

# RRS 68

## The Latest News from the Judges' Committee

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## **WELCOME TO THE JUDGES' NEWSLETTER 2025!**

**Sarah Ashton**

Now is the time to complete your renewal requirements with the various educational offerings offered by the Judges' Educational Training and Testing Committee.

The Judges' Committee just held its 2025 Annual Meeting in Denver. Wayne will give you the highlights in the Chairman's Corner.

The Race Administration has offered a detailed process to obtain your 2025-28 RRS. It is included in the newsletter along with Race Official Insurance and volunteering for the 2028 Olympics under [From The Race Administration Office](#)

Your feedback is valuable. If you have any suggestions for RRS 68, please share them with us. We're here to listen and improve. You can reach out to me at [ashtonsh@bellsouth.net](mailto:ashtonsh@bellsouth.net).



# CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

Wayne Balsiger

The Judges’ Committee just had its annual in-person meeting in Denver. It is always great to meet in person, as it allows for better networking and learning more about each other. However, we also use Zoom for those who can’t make it in person.

**Rule Books:** As you know, certified officials can receive a free copy of the rule book (waterproof or paper) or a second copy for \$10. See [From Race Administration](#) for directions. At my insistence, the Race Administration Committee made sure the books were shipped to you for free, as that was in doubt for a time.

**The new Hearing Request Form** is available at the [New Hearing Request form](#), and the Hearing Decision Form is unchanged. Changes in the New Rules for Judges is a five-page pamphlet that Dave Perry kindly compiled for us describing rule changes that affect us as judges on protest committees [Click here.](#)

**A reminder:** as you review NoRs and SIs for the new year: that Part 5 Rule numbers changed, so more edits are needed on your NoR and SIs where rule numbers are referred to. The Judges’ Manual is almost ready to be released. However, we are still waiting on the World Sailing Case Book to make our final updates. You can always download a free copy from the Judges ’ webpage.

**Insurance for Race Officials:** The National Association of Sports Officials (NASO) insurance we offer is now easier to find on the website. The policy runs from August 1 to July 31. It is prorated now through July 31 for \$39. The full-year price ending July 31 was our \$79 group rate instead of the standard rate of \$129.

**Education Season:** An Advanced Judge seminar at American YC and a Club Judge Seminar via Zoom. Round Tables and Protest Day are available. We have had full houses on those already held. With the quad rules changes, we have updated the Club Judge and Advanced Judge Seminars (and test questions). Around the Race Course (updated for 2025) will soon be on the website.

**Number of Judges:** This year, we have more judges, but again, there are some shifts in numbers at each Certification/Designation level. We always look for racing sailors interested in the rules and possibly becoming a Judge. If you are or know someone who might be interested, make sure your RAJ knows. And work on getting younger sailors interested. High School and College Sailors know the rules well. We are gaining our youngest Club Judge in April when he turns 18. Encourage others to get involved with Judging and Umpiring.

Year	Club Judge Seminar	Advanced Judge Seminar	Continuing Education
2023 events	10	1	19
2023 students	84	16	192
2024 events	17	2	27
2024 students	142	36	383

Judge Level	2025	2024	2023	2022
IJ	31	30	25	26
NJ (not IJ)	69	70	80	84
RJ	52	58	55	53
CJ	116	108	105	98
JIT	67	56	40	60
Total	335	322	305	321



## CHAIRMAN'S CORNER *continued*

**Annual Judges' Committee Meeting:** We discussed several topics we discussed this year.

Each RAJ describes their area with judge counts, strengths/what is working well, and challenges/issues. This often generates ideas for improvements or uses what others are doing in other areas. One issue we continue to have is how to help certify judges in Areas without many judges and hearings. Zoom can help. As to getting enough hearings, the + 1 Program of adding an extra person to a hearing panel can help. Bruce Cook has had some success with this concept.

We created several Work Parties to a) create a brochure titled "Join the Protest Committee" that is similar in concept to the "Join the Race Committee Team" brochure.

- Update the RAJ Guide and develop training and reference materials for "accelerated hearings," which are sometimes referred to as "3-Minute Justice."
- guideline of a list of US Prescriptions that cannot be changed and why. This is for international events in the U.S., where they want to be close to the World Sailing RRS and remove most US Prescriptions.
- Consider possible methods of obtaining a reference from an event without hearings. One method might be holding an ad hoc mock hearing like a protest day.

We enjoyed a visit from new president Henry Brauer, discussing several items he is seeing at the helm. First up are revenue issues, donation support, and reducing costs to keep the budget balanced. The CEO search is going well and nearing completion. The IT Sailing database is old, and the effort to implement it is about 30% of the goal.

This year, Sandy Grosvenor, Race Administration Chair, also joined us. Discussions centered on piquing sailors' interest in becoming race officials, recruiting new race officials, and training them.

Remember, all issues of the **RRS 68** newsletters are on the Judges' webpage.

Smooth sailing always,

Wayne Balsiger, Chair  
[webalsiger@gmail.com](mailto:webalsiger@gmail.com)



2025 JC Meeting

# FROM THE RACE ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

## 1. Insurance:

"US Sailing has worked with the National Association of Sports Officials (NASO) to create a membership for US Sailing-certified race officials that includes a liability insurance package. Certified race officials now have the option to join NASO if they determine that they need additional liability coverage."

Read about Liability Insurance for race officials

[\(https://www.ussailing.org/competition/rules-officiating/resources/competition-rules-officiating-resources-insurance-for-race-officials/\)](https://www.ussailing.org/competition/rules-officiating/resources/competition-rules-officiating-resources-insurance-for-race-officials/)

## 2. Officials for Olympics:

"US Sailing is in the early stages of developing an application and selection process for members who are interested in serving as race officials at the Olympic sailing competition in 2028. National Technical Officials (NTOs) may be experienced as World Sailing international officials or US Sailing national officials, or have equivalent demonstrated capabilities.

"The specific roles and number of NTOs needed will be determined by World Sailing with LA28. US Sailing will develop and submit a list of NTO candidates to the LA28 sailing team, who will review and in turn provide it to World Sailing for their review and approval."

For more information, read the letter from Tom Duggan, Chair of the Race Management Committee

[\(https://www.ussailing.org/news/document/planning-document-for-the-identification-and-selection-of-ntos-for-the-sailing-events-at-the-la28-olympic-games/\)](https://www.ussailing.org/news/document/planning-document-for-the-identification-and-selection-of-ntos-for-the-sailing-events-at-the-la28-olympic-games/)

## 3. Get your hot rulebooks here!

### **Please follow these directions precisely:**

Thank you for your patience as we have worked to prepare the US rulebook for production. World Sailing's late December release of the final rules set us back significantly.

As in the past, we will provide a printed rulebook at no cost to all certified race officials. You are welcome to choose either the paper or waterproof book. The rulebook app is also available to you free of charge in both Android and iOS versions.

To order a copy of the book, please:

- Use this link to go directly to the item in the store: <https://ussailing.store/products/the-racing-rules-of-sailing-for-2025-2028-preorder>
- **Log in with the password you have created for the store (not your US Sailing login). If you don't yet have a store password or forgot yours, click "Forgot password" and enter the email address that you received this email on.**
- Use discount code **"RRSFREE"** to order your book for \$0.
- This offer is good for **one copy** of either the paper or the waterproof book.

If you have any difficulty accessing the store or ordering your book, please email us at [store@ussailing.org](mailto:store@ussailing.org) for help.

# HAPPENINGS IN AREA J

## Steve Holmstrom

There are currently 34 certified judges and 6 Judges in Training (JIT) in Area J. This is made up of 12 Club Judges (CJ), 5 Regional Judges (RJ), 11 National Judges (NJ), and 6 International Judges (IJ) who are also NJ. This is a total of 40 “recognized” judges supporting judging activities in the area.

Area J covers parts of four states: Central and Southern California, Southern Nevada, Arizona, Utah, and Baja California. No, I am not claiming Baja California as part of the United States! Because of its affiliation with the Southern California Yachting Association, the Club Náutico Baja (CNB) in Baja California is also a member, and this year, we added a Judge in Training from CNB.

Area J has over 1,700 sailing events among the over 120 clubs scheduled for 2025.

In February, several Southern California Clubs get together and simultaneously hold regattas for many Southern California classes in the Southern California Yachting Association Midwinters.

Other events include:

The San Pedro Bay Harbor Cup which features 10 major collegiate teams from around the country (and world) fleet racing Catalina 37s and ILCA Youth 4 and ILCA Youth 6 World Championship Laser races.

The Biannual Transpac race starts off the Palos Verdes Peninsula, passes Catalina Island, and ends in Honolulu.

Further South off Long Beach, inside and outside the Breakwater, the ILCA, 29er, I420 Midwinters West, Olympic Class Regatta, A-Class North American Championship, Finn Pacific Coast Championship, and USODA (Opti) Nationals. The Congressional Cup is an annual match racing event on the World Match Racing Tour.

Long Beach Race Week features Championships for the Catalina 37, Moore 24, J/109, Melges 15, Schock 35, and Viper 640, as well as the Catalina High Point Series for J/70, J/80, J/105, J/109, and J/120.

Inside Newport Harbor, the Baldwin Cup, Finn North Americans and Global 2k Team Race, Governor Cup, and Rose Cup match races will be held.

The 77th Newport to Ensenada International Yacht Race is an international regatta to Mexico. The Lipton Cup, Etchells Nationals, and Worlds will be held in San Diego Bay.

This level of activity requires many judges. We are working on training new judges and advancing our judge core.





# USEFUL LINKS

- [US Sailing Judges' Page](#)
- [The Racing Rules of Sailing 2025-2028](#)
- [US Sailing Appeals](#)
- [World Sailing Cases](#)
- [SOARS](#)
- [Safesport](#)
- [World Sailing](#)

## RESOURCES

- [Find a Seminar](#)
- [US Sailing Judge Certification Requirements](#)
- [2025-2028 US Prescriptions to The Racing Rules of Sailing](#)
- [2025-29 RRS Changes that Affect Judging](#)
- [The Judges' Manual for 2021-2024](#) - **Latest version 02/2024**
- [Guidelines for Online Hearings](#)
- [Continuing Education Events and CEUs Table](#)
- [Race Officials Certification Forms](#)
- [Race Officials Insurance Information](#)
- [Race Official/Organizing Authority Connection Page](#)
- [New Hearing Request Form](#)
- [A Quick Overview of the Significant Rule and Game Changes in the 2025-28 RRS](#)

