOTICE OF RACE

1. RULES

1.1. The race will be governed by the rules as defined in *The Racing Rules of Sailing.*
1.2. Racing Rule 40 (Personal Flotation Devices) shall apply.
1.3. Racing Rule 90.2(c) is changed as follows: Replace the last sentence of the Rule with, "Oral changes may be given during the competitor meeting."

2. ELIGIBILITY & ENTRY

2.1. The regatta is open to boats of the ILCA dinghy class, including ILCA 7, ILCA 6, and ILCA 4 rigs.
2.2. RS Aero class dinghies may enter and sail, but are ineligible for the Laser Gorge Blowout Perpetual Trophy.
2.3. Eligible competitors may enter by requesting permission to race via email to davej@cgra.org.
2.4. Competitors will be required to agree to a Waiver of Liability as a condition of eligibility. This waiver may be completed online or at the event check-in.
2.5. No entries will be accepted after 18:00, July 29, 2026.
2.6. The number of entries is limited to 20 ILCAs. If less than that number register, RS Aeros are invited to join up to the maximum total number of entries.

3. FEES

3.1. The entry fee is $35. Fee may be paid by cash, check or credit card at check-in at the CGRA Race Office, the morning of the race.
3.2. CGRA Members (Intermediate or Pro) receive a discount of $5.00 (you can join CGRA here).

4. SCHEDULE

Wednesday, July 29	6:00 pm	Registration Deadline
Thursday, July 30	8:30-10:30 am	Check-in & car shuttle to HR
	10:30 am	Competitors Meeting
	11:00 am	Race Warning
	5:00 pm	Refreshments & Awards at Skamania Coves Resort

5. SAILING INSTRUCTIONS

5.1. The Sailing Instructions will be available at check-in on July 30, 2026.

6. THE COURSE

6.1. The course shall be from a starting line off Skamania Coves Resort to the bridge at Hood River. Course length is approximately 17 miles.
6.2. The race is divided into 2 legs with a mid-race rest stop at Viento Park (see Attachment A.). Boats must sail through the mid-race finish line off the beach at Viento to be scored.
6.3. The first leg finish line will be the second leg start line. The second leg will finish line will be the Hood River Bridge. Competitors must sail through the bridge to be scored.
6.4. The decision to race will be announced at the competitors' meeting. If the wind is from the East, too light to complete the course or if sustained wind prevents the race from being safely completed, the race will be abandoned. This is strictly the decision of CGRA.

7. PENALTY SYSTEM

7.1. The following US Sailing prescription will apply: Appendix V1 (two-turn penalty replaced with a one-turn penalty).

8. SCORING

8.1. Finishing order shall be determined by combining times for Stage 1 (starting line at Skamania Coves to finish line at Viento) and Stage 2 (starting line at Viento to finish line at Hood River). The competitor with the lowest combined time wins.

8.2. Competitors on course side at the starting signal of either Stage 1 or Stage 2 will not be recalled but will have a penalty of 2 minutes added to their time for that stage.

9. SUPPORT BOATS

9.1. All support boats shall register at the Race Office during the check-in period.

9.2. During racing, support boats shall monitor the race committee VHF channel and remain more than 50 yards from the course area, except when asked to assist by the race committee.

10. PRIZES

10.1. Medals will be awarded to the top 3 finishers.

10.2. The first ILCA (shortest elapsed time) shall have his or her name engraved on the coveted Laser Gorge Blowout Perpetual Trophy.

10.3. Additional prizes may be awarded at the discretion of the organizing authority.

11. SAFETY

11.1. Boats shall not impede the passage of commercial vessels and shall comply with Rule 9, Narrow Channels, of the US Coast Guard Inland Navigation Rules.

11.2. Boats that fail to comply promptly with signals from a committee boat to alter course, or that receive a 5-blast warning (5 short sounds) from a commercial vessel, will be subject to protest and disqualification.

11.3. In the event of breakdowns, boats may be towed to shore and secured for later pick-up.

11.4. A boat that retires from a race shall notify the race committee as soon as possible.

12. RISK, DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY, & PERSONAL CONDUCT

12.1. Competitors participate in the regatta at their own risk. See Rule 4 (Decision to Race). The organizing authority will not accept any liability for material damage or personal injury or death sustained in conjunction with or prior to, during, or after the regatta.

12.2. Competitors will accept full responsibility for all their actions during any activity related to this event. This includes on-shore activities before, during, and after the regatta.

13. RIGHT TO USE NAME & LIKENESS

13.1. By participating in this event, all competitors automatically grant the organizers and sponsors the right to produce and publish, at their discretion and without compensation, any photographs or videos in which competitors may appear during the period of the event.

14. FURTHER INFORMATION

14.1. Additional useful information regarding accommodations, travel, and tourism is available online at www.cgra.org.

14.2. For more information, please contact Laser Blowout Chairman Dave Jursik at davej@cgra.org.

Race Description

by Kerry Poe, Laser Blowout Founding Father

The Laser Gorge Blowout is 20 miles of downwind white-knuckle sailing through the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area. The 2026 race starts at Skamania Coves Resort, just east of Stevenson WA and finishes at Hood River. Swimming ability is mandatory! The race is a downwind start and will typically have 14-20 knot winds and flat water. The waves and wind begin to increase over the next 7 miles as you approach Wind Mountain. At Wind Mountain the river narrows and turns, creating some nice rollers to create havoc on Laser sailors. Between Wind Mountain and Viento State Park the river is surrounded by 2,000-foot high cliffs. The finish of the first leg of the race is at Viento State Park, a popular boardsailing and kite-boarding venue. The park has a beach protected from the wind where the sailors can load up on energy food and check their sanity before starting the most demanding part of the race. The sane Laser sailors will have the opportunity to pull out of the race at this point.

In the second half of the race, sailors will see the wind increasing and the waves growing larger as they approach the most demanding part of the river, SWELL CITY! Yes, there is a reason that it is called Swell City. The Laser sailor won't only be worrying about how to keep the bow from crashing into the back of the next swell, but will also have to try and avoid approximately 200 windsurfers wave jumping over him. Wind speeds can range from 25-40 knots, and I won't attempt to judge the wave heights. A short distance past Swell City is another popular board site called the Fish Hatchery for the board sailors not as inclined to take on the big swells. Next comes the welcome relief of dying wind (20-30 knots) as the survivors sail past the Hood River event site to finish under the Hood River Bridge. After the race, sailors can limp to one of the many local brewpubs for some well deserved refreshments.