

RACE MANAGEMENT GROUP

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2008

RACE MANAGEMENT GROUP

Chairman

Roger Wilson

Brian Anderson
David Arnold
Nadina Lincoln
Tony Lovell
David Nicholls
David Shepherd
Gordon Stredwick

Race Officials Education Officer

David Campbell-James

Secretary

Kelly Thomas

REGIONAL RACE MANAGEMENT COORDINATORS

North Wales - Mike Butterfield

South Wales - David Shepherd

North East - Adi Benson

North West - Adrian Stoggall

East - Edwin Buckley

East Midlands - Henry Wright

West Midlands - David Hopkins

Thames Valley - Charles Wand-Tetley

South East - Martin Bedford

South - Robert Lamb

South West - Mike Pearson

Northern Ireland - Ruan O'Tiarnaigh

Scotland - David Kent

At the beginning of the year Roger Palmer stood down from his post after coming to the end of his term, to make way for Roger Wilson as the new Chairman of the Race Management Group. Roger Palmer had achieved a considerable amount during his tenure and worked hard right to the end. In his last 12 months he developed: a mark-layers course; the GBR Race Management manual; a new Race Officers qualification matrix; the National Race Officers' examination; a new code of conduct for race officials; a Race Officials stand at the Dinghy Show; and 'Dealing with Dissent' guidelines.

This was all in addition to all the usual newsletters, courses and conferences. So Roger Wilson has a lot to live up to and has already set out his plans for his own five-year term. He wants to ensure that his predecessor's progress continues with the same energy and vigour. Amongst Roger's early plans are:

- to ensure that every club has at least one Regional Race Officer on its books
- to make the Race Management section of the RYA website the first port of call for race management information
- to recruit more young and more female race officers
- to increase the standard of club race management
- to develop at least five world class race management teams

In order to deliver all of this, a multi-faceted and phased approach must be established. Initial procedures set up are the development of various working parties and teams:

- **Communications WP** - David Shepherd (chairman), David Campbell-James, David Henshall, Robert Lamb and Nadina Lincoln. Tasked to establish mechanisms whereby *all* racers and *all* clubs become aware of what the RYA can offer.
- **Safety at Events WP** - Roger Wilson (chairman), David Frame, Paul Jackson, David Nicholls and Ed Stevens. Large event safety is an issue to be addressed by this group.
- **Race Management Rules WP** - David Lees (chairman), Mike Butterfield, Adrian Stoggall and Richard Thompson. This group will explore and trial the development of better rules to be submitted for consideration by the ISAF conference in 2011.
- **Volunteer Management WP** - Brian Anderson (chairman), Jeanne Horner, John Kent and Richard Stevens. Volunteers are pivotal to our sport and this group will explore how best to attract them and then keep them all on board.
- **Website WP** - David Campbell-James (chairman), Robert Lamb, David Shepherd and Adrian Stoggall. The website is in need of a re-vamp.
- **Race Management Advisory Team** - Roger Palmer (chairman), David Arnold and Adrian Stoggall. A group of very experienced race officers who will be able to offer advice to any race officer on any matter.

Roger is keen to utilise appropriate expertise from any quarter and not to restrict discussions to the Race Management Group per se. If you are in a position to make a contribution to the above working parties, please do contact its chairman or Roger Wilson himself at roger.wilson@forestlodgevets.com

FROM THE NEW CHAIRMAN OF THE RACE MANAGEMENT GROUP

For those who don't know me, I am a vet from Lymington who has sailed everything from Baltic Traders to asymmetrics all my life. I am an RYA Coach/Assessor, a Racing Coach and Advanced Powerboat Instructor and have been the principle of the RLymYC Training Centre for 15 years. I am an NRO, NJ and NU and for the last 15 years raced a variety of boats including HODs, an X332, XODs, Scows, an RS200 and a Tasar. I was chairman of the RYA Youth Steering Group from 2002-2006 and have sat on the RYA Racing Committee since 2005.

I am very honoured to have been asked to chair RMG after Roger Palmer who has done an outstanding job over the last 4 years of overseeing the development of our excellent GBR Race Management Manual and qualification matrix. GBR is now in a position where we are seen internationally to have top quality race management in depth and many of our race officers help run events throughout the world.

RMG has used my succession to take an in depth look at where it is going in the next four years and has decided on a number of key goals and set up a number of initiatives to help achieve these goals. These have been publicised through the RYA Racing Conference, the Club Conference at the Dinghy Show, the Youth Stakeholders Conference and the Regional Race Management Conferences and this newsletter.

There have been other changes in RMG: Adrian Stoggall and Mike Butterfield stood down at the end of their "stint". I have thanked them both on your behalf for all they have done during their time. However we are not losing their skills and experience as Adrian has agreed to join Roger Palmer and David Arnold on our new AdviceLine Team and Mike has agreed to join David Lees on our "Rules Working Party" to develop submissions to ISAF to make the Rules that control race management better.

RMG has been joined by Nadina Lincoln an NRO and NJ from Nottingham who has a great deal of dinghy experience especially inland, and David Nichols, an RRO from Hayling Island who is extremely experienced in event management, particularly of large international dinghy events. We welcome them both and I am sure that they will both add greatly to the effectiveness of RMG in developing race management that will build the number of racing sailors in our sport.

I would also like to take this opportunity to publicly thank Mike Robinson for the enormous amount he has done for race management during the 14 years he has been Regional Race Management Co-ordinator for Southern Region. During that time Mike has run countless seminars both at clubs and regionally as well as many Regional Conferences. Southern Region is far and away the biggest and busiest Region in the country and he can be justifiably proud of all he has achieved. Mike has "retired" to Poole Yacht Club but I am sure we will still see him on the water practicing what he so ably preached!

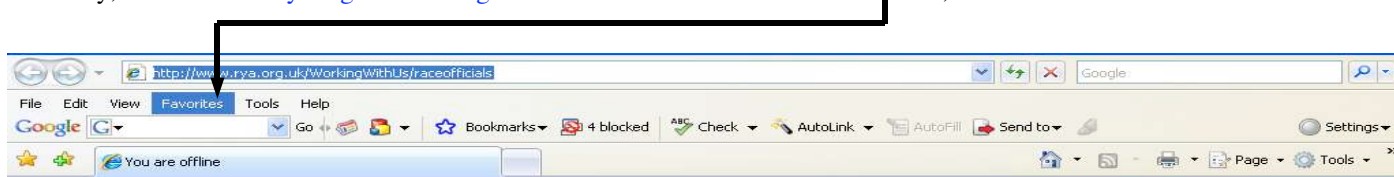
Roger Wilson



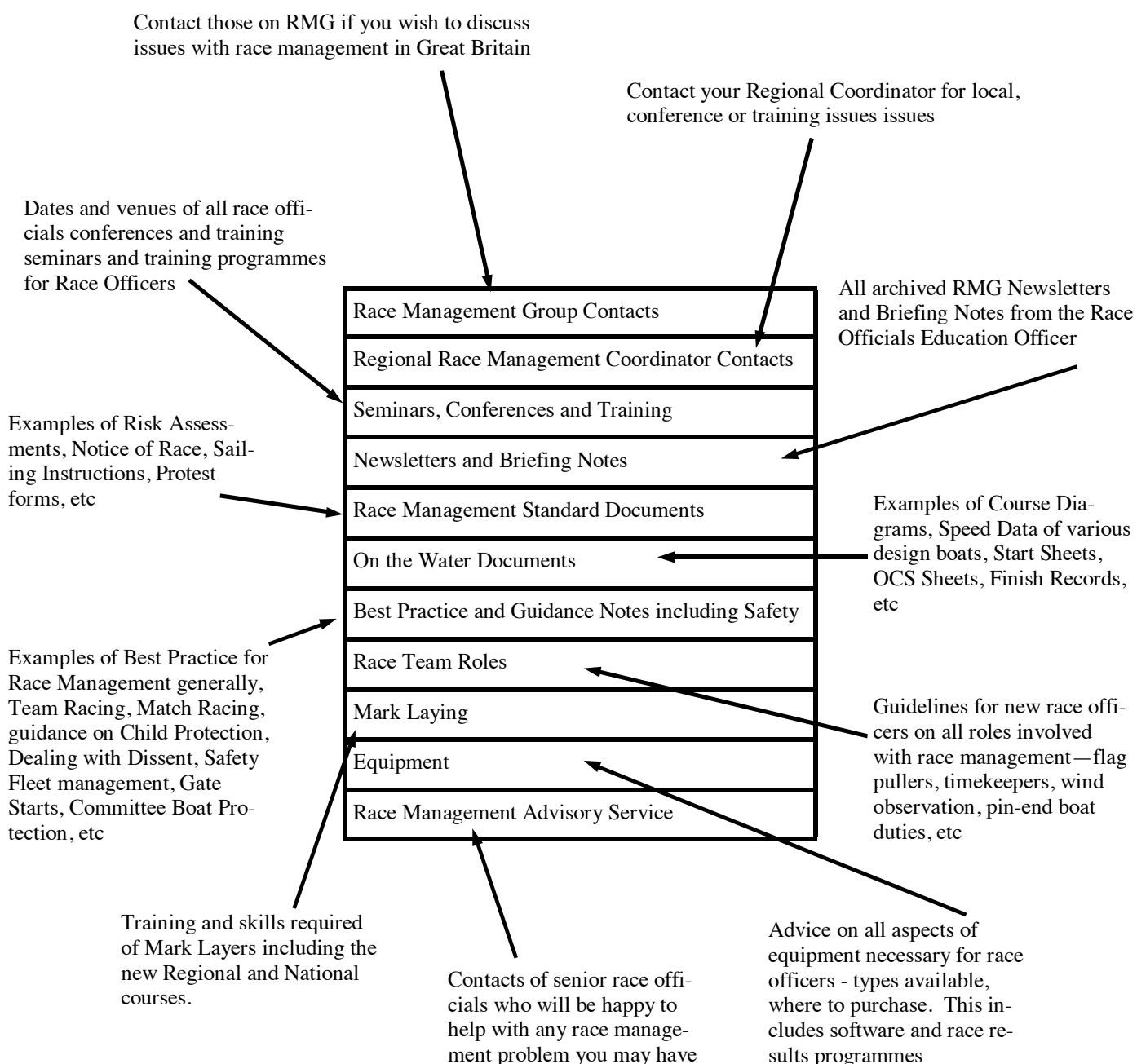
THE RACE MANAGEMENT SECTION OF THE RYA WEBSITE

www.rya.org.uk/WorkingWithUs/raceofficials/racemanagement

Over the next six months or so a considerable amount of work will be applied to our section of the RYA website. The structure has been agreed and content will follow in due course. Please do not lose patience with us whilst we attempt to get this right. It will take some time to evolve so it is important that you visit regularly to see what has been posted and what is new. To make that easy, once on www.rya.org.uk/WorkingWithUs/raceofficials click on “favourites”,



rename the page “RYA Race Officials” and then each time you go online thereafter click on the star and select “RYA Race Officials” from the drop-down list. Then select “Race Management” which leads to the Race Management section:



AND ONE LEVEL UP - RACE OFFICIALS

www.rya.org.uk/Working WithUs/raceofficials

Once selected from your 'favourites' as described on the previous page, the Race Officials section is seen and caters for **all** race officials. Issues common to all are contained here and this page is the route to the Race Management Section as well as the Judges and Umpires Section. Some pages are duplicated here from the Race Management Section in an attempt to make items easier to locate. Headings here are:

Directory of Race Officials - Where you can find race Officials in Great Britain

Race Management - Leads to Race Management page detailed above

Judging and Umpiring - Leads to Judges' and Umpires' page

Seminars, Conferences and Training - As per Race Management page detailed above but includes Judges' and Umpires' seminars

How to become a Race Official - Details all training programmes including Race Management

Opportunities - 'Wanted and Available' posts. Advertise yourself here or find an event to help at

Eurosaf - Details the European Exchange Scheme available to Race Officials

RYA Policies - Details official RYA policies

Best Practice and Guidance Notes - As per Race Management page detailed above but includes Judges' and Umpires' issues as well

Equipment - As per Race Management page detailed above but includes Judges' and Umpires' issues as well

Racing Charter - Details our charter

Racing Rules - Leads to the Racing Rules Section and includes the RYA Casebook and ISAF Qs and As

Rules Disputes Process - Details the use of Advisory and Arbitration hearings procedures

Race Management Advisory Service - As per Race Management page detailed

Rules Advisory Service - Similar to Race Management Advisory but restricted to rules issues

Event Appointments - Details who has been appointed to which RYA events

Insurance - Details the RYA Race Officials insurance policy

Volunteer Management - Outlines examples of schemes offered by clubs and organisations in Great Britain

Calculating Start Times for Pursuit Races

Ever wondered how to calculate start times for pursuit races?

$$C = (E \times 1000) / N$$

Where C is corrected Time, E is elapsed time, and N is the PY number or rating. All times are in seconds.

The concept of a pursuit race is for all boats to finish at the same time, having started at different times given by their respective Portsmouth Yardstick (PY) number or other rating.

To calculate the start times, first work out the corrected times if everyone sailed the full duration of the race i.e. 100 minutes or 6000 seconds. As would be expected the corrected times increase with handicap.

Assuming that the slowest class starts at the start time i.e. time zero, all that needs to be done is to subtract the slowest class's corrected time from the rest of the corrected times. This gives a time to be added to the start time for each class. The examples below show the general idea. The resulting corrected times are never round minutes for there has to be some rounding of the times either up or down.

To round up or down? Simply, if the times are rounded down this gives a small advantage to the faster classes as they start a fraction of a minute sooner, and rounding up means that the boats start a fraction of a minute later. Practically I do not think that this really makes much difference as there are much larger factors such as course design, wind speed, or individual sailor skills.

There is an impact from the entered classes on the start times for a pursuit race.

The calculations can be done using a simple spreadsheet or one of the result packages. Soon there will be a detailed set of instructions to calculate pursuit race start times using various results software packages on the website. One of the

packages, Sailwave, has a useful function called Back Calculated Elapsed time (BCE), this does the majority of the sums for you.

The example below uses a fleet that includes an Optimist as the slowest class. Start times for the rest of the fleet with the Optimist starting at 11:00 are as follows:

Class	Calculated time	Rounded time
Mirror	11:15:48	11:16
Solo	11:29:50	11:30
12	11:33:36	11:34
405	11:33:50	11:34
Laser	11:34:30	11:35
Buzz	11:38:57	11:39
29er	11:43:52	11:44
49er	11:54:37	11:55

If the entry list is changed slightly with only faster boats then the start times will be different.

Changing the fleet to the slowest boat being a 405, this of course changes the start times with the Laser now starting at 11:01 and the 49er starting at 11:32.

The result of this would now mean that the 49er gets an additional 23 minutes racing, this might not improve their chances of winning but will certainly improve the enjoyment for the faster classes. Consideration should be taken to restrict the entries to ensure that the majority of the fleet gets the most out of the race.

The information on the website is intended to help RO's to get the best out of the result software packages and to make the job of calculating the start times for a Pursuit Race as easy as possible.

Any questions? Call Tim Johnson
- 01329 665770 or tim.johnson19@btinternet.com

TWO NEW MEMBERS OF THE RACE MANAGEMENT GROUP

David Nicholls I am a keen sailor and have been since I was 11 years old. I spent my childhood in Cornwall racing at Restronguet and Falmouth in dinghies and keel boats. When I moved to London I joined Datchet Water Sailing Club and started racing Flying Fifteens up to and including International Level. I also managed to throw in the odd cross channel race, and regatta week. In 1989 I moved the base of my sailing to Hayling Island and have been a very active HISC member ever since – including a stint as Commodore. I have represented my employer, the Metropolitan Police, in dinghy and keelboat events. More recently I have sailed with my family, in particularly my sons in Mirror, RS Feva and Cruiser. I spend considerable time supporting my eldest son at Optimist and Feva events.



The organisation of sailing has been of great interest to me since my first appointment as Mirror Class Captain when I was 14 and through driving the PRO's runabout for Tim Coventry, Laser National PRO (1980). Since then I have run many club events, the MPSC Offshore Championships and Police National Offshore Championships, Laser 4000 Nationals 1999 and local youth events. I have a broad experience of committee work. Future plans include cruising my 31ft Phantom, racing my FF and running various events including the National Police Offshore Championships. That's if I am not too busy towing the Opi and Laser 4.7. I now feel honoured to make a contribution through the RMG to the continued success of British Sailing and its management.

Nadina Lincoln My sailing career started on the Norfolk Broads crewing for my mother in a Norfolk dinghy. However I soon decided I wanted to helm and moved on to a National 12, which I sailed until moving to Nottinghamshire. All the local National 12 sailing was on the Trent, which was a problem as you could make no way when it had been raining or when there was no wind, which was most of the time. So we moved to a gravel pit and changed to a Scorpion, which I have sailed ever since. Despite having cruised and raced a River Cruiser for many years on the Broads and a keelboat on the west coast of Scotland, I remain a dinghy racer at heart.

Like many others I began my experience in race management while our children, now both in their 20's, were sailing 405's and 29ers. It was better to be involved on the committee boat than drifting around on the shore. I then began the RYA route to becoming a RRO and then NRO. I am also an NJ and Regional Rules Advisor for the West Midlands. I know Nottinghamshire is not in the West Midlands but no NJ in the West Midlands came forward to do it, so my patch is not the patch I usually sail.



I also have experience of the running of a sailing club, having fulfilled many roles at Notts County SC, including being Commodore in 1999-2001.

One thing that is apparent to me is that communication between club members and the RYA is not always been as good as it might be. I feel that it is important to publicise the tremendous opportunities available to club sailors to contribute to the sport of sailing. There is a wealth of experience in the clubs. The key to developing good practice is to provide good racing at all venues and at all levels.

NEWS IN BRIEF

JO LEAVES

Jo Moulton is taking up a position at Sparsholt College in Winchester. She has been the Racing Rules and Race Officials Administrator for some time now and we will miss her. We wish her the best of luck for the future.

KELLY TAKES THE HELM

Kelly Thomas has taken the role of Racing Rules and Race Officials Administrator having previously worked in the Training Department of the RYA. Good luck Kelly!

OTHER APPOINTMENTS

Robert Lamb

Regional Race Management Coordinator for the South

Charles Wand-Tetley

Regional Race Management Coordinator for Thames Valley

Charles Perry

Regional Rules Adviser for Thames Valley

Chris Watts

Regional Rules Adviser for the South

David Nelson

Regional Rules Adviser for Northern Ireland

NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2009

We are planning a National Conference for Judges and Umpires and Race Officers for 2009. The date is expected to be end of January 2009 with the venue Lilleshall National Sports Centre near Telford but these have still to be confirmed. One of the main subjects will be the new Racing Rules which will be available at the end of 2008.

IRO SEMINAR

We are planning an ISAF IRO Seminar in the UK on 24th to 26th April 2009 at RYA House at Hamble. Instructors will be Charley Cook (USA) and Nino Shmueli (ISR). Contact David Campbell-James to book your place (raceofficials@rya.org.uk). Attendance fee is £60.

RACE MANAGEMENT SEMINAR (previously called the RRO Course)

An extra Race Management Seminar is planned for Thursday 5th and Friday 6th June at RYA House, Hamble. Instructors Bob Milner and Robert Lamb.

There are spaces available so please mention this to budding race officers in your club.

Application form on the RYA website under Seminars / Conferences or contact David Campbell James (raceofficials@rya.org.uk).

PROTECTING RACING BOATS BEFORE THE START

Background

The RRS offer two methods to protect boats before their start from interference from boats that have been racing, or intend to race in a later start. Rule 22.1 always applies, and on all parts of the course:

If reasonably possible, a boat not *racing* shall not interfere with a boat that is *racing*.

A sailing instruction can also make the starting area a prohibited zone for boats that have been racing, or intend to race in a later start, as recommended in Appendix L11.3 and LE14.3:

Boats whose warning signal has not been made shall avoid the starting area.

While these should be sufficient in most instances, some race committees have adopted different sailing instructions to achieve the same objective. The rule and draft SI both deliberately do not use the term 'keep clear', but that term has been observed in sailing instructions intended to protect boats before their start. That has unintended consequences and complications, since in any situation there must be only one right-of-way boat, and therefore only one 'keep-clear' boat. No sailing instruction can change a primary right of way rule (RRS 10 to 13). The correct approach is to place a restriction on the right-of-way boat or to place a further obligation on the keep-clear boat.

Recommendations if Further Protection is Needed

1. Give the race committee the power to penalize a boat without a hearing, for instance with a sailing instruction such as:
'SI xx.x When the race committee sees a boat breaking rule 22.1 [or SI xx.x] it may, without a hearing, [disqualify her from her nearest race] [penalize her in her nearest race with a xx% scoring penalty calculated as stated in rule 44.3(c)], notifying her in the race results. This changes rules 63.1 and A5.'
2. To use a Sailing Instruction to require boats whose warning signal has not been displayed to keep out of a clearly defined area which includes the starting line. For example:
'SI xx.x Boats shall not enter the area bounded by the following Navigation Buoys until [n minutes before] their Warning Signal: [e.g., West Bramble, South Bramble, Prince Consort and Gurnard.]'
3. To use clause L11.3 in sailing instructions and to reinforce it by defining, if possible, the starting area.

Note

These measures can be effective only against boats that have been racing or are intending to race. Other boats that stray into the starting area are subject to the rights as well as the obligations of the IRPCAS or local navigation rules.

RYA GOING BY THE RULES 2005-2008

TO BE PUBLISHED MAY 2008

Author: Trevor Lewis
RYA Code: DVD31
Format: DVD

ISBN: 9781906435172
Price: £9.99
Category: Sport/Sailing

An essential guide on putting the Racing Rules of Sailing into practice.

This PowerPoint presentation provides a simple but detailed guide to the racing rules. Written by Trevor Lewis, Chairman of the RYA Racing Rules Committee, an acknowledged rules expert.

RYA Going by the Rules 2005-2008 is a new RYA Racing DVD. It will be replaced later this year by *RYA Going by the Rules 2009-2012* which will incorporate changes to the rules for the next four years. Purchasers of the 2005-2008 version will receive a complimentary copy of the 2009-12 version later this year.



Detailed breakdown of the Racing Rules of Sailing 2005-2008
Simple yet effective diagrams to aid rule explanation
Can be used for presentations

SailRacer **PY, IRC & PERSONAL HANDICAPS**

Simon Lovesey of SailRacer has developed a new system to update Portsmouth Yardstick numbers. A “soft” button in Sail100, Sailwave and HAL will email results of races to SailRacer together with data of those boats and sailors competing. Simon will, if asked, also install a button onto other programmes in use by clubs.

This new development will collate results nationally and produce modified National PY numbers. It will also be able to produce PY numbers that are location specific. Additionally it will be able to produce 'Personal' ratings for individual sailors. These PY numbers will be downloadable as soon as they become available. So no longer will clubs have to hide their Handicap Committee from competing sailors, angry that their club handicap is unrealistic. We all know how much racing sailors love to be critical of their handicap and those of fellow competitors. This exciting development will go a long way to ease the pain of those tasked with the unenviable job of allocating club handicaps.

SailRacer will also publish and archive the submitted results on the web, manage On-Line Entries and for 4% of the entry fee will take On-Line payments. It can download entry data into your results programme and even provide multiple results using different handicaps from one finishing record (eg IRC, Club handicap, PY, etc).

More information is available from Simon Lovesey at simon.lovesey@skillsware.net or via sailwave.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

robert.lamb@rscs.org.uk

COMMITTEE BOATS ARE NOT ALL THE SAME

I don't know if we are unique but both Frank Newton and I, who both operate out of the Academy, own and maintain our own Committee boats, and are totally different in outward appearance, chosen for our ideals, albeit some years apart and may also reflect our own



individual style of Race management. For the ISAF Youth Worlds, the individual Race Officers who were asked to officiate, chose not only their teams but also their Committee boats –hence the disparity displayed, but this also enabled comparisons to be made.

I sat on the side lines, although OPUS, moored just of the Academy building was very evident, not needed, and I was busy with other things including earning a living to pay for it all!

Some parameters needed for a suitable platform are universal and others change with the venue. At Weymouth we either operate in the harbour or in the Bay so a reasonably fast transit time to the operating area is needed, as well as the ability to stay on station for considerable periods with 6+ folks and attendant visitors. [judges/press etc.]

With a background experience in all sorts and sizes of yachts, I finally chose a 10m catamaran two seasons ago with plenty of space, both on deck and also down below, out of the weather. It gives me height to look down on nearly all boats that race, and it has a safe, easy motion at anchor whose line is bridled to enable steady orientation to the wind, even in tide ways. Two bow seats enable the gunner comfort [we give a mixture of guns and hoots at start sequences-this aids the competitors, who quickly latch on to what each means, as well as the flags] and also positions the two recording teams at the finish. Another recorder in the sheltered cockpit sits alongside the timekeeper. All recorders [often wives or mothers], can sit inside with the heater on and still do their job in comfort looking through the saloon windows.

As Jenny and I live aboard when officiating, we keep one cabin for ourselves and the other is used by the rest of the team for their gear. Oilies live forward of the large Bathroom that takes up most of the Starboard forward hull enabling plenty of room for manoeuvre. We act as public loo for 10+ folk sometimes so a simple flushing system is needed, not lots of valves. The galley also has to provide sustenance, both hot and cold. We have large lockers for the boards, flags and other paraphernalia as well as fenders etc.

We also cruise the boat quite often so the flag hoist yard is hoisted for each event, using the shroud and backstay; but note the height of the hoist- sufficient for competitors to easily view the proper sized flags. I have yet to see a pure motor boat with sufficient height, and

certainly they have no staff on which all starters can refer and relate easily to;I consider a tall mast essential.

Gadgets- we have few, unlike Frank. One large analogue clock suffices that we all synchronise our wristwatches to; a masthead wind speed and direction indicator, although if I'm honest, I look at the water and wind continuously myself. [For larger events the RYA have provided their own expensive looking B+G sets that had sensors at 2m above sea level height and numerous coaches had hand-held ones; we always all had the same reading and I just look at the weather and the waves – does it really matter whether it is 12 or 13 kts.? For the lower end 4-5kts, perhaps but it normally oscillates between them in any case.] Let us have some common sense and not rely upon instruments all the time. Radios however are needed and we have two fixed sets and 3 handheld- all set to Low power. The mobile phone is also becoming more used.

Two other essentials- adequate fendering for the RIBS, and an electric Anchor winch connected to at least 2 sets of good ground tackle. And the best bit of the boat – my wife, who hates boating yet is an excellent timekeeper/cook and boat cleaner. People make good committee boats not ££££s. They need of a lot maintenance, true, but who will adequately maintain the new “super” boats? I suspect that they will go the way of all club committee boats, smelling of a quick paint job and having unreliable engines/winches.

If around, please feel free to come aboard and snoop/comment, - but you might get given a job! We can always accommodate extra folk onboard, especially those from inland and/or wanting Match racing experience.

Richard Stevens, IRO

FLAGS ON STICKS

It was good to read David Arnold's article in the last Race Management Newsletter and hear from someone else who hates flag halyards! I've been using flags on sticks for 15 years for all the reasons he lists, firstly as Race Officer for Army and Joint Service windsurfing and latterly at Mudeford Sailing Club.

I've always preferred using a RIB when running racing (it's so much easier to talk to the sailors, and far quicker to react to changes in conditions) and I've yet to find one with a flag halyard mount. Like David, I use B&Q cold water pipes (white in colour) but have restricted my set to 6 pipes, all with flags at each end. You have to choose flags that are not needed at the same time and my set is not definitive, but it has served me well for many a year!

Class Flag-----	Postponement
Blue Peter-----	General Recall
Round the Ends-----	Black Flag
Individual Recall-----	Abandonment
Short Course-----	Second Class Flag
Yellow-----	Blue

I also use the same water pipe as flagpoles for my buoy number flags and for the “Red, Yellow, Green” set for windsurfing slalom racing. As David said, a tubular sail bag is perfect for protection and storage.

Mike Roach

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

robert.lamb@rscs.org.uk

THOUGHTS ON RACE MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT AT CLUB LEVEL

I found trying to get more involved in race management, or at least to be better at it, at best difficult. Yes you could do more duties at your club, hoping by trial and error to improve; and other club members would be happy – especially if it excused them doing duties, but that does not necessarily make you a better race officer.

At first there appeared to be little literature or guidance from the RYA, and it was only after a club protest over SIs that I asked the RYA to look at the Club's SIs and then after various phone calls and e mails that I found out about, and joined, a RRO course run by Adrian Stoggall. Not only was the course very good, it was also a great experience after doing Race Officer duties for about 30 years, to be with other people who discussed race management in an open way, made no pretence of knowing everything – of being infallible –, who admitted that they too had made mistakes, and asked the same sort of questions that I wanted to ask. I then went to a few other clubs to see how they and their race officers worked and to learn.

The problem seemed to me that at club level you have those sailors considered to be 'experts'. These are usually members who travel to open meetings, do well at club events or have just been 'about' for a (very) long time and thus develop a sort of aura of competence about them; and in their eyes – and those of the senior members of the club – can only be right. They need not necessarily be bad ROs but nor are they necessarily good.

If you look at sailing magazines you see various courses to teach you to sail, to race and to race even better. It would seem that almost every club is a certified RYA Training Establishment and this has to be good. But how often do you see an advertisement or article on the improvement of race management? How much club race management training is different to that which was exercised say 20 years ago? Even the RYA's own magazine seems to miss out on this. The Racing Charter may well extol the virtues of good / better race management, but how do you set about this? I feel that this is best shown by the fact that there are as many NROs (100) as there are CROs (106) with RROs in the middle (295). In the normal course of events you would expect there would be a pyramid effect with the largest number of members with qualifications being at the base (CRO). And if you then bring in the fact that there are about 1500 clubs, allow that some clubs may well have 2 or even 3 CROs you really come to the conclusion that most clubs have very little formal training in race management. Does this matter?

A past RYA report found that some junior / young sailors, having gone through training at either youth squad or at club level, gave up sailing and racing because after their initial training they found the 'racing at club level of poor quality'. Is this really surprising? When you or any other club member makes an effort to organize some good racing - better than some of the other club racing -, members say 'thank you, that was really good'.

If the referee at a local rugby game did not fully understand the principle of the forward pass or the offside rule (a bit more tricky), or if the starting line at a 100 metres race had say 2 metres 'bias' there would be a furore. But what is the difference between that and providing good dinghy racing? In fact if you have some idea of what is wanted it is probably easier to be a 'good' race officer and have thanks than be average or below and put up with grumbles. Mike

Garth – the cricketer – is quoted "This whole issue with the umpires and scorers is an issue that needed attention. We need more umpires at the recreational level and we are looking to try and help with their recruitment. We want to make it interesting, more of a job that people will enjoy. We want them to be the best they can be, whether on the village green or higher up. We will help them to progress. ACUS (the Association of Cricketing Umpires and Scorers) have built a foundation, but we'd like to take it forward as we have the resources." I feel that this is a worthwhile goal that applies to all sports.

The impression that I have got, and perhaps it is quite wrong, is that the Race Management Group consists of very enthusiastic, competent, friendly and helpful people doing their utmost to improve matters while the RYA seems mainly interested in training sailors to win medals. Race management training seems a bit like trying to push water uphill.

I do not pretend that it is easy to find a solution. Many club members don't mind doing patrol boat duty, as this is a bit more glamorous and you drive about in a rib having taken a powerboat course. There is (no?) responsibility; you don't have to worry about the racing, and if by chance the start lines or the marks are poorly laid it is the Race Officer's fault! Certainly not yours! Every club seems to offer powerboat training, *it is for safety and this has to be good*. But does not the ultimate responsibility for racing, for safety, whether to race or not lie with the Race Officer? So surely the club should – *must* – offer good RYA race management training, to RYA standards as is the case with powerboat courses. A club has to have certain levels of equipment for powerboats, so why not insist on a level of equipment for Race Management. But first there should be awareness by the clubs of the need for quality training, and the RYA could do more to bring this to the attention of the clubs. It is really not that onerous.

May I suggest the following.

- The RYA could, through its magazine, letters to clubs etc make a greater effort to promote and demand better race management. It is illogical to promote top level sailing and yet not expect good quality event management.
- If a club wants to be registered as complying with the Racing Charter it *must*
 - Offer RYA race management training.
 - Produce a racing development plan.
 - Have a proper level of equipment (Flags, sound system, notice boards etc.)
- All this to be tied in with current power boat courses to give an overall 'package' of good quality event management.

Throughout my life any qualification that I have received has been earned by passing exams and tests – written and practical. It would seem that the Racing Charter is the only certificate that I have come across that is given out without any test or a plan of commitment by a recipient. So why not have a qualification requirement for the Racing Charter certificate? This would be no different to giving training status to clubs. I accept that any such qualification would require some monitoring and probably involve some expense and may even be resented by some clubs. But surely those clubs that make a genuine effort should have a genuine recognition.

Giles R C Passmore

Please feel free to comment on any of the issues raised in this newsletter with a view to publication in October
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