

RRS 68

The Latest News from
the Judges' Committee



In This Newsletter:

[Chairman's Corner](#)

Page 02

[Round Tables](#)

Page 03

[Jury Secretary](#)

Page 05

[Scribing](#)

Page 06

[Happenings in Area F](#)

Page 07

[Useful Links](#)

Page 08

WELCOME TO THE JUDGES' NEWSLETTER

Sarah Ashton

Time to start preparing for the Spring Sailing Season. Utilize the off-season by taking a few seminars to polish your judging knowledge and skills. Check the [Seminar Calendar](#) to find one right for you!

We are still soliciting tips for your fellow judges; please send me your ideas for preparing for an event, working with the OA and RC, organizing hearings, great new equipment, etc.

If you have any topics you would like addressed or articles to include in the newsletter, please send them to your RAJ or me. Pertinent photos will also be appreciated.

Thanks to Priscilla Parker for the fabulous action shots.

ashtonsh@bellsouth.net

CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

Wayne Balsiger

Misconduct Information Guidance for US Judges: We had an article on this in the July issue. This being important, Matt Hill is sending out an email to all Judges. The email explains why the Judges' Committee and US Sailing has this new process and form for submitting RRS 69 hearing decisions when a warning or above is issued. This allows tracking past instances that can be used in subsequent hearings if a person has multiple misconduct hearings.

This idea is spreading beyond the US, and World Sailing is considering a submission from the Dutch MNA to amend rule 69.2(j) to require that all penalties and warnings be reported to the MNA.

The form to submit is on the Judges page as well. Please read the email and let others know about this process as well. The July issue of RRS68 is available on the Judges page on the website.

Jury Duty: Two good articles below by Mary Pierce and Bruce Cook on important Protest Jury positions, Jury Secretary and Jury Scribe. Both duties help smooth the protest process.

Area F: This month, Chris Luppens highlights Area F Judges Education offerings With Fall here: the Club and Advanced Judge Seminars, Clinics, Protest days and Round Tables are coming onto the seminar calendar. These are great ways to improve your knowledge and skills and earn CEUs to fulfill part of your recertification requirements.

Round Tables: Nancy Glover has been busy with Round Tables and has an article on them in this issue. Earlier issues had good discussions on our educational offering and CEU philosophy. The list of Round Table topics is being posted to the Judges' page.

Hosting an event: Seminars can be either online via Zoom or in person. There are benefits to both methods, and we try to offer both. If you are interested in hosting a CEU event, online or in-person, you can find the contact person to discuss the opportunity listed in the Judges Educational Offerings table on the webpage.

Recertification needs an application: This a reminder that if you are recertifying, you do need to fill out an application by November 1st. The Committee reviews recerts at our December meeting, so please get all your recert requirements met by then, if possible. If you have any questions, check with your RAJ.

Elvstrom Protest Boats are back! Are your Elvstrom protest boats in poor shape or missing a boom or mark after all these years, like mine were? Well, sail right over to the US Sailing store and buy a new set or two for only \$5 ea.

Thank You. A thank you to all judges for the service you provide for our sport. We are a vital part of an event. US Sailing is working on promoting Organizing Authorities to request judges sooner and to consider covering at least part of Judges' expenses. Other than (Mountain) Search and Rescue, we are likely the only sport that asks officials to often cover their own expenses.

Back copies of these RRS68 are available on the Judges' webpage.

ROUND TABLE CONCEPTS AND TOPICS

Nancy Glover

Roundtable season is here once again! The best thing about Roundtables is that we plan it together: Judges Education and Training and Testing Subcommittee ("JETTS"), RAJs, judges and our friends from umpiring and race committee.

Roles:

Roundtable Administrator: approves Roundtables in cooperation with the JETTS Chair, works to develop and approve draft agendas, and provides names of experienced facilitators if a group wishes to bring in an experienced person.

Facilitator: creates draft agenda, presents Roundtable Rules (all opinions equally important, respect others, all should participate), and has the responsibility to keep things moving and on topic.

Discussion leader: introduces the assigned topic. Please, no slides; concise handouts are all right. Roundtables are discussions, not lectures!

Technical expertise: a Roundtable should have two or three experienced, technically strong judges to ensure incorrect technical information is not accidentally presented.

Participants: bring your opinions and be prepared to support them!

Ideally, a Roundtable has a mix of technical and "best practice" topics. Roundtables are most interesting if topics and topic leaders do not repeat within two years.

Technical topics (we recommend you pick at least three):

Protests: facts, conclusions and decisions, how to write solid results and anticipate appeals.

Appeals: regional and national appeals, procedures, response time.

Rules 2 and 69: competitors and support persons, which rule is applicable, responding to reports, investigation and hearings. Guidance regarding reporting warnings and other actions to US Sailing. Scope of protest committee actions v. MNB actions. Note the new training module.

Arbitration: procedures, conduct, which cases are appropriate

Rule 42 and Appendix P: you may cover general rules or select sub-topics. Note we have New cases, appeals and Q and A: what we need to know and what may change.

Understanding the new quad: rule changes including US prescriptions (generally only in the year of change, 2021, 2025, etc.)

Informing the Protestee: hail, flag, exceptions and timing

Alternative Penalties: the many choices: SP, DP, Class and World Sailing Guidelines

High school and college sailing: procedural rules and how they differ from RRS

Keeping Clear and Giving Room: How close is too close? Factors involved (type of boat, wind, sea state, current, level of competition).

SafeSport: Lessons learned, compliance, police v. venue (club, community sailing, etc.) v. Rule 2/69 v. SafeSport. When to report.

Rule 6 and World Sailing Regulations (and Guidelines). Who may protest? When may a protest occur?

Exoneration: rule 43 now has it all!

Acquiring Right of Way and Changing Course: when do rights and responsibilities change, and how much time does a boat have to comply with rules 15 and 16?

Starting with Papa, India, Zebra, Uniform and Black Flags: compare and contrast, prepare for redress! Include a friend from Race Committee in this discussion.

ROUND TABLE CONCEPTS AND TOPICS *Cont.*

Penalties: all the many choices under rule 44, Appendix T and Appendix V (a US Sailing Prescription).

Creating Race Documents: the new NOR and SI, working with OA and RC, judges review needed early since many important factors set out in the NOR. Include a friend from Race Committee in this discussion.

Reopening a hearing: significant error, significant new evidence, recent experiences with video, procedures.

Standard of Proof: what constitutes a "balance of probabilities" and "comfortable satisfaction?" Comparing rules 2, 64 and 69 standards.

Class Rules: handling alleged violations, working with the Technical Committee, class measurers, and handicappers. Informing class rule authorities. Rules 64.4, 65.4, 78.

Entry and Qualifications: when may a boat or competitor be excluded, US Prescription to rule 76.1

Indemnification and Hold Harmless: US Prescription to rule 81. What it means...and what it does not mean.

Changes to the Rules: what rules can be changed, application to class rules, testing proposed rule changes.

Mandatory best practice topics (pick at least one):

Video hearings: which technology, using boats, preventing unintended observers.

Electronic evidence: assessing photographs, drones and other video evidence.

Accepting the invitation: what to expect, questions to ask (good topic for less experienced judges).

Accepting Out of Area Chief Judge: working with OA and RC, expectations, communication, creating a great team, what to ask, what to expect (good topic for new RJs and NJs).

Temperament: working with difficult people, sailors, parents, coaches, race committee and OA.

Judge Testing: best ways to prepare, taking electronic tests.

Other topic suggestions:

What's happening at US Sailing and the Judges Committee (RAJ or USSA BOD member)? Please do not focus on Area only matters or yacht club matters).

The certification ladder: moving from CJ to RJ to NJ

Becoming an International Judge: requirements and planning your approach (best led by an IJ)

Feedback for JETTS: the good, the bad, the future

Working well with Juniors

Working well with adaptive sailors

Efficient protests: questioning parties and witnesses, scribing, using electronic forms, and tips from the IJs.

Working with the OA and Race Committee: how we can best support each other, document creation and review, redress issues (invite your favorite Race Officer to provide perspective).

Getting into Umpiring! More fun on the water. Best led by a certified umpire.

Radio Controlled Boats: growing throughout the US.

New favorite: end with Stump the IJ. Any questions, opinions or issues!!

Any questions? Feel free to contact me. nancyjglover@hotmail.com (781) 469-6515

JURY SECRETARIES:

Mary Pierce

The chief judge (or an appointee) can manage the protest desk at small events. But at middle-sized and large events, a jury secretary is indispensable to keep the protest desk organized and information, postings and hearings moving freely. Here are tips and best practices from two of the best jury secretaries, Harriet Ottenheimer (FL) and Dar Collins (MA).

Before the event:

1. Get, read, and file the NoR and Sailing Instructions (on a computer and/or in binder/paper files)
2. Load a binder or file folder with at least two paper copies of all protest committee forms and a few sheets of blank paper in case a form is missing or something needs to be posted for which there is no form. All of the forms are on the US Sailing website.
 - a. If desired, download the event, venue, and other logos to personalize forms. Print this new set of forms with the name of the regatta and logos of the class and host venue; leave the space for the date blank on each form, to be filled in daily onsite before posting.
3. Contact the chief judge and/or regatta chair to arrange onsite details:
 - a. access to an office photocopier, if possible, for quickly making multiple sets of documents such as filled-out protest forms.
 - b. access to venue wifi, including passwords, and the back end of the scoring/judging program to post protests, hearing schedules, and results if the regatta uses online scoring and notice boards.
 - c. possibility of a runner/helper for copying and posting.
4. Pack: forms from above, large envelopes or clear sleeves, laptop, paper, pens/pencils, tacks, painter's tape, paperclips, stapler and staples, paperweights, clock/timer app on a phone, VHF radio, cables, chargers. The laptop should have a complete set of generic jury forms on it. A small, portable printer/scanner/copier is essential if you don't have access to a photocopier.

Onsite:

Before racing starts:

1. Locate the jury secretary/protest desk and a physical ONB, a nice courtesy even if using online scoring/judging.
2. Confirm docking time notification procedure with PRO; exchange phone numbers with key docking time personnel. NOTE, some PROs retain the right to post the docking time on the ONB and have their forms for doing so!!
3. Get the cell number of the chief scorer. If there is a preferred scoring review request form, get a few copies and make more.

After racing:

1. Be available at the desk to receive protests, scoring inquiries, and redress requests.
2. Keep a log (a small notebook) of every action: time the jury desk opens and closes each day, the time each form is posted (especially crucial for redress hearings), docking times, PTLs, a running log of protests and redress requests received, and anything else that seems relevant. This helps at large regattas and can be referred to in case of appeals.
3. **NUMBER AND TIME STAMP EVERYTHING!!** (Be sure to add PTL to the protest form if it's not there)
 - a. Get cell phone numbers of parties.
 - b. Make sure names are legible.
4. Have sufficient copies of each protest made for all judges, plus one to keep at the desk. Place these into a large envelope or a plastic file folder/sleeve and give them to Chief Judge.
5. For really large regattas, establish a visual procedure for tracking the progress of each hearing through the process (a large board with sticky notes to put into rows and columns is good: rows for hearings, columns for the stage of the process).
6. Post all relevant paperwork online AND/OR on ONB as soon as possible (docking time, protest time limit, protest schedule, results of hearings, redress requests. . .). Update ONB (online/physical) as needed (new protests, new results. . .)
7. Notify the scorer of any scoring changes, penalties, etc., awarded by judges.
8. Have a nutrition bar and some water handy just in case it's a long night.
9. At the end of each day, secure all papers safely and ensure the ONB is up to date.
10. The next morning, clean up the ONB and set the desk up again. Repeat daily.

At the end of the event:

1. Organize all paperwork and give one set of everything to someone local at the host club (probably the regatta chair). These papers (especially the protests and records of hearings) must be kept onsite for a whole year in case of any appeals. Sometimes, the Chief Judge will take these home.
2. You can take home the desk copy and keep it safe as a backup, but it's unnecessary.
3. Pack up. Thank everyone who helped make your work easier!!

SCRIBING...

Bruce Cook

Scribing helps minimize the time it takes to complete a protest or redress hearing. The scribe should have a good understanding of the racing rules, the ability to listen to and analyze evidence as it is presented, the ability to apply the racing rules to the evidence presented, and the ability to write facts conclusions and decisions in a concise manner for consideration by the hearing panel by the time the panel finishes taking evidence in the case.

This process should be followed for the validity hearing as well as the substantive hearing: each hearing requires its own facts, conclusions and decision.

The scribe's most important job is to find facts. Begin that process by writing down information from the hearing request form that does not appear to be in dispute: boat names, tack, location of the incident, etc. As evidence is taken, supplement what is written down or modify it as needed with information that is more likely than not what happened. If you are uncertain about a point, write down options and come back to it later: for example, "Boats entered the zone overlapped - not overlapped."

Facts should be in declarative sentences that are short, concise, clear, in the past tense, quantitative [5 feet] rather than qualitative [about 5 feet], and numbered to organize the flow of the incident.

In the end, what you have written down must tell the story of the case. The story of your case is your list of facts found. Ask yourself this question: would a knowledgeable reader understand what happened by reading my facts found? If not, fix the problem. Otherwise, move on to writing your conclusions.

Use rule book language for your conclusions and number them: for example, "1. X on port did not keep clear of Y on starboard and broke rule 10." After doing so, ask yourself this question: Do my conclusions follow from my facts found? If not, fix the problem. Otherwise, move on to writing your decision.

The dismissal or denial of the protest or request, the assignment of any penalty that applies, or the award of any redress should be apparent from your conclusions. Ask yourself this question: Does my decision respect my conclusions and the rules? If not, fix the problem. Otherwise, present your write-up to the other panel members and ask them for comments.

Presenting a write-up ready for comment to the panel members will focus their attention on the result and help to limit their discussions to points that require clarification. This minimizes the additional time it would otherwise take the panel first to discuss the case after evidence is taken and then write the decision from scratch.

Expect comments and edit the write-up as needed: it will end up better than it started. Once approved, it can be presented to the parties. Once the parties are informed of the decision, the hearing panel is ready to move on to the next case.

HAPPENINGS IN AREA F

Chris Luppens

Area F includes the States of Texas, Oklahoma, Nebraska, New Mexico and Wyoming, along with a part of Missouri and part of South Dakota. We are the big yellow blob in the middle of the Area maps found on the US Sailing website. Huge area, but so what is the big deal, nobody sails in most of the area, right? According to current database records at US Sailing, there are currently 83 Local Sailing Organizations (LSOs) in the area and many more unregistered organizations, I am sure. The more prominent organizations and all of the judges are concentrated around hotter spots for higher-level competitive sailing, Houston, Dallas-Ft. Worth, Corpus Christi and even Denver.

That does not mean the smaller clubs are not active; they do not usually host bigger, national or class championship events. Should only the more significant events have certified officials or some level of trained officials available? Quality of sailing is very much related to good officiating at all levels.

To better illustrate the situation, going from Houston to Lake Alcova, where the Casper Sailing Club operates, is 1,285 miles (20 hr. drive) inside Area F. The closest judges (One Club Judge and one NJ/IJ) are in Denver, about 844 miles away. The rest of the judges in the area live in or around Houston, Dallas-Fort Worth, or Corpus Christi. In the area, there is just one NJ/IJ who moved here to follow his grandchild (boy, do I get that!), 6 NJs, 2 RJs, 8 CJs and 13 JITs. The numbers indicate how valuable JITs are for an Area composed of immense distances, many smaller clubs and a desire to bring quality competitive sailing to everyone. Being listed at any earns a posting in the Find a Race Official database and helps people locate those who have had at least some training.

The goal is to certify folks at the Club Judge level as a minimum, but is it truly practical or even possible in all situations? We must depend on Zoom or something similar to train people and link the more experienced people to help as needed.

Ongoing discussions related to certification and the use of Zoom need to consider the needs of Areas like F. I believe that is happening, and alternatives for smaller clubs and training and recognizing race officials for these clubs are starting to be addressed.

I am very proud of the efforts of our judges in Area F and appreciate their and anyone else's input in generating ideas for promoting officials and quality racing in all Areas.



USEFUL LINKS

- [US Sailing Judges' Page](#)
- [The Racing Rules of Sailing 2021-2024 with the corrections and updates for Jan 1, 2022](#)
- [SOARS](#)
- [Safesport](#)
- [World Sailing](#)

RESOURCES

- [Find a Seminar](#)
- [US Sailing Judge Certification Requirements](#)
- [2021-2024 US Prescriptions to The Racing Rules of Sailing](#)
- [Appendices KG & LG - NoR and SI Guides & Templates](#)
- [The Judges' Manual for 2021-2024](#)
- [Guidelines for Online Hearings](#)
- [Continuing Education Events and CEUs Table](#)
- [Race Officials Certification Forms](#)

SafeSport Training Tip

When taking SafeSport training, please access it via the USSailing.org site and not via the SafeSport site. This ensures you take the correct training and allows your results to flow back to US Sailing and SOARS automatically, saving you and the office time and headache.

