

RRS 68

The Latest News from the Judges' Committee

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WELCOME TO THE JUDGES' NEWSLETTER 2025!

Sarah Ashton

I hope your summer is proceeding breezily and storm-free for fabulous sailing.

Your Regional Area Judge (RAJ) can be a valuable resource:

- Find judges in your area available for events.
- Assist you in finding judging opportunities.
- Answer questions concerning NORs, SIs, hearing procedures, appeals, etc. you may have or direct you to the proper source.
- Assist you in taking and hosting Judge's Educational Events.
- Help you to certify or recertify.

Feel free to contact them, they are here for you.

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



CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

Wayne Balsiger

Summer is in full swing, and I trust you are at events doing good work as Judges for the sport we all love.

First, the 2025-2028 Judges' Manual is out. The Judges' Committee decided to release it now, even though the WS 2025 Case Book has not been released yet. It is available under [Guidelines and Documents](#) on the Judges page. The JM references many Case numbers, and when they are published, we will update the Judges' Manual as needed.

A while back, we removed the Rule 42 experience as a requirement for National Judge certification. The Judges' Committee approved the Rule 42 Endorsement proposal, and we are now rolling out the training and testing. This is similar to a Motorcycle endorsement, and it will let everyone know who is qualified for Rule 42/Appendix P on-the-water judging via Find-A-Race-Official. See Jerry Thompson's article on this initiative and timing.

- Sandy Grosvenor created a new [Addendum of Minimum US Prescriptions for International Events](#) held in the U.S. This explains what US Prescriptions are required for the event.
- The [Scribing Guide](#) on being a scribe in a protest hearing is now on the website.
- We have updated the [Judge Certification Requirements](#) to resolve some ambiguities. A seminar is required for initial certification, Club Judge for CJ, or Advanced Judge Seminar for RJ or NJ. CEUs for recertification must be Judge CEUs.

Rules Related Information: See Dave Perry's article on a forthcoming new appeal to help explain a revised the definition Mark-Room. Rules Corrections and Changes are made within the 2025-2028 timeframe. [These changes are noted here.](#) While labeled Changes and Corrections V1, that means Version 1, not rule V1. The correction is to rule U5.

Protesting? Notify the RC when you finish. Many SIs include a clause requiring boats to notify the RC of their intent to protest when finishing. This allows the RC to let the Protest Committee know they may have work to do, especially if the jury is not standing by on-site.

The 2025-2028 rules made changes such that while the often-used SI language says "shall," the SIs may not have correctly referenced the rule it is changing. A discussion about this among Rules, Appeals, and Judges' Committees provides several options you can use:

a) For a request but not a requirement to tell RC:

"If a boat intends to protest another boat or request redress, it is requested that the boat notify the race committee of that intention after finishing."

This intentionally isn't a validity requirement as we don't want the hurdle, but we get the benefit that most people do notify the RC at the finish so we can get the jury moving toward us or ready for a zoom meeting.

b) To make it a requirement to notify (for instance, no consultation with a coach):
RRS 60.4(a) adds "(4) if the protest concerns an incident observed by the protestor in the racing area, and the boat fails to notify the race committee of her intention to protest promptly after finishing."

Or use this language: SI xx "Rule 60.2(a) is changed by adding:

(3) If the protestor is a boat and the incident occurs in the racing area, she shall report her intention to protest to the race committee as soon as possible after finishing and receive its acknowledgement."

Or the last shall option:

SI xx: "Boats intending to protest shall so inform the race committee as soon as possible after finishing. Failure to do so makes her protest invalid. This changes rule 60.4."

In other words, the new RRS default is that no reporting is required and if you want to change that, you need to properly reference the rule being changed.

Race Officials Insurance: If you are interested in renewing or signing up, please keep an eye out for news via email around mid-July regarding renewal or sign-up opportunities. The new insurance year starts August 6th. I recommend having the insurance.

Smooth Sailing Always, Wayne Balsiger, Chair webalsiger@gmail.com

RULE 42 ENDORSEMENT

Jerry Thompson

Have you or someone you know had trouble finding race officials who are qualified to enforce Rule 42 on the water?

US Sailing's Judges' Committee, at their June 9 meeting, approved a Rule 42 Endorsement for race officials.

The purpose of the Rule 42 Endorsement is to identify race officials who have training and experience enforcing Rule 42 on the water under Appendix P of the Racing Rule of Sailing. The endorsement will be searchable in SOARS, allowing Organizing Authorities to locate endorsed officials. Another benefit of the Rule 42 Endorsement is that it will help standardize how race officials enforce Rule 42.

How does a race official become Rule 42 endorsed? The requirements are:

1. Be certified as a race official at any level.
2. Attended an Advanced Rule 42 Seminar with positive references from the instructors.
3. Pass the Rule 42 examination.
4. Have served as an on-the-water judge for Rule 42 / Appendix P for at least four events, of which two shall be regional or national events, during the past four years.
5. Receive two references from a Rule 42 event Chief Judge or their designated representative.

The Advanced Rule 42 Seminar will be offered via Zoom. The Judges' Committee is planning to run the first Advanced Rule 42 Seminar this fall. This first seminar will only be open to members of the Judges' Committee. Then, in the winter of 2026, the committee plans to offer several Zoom-based, online seminars.



A REPORT ON A NEW APPEAL FROM DAVE PERRY, CHAIR OF THE US SAILING APPEALS COMMITTEE

A Report on a New Appeal from Dave Perry, Chair of the US Sailing Appeals Committee
The US Sailing Appeals Committee recently published an interpretation of the new definition Mark-Room in several common scenarios which are often debated. It is [Appeal 130](#).

One scenario is at a port-hand windward or offset mark going onto a run. The question is: does mark-room include room to gybe onto port before leaving the mark astern? The answer is No. Mark-room is just enough space to turn promptly in a seamanlike way to a course consistent with sailing at the boat's optimum angle to the wind without changing tacks. Mark-room does not include any additional space to gybe and sail on the other tack.

Another scenario is two port-tack boats, PL and PW, approaching a port-hand windward mark in the zone. The question is: does mark-room continue to "protect" PW after she passes head to wind? The answer is No. Because the boats were overlapped when the first of them reached the zone, PW is entitled to mark-room under rule 18.2(a)(1). If there is any contact between the boats up until PW is head to wind, PL has broken rule 18.2(a)(1). But, the moment PW passes head to wind, rule 18.2(a) no longer applies; see rule 18.2(b) (and in fact all of rule 18 no longer applies; see rule 18.1(a)(1)). After passing head to wind, PW is no longer entitled to mark-room. If PL has held her course, then PW is not exonerated by rule 43.1(b) for her breach of rule 13. However, if PL luffs to try and prevent PW from tacking, and there is contact even after PW has passed head to wind, PL possibly breaks rule 16.1 in which case PW is exonerated by rule 43.1(b) for her breach of rules 11 and/or 13.

Another scenario is two boats, A and B, rounding a leeward mark to begin a windward leg. A is clear ahead of B when she reaches the zone, and she swings wide to cut the mark close as she comes up to close-hauled. B sails in between A and the mark. A luffs up to head to wind to "shut the door" causing B to touch the mark, breaking rule 16.1. The question is: does mark-room include luffing up to head to wind, in which case A is exonerated by rule 43.1(b) for breaking rule 16.1. The answer is No. Mark-room includes room for A to sail up to a close-hauled course, which is the course she needs to sail to begin sailing the next leg.

A final scenario is when a boat is rounding a mark in strong current. Often the boat will leave the mark astern before rounding the mark so as not to touch the mark while rounding it. The question is: if a boat leaves the mark astern before rounding the mark, does mark-room include room for her to leave it astern again after rounding it. The answer is Yes. If a boat leaves the mark astern before rounding it, she is still entitled to mark-room, which includes three components: sailing to the mark (when her proper course is to sail close to it), rounding or passing it on the required side, and leaving it astern. Only after she has left the mark astern after sailing to and around the mark has she been given mark-room.



HAPPENINGS IN AREA A

Mary. Pierce

Happy Summer from Area A:

We are in full swing here, cramming as much into our essentially 10-week season as is humanly possible. While there is no central calendar, a quick look at our most active clubs shows 81 regattas ranging from World Championships, US Championships, off-shore and distance Races, one-design class National Championships, charity regattas, to regional Junior Regattas, and local regattas, to say nothing of regular series racing! And I'm sure I've missed some. It's definitely the busy season for our 61 certified judges and JIT's! Our mission is to help keep racing fun and fair by carefully applying the rules in situations where there is a difference of opinion on whether a rule might have been broken. We are always actively recruiting more judges, so if you know a racing sailor in Area A with an interest in the rules, please send them to me or one of the other certified judges.

Once the season begins to wind down, we will once again offer and attend continuing education courses. Keep an eye out for Club and Advanced Judge classes, both in person and on Zoom. The always popular round tables and protest days will also begin to pop up on the seminar calendar.

Finally, we are proud that one of our newly retired judges was named a Judge Emeritus this year. John Dieselman, from Ipswich, MA, has been active in our area since 1970, before it was an area, and when our governing organization was the North American Yacht Racing Union (NAYRU)! In that time, John has worked regionally, nationally and internationally as a National Judge. He also served as the Regional Administrative Judge for Area A for six years and as a member of the Massachusetts Bay Sailing Association appeals committee for 34 years! Most importantly, though, John passed his love of sailing and appreciation for the racing rules along to others. He invited in many new judges and has been and still is a trusted mentor and friend to most, if not all, of the Area A judges. We should all be so lucky as to have a John Dieselman in our area!



USEFUL LINKS

- [US Sailing Judges' Page](#)
- [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](#)
- [2025-28 RRS Changes that Affect Judging](#)
- [The Judges' Manual for 2025-2028](#) - **Latest version 06/20/25**
- [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](#)

