DRAFT NOTES FOR MINUTES JC 8/10/2026

US SAILING JUDGES COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

Date: August 2026
Chair: Edith
Meeting called to order: 7:01 p.m. Eastern
Adjourned: 8:04 p.m. Eastern

1. Approval of Previous Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed. Bruce had previously submitted a correction, which was incorporated.

Action: The minutes, as corrected, were approved.

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2. US Sailing Update – Matt

Matt reported on several US Sailing activities and administrative matters.

International Judge Seminar

An International Judge (IJ) Seminar will be held in September at Mechtawo Bay. Approximately ten people were registered, although that number may decrease to nine.

International Measurement Clinic / LA 2028

A World Sailing International Measurement Clinic will be held the same weekend as the IJ Seminar.

As host country for the 2028 Olympic Games, US Sailing expects to need approximately **50–60 trained volunteers**capable of assisting International Measurers and National Technical Officials with equipment inspection and measurement.

The September clinic will serve as an initial training opportunity and will also be extensively photographed and videotaped. The material will be used to develop a US Sailing online Equipment Inspector course.

The anticipated program will include approximately three hours of self-paced online training followed by hands-on measurement experience at an event or specially organized training session.

US Sailing anticipates offering approximately four or five additional opportunities during 2027 as the program develops toward LA 2028.

Members noted that more advance notice of future clinics would be helpful for scheduling.

NASO Insurance

Officials whose NASO insurance is due for renewal should have received renewal information in early August. Because of a delay, existing coverage has been extended through the end of August.

Information about renewing or obtaining NASO coverage is available through the US Sailing website. Matt posted the appropriate link in the Zoom chat.

Action: Information and the NASO link should also be distributed to the RAJs for circulation within their Areas.

IT

US Sailing's IT staff member, Andrew Ewing, has been recovering from rotator cuff surgery and has recently returned online. A backlog of pending website and IT requests is expected.

Background Checks

US Sailing has transitioned its primary two-year background-check process to **NCSI**.

Accurate, which acquired Higher Image, continues to conduct the interim one-year background checks because it will continue doing so without additional charge to US Sailing.

Members receiving an email from Accurate requesting authorization for a background check were advised that the communication is legitimate.

The US Sailing website will be revised to explain Accurate's continuing role in the interim background-check process.

Bruce reported that Accurate's system required a Social Security number and would not accept the dummy numbers that had previously been permitted.

Action – Matt: Contact Meredith regarding whether individuals can complete an Accurate background check without providing a Social Security number and report back to the committee.

Action – Matt: After obtaining clarification, provide RAJs with language they can distribute regarding the background-check process.

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3. Area A – Judge Upgrades

Three judge upgrade applications were considered.

Rob Davis

Rob Davis, currently a Club Judge, applied for upgrade to Regional Judge. His paperwork was complete. References included Bill, Nancy Glover, and Jerry Thompson.

Members familiar with his work supported the upgrade.

Decision: Approved for recommendation as a **Regional Judge**.

Charlene/Charlotte Feeney

Feeney applied for upgrade from Club Judge to Regional Judge. She had previously received a six-month extension to retake the examination and has now passed it. Her paperwork was reported complete.

References included Christina McDavid, John Mooney, and Nancy Glover.

Members spoke favorably about her judging abilities and experience.

Decision: Approved for recommendation as a **Regional Judge**.

Note: Confirm the correct spelling/form of her first name before the final submission.

Paul Gilman

Paul Gilman, currently a Regional Umpire, applied to become a Regional Judge. His paperwork was complete, and his references included Patricia O'Donnell, Amy Ferrara, and John Mooney.

Members who had worked with him described him as thoughtful, knowledgeable about the rules, and possessing good temperament.

The committee discussed whether it was appropriate to move directly to Regional Judge without first being a Club Judge. It was noted that this is permitted when the applicant satisfies the applicable qualifications and that Gilman's Regional Umpire experience was significant.

Decision: Approved for recommendation as a **Regional Judge**.

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4. Rule 68 / Newsletter – Sarah

The deadline for the next newsletter is **August 26**.

Sarah requested additional articles and photographs from committee members.

Mark agreed to provide another rules quiz and attempt to provide an article. The previous "Christmas tree" rules problem generated substantial interest and discussion.

Tom was asked to provide Sarah with a working email address because he apparently had not been receiving the newsletter.

There was discussion about distributing the newsletter to Area members. PDF remains the basic distribution format.

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5. Education / Continuing Education – Mark

Mark reported that summer activity has been relatively quiet because of extensive Olympic-class regatta activity. More educational programming needs to be placed on the calendar for late summer and fall.

The Continuing Education list currently posted on the US Sailing website is outdated.

Action – Mark: Send the current CE list to Edith.

Action – Edith: Forward the updated CE information to Matt and Judy for website updating and CE administration.

Mark will also provide Sarah with another rules quiz and, if possible, an article.

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6. Pop-Up Protest / Roundtables

Bruce asked about the status of possible topics for future "Pop-Up Protest" sessions.

Action: Edith will determine who is coordinating the program and follow up.

Nancy reported that the Roundtable program is going well. Three additional sessions are scheduled, and she would like to continue the program later into the year.

Nancy invited members with ideas for future sessions to contact her; she is willing to handle the administrative work.

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7. Appendix P Certification – Jerry Thompson

Jerry reported continued progress with the Appendix P endorsement program.

Training videos continue to improve. Smart glasses are now being used to record situations from the judge's perspective. Training presentations increasingly show incidents first at normal speed and then in slow motion to help participants analyze positioning and Rule 42 issues.

There are currently **four endorsed individuals**, with additional candidates in the pipeline.

The long-term objective is to have enough endorsed individuals that assessors themselves can all be Appendix P endorsed.

The next clinic is scheduled for **August 25**, requested by Steve Holstrom of California. Jerry and Giff will conduct the clinic. At the time of the meeting, **two openings remained**.

Jerry reported that the application process still needs improvement, but feedback and discussion indicate that the program is progressing in the right direction.

Members praised the usefulness of Jerry's video presentations. A recent presentation was considered sufficiently valuable that it was turned into a Pop-Up Roundtable.

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8. International Judge Candidates – Daryl

The upcoming IJ Seminar was noted as an important opportunity to develop future candidates.

At the current application deadline, **Shannon is the only candidate previously approved by the committee** for submission to World Sailing.

Shannon confirmed that completing the World Sailing application was on her immediate task list and that she intended to meet the deadline.

No other voting items from the relevant working groups were presented.

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9. Hearing Credit and Judge Certification – Old Business

Bruce raised concerns regarding the committee's previous discussion about whether hearings conducted at umpired events should count toward judge certification requirements and whether a written decision should be required.

The discussion addressed several related questions:

- Whether hearings under Appendix C and Appendix D should receive the same certification credit as fleet-racing hearings.
- Whether a written decision should be required.
- Whether a hearing request found invalid should count as a hearing for certification purposes.
- Whether current SOARS reporting practices consistently distinguish between full hearings and proceedings ending with a determination that the hearing request is invalid.
- Whether US Sailing's requirements should remain aligned with World Sailing requirements.

The current draft certification criteria were reviewed. The draft allows limited credit for proceedings conducted under Appendix C or Appendix D and does **not** appear to require a written decision for those proceedings.

Considerable discussion occurred concerning hearing requests determined to be invalid. Members reported differing practices: some have historically counted such proceedings in SOARS, while others were taught not to count them.

The committee recognized that this inconsistency should be resolved.

It was also noted that the terminology should be precise: the **hearing itself is not "invalid"; rather, the hearing request may be found invalid.**

No final change to the certification requirements was adopted during this discussion.

Action – Mark: Circulate the current proposed judge certification criteria to committee members for review.

Action – Giff: Lead a working group to examine how hearings should be defined and credited for certification purposes, including proceedings in which the hearing request is found invalid.

Action – Bruce: Collaborate with Giff on proposed language.

Action – Edith: Ask the committee for additional volunteers for the working group; Clark was suggested as a useful participant.

The working group should consider:

1. The definition of a hearing for certification purposes.
2. Whether a hearing request found invalid should receive hearing credit.
3. Appropriate treatment of Appendix C and Appendix D hearings.
4. Consistency in SOARS reporting.
5. The relationship between US Sailing and World Sailing certification requirements.

The committee expects proposed language to be circulated in advance so that members have adequate time to consider it before a vote at a future meeting.

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10. Basic Judge Program – Daryl

Daryl followed up on the **Basic Judge** concept approved at the previous meeting.

The concept was described as requiring an individual to:

- Take a judge seminar; and
- Participate in one hearing.

The committee previously agreed that the proposal should be reviewed with the Race Administration Committee before implementation.

Daryl noted that he has recently conducted two in-person Club Judge seminars, each with approximately ten participants. Approximately 20% of participants subsequently took the test and indicated an interest in becoming more involved. Many of the others appreciated the seminar but did not intend to pursue Club Judge certification.

This experience was cited as evidence that a Basic Judge designation may fill a useful role for people interested in rules and race administration who are not yet ready to pursue full Club Judge certification.

Action – Daryl: Prepare a brief written description explaining the Basic Judge proposal and the reasons for it.

Action – Edith: Continue working with Wayne Ballsinger, Chair of the Race Administration Committee, to place the proposal on that committee's agenda.

The committee does not expect action from Race Administration before approximately Halloween.

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11. New Business

The committee discussed beginning preparations for its winter in-person meeting.

Atlanta was mentioned favorably because it is relatively easy to reach and reasonably priced. Austin was also noted as having worked well previously.

Action – Edith: Solicit suggestions from committee members regarding the location of the winter meeting.

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12. Next Meeting

The committee discussed possible October dates.

October 12 was not workable for several members. Tuesdays also present conflicts for some members. October 5 was discussed but presented another conflict.

The Racing Rules for Judges program conducted by Jerry and Giff on October 19–20 also needs to be considered when selecting the meeting date.

Action – Edith: Circulate several possible October dates by email and ask members to identify conflicts.

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13. Adjournment

The Chair thanked the committee members for their work and participation.

The meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m. Eastern.

ACTION ITEMS SUMMARY

Matt

- Clarify the Social Security number requirement for Accurate background checks.
- Provide RAJs with background-check guidance after clarification.

Mark

- Circulate the current judge certification criteria.
- Send Edith the updated Continuing Education list.
- Provide Sarah with another rules quiz and, if possible, an article.

Edith

- Forward updated CE information to Matt/Judy.
- Follow up regarding Pop-Up Protest programming.
- Continue coordination with Race Administration regarding the Basic Judge proposal.
- Solicit winter meeting location suggestions.
- Circulate possible October meeting dates.
- Recruit additional participants for the hearing-credit working group.

Giff

- Lead the working group on the definition and crediting of hearings for judge certification.

Bruce

- Work with Giff on proposed hearing/certification language.

Daryl

- Prepare a brief explanation and rationale for the Basic Judge program.

Sarah

- Prepare the next newsletter; article deadline August 26.

Shannon

- Complete and submit the World Sailing IJ application by the applicable deadline.

Committee Members

- Submit articles and photographs for Rule 68.

Review the circulated certification criteria and proposed hearing-credit language before the next meeting.