



# JOIN THE PROTEST COMMITTEE TEAM!



An introduction to serving on  
the Protest Committee





Created by the Judges Committee  
United States Sailing Association  
[www.ussailing.org](http://www.ussailing.org)

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Join the Protest Committee  
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# Contents

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Introduction .....	1
Is the Protest Committee Right for You? .....	2
Personal Conduct .....	2
The Protest Committee in Action .....	3
Before the Event .....	3
At the Event .....	3
Right Before the Hearing .....	4
Conducting the Hearing .....	5
Checking Validity .....	5
Taking Evidence .....	6
Deliberation .....	9
Concluding the Hearing .....	11
The Protest Committee in Action: Key Takeaways .....	12
Roles on a Protest Committee .....	13
Chief Judge .....	13
Jury Secretary .....	13
Protest Committee Jurors .....	13
Beginning Your Journey as a Sailing Judge .....	14
Contact Your Regional Administrative Judge .....	14
US Sailing's Educational and Certification Programs .....	14
Seminars & Other Resources .....	15

# Introduction

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This booklet is designed to help individuals start their journey as members of a protest committee. Created by the US Sailing Judges Committee, it aims to enhance the quality of protest committees across the country.

Most sailboat races are organized by yacht clubs and other local sailing organizations. These groups rely heavily on volunteers to form their race committees and protest committees, often composed of sailors from their own ranks. This booklet is intended to make it easier for new volunteers to learn the essentials and feel confident about serving on their local protest committees. It also serves as a quick refresher on best practices for experienced protest committee members.

Typically, judges work within a protest committee of three to five members, resolving disputes between competitors or between competitors and race officials. Judges can also spend considerable time on the water, observing races firsthand.

This edition is based on *The Racing Rules of Sailing* for 2025-2028. For those seeking more detailed information on hearing protests, the *US Sailing Judges' Manual* is an invaluable resource.

If you are looking for help getting started on your journey to become a judge, check out the **Beginning Your Journey as a Sailing Judge** section of this booklet, which includes information on how to find and reach out to your Regional Administrative Judge.

We are grateful to Giff Constable, Edith Collins, Darryl Waskow, and many other members of the Judges Committee who contributed to this booklet. If you have suggestions for improvement, please send them to US Sailing via email at [raceadmin@ussailing.org](mailto:raceadmin@ussailing.org).

Thank you for volunteering on the Protest Committee!

Mark Townsend  
Chair, US Sailing Judges Education, Training and Testing  
Subcommittee

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For those seeking more detailed information on hearing protests, the *US Sailing Judges' Manual* is an invaluable resource.

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# Is the Protest Committee Right for You?

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While we often refer to sailing as a self-policing sport, judges play an important role to ensure the fairness of our regattas and accountability to the rules. There are some great reasons why you should consider joining the protest committee:

1. You can give back to the sport and to fellow sailors.
2. In every hearing, you have an opportunity to flip what can be very stressful incidents into respectful, calm, and fair experiences.
3. You will also find that serving as a judge improves your skills as a racer, simply by learning the rules better and having greater exposure to how tricky incidents unfold.

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Expert knowledge of *The Racing Rules of Sailing* isn't necessary to get started as a judge. You'll build this expertise through study and applying the rules to various incidents during protest hearings. However, to be an effective judge, you need firsthand experience with how different types of sailboats race, move, and maneuver. You need to have applied right-of-way rules as a competitor. This knowledge is typically gained through actual racing on the water rather than just theoretical learning.

Judges need to be able to find and write facts, run a hearing properly, work well in a team, and communicate effectively. A judge needs a cool head, both with the sailors in a hearing and with their fellow jurors. A judge should apply the rules as written and should not substitute his or her own ideas about what would be fairest in the circumstances.

Other important qualifications include race committee experience, English language proficiency, and good physical health. For judging on the water at an event, it is also important to be able to handle small power boats.

## Personal Conduct

The personal conduct of judges must be above reproach before, during and after an event. Judges must embody integrity and judicial temperament at all times. Judges are expected to be mature and temperate, moderate in their use of alcohol, judicious in their use of medications, and in full control of their faculties. A judge must always defer drinking alcoholic beverages until all daily official duties are completed.

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Racing experience is critical since the hardest part of any protest hearing is determining what happened on the water.

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A judge should apply the rules as written and should not substitute his or her own ideas about what would be fairest in the circumstances.

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# The Protest Committee in Action

You have been asked to be the protest committee chief judge for the club's annual Picnic Race. Last year there was a protest, but no one had thought to organize a protest committee. It turned out to be a bit of a black eye for the club, and the regatta chair was awarded the club's annual gag gift for the most notable misdeed of the year.

## Before the Event

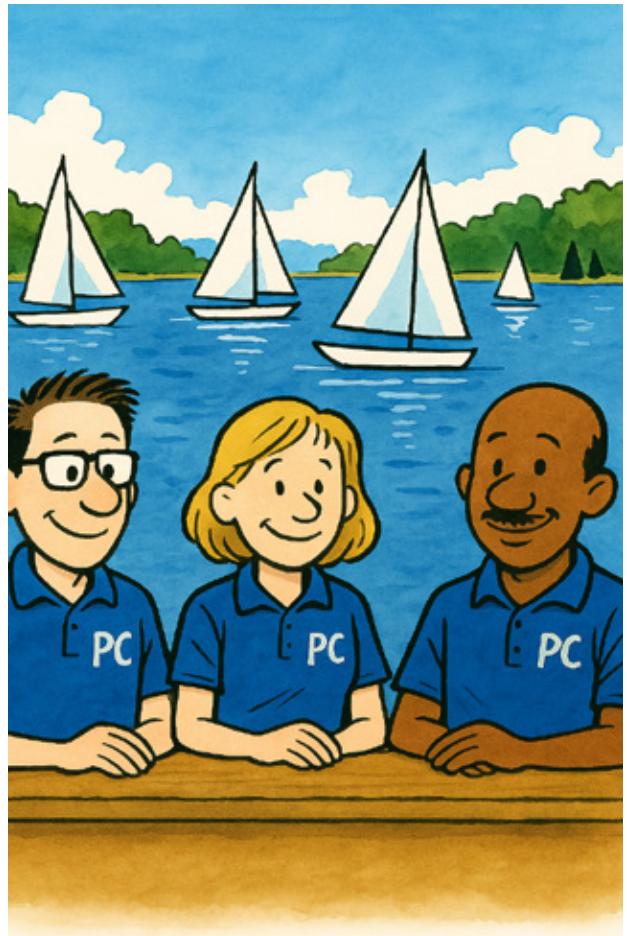
You call Marilyn and Chuck, both experienced sailors who are not sailing in the Picnic Race and ask them to be on the jury. You also call up Ann, who has served as jury secretary in the past.

"Hey Ann, can you make sure we have a room for hearing the protests, with enough space for any observers who might want to watch the proceedings? We also need to pick a good spot for the jury desk where competitors can pick up and submit hearing request forms."

"Marilyn, can you check at the club and see if we have any hearing request forms? We don't want the protest written on a bar napkin this year. If we are out, you can get the latest form from the Judges page on the US Sailing website."

"Chuck, can you make sure we have access to a copy of all the rules that apply. We'll need a copy of *The Racing Rules of Sailing* that includes our national prescriptions, the notice of race, and the sailing instructions. Let's also make sure we have a copy of the relevant class rules and the *World Sailing Case Book*."

You send an email to Sharon, the Principal Race Officer, reminding her that since the sailing instructions state a protest limit of 60 minutes after the signal boat docks, she will need to send you the exact time she docks after racing.



## At the Event

Ann sets up a table in the club lobby with a sign that reads "PROTEST COMMITTEE" and a small stack of hearing request forms and pencils. Earlier, Chuck arranged a hearing room with

a table and enough chairs for the protest committee, parties, witnesses and observers.

You remind everyone that a protest needs to be in writing and identify the protestor, the protestee, and the incident. A request for redress shall be in writing and identify the reason.

Sharon, the PRO, sends a text indicating the signal boat docked at 14:32. Ann posts a notice on the official noticeboard stating that the protest filing deadline is 15:32.

Soon the sailors start congregating on the club patio, regaling each other with stories from the racing. A sailor named Mike stops by and asks for a hearing request form. Ten minutes later he returns with the completed hearing request form. On his submitted form, Ann writes down the time the form was delivered and the protest time limit.

Protestor Mike and protestee Nancy are both available, so you schedule a hearing to start in 10 minutes.

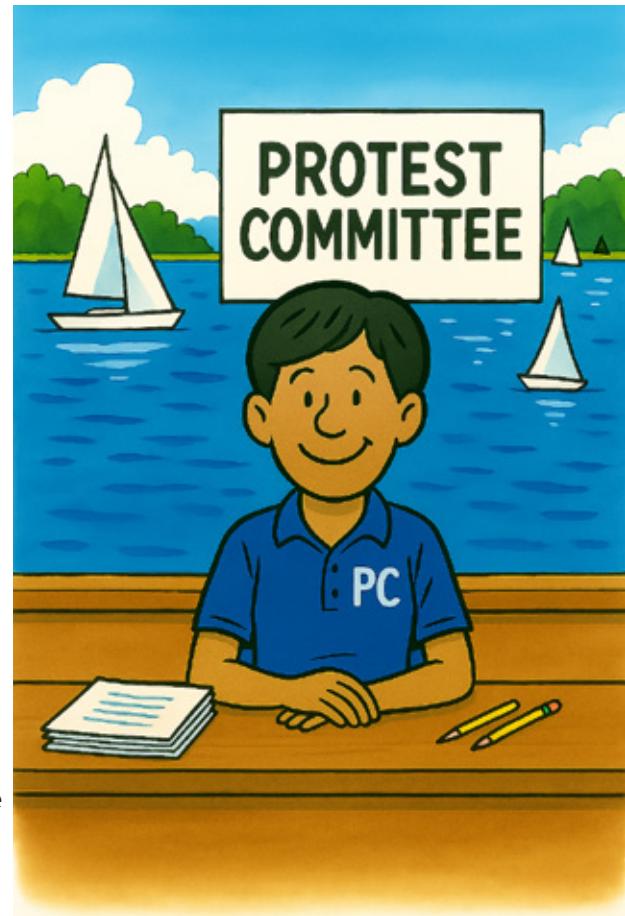
## Right Before the Hearing

Ann makes copies of the request form and gives a copy to Mike, Nancy, and each of the members of the jury, which consists of you, Marilyn, and Chuck.

When you examine the form, you see that both boats in the incident are 24-foot keelboats from the same class. *Big Blue*, represented by Mike, is protesting *Spitfire*, represented by Nancy, for a situation that occurred in the second race of the day. From the description and diagram, it looks like the boats almost hit when they overlapped on the port layline. Before the sailors come in, you double-check the sailing instructions for protest validity requirements that go beyond the basic rules, of which there are none. You also take a second to ask Marilyn and Chuck the possible rules we should watch for.

"It looks like they were on the same tack and overlapped, so rule 11, windward-leeward. But it also seems like the leeward boat headed up, so maybe 16.1, changing course," Marilyn says.

"Depending on the timing of the luff and the overlap, it could be rule 15, acquiring right of way," Chuck says. "And *Big Blue* also calls out *Spitfire* as a leeward boat coming from behind, so we should see if rule 17, on the same tack/proper course, is in play here. These boats are 24 feet long, so an overlap within 48 feet would qualify. Oh, and while the description doesn't reference the zone, we should still confirm that this isn't a mark room."



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Both boats in the incident are 24-foot keelboats. It looks like there was a near miss when the two became overlapped on the port layline

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situation and thus rule 18."

"I agree," you say. "Let's see what they tell us. I'll chair this first one. Marilyn, please jump in if I skip over any proper procedures and keep an eye out for any relevant US appeals or World Sailing cases. Chuck, please act as the 'scribe' writing down our facts found and completing the decision form." [see more on these roles later in this booklet]

## Conducting the Hearing

You call the sailors in and begin by introducing yourself and having your fellow judges do the same. You ask the sailors to introduce themselves and you confirm that they were both on the involved boats during the incident. Mike, the protestor, says that he was *Big Blue*'s main trimmer and tactician. Nancy, the protestee, was *Spitfire*'s skipper. Looking rather unsettled, she says this is her first hearing.

"That's okay," you say to settle her nerves. "Protests are a normal part of our sport and we'll try to make this go as smoothly as possible. Both of you, just do your best to share your own views on what happened, and we will do our best to make sense of it."

You ask, "Do either of you plan on calling a witness?" The sailors shake their heads. You continue, "None of the judges on the panel witnessed the incident. Do either of you have any objections to any of the judges being part of this hearing?" The two sailors again shake their heads. Lastly, you turn to Nancy, "Do you need additional time to review the protest form?" She says no.

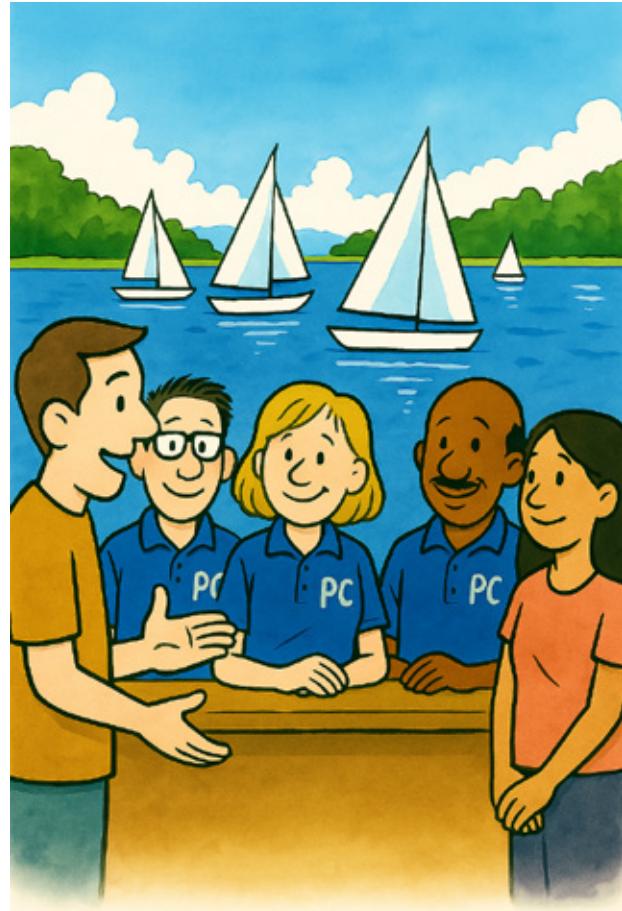
## Checking Validity

"Next, let's look at validity of this protest," you say. "First I want to ask if there was any damage or anyone hurt in this incident?" They say no.

You continue, "I see that the protest was filed within the time limit. John, at the time of the incident, how did you notify Nancy's boat that you were protesting?"

"My skipper and I both yelled 'protest *Spitfire*' about a second after we were forced head-to-wind," Mike says. "Then my skipper unfurled the red flag we had on the backstay."

"How long did it take to unfurl the flag?"



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"My skipper and I both yelled 'protest *Spitfire*' about a second after we were forced head-to-wind," Mike says. "Then my skipper unfurled the red flag we had on the backstay."

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"Maybe 5 seconds or so, once my skipper was sure we weren't going to auto-tack," Mike says.

You ask Nancy, "Did you hear the hail and see the flag?"

Nancy nods.

You turn to your fellow judges. "Does anyone else have questions about the validity of this protest, or would you like to deliberate without the sailors in the room?" Marilyn and Chuck both signal that the hearing can move forward.

"We determine that the protest is valid so now we will hear from each of you. Mike, since you brought the protest, we will start with you. Please tell us how you saw the incident, and let us know what the wind, sea and current was like at the time. I encourage you to use the model boats we have on the table."

## Taking Evidence

With words and the model boats, Mike proceeds to describe a situation that looks like this:

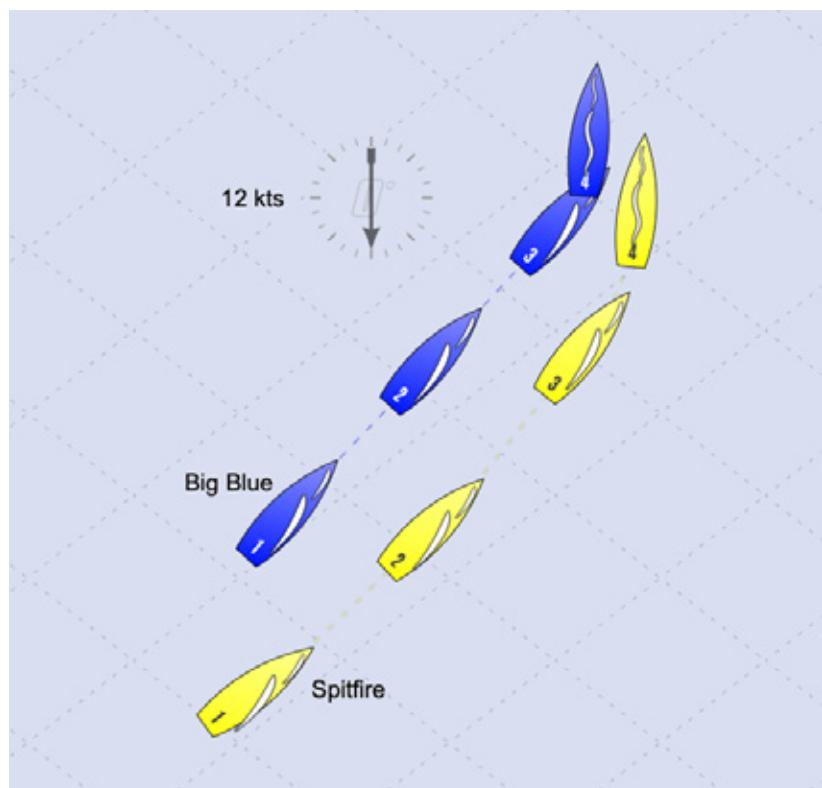
Mike says, "In that race, the wind was about 12 knots. The seas were pretty flat and current wasn't really a factor. We were near the port layline, maybe three-quarters up the beat. *Spitfire* was behind and below us and going faster. I think my skipper was pinching too much in the puffs, but regardless, *Spitfire* overtook us. All of a sudden, we realize they were heading us way up. It was a really aggressive move that came out of nowhere—"

"I wasn't trying to be aggressive," Nancy interrupts.

You jump in, "Hold on Nancy, you'll get a chance to speak in a second and you'll also have a chance to ask Mike questions. Mike, go ahead and finish. Let's stay focused on the incident — what happened next?"

"My skipper threw the tiller over and took us head to wind. *Spitfire* bore off and sailed away while we were stuck in irons. Finally, we got moving again, but it really hurt us in the race," Mike says.

Mike doesn't have anything more to add, so it is Nancy's turn. She sets up the model boats in a similar fashion to Mike but with



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*Big Blue's* take on the incident, as shown by Mike.

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a few differences.

Nancy says, "Yes, we were all basically on the port layline, or close to it, and we were coming up slightly below and behind his boat. My tactician thought *Big Blue* was pinching and that we could sail lower and pass them. As we overtook, a big puff hit and we heeled over. I lost my footing and my grip on the tiller for a second but managed to get the tiller back in my hand pretty quickly."

She continues, "So yes, the boat did head up by accident when that happened but not all the way into irons. *Big Blue* stayed clear and we kept on sailing. I know dropping the tiller was my mistake, but we were leeward boat, we didn't hit, everyone kept on racing, so I don't see the problem."

"We're not going to get into the rules yet," you say, "but we are going to have some questions for both of you. First, since neither of you are calling witnesses, Nancy you get a chance to ask Mike questions."

"I think *Big Blue* turned up more than they needed to," she says.

"Do you have an actual question to ask?" you say kindly.

She turns to Mike. "Don't you think you turned up more than you needed to?"

"No, I think my skipper did what he needed to in order to make sure we didn't collide. It all happened very fast."

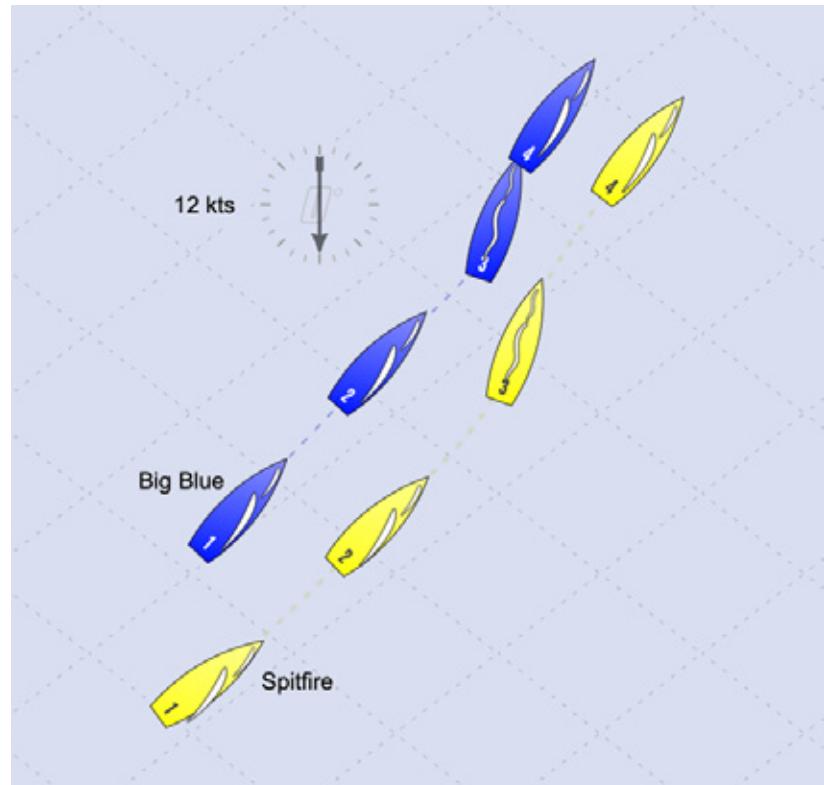
Nancy has no more questions, so it is Mike's turn.

He asks her, "After this happened and you kept on sailing, by the time you got to the zone, how far ahead of us do you think you were?"

Nancy thinks for a moment. "You did fall back. I would say we were 4 or 5 boat lengths ahead of you when we actually got up to the mark."

Mike has no more questions, so it is now the jury's turn.

You prompt Marilyn to go first. She says, "I heard both of you say that both boats were well outside the zone when this happened



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**Spitfire's take on the incident, as shown by Nancy.**

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and also that *Spitfire* created an overlap to leeward and from astern. Did I get that correct?" The sailors both nod.

Marilyn continues, "Mike, when the overlap began, how far to leeward of you was *Spitfire*?"

"I dunno, 15 or 20 feet?" he says.

Marilyn asks the same question to Nancy. "20 feet sounds about right," Nancy replies.

Marilyn stays focused on Nancy. "And when you dropped the tiller, how many degrees did the boat turn up and how long was it before you got the boat back under control?"

"Mere seconds to get back under control," Nancy says, "And maybe we turned up 15 degrees?"

"And in your view, Mike?" Marilyn asks.

"I don't know how long it was. I was ducking as the boom came in and I thought we were doing a crash tack. But I think they turned up much more. More like 30 or 35 degrees. As I said, we got pushed into irons."

Marilyn signals to you that she has no more questions for the moment, so you ask Chuck if he has questions.

"Yes," he says. "What was the distance between the boats at their closest point when they both turned up."

Mike says, "Maybe 6 to 8 feet." Nancy agrees.

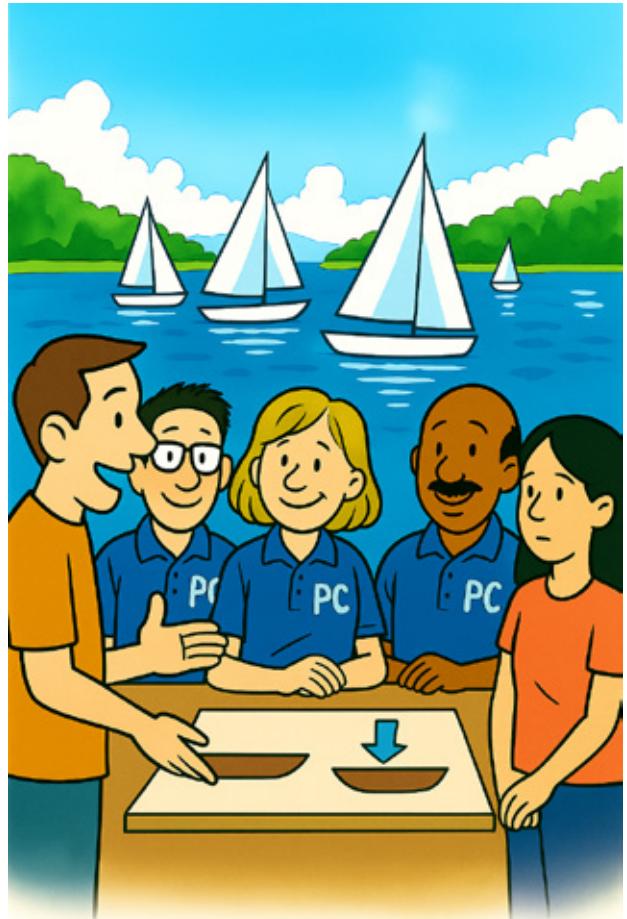
Finally, you ask, "Nancy, when you dropped the tiller and the boat turned up, what was the state of your sail trim and the sails themselves?"

"What do you mean?" she asks.

"What I'm getting at is, were the sails trimmed in and were they luffing or flapping in the upturn?"

"Oh, I see. Yes, they were luffing. I know we went above close-hauled for a moment there, but I don't think it was for very long."

The judge team has no further questions, so you ask the sailors if they want to make any summary comments. They shake their heads. You thank them both and ask them to step outside, reminding them to stay close by.



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Marilyn focused on Nancy: "When you dropped the tiller, how many degrees did the boat turn up and how long was it before you got the boat back under control?"

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## Deliberation

Once the sailors step out, you ask Chuck to read off the facts he's put together so far as scribe. He reads out the following:

1. The wind was 12 knots with flat seas and light current.
2. Both boats were sailing upwind close-hauled on port tack, 3/4 up the first beat and outside of the zone.
3. *Spitfire* established a leeward overlap with *Big Blue* from clear astern, 20 feet to leeward of *Big Blue*.
4. *Spitfire* turned up 30 degrees. ("Let's talk about that," Chuck says in an aside)
5. *Big Blue* turned up to head-to-wind.
6. Both boats resumed sailing close-hauled.
7. There was no contact or injury.
8. Neither boat took a penalty turn.

"What do you think?" he asks you and Marilyn.

"I agree with what you have down," Marilyn says. "What particularly swayed me was how far ahead *Spitfire* was after the incident. It felt believable that *Big Blue* turned up so much to avoid contact that they got stuck in irons. If we believe that, and we consider Nancy's comment that *Spitfire* was footing off to try to pass, then I agree with your fact that her upturn was 30 degrees, not 15."

"I agree," you say. "Chuck, you did a great job keeping the facts to just the relevant facts. So, given these facts, what is everyone's view on rules infractions, if any?"

Chuck says, "I think *Big Blue* kept clear as the windward boat so I don't think there's a rule 11 violation. They both said that the two boats never got closer than 6 or 8 feet apart, thanks to *Blue*'s quick reaction. For the same reason, I think *Big Blue* had room to keep clear when *Spitfire* changed course, so *Spitfire* didn't break rule 16.1, though I could be convinced differently."

You say, "Then let's check the exact wording of 16.1. If there's one thing I've learned working with really experienced judges, it's that they always go back to the rulebook."

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The scribe usually kicks off deliberation by reading off the facts as they currently see them.

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Rule	Description (2025-2028 rulebook)
16.1	When a right-of-way boat changes course, she shall give the other boat room to keep clear.
Room definition	The space a boat needs in the existing conditions, including space to comply with her obligations under the rules of Part 2 and rule 31, while maneuvering promptly in a seamanlike way.
Keep Clear definition	A boat keeps clear of a right-of-way boat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) if the right-of-way boat can sail her course with no need to take avoiding action and,</li> <li>(b) when the boats are overlapped, if the right-of-way boat can also change course in both directions without immediately making contact.</li> </ul>

Marilyn says, "I think they cut it close, but yes, *Spitfire* managed to stay just on the right side of 16.1. Instead, I think the real problem here is rule 17."

You all pull up 17 and then read the associated definitions:

Rule	Description (2025-2028 rulebook)
17	If a boat <i>clear astern</i> becomes overlapped within two of her hull lengths to <i>leeward</i> of a boat on the same tack, she shall not sail above her <i>proper course</i> while they remain on the same tack and overlapped within that distance, unless in doing so she promptly sails astern of the other boat.
Proper Course definition	A course a boat would choose in order to <i>sail the course</i> as quickly as possible in the absence of the other boats referred to in the rule using the term. A boat has no <i>proper course</i> before her starting signal.
Tack, Starboard or Port definition	A boat is on the <i>tack, starboard or port</i> , corresponding to her <i>windward side</i> .
Leeward and Windward definition	A boat's <i>leeward side</i> is the side that is or, when she is head to wind, was away from the wind. However, when sailing by the lee or directly downwind, her <i>leeward side</i> is the side on which her mainsail lies. The other side is her <i>windward side</i> . When two boats on the same tack overlap, the one on the <i>leeward side</i> of the other is the <i>leeward boat</i> . The other is the <i>windward boat</i> .
Clear Astern and Clear Ahead; Overlap definition	One boat is <i>clear astern</i> of another when her hull and equipment in normal position are behind a line abeam from the aftermost point of the other boat's hull and equipment in normal position. The other boat is <i>clear ahead</i> . They <i>overlap</i> when neither is <i>clear astern</i> . However, they also <i>overlap</i> when a boat between them <i>overlaps</i> both. These terms always apply to boats on the same tack. They apply to boats on opposite tacks only when rule 18 applies between them or when both boats are sailing more than ninety degrees from the true wind.

"What do you think?" Marilyn asks.

You say, "We found a fact that *Spitfire* established their overlap with less than two hull lengths between the boats. And while they might have been in 'low mode' and so could have had some wiggle room to turn up and still be on a legit proper course, we found a fact that they turned up 30 degrees, which would be well above their proper course. Nancy admitted that her sails were luffing and she went above close-hauled. I think *Spitfire* broke 17. Does anyone see it differently?" Both Marilyn and Chuck agree with your assessment.

You add, "While we're checking the rulebooks, Marilyn, are there any US appeals or World Sailing cases we should consider here for either rule 17 or how we viewed rule 16.1?"

Marilyn takes a moment to scan the indexes and concludes that everything is in line with the jury's opinion.

"Okay," you say, "it seems like we have consensus on Chuck's facts. We have the conclusion that *Spitfire* broke rule 17. Our decision will then be to DSQ *Spitfire* from race 2." Your fellow judges agree and Marilyn steps out to bring the sailors back into the room.

## Concluding the Hearing

Mike and Nancy return to the room and Chuck reads out his facts, conclusion, and the ultimate decision. You formally close the hearing and thank them both.

As Nancy is leaving the room, she turns back. "Thank you," she says. "It didn't go my way, but I appreciate how fair you all were trying to be. I learned a lot going through this and I think it will make me a better sailor."

You smile and wish her luck for the rest of the regatta.

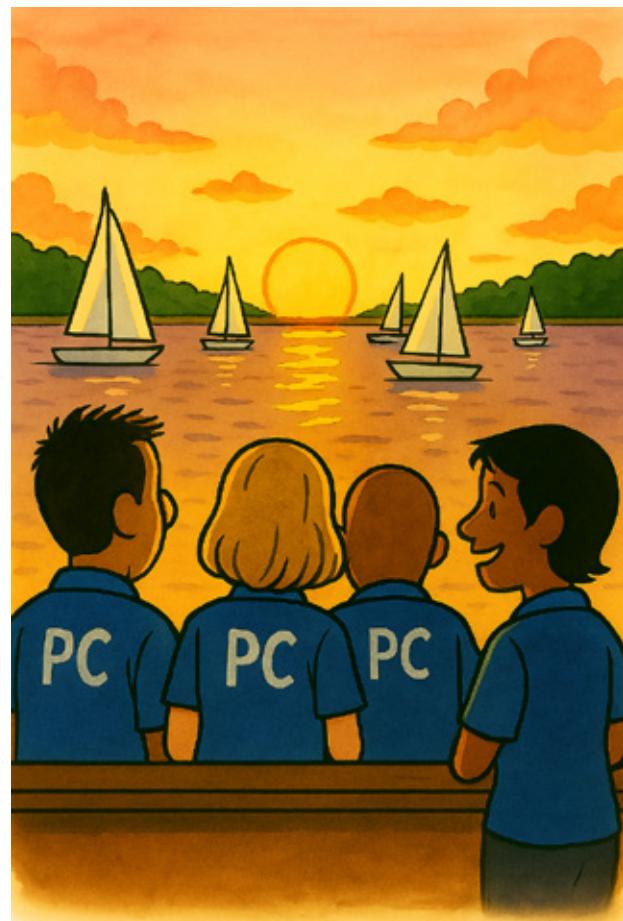
You notify Eileen, the race committee scorer, that the protest committee has disqualified *Spitfire* in race 2. Chuck sends Ann the completed digital decision form and she files it along with the hearing request form.

The time limit expires with no further business so the four of you head to the patio to enjoy the rest of the day.

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It's a good practice to check the World Sailing Case Book and the US Appeals Book to see if there are cases that are relevant to your incident.

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# The Protest Committee in Action: Key Takeaways

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**1**

The protest committee worked as a coherent team to make sure everything went smoothly from the setup before the hearings, into the hearings themselves, and even the organizational work required afterwards.

**2**

During the hearing, the jury covered important procedural steps. These steps are in place to make sure that the rights of all parties are protected.

**3**

The hearing panel chair can set the tone of a hearing, defusing stressed or agitated sailors and putting a lid on aggressive comments from one party towards the other.

**4**

Judges will often hear vague or conflicting testimony. It's often impossible to know exactly what transpired on the water, but our job is to make the best determination of what happened based on the balance of probabilities.

**5**

A good jury acts as a team, working together to spot important testimony and ask the right questions. This is why it's so useful to have more than one judge on a jury. However, you'll note in the story how the judges never wasted time with unnecessary questions.

**6**

It is essential to find and document facts for an incident. Your facts found should be both concise and relevant. In addition, if you handed your decision form to another judge, they should be able to see how you got from your facts to your conclusions.

**7**

Lastly, even very experienced judges "go to the book" every time, always pulling out *The Racing Rules of Sailing* to re-read exact wording, as well as referencing important documents like the NOR and SIs, the World Sailing Case Book, and US Appeals Book.

# Roles on a Protest Committee

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The protest committee is composed of several important roles, each essential to ensuring the smooth operation and fairness of the hearing process. These roles may be handled by separate individuals or combined, depending on the size and needs of the event.

## Chief Judge

The chief judge is responsible for overseeing the protest committee as a whole. While the chief judge may delegate specific tasks to others, they ensure that all aspects of the protest process run smoothly. This includes assisting with race documents, securing appropriate locations for the jury desk and hearings, and arranging for housing or meals for the judges as needed. When hearing requests are submitted, the chief judge assigns judges to each hearing and selects the chairperson for the panel.

## Jury Secretary

The jury secretary's primary task is to receive hearing requests submitted at the jury desk and make sure the protest committee updates the official regatta notice board. This involves recording the time and date each request is received, assigning sequential numbers to filings, noting the protest time limit, initialing the forms, and ensuring proper record keeping is handled.

## Protest Committee Jurors

The protest committee jury is ideally made up of sailors and qualified judges who are not competitors in the event. However, sailors may serve as jurors if they have no conflicts of interest. During a hearing, jurors often take on distinct, important roles to ensure fairness and thoroughness in the proceedings.

- **Panel Chair:** The panel chair leads the hearing, ensuring that it proceeds both fairly and efficiently. The chair is responsible for achieving an appropriate, well-documented outcome and sets the tone for civil and respectful proceedings. While much of the documentation may be handled by the scribe, the chair oversees the overall process.
- **Procedural Judge:** The procedural judge focuses on ensuring the hearing panel adheres to correct procedures. This judge also helps identify which class Rules, World Sailing cases, World Sailing regulations, and US Sailing appeals are relevant. Their responsibilities begin with analyzing the request form before the hearing and continue throughout the hearing itself.
- **Scribe:** The scribe is tasked with documenting the assumed facts for both the validity and incident hearings before the parties are admitted. The scribe updates these facts as needed during the hearing and typically prepares the formal hearing decision form, which is then reviewed by the chair.

# Beginning Your Journey as a Sailing Judge

A great first step is to connect with an individual who coordinates protest committees at your local sailing club. Express your interest and ask if you can sit in on a protest hearing to observe how the process unfolds. Once you've gained some insight, offer to serve as a member of a protest committee. Many clubs welcome new participants who are eager to learn and contribute.

## Contact Your Regional Administrative Judge

As you continue your judging journey, reach out to your Regional Administrative Judge (RAJ). US Sailing divides the country up into different areas, as shown on the map, and each area is overseen by a volunteer RAJ.

The RAJ is your resource for how things work. They facilitate learning and growth opportunities for judges. Often, they will answer inquiries about rules, procedures, or other judging related topics.

You can find the name and email for your RAJ on the main US Sailing [Judges webpage](#).



## US Sailing's Educational and Certification Programs

US Sailing created the Judges Education, Training and Testing Subcommittee (JETTS) with 3 primary goals:

- To improve and standardize the quality of judges
- To provide structured training and continuing education for judges
- To help event organizers find qualified active judges

People just beginning their journey will usually start with the Judge-in-Training (JIT) program. To be qualified as a Judge-in-Training (JIT), you should have an active US Sailing membership, attend a Club Judge seminar (see below), take the class test, and complete SafeSport training.

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The fastest way to get going is to contact your RAJ, whom you can find on the US Sailing Judges [webpage](#).

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US Sailing's certification program has three levels: Club, Regional and National Judge. In addition to providing evidence of practical experience, candidates must participate in approved educational offerings and demonstrate their knowledge of hearing procedures and racing rules by passing a test at least once every four years.

- Club Judge certification is for those individuals who seek to judge primarily at their own club and would like to have stronger and more consistent rules knowledge.
- Regional Judge certification is for those who seek to judge in a region of the country in addition to serving their club.
- National Judge certification is for regional judges who seek to officiate at any event in the country.
- International Judge certification is granted by World Sailing. US applicants for IJ certification must be nominated by the Judges Committee and the US Sailing Board of Directors.

## Seminars & Other Resources

US Sailing offers educational seminars and roundtables throughout the year, although the frequency is lower during the busy summer season. To see upcoming seminars, visit the "Find a Seminar" page in the [Judges section](#) of the [US Sailing website](#). If you don't see a seminar you seek, reach out to your area's Regional Administrative Judge.

The US Sailing Judges Committee produces the US Sailing Judges' Manual, which is also available on the [US Sailing Judges web page](#). In the manual, you'll find detailed guidance on being a judge, preparing for an event, running a fair and effective hearing, and more.

You also need to set up your online logbook for recording your judging and race committee activities. The logbook is called SOARS (Sailing Officials Automated Reporting System) and is located on the [US Sailing website](#). Applicants for certification, as well as all certified judges, must record their race official activities in SOARS.

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On US Sailing's website, you'll find a variety of online and in-person educational opportunities for all levels of judges.

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