

# RRS 68

## The Latest News from the Judges' Committee

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## **WELCOME TO THE JUDGES' NEWSLETTER**

**Sarah Ashton**

Happy New Year to all. I hope this year will meet all your expectations!

If this is your year to renew, check your requirements now so that you can start planning to fulfill them. Remember that you do not have to take a Club Judge Seminar and Advanced Judge seminar to renew, as there are several Round Tables, Clinics, and Protest Days offered throughout the year, many on Zoom. If you are short events contact your RAJ now so that he/she can assist you in finding judging opportunities.

The Annual Judges' Committee Meeting will be in February. If you have any issues or concerns that you would like your Judges' Committee to address, get in touch with your RAJ this month so that they can present them to the Committee at the meeting.

As always, if you have any comments or suggestions for the RRS 68, do not hesitate to contact me.

[ashtonsh@bellsouth.net](mailto:ashtonsh@bellsouth.net)

# CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

Wayne Balsiger

Wow, a new year already. As many of us know, the years seem to go by faster each year. This past year was no exception for me.

**Find a Seminar and Continuing Education:** As discussed in the last *RRS 68*, we have many Judge education offerings on the Judges' Seminar calendar from now through April. Now is the time of year when we have most of our education offerings. These range from Club Judge Seminar in-person and online to Advanced Judge Seminar online. There are Judge Round Tables where multiple subjects are discussed among the participants. There are Clinics on Misconduct and the Investigator role. There are other clinics as well. We offer Protest Days in-person and online. Protest Day is a great way to improve your hearing process, along with the Better Written Decisions clinic for improving Protest Committee writing. For Certified Judges: these are no charge Continuing Education Units (CEU) (does not include Seminars). Check them out on [Find a Seminar](#).

We have two new RAJs this year: Jerry Thompson is now Area D RAJ. Jerry is in Roanoke Rapids, NC, and is both a Judge and Race officer. Steve Holmstrom is now Area J RAJ and hails from San Pedro, CA. We welcome both to the Judges' Committee. We say Thanks to Edith Collins, outgoing RAJ of Area D, and Steve Schupak, outgoing RAJ of Area J.

**Safety Courses:** At a recent Judges' Round Table, one topic was led by Doc Sullivan about safety and responses that judges can do in emergency situations. One of the suggestions made is that many times, the judges (and umpires) become the first responders in emergency situations. Several items come to mind: US Sailing has some small boat handling classes. Taking a First Aid class is always a good idea as well. If you have not had a first aid training class in the last 10 years, the ways to handle various emergencies have changed over time.

Check out the other great articles in this issue: Happenings in Area B, a new column on experiences, lessons learned by judges, and an article describing the attributes of judge educational leads.

Remember, all issues of the *RRS68* newsletter are on the Judges' webpage.

Smooth sailing always, Wayne Balsiger, Judges' Committee Chair [webalsiger@gmail.com](mailto:webalsiger@gmail.com)



# JUDGE LEARNINGS FROM EARLY ON

I hope this will be the start of a column that will be in each issue of *RRS 68*. There is a catch, though. For this to happen, other judges will have to write the succeeding columns.

Here are three wonderful lessons I received when I first started judging. The first two were from experienced judges, and the third was an informative hearing. All three left an indelible impression and have informed what I do as a judge.

At my first big event, the first hearing had possible validity issues. It was unclear whether or not the hearing request form included all the necessary information.

After excusing the parties, we discussed validity. The FIRST THING the chair said was, "Let's take out the rule book and read the relevant rule." Someone read it out loud while the rest of us followed along. I was surprised because they were so experienced. I assumed that they all knew the rules and, therefore, didn't need to read the book. The lesson for me was that one ALWAYS reads the rule to get the exact wording. (Thanks, Grant Baldwin.)

At the same event, the Chief Judge asked me to post something on the (physical) notice board, which I did. As I returned to the jury room, he asked me how I knew what to post. I said because I remembered. He kept looking at me—wrong answer. I then said because someone had told me that. Wrong answer. I thought a bit longer and said, "Because I read it in the Sailing Instructions." Right answer. Again, read rather than rely on memory. (Thanks Flavio Naveira.)

Somewhere along the way, I had a conversation with Dave Perry that fits with the above and paved the way for the third lesson. He asked me whether I was the kind of judge who sticks to the rules as written or if I would be thinking about what they meant and thus interpreting them. I said I was most comfortable with sticking to the rules as written.

The third lesson was at a Melges 24 hearing. Some facts: 15 knots of wind. Weather mark. A port boat (**P**) is close hauled coming into a line of starboard tack boats on their layline. **P** ducks a starboard tack boat (**S1**). Unbeknownst to **P**, there is another starboard tack boat (**S2**) just to the weather of **S**, back a bit, and hidden by **S1**. When **P** sees **S2**, **P** bears off even harder, but **P**'s bow hits **S2** near the **S2**'s port stern quarter. **P** takes the appropriate penalty. **S2** has a crew thrown overboard whom they recover, but it moves them far back in the fleet. **S2** requests redress.

Amazingly, there was no damage to either boat. (I still don't see how, but the jury inspected both boats.) The jury found that **P** did everything reasonably possible to avoid contact and that **S2** could not have avoided contact when it became clear that **P** was not keeping clear.

We would have liked to have granted **S2** redress. We read and reread the rules, but the only possible avenue was if anyone on **S2** had been injured. The rule states there needs to be injury. The crew thrown overboard was questioned, and they said they were not injured — no scratches, no bruises, and no sore spots. We probed for a bit but could find nothing. We denied redress because there was no avenue in the rules to grant it.

These situations provided me with a great deal of information on working toward being the best judge I could be. I hope others have educational stories to share, and I would love to see them here! Please email them to me or [ashtonsh@bellsouth.net](mailto:ashtonsh@bellsouth.net)

[Craig Daniels](#)

IJ, NU, RRO, Area L RAJ



# LEAD PRESENTER JOB DESCRIPTION

**Bill Simon - Chair**

**Judge Education, Training and Testing Subcommittee**

## **Lead Presenter**

- Have presentation experience with US Sailing Continuing Education Events (CEEs) or a background in small to medium educational events with small to medium audiences.
- Be a certified, knowledgeable and experienced sailing race official.
- Be approved by JETTs to lead specific types of CEEs
- Commit to being available to act as a presenter for up to 2 events per year and serve a 2-year term.
- Be proactive in one's region of the country by inviting clubs/associations to hold CEE events.
- Agree to teach each event as designed by the JETTs education group and have JETTs Chair approval for any deviation, oral or written, from the materials.

## **Additional Presenter Assets**

### ***Roundtable Lead:***

- Ability to stimulate and lead attendees to focus and develop a session's core topic(s) through their knowledge and experience.
- Have experience officiating at high-level events at the national or higher levels.
- Be certified as a high-level race official.
- Understand that roundtables are not lectures by the lead instructor.

### ***Clinic Lead:***

- Be able to assume the role of lead instructor for a seminar/interactive CEE.
- Be able to have in-depth knowledge of the event topic.
- Have the experience to provide in-depth, first-hand knowledge of the CEE topic presented.
- Be able to develop the team that will support and expand the CEE.

### ***Seminar Lead:***

- Be capable of leading a CEE composed of contrasting experience levels and certification levels.
- Have the knowledge and experience to provide the background information for the seminar design.
- Be a strong manager with the skills to provide the organization, communication, and seminar tools before, during and after the CEE.
- Have experience officiating at high-level events at the National or higher level.



# HAPPENINGS IN AREA B

**Bruce Cook**

In Area B (New York and Connecticut), the weather is cool. The few snowflakes that have fallen have not hung around. People are paying their winter storage bills and planning what work they want done to their boats for next season. They are also planning their 2024 sailing schedules, taking available educational programs to become certified judges and to maintain their certifications as judges. In between all of this, many are enjoying the fresh air on the weekends while frostbiting at their clubs.

The winter seminar season is in full swing, with a host of educational opportunities being offered by the Judges Committee. There are online programs that include protest day, round tables, clinics, club judge and advanced judge seminars. There are also in-person programs available. Be sure to check the US Sailing website for a list of available programs. If your certification is coming up for renewal in 2024, sign up for any needed programs to renew; do not wait until the last minute. Sign up for some of these programs even if your certification does not come for renewal this year: use the programs to get certified or to simply enjoy a good chat about sailing with fellow sailors.

As clubs plan their events for the year and as needs arise during the year, opportunities to judge exist. The Administrative Judges on the Judges Committee (RAJs) have occasion to circulate opportunities to other RAJs, who pass that information along to you using their mailing lists. The +1 Program started in Area B in 2022 and continued in 2023 has had some success making opportunities available thanks to the clubs and organizing authorities. US Sailing has a new program on the US Sailing website called the Race Official/Organizing Authority Connection Board, where you can post your availability and interest in officiating as well as the officiating needs of your club's events. Opportunities to officiate do exist, and these methods of communication are helping you identify them.

According to US Sailing's Find a Race Official, Area B had 3 International Judges, 7 National Judges (3 of whom are also International Judges), 9 Regional Judges, 7 Club Judges, and 4 Judges in Training in 2023. The Area mailing list consists of 69 names. This represents a slight increase in the total number of judges from the total number in 2022 and a sizeable increase in the number of people on the 2023 mailing list. Hopefully, this is a good sign for the future and the growth of the judges' corp.

Thank you all for supporting the sport.



# USEFUL LINKS

- [US Sailing Judges' Page](#)
- [The Racing Rules of Sailing 2021-2024 with the corrections and updates for Jan 1, 2023](#)
- [US Sailing Appeals](#)
- [World Sailing Cases](#)
- [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](#)
- [Race Officials Insurance Information](#)
- [Race Official/Organizing Authority Connection Page](#)

