



# Whistle Blowing - Fleet Umpiring

Ronnie McCracken  
and  
Gordon Davies





# Blowing Whistles!

## Radio Sailing

Gordon Davies

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# Some umpires can get close to the action!







# Radio-sailing umpires face a different challenge!





## Why umpiring?

- Make the game better.
- Reinforce, not replace, self policing.
- Resolve incidents on the bank, not in the protest room.
- Keep on racing.



# How RS umpiring works 1

- Umpires stand with the sailors.
- No flags
- Umpires can penalise after a protest
- Umpires work as a team: umpires and observers



## How RS umpiring works 2

- Competitor-Observers
- Umpires and observers can identify contacts
- Umpires can initiate penalties after contact hail



## When umpiring does not resolve an incident

- Incident reported to Race Committee
- SYRPH (System for Reducing the Number of Protest Hearings)
- Protest hearing as a last resort





## Principles for the development of umpiring

- Umpiring should reinforce, not replace, self-policing
- The sailors should define the game
- Umpires should be part of the game

## **Part 3**

### **Appendix Q and Addendum Q**

#### **On the Water Judging for Fleet Racing and Medal Races**

##### **Introduction**

Appendix Q and Addendum Q can be downloaded from the ISAF website at: <http://www.sailing.org>. **Appendix Q and Addendum Q handout**

Different from Addendum Q, Appendix Q was developed for all levels of fleet racing. This appendix can be used under rule 86.3 to change or test proposed rules if the national authority so prescribes and/or allows. Those seeking to use this approach to on-the-water rule enforcement may be required by their MNA to seek approval before its use. That is the case with the RYA.

The use of Appendix Q is recommended for judged races where there are about ten to twenty boats. There should be one judge boat for every 3 or 4 boats in the fleet. Fewer judge boats can be used, but coverage will be more difficult.

Be sure to note to the competitors that when the Addendum is used the Addendum changes the definition of Finish and several other rules.

Addendum Q and Appendix Q includes a section on Advice to the Competitors as well as Advice to the Judges. The OA may separately use this advice part of the document or use the complete Appendix so that all involved will understand the system.

## **Additions to the Notice of Race and the Sailing Instructions**

### **Notice of Race**

The Notice of Race must specifically state that Appendix Q will be used in the regatta.

### **Sailing Instruction**

In addition to the notice of race statement, the full Appendix Q must be added to the Sailing Instructions as an attachment.

### **Initial Briefing at the Competitors/Coaches Meeting**

There are significant changes to the rules in Appendix Q and this fact should be clearly discussed during the initial skippers briefing. Be open to questions, and advise the competitors that they should review and understand completely the Advice to the Competitors section of the Appendix.

Appendix Q reduces a boat's rights to protest and changes the procedure to use when protesting. Point this out and advise competitors that if they use an improper protest signal the incident will become an invalid protest and the judges will signal no penalty even though there may have been an infringement.

### **On the Water**

Positioning is critical in order to view each incident correctly and as in any system the judges must be certain that a rule has been broken. If they are not in position to clearly see the incident they must signal no penalty. In most cases, the judge must be a few boat lengths away from any situation in order to properly understand the actions of the right-of-way boat and the keep-clear boat. Under this Appendix, judges both respond to the sailor's request for a decision, and give judge initiated penalties.

Each judge should understand the procedure for signaling penalties. It is very important that the complete judge team use the same procedure when signaling a penalty.

Each judge team should develop a system to identify "hot spots" (locations where boats are close together and incidents are more

likely to occur) and be sure to communicate these with each other. These points will generally be at the start, at marks of the course and at the finish line. Talking all the time with each judge “taking” a boat and talking through the potential incident and the right of way boat.

In order to cover these “hot spots” there may be more than one judge boat in an area, with judges on each boat who have seen the incident. Each judge boat might have a different perspective of the incident and each judge team could make a different decision. When an judge sees an incident and other judges are in the area, they should raise their arm to signal they have seen the incident and are ready to make a decision. If no other judge raises their arm the judge should make the call. If judges on two boats raise their arms, one points at the other judge boat and the other judge team makes the call

Addendum Q documents provide in-depth details of positioning, communication among the judges, viewing the incident and signaling the penalty. This advice also is useful to Appendix Q.

Since judges must be in position to see incidents, and that creates wake from their boats in the racing area, they need to be aware of their wake and the effect to the competitors, especially in light air conditions. Anticipation of where the “hot spots”



might occur will assist the judges in properly positioning their boats while minimizing adverse effects from their wake

## **Equipment**

Again the judge boats must be of an appropriate size to be close to the competitors in tight situations. Judges will be closer to the racers than for on-the-water judging for rule 42. In many cases this should be within a few boat lengths of the action.

Each judge boat will need a green or green and white flag to indicate no penalty, a red flag to indicate a penalty to one or more boats and a black flag to indicate that a boat is disqualified. Classes might specify another flag, such as 'U'niform.

## **Debrief**

As stated earlier Debrief sections discussions with competitors should be undertaken by the pair of judges who penalized the competitor, taking into consideration emotions and allowing time to fully discuss.

It is important for the competitors to understand what the judges saw and what rules applied as they made their decision. It

should not become a heated debate or one party trying to convince the other party of who is right. If the conversation moves in this direction it is best to limit the discussion and move on.

It is important that when a judge team has made an error, they be willing to tell the competitor either in a debrief or when speaking just with the competitor that on reflection an error was made. Nothing can be reversed, but all will realise that the goal is to serve the game that we all enjoy and to make it better.

## **Summary**

This on-the-water judging system can be very beneficial to the competitors when small fleets are involved. Most breaches of rules of Part 2 are identified so boats can take penalties but while breaches of other rules and requests for redress will still go to hearings, sailors can finish a race knowing that what took place on-the-water will stand as is.

On-the-water judging does require more resources in power boats, equipment as well as a possible need for more judges and added fuel costs.

Discussions of incidents will offer new opportunities to understand the rules in more depth and allow the competitors to

increase their awareness of how the rules can be a benefit to their racing results.

### **Addendum Q**

The number of judges globally who have umpired Medal Races is a low percentage of the 400+ international judges and RYA national judges, who are also not international judges, have very limited experience of medal races which is mainly restricted to the final of the Sailing World Cup and Olympic Classes continental and world championships. A number of Olympic Classes, like the Laser do not have medal races on the last day of their world championship.

The normal RRS apply but with some important changes.

Each class race is run separately with the top 10 competitors on the scoreboard on the previous evening taking place. Each race has 3 jury boats covering the race with penalties being handed out on the water so that at the end of the race.

If I have time I will let you answer some on the Addendum Q quiz so that some of the changes can be seen.

Thank you

## Fleet Racing Umpiring including ISAF Appendix Q and various Class SI contents

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Good afternoon. As you have just finished lunch please do not fall asleep; it is rude to the people round about you if you snore.

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Before we start how many of you have been involved in Fleet Race Umpiring and was it dinghies or keel boats? How many Dinghies? (count) and How many keel boats? (count) - comment on the numbers.

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### “On the Water Judging”

Whilst the sport of sailboat racing should continue to be self policing as far as possible, over the past years on-the-water judging has been introduced to fleet racing by Organizing Authorities and Classes to address several issues. The obvious is the immediate and final determination of a breach of a rule of Part 2 though Rule 31 is often included, while breaches of Rule 42, mainly for dinghies, are covered under Appendix P and I will touch on this later. ~~It~~ OTW judging is particularly popular with Clubs running week end regattas or 5 day championship keel boat racing reasonably close inshore “round the cans/laid buoys”.

As a result of such a penalty, or no penalty, boats then know their relative positions and can continue to strategize their race without having to wait for the result of a protest hearing which sometimes can be late into the night.

On-the-water judging places judges on the race course with the competitors, observing the racing. ~~Judges and they~~ work in pairs, on each boat/RIB, to observe the racing and to signal infringements in accordance with the systems discussed ~~below~~later.

These practices ~~have been developed for fleet racing and continue to be developed currently remain at the development stage~~ as each system is refined through the experience gained ~~by implementation~~. Typically, a club or class association will choose to have on-the-water judging as part, or the whole, of their regatta depending on the courses styles being sailed and will ask the judges to implement the system preferred by the class. ~~Boats racing reasonably close to the shore would use this but not the Round the Island or Channel Island Races, but that could be interesting.~~

The components required to implement a system include, reference to this format in the Notice of Race, changes in the Sailing Instructions, availability of judges, jury boats and



equipment including boat identification, radios, whistles and flags.

It is always important to have frank and open discussions with the competitors at the initial briefing. Either between races or after racing the judges must be willing to discuss with a competitor the call that they made. It is also very beneficial to competitors in a large fleet to hold a debrief after racing or the following morning where all the sailors can learn from each call.

## **Basic Rule Infringements**

### **Introduction**

Basic rule infringement is the simplest form of on the water judging, for example Part 2 and rule 31. A breach of rule 41 ~~would-should~~ be dealt with by the protest committee. This is different from Appendix Q which will be discussed ~~in a~~ later and Addendum Q (~~in a~~ later ~~section of in~~ the hour, if we get there).

~~There are currently different systems in use.~~

The simplest is when the judges observe a breach of a rule of part 2, ~~they and~~ notify the boat immediately. Signals to the boat include a sound, typically a whistle, and/or a radio call, and a

visual signal, ~~typically say~~ a red flag or the colour designated in the SI but this must be a colour easily identified and is pointed at the infringing boat or boats ~~whilst~~and their sail number is hailed. Depending on the sea and weather conditions this can be fairly close or if it is a calm light wind day sound will travel some distance.

The signal~~s~~ indicate~~s~~s that one or more boats have infringed a rule and should take a penalty under rule 44. If no boat takes a penalty, the judges ~~shall~~ lodge a protest for the incident they have witnessed, or they can act as witnesses if a boat lodges a protest.

In other systems, judges simply signal that they saw a breach of a rule and indicate their expectation that a boat or boats take a penalty by pointing a coloured flag at the boat(s) and making a whistle sound.

~~Yet~~ In another systems, the judges are given the authority to ~~penalize~~penalise the boat they consider broke a rule. The boat's failure to take the penalty would then result in a DSQ without a hearing.

A careful study of the sailing instructions at each event will advise the judges of the system they will be using. A hand-out will provide some sample NOR and SI wordings.

## **Additions to the Notice of Race and the Sailing Instructions Notice of Race**

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The notice of race must state that on the water judging may/or will be used in the regatta.

### **Example**

“On the water judging in accordance with sailing instruction X.X may be used and the procedure and penalties will be detailed in the sailing instructions”.

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Some OAs may want to include the exact same language in the notice of race that will be used in the sailing instructions.

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## **Sailing Instructions**

A specific section must be added to the sailing instructions to inform the competitors that on the water judging will be used. The procedure must be placed in the sailing instructions with a separate numbered paragraph that clearly states how the competitors will be informed that a rule has been broken. Here are some examples which have been inserted into sailing instructions at various events.

### **Example A**

On the water judging will be applied for the rules of Part 2 and rule 31. Judges who are members of the protest committee will

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blow a whistle when they expect one or more boats to take a penalty. In addition, they will attempt to indicate with hand signals which boat(s) they believe were involved in the incident. If the incident results in a protest hearing, the judges may provide testimony as a witness.

### **Example B**

B.1 Apart from rule 42 infringements, members of the protest committee will be on the water to observe racing. When a judge sees an infringement the judges will make one sound signal but no sail number will be hailed. This shall mean that the judges have seen a situation which may be protested and one or more competitors should take a penalty or retire. If no boat takes a penalty under rule 44.1, the judges may protest one or more of the boats.

B.2 Action or no action by the judges under this sailing instruction shall not be grounds for redress. The changes rule 62.1(a)

### **Example C.**

C.1. On the water jury boats will display code flag "J". A protest committee member may also be on board the race committee signal boat, and if so, that boat will also display code flag "J".

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~~C.2. In addition to enforcing rule 42, judges will be observing boats for breaches of the rules of Part 2 or rule 31. When the judges observe a boat breaking one of these rules, one sound signal may be made but no flag or hail will be made. If no boat takes a penalty under rule 44.1, the judges may protest one or more of the boats.~~

~~C.3 Action or no action by the judges under this sailing instruction shall not be grounds for redress. The changes rule 62.1(a). **PP slides required**~~

## Initial Briefing at the Competitors/Coaches Meeting

The procedure for on the water judging should be discussed with the competitors/coaches at the first briefing by a representative of the protest committee.

Care should be taken to:

- specifically refer to the method to be used for on-the-water judging and how it will be applied,
- give a brief description of the sound signal and what it means,
- introduce the judges,

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- provide a description of and the number of judge boats, and how they will be identified
- inform competitors that the judge boats can be very close to and amongst the boats as they race, from the start of the race until all boats have sailed the course and finished.

### **Racing best practices**

Each jury boat will have two judges who position their boat in the best location(s) throughout the race to observe potential “hot spots” and areas of contention between the competitors.

The judges must be experienced in driving RIBs or similar motor boats, with adequate engine sizes which do not provide excessive wash when driven in close proximity to boats racing.

It is always preferable if a judge drives and if the boat owner insists on being on board he should not drive unless he is also an experienced judge.

They will have to be close enough not only to see infringements but also be in the best position to determine the boat at fault. They should ensure that they do not interfere with any boats

racing. The judges also have to be close enough for the boat(s) to hear their sound signals.

The judges should always talk to each other identifying what their boat is doing and who has right of way, overlaps etc. so an agreement can be reached, although there are instances when only one judge observes an incident, particularly at the start. While each judge identifies the boat on which they are focused, the judges should be anticipating potential incidents and the rules involved, so that if an incident does occur, a quick decision can be made. In each case the judges(s) must be certain that a rule has been broken before the required signals are indicated.

If the judges do not agree or they are not certain then a rule has not been broken, ~~no~~ no signal should be made.

### **Judging recording**

Each pair of judges must be in a boat that is suitable for the size of the racing boats. There is no sense in being in a 4.5 metre boat with a 25 hp engine if you are umpiring RC 40s or Extreme 40's.

Each judge should keep the rough notes made while afloat for each incident where they signaled that a rule had been infringed. Record the race number, date, time, leg of the course, boats involved in the incident, the lead up to the incident and the boat(s) which broke a rule. Where possible they should make a diagram to include as many of the boat positions during the incident as possible in order to fully describe the situation at the debrief, if you have sufficient time before the next incident. Video cameras can be useful at times but depends on the sea conditions and distance.

Depending on the conditions, or the budget, a worksheet of waterproof paper should be available to be completed after the incident.

### **Debrief**

Judges should always be available to discuss with any competitor the calls which have been made on the water. Discussions should include the pair of judges who made the call (the call may have been no penalty or a penalty given). It is beneficial for all the competitors, whether they were penalised or not, to hold a daily session where the judges describe the incidents which resulted in signals by the judges. By doing so,

competitors also gain an in-depth knowledge of the racing rules from the judge's explanations.

Other protests for rule violations for other parts of the rules not involving Part 2 or rule 31, unless included in the Sailing Instructions, are still decided by the protest committee through by hearings.

In summary, the system provides less time in the protest room, more opportunity to participate in the social aspects of the regatta, and offer the competitors an alternative to the full protest system.

Various classes using the system state

Melges SI:

Jury actions on the water:

If a member of the Jury witnesses an infringement of the RRS or Class rule C.11, they may indicate their observation with a whistle and a red flag.

The boat shall then exonerate itself by complying with SI 14.1 (two-turns penalty). If no penalty is taken the Jury may protest

If the Jury witnesses an incident that cannot be called with the

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red flag as above, it may indicate with a whistle and Code Flag “U” that it has seen a potential incident and are willing to act as a witness and expect a competitor protest ashore if no boat exonerates herself.

Action or lack of action by the Jury under SI 16.10.1 or 16.10.2 shall not be grounds for granting redress.

The Jury boats may be positioned anywhere on the course area. Their position at any time shall not be grounds for granting redress. This changes RRS 62.1(a)

NB a voluntary penalty is one-turn, according to SI 14.1. This aligns with the principle that umpiring should reinforce self-policing.

The Opis’ state:

In addition to taking action in accordance with Appendix P, if a member of the jury sees a boat breaking a rule they may make a sound signal but her sail number will not be hailed. If the appropriate penalty is not taken the Jury may protest one or more boats. This action allows the competitor to abdicate abiding by the rules and if no judge boat they can break the rules.

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## J80 Worlds

This Class had been having major problems at the windward mark with boats approaching the mark late on the port layline and then crashing with starboard layline boats. It was stated there would be 2 jury boats positioned at the windward mark, one above the mark and the other below the mark and port layline. A whistle would be blown for an incident and if no exoneration taken the boat would then be approached after racing and advised what had been seen and recommending a RET. If they do not do this the judges would act as witnesses. Within 2 days the competitors were behaving at the top mark. There was also problems at the gate with boats coming in for the port gate and then gybing late to the starboard gate and causing mayhem. The same procedure was used here.

## Audi Med Cup

There is a good coverage by on the water boats within the fleet and each boat has a pink flag on the flagpole on the deck of the boat unless required. If an incident between boats occurs and no boat immediately takes a penalty a whistle is sounded and the pink flag raised. This means the jury boat has collected evidence to act as a witness at a hearing and you could have 3 boats

exoneration. After a stated period the pink flag is lowered until the next incident.

After the end of the day's racing there is then a debrief of what the judges saw in each incident which is also a good educational session.

Different umpires have differing views on signaling penalties but a large number prefer to use display a flag as this can stay displayed for longer than a sound signal can be made. Some prefer using a U flag, as a red flag can often be thought of, instinctively, as a penalty being imposed.

The Whistle blowing most judges are familiar with is Appendix P which can take place at Club, Regional, National and International events. This is also the area where OTW judges gain the most help with the ISAF interpretations and apart from the standard interpretations you can find on the ISAF web site under the Rule 42 sub-section gives specific class breaches.

In the IJ Manual there are also various examples of boat positions as shown in the following slides.

Thank you.

## **Umpiring and radio-sailing: a challenge for both sailors and umpires**

*The comments here are based on my personal experience of umpiring at :*

*IOM Europeans, 2010*

*IOM Worlds, 2011*

*Marblehead Worlds, 2012*

*together with experience of umpiring match racing and team racing. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to participate in these events. These remarks are my own personal opinion, although I have discussed certain points with both competitors and fellow race officials.*

Umpiring is now a well-established feature of major radio-sailing events.

The major benefit to the sport has been to considerably reduce the amount of time lost to protests. However, the introduction of new actors into the sport cannot go without changing the way the game is played. It may be felt, for instance, that some sailors may be playing to the whistle, in the hope that no umpire penalises them. Other competitors may have difficulty accepting the instant, and, sometimes, rough justice meted out. More subtly, it can be perceived that the introduction of race officials more versed in other disciplines of the wider sport of sailing has, in some way, dispossessed the habitual radio-sailors of ownership of their sport.

Changes in the sport of radio-sailing will inevitably result from the wider use of umpiring. These changes have to be managed so that they enhance the game, resulting in more enjoyable regattas for all radio-sailors. I believe that this objective can be attained if sailors, organisers and umpires respect three principles:

- Umpiring should aim to reinforce, not replace, the self-policing of the sport of sailing;
- Let the sailors define the game;
- Make the umpires part of the sport.

### **Umpiring should aim to reinforce, not replace, the self-policing of the sport of sailing.**

Sailing differs from most other sports in that competitors are expected to enforce the rules themselves. Only when sailors cannot resolve a dispute on their own do they refer to judges, or, in certain cases, to umpires. The dispute resolution system in sailing is initiated at the express demand of the sailors, and functions on the basis that competitors entrust colleagues, experienced sailors with knowledge of the rules, to establish facts and decide on the application of the rules.

Judges and umpires are very protective of this “self-policing”. In general they are reluctant to intervene unless invited to do so. There are cases in which they will intervene. Rule 42 Propulsion is increasingly policed directly by judges, especially at major events, because competitors believe that self-policing of this rule no longer works. At major dinghy and keel-boat events the following policy (or something very similar) is often announced:

*The jury will not usually protest for a breach of a rule of Part 2 or rule 31 unless they observe an apparent breach of good sportsmanship (RRS 2). Examples of such breaches are:*

- *deliberate breach of the rules without taking a penalty and gaining an advantage;*
- *failing to take a penalty after knowingly touching a mark with no justification for exoneration;*
- *intimidating other boats – often evidenced by unnecessary shouting or foul language;*



– *team tactics – sailing to benefit another boat to the detriment of your own position;*

Umpiring does not replace self-policing, as it is essentially a speeded-up version of the normal protest procedure (although the techniques required to be in a position to give a rapid response are somewhat different from jury procedure). The technique was developed (simultaneously and independently, it is claimed) by match-racers and team-racers in order to improve the game. Gone are the days when, in match racing, one race per day was the norm, followed by several hours in the protest room. Team racing has moved on from the time when a national championship would be sailed over an entire winter. Umpired fleet racing developed largely in response to the IOC's demand that the medal winners be decided immediately after the final race of the series, not after the close of protest hearings.

An umpire's decision may only be requested after an attempt has been made by competitors to resolve a dispute by one, or more, of them acknowledging an infringement and taking a penalty. Both the rules governing umpired races, and the policies adopted by umpires, should encourage competitors to take a penalty voluntarily.

In the umpired versions of our sport, except for match racing, competitors are encouraged to take a voluntary penalty. In team racing, this voluntary penalty is only one turn whereas an umpire imposed penalty is two turns. Many competitors prefer not to risk the higher penalty, and take a turn immediately they are protested. This is very useful at local and regional events where the number of umpires is limited.

I understand that I am not alone in believing that introducing a differential penalty into radio-sailing would be increase the rate of voluntary penalties and introduce a major disincentive to “play to the whistle”. At the very least, the 1turn/2turn system should be experimented at a major event.

Radio-sailing has other additional, unique, forms of self-policing. Competitors not participating in a heat act as observers, calling contacts between boats, and between boats and marks. The use of observers pre-dates umpiring and is an integral part of the sport. The observer system has immense benefits for radio-sailing, as it integrates all competitors in to the process of enforcing the rules, and, especially at local and regional events, reduces the number of race officials required to manage an event.

However, at umpired events, relations between observers and umpires may not be easy. Umpires from other disciplines will not normally impose a penalty for an incident that they have not seen themselves. Observers will often call contacts that umpires have not seen, or for which they are not in a position to make a decision. The observer's call remains unresolved, or has to be taken to a protest after the heat. In the intense atmosphere of a championship this can lead to frustration and tension between observers, umpires and competitors.

However, workable solutions are possible without overriding the principle of self-policing. (Please excuse the short outbreak of “umpire-speak” that will follow)

In the case of contact with a mark, for instance, under rule E3.5(b) the observer is obliged to hail the sail number of boat that makes contact with a mark. The observer's call establishes that rule 31 has been broken. As no penalty has been taken for an infringement of rule 31, rule IRSA Add. Q4.1(a) permits the umpire to penalise the hailed boat. It is important to note that Q4.1(a) does not specify that the infringement of rule 31 has to be observed by the umpire.

By affirming that the observer's call of contact with a mark is a sufficient base for an umpire given penalty, observers are maintained in the same role that they have in non-umpired racing. If appro-

appropriate an umpire may exonerate the hailed boat under rule 21(b).

When an observer calls contact between boats the situation is somewhat more complicated. Stating that contact occurred establishes that a rule has been broken, but identifies neither the rule or which boat infringed. An umpire may well be reluctant to give a decision unless he has seen the incident. If neither boat protests, the incident can only be resolved by the observer reporting it to the race committee, who may protest one or both boats.

It is not beneficial for observers to continually make calls which do not lead to a resolution of the incident. In match-racing when there is contact but umpires are unable to make a decision they penalise both boats. However, these penalties cancel each other out, and have no effect on the race. As an experiment a variant of this system could be used. If an observer calls contact and either no penalty, either voluntary or umpire-given, taken, or no protest made, then both boats take a reduced penalty. Inspired by match-racing, this penalty could be, on the beat, to bear away and gybe, and on the run, to luff and tack. This might encourage an infringed boat to protest.

SYRPH(SYstem for Reducing the number of Protest Hearings) is a further development of self-policing, in that it leaves the decision on the outcome of an incident in the hands of the competitors without involving the protest committee. This system is unique to radio-sailing, and race officials who have little experience of this branch of the sport may not appreciate the benefits of implementing it. It has been my experience that the degree to which SYRPH is used depends very much upon the members of the race committee and jury. Officially approved guidance notes would be an appropriate response.

The development of umpiring in radio-sailing should encourage self-policing, and integrate the unique expressions of this principle that have emerged in radio sailing.

### **Let the sailors define the game.**

At a macro-level, the rules of sailing and the nature of the sport are defined by a process involving various bodies federated in ISAF. The Racing Rules Committee have a central role in defining the specific rules of radio-sailing (Appendix E) within the context of the main body of the rules. However the IRSA, class associations, and discussions between committee members and other sailors or race officials all input into the process.

However, at a micro-level, the Racing Rules of Sailing are not a rigid cadre. There is room for interpretation, adjustment and variation in the way the rules are implemented, without necessarily changing the rules. In addition, within limits, the rules may be changed to meet specific circumstances.

I believe that it is important for sailors to participate actively in this process of interpretation, adjustment and negotiation. Sailors should define how they want the game to be played, then engage in a dialogue with event organisers, race-committees, juries and umpires. The objective is to ensure that both sailors and umpires are working from a common, agreed, interpretation of the rules. It is preferable that this dialogue take place before the event, taking account of the experience of previous events, rather than in the heat of a championship control area.

If sailors do not engage, or the other partners do not facilitate this engagement, the possibility exists that other partners will define essential aspects of the game. This may not provide the optimum conditions for the further development of radio-sailing.

One example:

- *Rule 15, Acquiring Right of Way, and rule 16.1, Changing Course, both require one boat to give another “room to keep clear”. Room is defined as “the space a boat needs in the existing conditions while manoeuvring promptly in a seamanlike way”. For an umpire more used to working with 8m yachts with a crew of four, or 3.6m dinghies with a crew of 2, the notion of sufficient room may be somewhat different to a radio-sailor who can tack their boat by a quick flick of a lever. Umpires must realise, for instance, that the time needed for the competitor controlling a boat to react to another boat's change of course may well be longer than the time needed to carry out the manoeuvre once the command is given. Sailors and umpires should reach a consensus on this.*

It is interesting to note that, at the other end of the yachting spectrum, the owners and regatta organisers have agreed a set of special rules for racing in yachts over 100 feet in length. A major element of this Appendix SY is a specific definition of keeping clear, which fixes the minimum distance between boats at 40 metres.

There are many other instances in which a dialogue between the sailors and the other participants (officials, organisers...) can provide the basis for interpretations and adjustments that can improve the game for all concerned. For instance, a class association can give clear guidelines to a race officer regarding the sailing conditions in which they would expect that a race be abandoned.

It is essential that the results of this dialogue be transmitted for the benefit of future events. The aim is to achieve a consistent approach to umpiring at all events. ISAF produces a panoply of documents that continually evolve – call books, race officials manuals, rapid response calls, guidelines etc. It would assist race officials greatly if radio-sailing developed similar documents, so that when they arrive at an event they have up-to-date information on current best practice. If radio-sailors do not produce such documents the umpire team at each event will bring their own techniques and experience and, in effect, develop a new style of umpiring technique.

### **Make the umpires part of the sport.**

In match-racing and team-racing the umpires are very much part of the sport. They officiate at numerous events throughout the year, and contribute, through their particular rule-based expertise, to the development of the sport. They can also provide an essential element of continuity, especially in student and youth sailing in which a sailor's career is of necessity short.

In these branches of the sport there is an ongoing relationship between sailors and umpires. Sailors learn the limitations of umpiring, as well as the advantages. Umpires monitor developments in techniques, use (and misuse) of the rules and how sailors play the game.

Radio-sailing should aim to develop a similar ongoing relationship between umpires and sailors. However, this requires that umpires be given the opportunity to commit to radio-sailing. The sport needs to provide umpires with sufficient opportunities to officiate throughout the year. Many match-racing umpires, for instance, find that they need to umpire at one event per month in order to maintain their standard. The only way that this can happen is if more regional and national events are umpired.

In the same way, umpires need to know that if they do commit to radio-sailing they have a good chance of being invited to the more prestigious events.

One way to develop umpiring would be to make the award of major international events contingent

on the country organising a minimum number of umpired events in the years preceding the championship. It would also be useful if a large part of the proposed championship umpire team were invited to one of these events.

The ultimate aim is to encourage the emergence of a network of umpires who know and contribute to the sport of radio-sailing. This network should aim to become self-sustaining, taking charge of recruiting, training and developing umpires, many of whom would be experienced radio-sailors. This already happens in both match-racing and team-racing.

## **Conclusion**

If radio sailing can respond to the triple challenge of:

- ensuring that umpiring reinforces, not replaces, the self-policing of the sport of sailing;
- letting the sailors define the game;
- making the umpires part of the sport;

then umpiring can contribute greatly to the development of radio-sailing as a fascinating form of sailing. Umpires can contribute to the transmission of the unique spirit of radio-sailing to other disciplines within the sport, and, in reverse, contribute to the fuller integration of radio-sailing into the wider sport.

Gordon Davies  
Bray  
Co Wicklow, IRELAND  
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