

Saimaa 24h Sailing Challenge 2026: Information and Invitation

Set sail for an unforgettable adventure on Lake Saimaa! The legendary **Saimaa 24h Sailing Challenge** returns in 2026 in a renewed format, combining endurance sailing, navigation, teamwork, and competition — all set against the stunning backdrop of Finland’s largest lake. While refreshed for a new era, the event proudly honours its long-standing traditions dating back to 1971.

Event Details

- **Date:** Friday–Saturday, 5–6 June 2026
- **Venue:** Southern Lake Saimaa, Finland
- **Start:** Lappeenranta – Laihianselkä
- **Finish:** Sarviniemi
- **Organizer:** Lappeenrannan Pursiseura (LrPS) / Lappeenranta Yacht Club (LrYC)

The event begins with a ceremonial parade of boats through Lappeenranta Harbour, followed by the official race start at 18:00 on Friday evening. The fleet will sail continuously through the night, with finishing times expected on Saturday evening.

The Challenge

Saimaa 24h is a demanding long-distance sailing event designed to test seamanship, night navigation skills, endurance, and strategic decision-making. The course offers several route options, challenging crews to balance speed, risk management, and tactical choices.

The race is conducted under **Saimaa Ranking** and **Finrating handicap rules**, featuring two main racing classes and a separate cruising/adventure class. This format ensures competitive and engaging racing for a wide range of boats and crews.

Registration

- **Registration opens:** Wednesday, 1 April 2026
- **Registration closes:** Friday, 15 May 2026
- **Entry fee:** 100 €

Registration is binding and must be completed via the official Forms registration system. All boats, skippers, and crew members must be registered by the deadline. No late entries will be accepted.

Environmental Bonus: Boats displaying the official *Pidä Saaristo Siistinä ry (Keep Archipelago Tidy)* Roope-sticker for the 2026 season receive a **5 € discount** on the entry fee. In addition, the organizer will donate **5 € per Roope-sticker boat** to support environmental work in the Lake Saimaa region.

A **Teams information briefing** will be held on Wednesday, 15 April 2026, covering race procedures, safety, schedules, and route planning.



Spectators and Race Viewing

Spectators are warmly welcome to follow the event both onshore and on the water. The ceremonial parade and race start can be viewed from Lappeenranta Harbour and nearby shore locations.

In addition, spectators may follow the **race start and early stages on board the spectator vessel s/y Toveri**, which departs from Lappeenranta Harbour shortly after the competing fleet. This unique on-water viewing experience offers close-up perspectives of the start and the first tactical moments of the race.

The entire event can also be followed through **live online GPS tracking**, allowing real-time race viewing throughout the 24-hour challenge.

Tracking and Media Coverage

All participating boats will be equipped with **GPS tracking devices**, enabling real-time online race tracking. The event will feature professional photography, video coverage, and drone filming. Crews are also invited to contribute short onboard video clips to enhance event storytelling and live updates.

Safety and Sustainability

Safety is a core priority of Saimaa 24h. The event is conducted under strict safety regulations, and all crews are expected to follow good seamanship practices. Environmental responsibility is strongly emphasized, with sustainable operations and respect for Lake Saimaa at the heart of the event.

A Legendary Return

First sailed in 1971, Saimaa 24h became one of Finland's most iconic long distance inland sailing events. The 2026 edition marks a major relaunch, serving as a pilot event with the goal of integrating Saimaa 24h into the official Saimaa Ranking Series from 2027 onwards.

Join us for an extraordinary sailing experience — where endurance, strategy, and adventure meet on the waters of Lake Saimaa.

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