



Judging Ocean Races

David Brunskill





Judging Ocean Races

- Background
- The judging issues
- What extra skills are needed
- Pre race preparation – the differences
- Ocean racing and the rules



Background

- Oceanic and Offshore racing is highly visible to the public
- There are few Part 2 rules protests and even fewer relating to the IRPCAS
- But protests happen and protest committees need to take decisions - until now there has been no advice relating to the role of the judge
- Little history available via ISAF or elsewhere
- An ISAF working party is being established to develop “Best Practice” for judging oceanic racing





ISAF International Juries and Ocean Racing

2012 Statistics	
Number of international Jury Reports Lodged	232
Number of Oceanic Races reported	2
Number of offshore races with at least one night at sea	5
Number of Jury reports commenting on Ocean race issues	2



Media Statistics

Event	TV Airtime (hours)	Website Individual (Millions)
Volvo 2011/12	4817	6.27
Vendee 08/09	466	26.96
Americas Cup 2012*	635	6.90





Judging Issues

- RRS Appendix N 2.1
- Pre race safety and measurement disputes
- Compliance with organisers' media requirements before, during & after races
- Prohibited zones, TSS, equipment issues, outside assistance, advertising, medical or technical support
- Course compliance – virtual marks, ice and other gates
- Redress – normally for giving assistance
- Part 2 or IRPCAS protests



Protest Committee Skills

Within your protest committee you will need people with an understanding of:

- Ocean navigation
- Provisions of IRPCAS – applying rules of Part B
- Safety issues in offshore racing
- The Offshore Special Regulations (see appendix H)
- Sailing offshore, at night, in rough weather and in fog
- Discretionary penalties used in offshore/oceanic racing

The PC may need to respond to queries and protests or redress requests from parties throughout the duration of the race. Where committee members live and how they communicate is an important consideration when making PC appointments.



Pre-Race Preparation

- Conflicts between NoR & class rules, equipment rules, rating rules and Sailing Instructions
- Protest committee location and communications
- Policy on DPI
- Approach to redress issues.
- Media pressures

Note: Pre reading - RYA/RORC guidance on racing under IRPCAS and Virtual Marks



Ocean Racing and the Rules

Race organisers frequently amend rules via the NoR and SI's. These need careful checking by the protest committee well in advance of the event. The changes can cover

- starting and other penalties
- navigation
- media and race organiser contact
- outside assistance, medical emergencies, repairs during a race
- protest procedures

Ocean race organisers generally prefer discretionary penalties rather than DSQ

Starting – rules changes



- For media and safety reasons organisers may want to give a penalty for boats OCS rather than have them recross the line
- Penalty changed in SI's
- Can be amendments to rules 28.1 & 29.1



Navigation related rules changes

- Race organisers may not wish to DSQ boats for breach of rules relating to prohibited zones, ice or other gates, TSS, or errors in rounding virtual marks.
- Penalties included in SI's
- Rule 48.2 draws attention to boats obligations when navigating in TSS



Rules relating to media and race organiser contact

- In professional oceanic races sponsor support is reinforced by frequent contact with competitors, blogs/media links etc.
- The race team will maintain the ability to contact competitors and advise e.g. ice warnings, any change in marks or gates, any unexpected navigational warnings
- The NOR may require sailors to be present at official events.
- SI's may require competitors to provide a daily media report or other form of report to enhance return to sponsors
- The level of contact required by the race team may be specified
- Breaches of any of these instructions may lead to protests and/or application of discretionary penalties



Rules for outside assistance

- There are frequently issues relating to the extent to which routing, technical assistance by competitors shore based teams , media equipment changes or medical support is permitted
- Satellite phones, Satcom C email, online internet contact are all difficult to police
- Different races have very different approaches
- Race documentation can be notoriously imprecise in these matters. There is no gold standard
- Rules 41, 45, 47.1 and 47.2 are frequently amended
- Pre–race clarification of the race organiser’s intentions can be important



Protest Procedures

- Race organisers (and also competitors) may want decisions on protests or requests for redress before boats finish racing
- SI's may amend rules 61, 62 & 63 to permit hearings by unconventional means
- The protest committee will often have a great deal of discretion over how these are arranged
- Ensuring that the process is open and transparent to the parties can be difficult
- **Barcelona World Race 2010/11**
- **27.1 RRS 61.2 Contents of a protest**
- **RRS 61.2 shall be amended as follows :**
- **First line : after « ...in writing », add « including by e-mail, by Inmarsat C message. However, the protest may be made initially by Channel 72 of the VHF and a hearing may take place immediately and confirmed in writing within 48H. »**
- **Add at the end of the rule : « However, if at the time when the incident arises, the boats are within VHF range of the Race Committee and/or the International Jury, the written requirement may be replaced by a VHF message. In the event of written transmissions not working, any telephonic message shall be acceptable. »**



Sails, Ballast, Manual Power Class Rules

- IMOCA, Class 40, Figaro, mini 6.5, Volvo may have restrictions or changes affecting some or all of the above rules.
- Rule 50 Setting and Sheeting Sails – often permitting outriggers
- Rule 51 moveable ballast for canting keels and rules re sail (or other heavy item) stowage
- Rule 52 manual power – to permit autopilots or to power up canting keels
- Class rules may specify matters covered in the NOR or SI's. This can lead to drafting issues with NOR & SI in a multi class race.





Discretionary Penalties

- Rule 64.1 gives freedom to introduce penalties other than DSQ
- Frequently the SI's will specify that penalties are discretionary and judges may have a free hand
- There can be financial penalties for “non-racing” breaches of rules
- Different races have different ethos and approaches to penalties
- There is no common process



And Finally Discretionary Penalties The Risks - and an Approach

- Brief organisers, RC, competitors and media on the penalty structure and its implications
- It may or may not be helpful to publish a table of discretionary penalties versus rules breaches.
- Beware of the laws of unintended consequences.
 - Protest Committees can be trapped into an inappropriate penalty structure
 - Whatever penalty is imposed there may be criticism
- Manage expectations!



Any Questions

NOTE

- The presentation will be on the RYA website.
- The answers to the redress case and IRPCAS protest are available NOW.

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Redress Case

Objective To provide a scenario which would require sailors to consider redress after a yacht has given assistance to another whilst taking part in an offshore race. The exercise will require an understanding of basic marine navigation.

The Facts *Ante*, a 100 foot long classic yacht was sailing at 9 knots through the Bay of Biscay on a race from Cowes to Gibraltar on a course of 208T towards a virtual mark in position 43° 0.0N 9° 20.0W off Cabo Villano. As well as the overall prize to Gibraltar, *Parthia* and *Ante* were competing for the “Biscay Bucket” full of champagne for the first yacht across the Bay of Biscay. There was a stable force 3 NW’ly breeze and *Ante* estimated she would maintain her current speed of 9 knots over the ground on her way to the Cabo Villano virtual mark. She was racing closely in company with *Parthia*, another classic yacht with a similar rating and they were leading the fleet. *Ante*’s equipment included an AIS transponder, a position tracker and satellite phones. Her position was polled regularly by the race operations room. All yachts were required to contact the race operations room by sat phone daily for media and race updates.

On the day in question *Ante* called in to the operations room as required but instead of the ops room passing on race information *Ante* was told that MRCC Falmouth was concerned for the safety of *Last Chance* a 35 foot cruising yacht sailing singlehanded from Cardiff to Corunna. Friends of the skipper of *Last Chance* (who had been monitoring her position via AIS) reported that she had been virtually stationary for twelve hours. *Last Chance* was not equipped with a Satellite Phone and had been out of contact with the shore since passing Lands End. *Ante* was asked to check out the situation.

At 1030 *Ante* bore away onto a southerly course from point A at 45° 0.0N 8° 0.0W to *Last Chance*’s position point B at 44° 40.0N 8° 0.0W.

Ante arrived two hours later and found that *Last Chance*’s skipper was well but had picked up a large fishing net round her rudder and skeg during the night. During the daytime *Last Chance* had managed to cut the net free and as *Ante* approached *Last Chance* was about to resume her course to Corunna.

Ante reported back to MRCC Falmouth then contacted race control and requested redress. *Ante* had resumed her course to the Cabo Villano virtual mark at 1300 but had to sail a little closer to the wind. *Ante*’s speed over the ground was reduced to 8.75 knots which was maintained for the rest of that leg of the course.

The protest committee was contacted and considered that the request for redress was valid and that redress should be granted.

Questions

1. How would you calculate redress?
2. What redress do you think that the protest committee would grant to *Ante*?
3. Is there any other information possibly available to the protest committee which could support your calculations?

David Brunskill

Specimen Answer

1. It would be reasonable to calculate time lost as a comparison between the predicted time to the Cabo Villano mark if *Ante* hadn't been diverted and the actual time taken to get there. This then would be a basis upon which to grant redress.

The distances from A to Cabo Villano and from B to Cabo Villano could be worked out using a GPS Satnav or via traverse tables.

	Calculation	Time
Time taken to get from position A to <i>Last Chance</i> at position B	Two hours as stated	2 hours 0 minutes
Time assessing situation	30 minutes as stated	0 hours 30 minutes
Actual time from position B to Cabo Villano virtual mark	107.3 miles at 8.75 knots	12 hours 16 minutes
Time taken to get from point A to the Cabo Villano virtual mark as a result of the diversion	<i>Ante</i> 's total passage time	14 hours 46 minutes
<i>Ante</i> 's predicted time to the Cabo Villano virtual mark from position A	124.5 miles at 9 knots	13 hours 50 minutes
Time lost by <i>Ante</i> as a result of the diversion		<u>0 hours 56 minutes</u>

2. The protest committee could grant *Ante* 56 minutes redress on elapsed time to the finish and shared the "Biscay Bucket" prize equally with *Parthia*.

The race committee could give *Ante* a full bucket of champagne – they willingly went to give assistance to a yacht possibly in distress. We should always encourage the traditions and legal and moral obligations of the sea.

3. An alternative method of calculation would be for the race operations room to get both *Parthia*'s and *Ante*'s arrival time at the virtual mark via AIS, polling the tracker, or via a declaration of rounding times from both yachts.

Parthia's elapsed time could be used to correct *Ante*'s predicted time by adjusting *Parthia*'s elapsed time with the difference in TCF between *Parthia* and *Ante*. It would then be a simple matter to compare *Parthia*'s corrected arrival time at the mark with *Ante*'s actual time on diversion.

IRPCAS Case

Objective

To provide a scenario which would require sailors to read the steering and sailing rules, lights and sound signals sections of the IRPCAS and then decide whether any yacht had broken any rule.

The case

Ante, a 100 foot long classic yacht was sailing at three knots in light airs at night in thick fog towards a turning mark in the Mediterranean. The relative wind was 175 degrees on the port side. *Ante* seemed to be getting very close to another vessel and could hear its sound signals very clearly – a prolonged blast followed by two short blasts. *Ante* then saw a starboard light through the fog roughly 20 - 25 degrees forward of its port beam and the bearing of the light was steady. The boats seemed to be sailing at roughly the same speed but closing. *Ante* could only see the sidelight and could not see any masts superstructure or sails. *Ante* was certain that that the other vessel was, *Parthia* with whom they had been in touch most of that day and which was racing to the same turning mark.

The other yacht maintained its course and didn't respond to a hail. When roughly 50 metres from the other yacht *Ante* gybed away, kept clear and then protested *Parthia* on arrival for breach of IRPCAS rule 12.a.ii.

SI's stated that Colregs applied between sunset and sunrise. Neither the NOR nor the SI's required yachts to use active AIS.

The Hearing

The protest was deemed valid. *Parthia* was not present at the hearing which was conducted under rule 63.3 (b).

The race committee, who had been monitoring both yacht's trackers confirmed that at the time reported that *Parthia* was extremely close to *Ante*. The coastguard had *Ante* visible on AIS and radar at that time although *Parthia* was not showing an AIS signal. There were no other vessels in the vicinity on radar or AIS. The radar targets of *Ante* and *Parthia* "could have merged"

The facts found were as stated by *Ante*.

Question

What would be the protest committee conclusions and decision be and why.

Specimen Answer IRPCAS Case Ante & Parthia

Conclusions

The other vessel was probably *Parthia*. Given that the vessels were closing it was quite possible that *Parthia* was on starboard tack

Ante was unable to determine which tack *Parthia* was on. Although *Ante* did not see *Parthia's* stern light, there may have been some doubt as to whether she was crossing or overtaking and it was therefore prudent of *Ante* to act in accordance with IRPCAS rule 13 (c) as an overtaking vessel.

It could have been considered that *Parthia* was to windward and to port. As *Ante* was unable to determine whether *Parthia* had the wind on the port or starboard side *Ante* was also required to keep out of the way of the other as required by IRPCAS rule 12.a.iii.

Both yachts complied with IRPCAS rule 19 (conduct of vessels in restricted visibility).

Decision

No rule was broken by *Ante* which altered course away from the other vessel and ensured that no risk of collision existed. There were no facts to determine whether *Parthia* broke a rule.

Protest dismissed.

In the bar next day *Parthia* said that one of her crew had been extremely ill at the time of the incident. *Parthia* first saw *Ante* closing on a steady bearing and then they seemed to change course and fade away into the fog. They didn't hear any hails from *Ante*. However *Parthia* had been on starboard although close to running by the lee. In *Parthia's* view *Ante* was overtaking so she held her course.

The crew member had been hospitalised on arrival and the skipper was too busy with that to talk to *Ante* or get to the protest hearing. *Ante* kept clear and in the circumstances *Parthia* was happy with the outcome of the hearing.