

JUG NEWS

Issues and News for Judges and Umpires

January 2008

Chairman of JUG, Peter Johnson, speaks:

It must be 2008 - welcome to another JUG Newsletter, ably assembled again by Carol Haines.

This bumper issue seems dominated by dissent and related matters. Several contributions stem from umpiring, but refer to matters just as relevant also to judges and other race officials. Increasing concern about this important area has led JUG to post a new RYA Best Practice on the web that covers Dealing with Dissent. It is reproduced towards the end of this Newsletter. I hope you find it useful – not least in providing a text you can point to when justifying actions you have taken.

JUG continues to be active in this area. It is currently considering appropriate guidance on dealing with gamesmanship rather than dissent. In addition, it is working closely with the newly formed Fair Sailing Team (FAST!) of Racing Rules Committee to develop guidance on the interrelation of rules 2 & 69, as well as to bring all possible different aspects of rule 69 (eg. bullying, child protection, working with the police – to name just a few) into a single accessible document.

A new style of one-day Regional Judging and Umpiring Conferences will occur soon in February and March, often in concert with our race management friends. These will use core material supplied by JUG and are mostly organized by the new Regional Rules Advisers (RRAs). We are already planning a large National Judging and Umpiring Conference for early 2009 to coincide with the introduction of the next rules revision.

Under Alan Baser's guidance, JUG is going to trial a mentoring scheme this year for a small number of aspiring judges and umpires. This will also line up closely, but not exclusively, with the newly formed 'Young Officials Group' – this may be an 'unofficial' (no pun intended) group, but its activities are supported strongly by JUG. If you are interested, contact Alan.

Should you have views on any of the issues raised in this Newsletter, or suggestions for inclusion in the next conferences or Newsletter, please let me know.

May I wish you all a highly successful (and dissent-free) season in 2008.

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Appointments & Reappointments

Congratulations to all the following who continue to support the sport with their time and expertise:

From the ISAF November 2007 meeting:

International Judge, first appointment

Mike Butterfield

Jon Napier

International Umpire, first appointment

Peter Johnson

International Judge, renewals

Penny Carter

George Chapman

David Chivers

John Doerr

Philip Gage

Carol Haines

Sonia Mayes

Stephen Procter

Eddie Ramsden

Chris Simon

David Lees

National *first* appointments from 2007:

National Judge

James Mitchell

James Scott

Jon Haines

Alan Baser

Barry Dunning

Brian Smith

Richard Tate

Ewan Stamp

Nigel Cole

Malcolm Blackburn

National Umpire

Terry Easterbrook

Jon Napier

Alan Baser

Regional Judge

John Cronshaw

Ronald Harris

Jess Mapplebeck

Simon Winn

Vincent Wright

Caroline Marriage
David Law
Alf Bell
Harry Brown
Simon Rowe

Regional Umpire
Caroline Marriage

Umpire Assessors
Sally Burnett and Craig Mitchell were confirmed as Umpire Assessors

Congratulations also to the following who passed the recent Regional/National Judge examination at the Carsington seminar in November:

Regional
Luke Shaw
Michael Forbes
Gemma Suggitt
Bekcy Priest
Michael Adams
Roy Blackburn
Bill Handley
Neil Semple.

National
Neil Semple
Bill Handley
Becky Priest
Roy Blackburn
Luke Shaw
Gemma Suggitt

And to those that passed the recent National Umpire examination at the Edinburgh seminar in December:

Chris Noble
Gordon Davies
Nicole Johnson
Robert Yeamans
Charles Darley
Allan Manuel

Rules Advisors Scheme

The Regional Rules Advisor (RRA) scheme was launched last March and reports on its success from the regions have come in steadily:

Penny Carter (South): Ran one for Frensham Pond Friday evening, October 6th, and has had enquiries from Bembridge.

Charlie Watson (South West): Managed to run two courses so far, both in Cornwall.

Richard Thompson (Thames Valley): Will run a course at Itchenor next summer. They expect to introduce the procedures for some events in 2008 and all racing in 2009.

Nadina Lincoln (West Midlands): Has done sessions at South Staffs and Earlswood Lakes. In discussions with Draycote SC and Midland SC.

Mike Butterfield (North Wales): One course at Pwllheli SC.

Bill O'Hara (Northern Ireland): Pilot course in June; another course in December.

Terence Brownrigg (Scotland): Promoted the RYA Arbitration policy at RYA Scotland's Sailing Development Conference in November. Course at RNCYC on 2 December.

Carol Haines (Yorkshire & Humberside): Course at Pennine SC. Booking two courses in early April.

William Jeffcoate (East Midlands): Littleton (Thames Valley! Invited through RS contacts). Dates in Jan/Feb for Notts County, Carsington and Rutland. Trying to agree a date with Ogston. Also, great interest from the RS200s and a provisional date in March. This process may well be a success with fleets, too.

Eddie Ramsden (South Wales): Setting up a course in February.

Peter Johnson (NorthWest): Three completed at Royal Windermere YC, West Kirby SC and Hollingworth Lake SC – very rewarding and well received. Further presentation in the IOM scheduled for March.

A range of issues have emerged and are the subject of discussion among the RRAs:

The standard of rules knowledge, even among course members, is poor.
The finding of facts was a problem, and this could lead to the wrong selection of the rules.
Knowledge of the definitions was shaky.
Few know of the existence of the Appendix M guide.

However, the course is very rewarding and has been very well received, with apparent great determination by many clubs to set up the process - for all the right reasons.

Clubs are asking for 'Rules evenings' for their winter programmes.

The Rules Advisory Seminars have had the coincidental benefit of identifying a group of individuals who could play a key role in rolling out the new Basic Rules Course in Clubs.

Apropos of which:

Regional Rules Advisers Review

The Regional Rules Advisers Review meeting is scheduled for 26 January 2008 at RYA House starting at 10.00.

Among other agenda items will be a review and discussion of the future of the Rules Disputes Course and the Rules Dispute Best Practice guidance notes, as well as a review of the role of Regional Rules Adviser.

A new Basic Rules Course for Clubs and Classes will be launched.

Judgeline

David Brunskill reports on the progress of the scheme:

'Not quite mature yet' said one of those present at the Class Judge meeting in Hamble in November when referring to the Class Judge scheme. I think that the comment referred to the Class Judge scheme rather than me – but make your own judgement.

The Class Judge scheme has been in place since 2004 and it was perhaps appropriate this year to try to see whether our main customers – the RYA performance pathway classes - were finding the Class Judge scheme worthwhile.

A number of class representatives attended the meeting and the key presentation was from Peter Saxton, the Sailing Secretary of the 420 class, who had contacted the various classes and had got the unvarnished feedback.

Peter's presentation set the tone of the meeting by showing the classes' perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of the scheme. Even better, those present were then able to discuss the points and set out key areas for improvement in 2008.

The key concern was about young sailors' rule knowledge, compared with their other skills. The conclusions drawn out from the classes were as follows

Build on strengths

- Involve jury 'live' in boat on boat incidents?
- Jury to attend squad sessions as well as events?

Address weaknesses

- Standardize & publish jury costs?
- More rule 42 education for jury – international exposure?
- Be consistent across classes on rules disputes process best practice?
- Work on rules with young sailors?

As the day progressed, it was possible to work out where there are misconceptions amongst sailors and classes about what judges can and cannot do. There is a communication issue as regards when judges can move towards actively initiating protests when present as judges-on-the-water. There was extensive discussion about whether judges should initiate protests or alert sailors if judges saw a rule broken.

The current policy is that judges should always protest when there is a breach of Rule 42 and Appendix P is in force, but otherwise should only protest unfair sailing under rule 2 or call a hearing under rule 69. The RYA Best Practice guidelines are on the RYA Website (*See below. Ed.*). There was a view that, in training events, they could and should give strong advice as regards general rule behaviour.

There was concern from judges that sailors must take responsibility for sailing within the rules, protesting any infringements and must not expect judges to referee fleet racing. Even if a judge is nearby, sailors should not expect that he or she will have seen enough of an incident to have a view of what happened.

Class Judges are happy to be involved with squad training. There are issues though in that there needs to be more understanding amongst coaches as regards how best to get the judge input and judges need to be trained in working with coaches.

The weaknesses were interesting. There were split views (not least from Class Judges) on whether a judge, having been involved in training a class, could be sufficiently impartial when in an International Jury at a Worlds or European Championship and where the GBR squad they trained is present. However, it is definitely the case that (via Judgeline or via RYA events) there should be considerable effort trying to find suitable international events for Class Judges whether in their own class or another requiring rule 42 skills.

Having been to events in most of the RYA pathway classes in 2007, there is no doubt in my mind that adherence to RYA Rules Disputes Best Practices within the Class Judge scheme is patchy at best. But this is a two way process that needs classes to agree the various processes that can be used and appropriate wording adopted in sailing instructions.

As the day progressed, some of the weaknesses picked up by classes were addressed.

A rule 42 presentation by Chris Watts was strongly focussed on the interrelationship between judges, sailors and coaches. One quote was that “In practice events, the Class Judge should be a ‘tool’ to be used by the competitors and the coaches.”

Peter Johnson led a solid hour of the agenda covering rules advisory and arbitration hearings as well as a role play arbitration case.

So, as regards the structure of the conference, at least we were aware of some of the current shortcomings of the scheme and are addressing them.

The key conclusions (at least to me) at the end of the day were:

- 1) The class judge scheme has merit and needs to be retained
- 2) There is a continuing need for high calibre judges for the scheme whether as class judges or as support when more than one judge is needed at a regatta.
- 3) There is need for the highest possible standards and consistency in their application.

Copies of the presentations, agenda, list of attendees, minutes and action steps are contained on a CD, copies of which can be obtained from the Jo Moulton at the RYA.

StopPress

I can now confirm that **Charlie Watson** has been appointed class judge by the 29er class, and **Nigel Vick** has been appointed class judge by the Topper class.

And here are some reflections from Nigel about sportsmanlike behaviour after a weekend’s umpiring at a youth event.

Umpires and Novices

Let’s bring back duelling!

So, there we were coming down the stairs at this youth event, discussing computers when Ralph comments “the problem is all the damn software that gets installed without your knowing it”. Next thing we know, a youth is proclaiming “That’s rule 69 – YOU SWORE!” Incidents later in the day caused me to reflect upon this, as young sailors sought to protest under rule 69 claiming that their opponent had sworn. As umpires, we had not heard a thing, and it was not as if it was windy or we were far away. Yes, they were being aggressive, but not excessively so – as an umpire, I didn’t feel that I should hit them with a penalty for bullying – but it was disturbing.

The event was team racing at a very low level, so how do young people get such a distorted view of the rules? Is threatening a protest for bad language an unsportsmanlike act in itself? It may be old fashioned but one can question whether a ‘gentleman’ would even acknowledge hearing such language. (We needn’t go so far back that he would ‘demand satisfaction’. I am sure that, if we did, the RYA would provide us with a course so that we could umpire the

duelling that would result.) And just to cover myself, I should declare that the term ‘gentleman’ and ‘sportsman’ are intended to refer to a mode of behaviour and are gender-inclusive – I hope that makes it sufficiently PC.

Can we blame the coaches who have seen race committees try to ensure sportsmanlike behaviour? Perhaps they are guilty of being over-aggressive in suggesting that protests are the appropriate response to this form of behaviour? How did they fail to mention that action under Rule 69 can only be brought by a jury receiving a written report. In any case, what is inappropriate language? If as an umpire we made a report every time someone swore, we would be in big trouble. I have a great deal of sympathy with the foredeck hand who uses a few expletives after falling through the bow-hatch. I have a little less sympathy when the helm uses bad language at his crew – but will generally let it go if it is not excessive and infrequent. Generally, I regard this as an internal matter for the crew. Perhaps I was badly influenced by a certain gold medallist’s opinion of his crew’s abilities when it came to fixing parts of their boat. I have no sympathy with the use of foul language directed at an umpire and even questioning of his ability: if repeated, it will draw a penalty.

At the same event, I brought a protest against a young man for what I considered was unsporting behaviour. He saw nothing wrong in telling the umpire that he shouldn’t be doing the job. It was his opinion and he had every right to express it. As we had only three umpires covering five flights of boats, we were some distance away when the preparatory signal sounded. The youth was vociferous in his opinion that he was entitled to redress because there were no umpires present (he accepted that we were actually there 45 seconds after the Preparatory signal). His opinion was that, if we couldn’t be there when he wanted us, we were not fit to do the job. He got away with it the first time as it had been an exciting and intense match and he was understandably upset – unfortunately, he chose to repeat it a second time as he sailed away from the finish line.

Some will say that allowing it once was too tolerant, but I do think that we have to be careful in this area. There are some young people whose every other word is an expletive to be deleted. To some extent, we need to be aware of this and not expect too high a standard of behaviour or we risk excluding a large sector of the population. Also, we risk perpetuating the exclusive and snob label which is often attached to our sport. I don’t argue that anything goes, but rules should be used thoughtfully. The RYA motto of education not legislation seems as appropriate in this context as anywhere else.

Should we ensure the rules are observed? At ‘grassroots’ events, we see some really silly things. Luffing by boats which have obtained an overlap from astern. Boats on starboard giving way to boats on port. Statements like “I said I was going to be on starboard before I tacked – so you had plenty of time to avoid me!” Then, there are the usual team racing problems of failure to show a red flag or say ‘Protest’. I wonder whether it is in the best interests of the sport that we allow such blatant rule infringement or is it genuinely the case that the sailors should have been better prepared? Is it unfair to those who have prepared properly? Shouldn’t the sailors know the rules? If they don’t, can we just shrug our shoulders and say it is their fault. Should we be assuming that ignorance of the rules is acceptable or should we assume that the sailors know the rules and intervene to stop the infringement on the basis that it is taking unfair advantage of less knowledgeable sailors?

Isn't this a case where sportsmanship places an obligation on the umpires to help the sailors improve their knowledge of the rules? Isn't it just good sportsmanship for us as umpires to intervene and ensure that the rules are observed? Is it in anyone's interest for sailors to go away from an incident with an incorrect knowledge of the rules?

A sailor on starboard who thinks he can call for water from a leeward boat in order to pass astern of a team mate on port doesn't understand what constitutes an obstruction. If the leeward boat gives him room, should we have to decide that the call was too loud before we penalize the shouter for bullying? If the windward boat knows the rule, isn't he blatantly being unsporting. If he doesn't understand the rule, does it help the sport for all parties go on misunderstanding the rules? The windward boat probably genuinely believed that he was entitled to room. Why should we leave some other umpire/competitor the task of ensuring that the rules are properly complied with?

Match racing has a tradition of de-briefing the sailors. Match race umpires are used to debriefing competitors at the end of the day. This is not generally practical in team racing because:

- A. there are too many incidents – the umpires are too busy to take notes.
- B. there are too many skippers – good public speaking skills would be required to keep the crowd under control if everyone stayed.
- C. the stakes are not high enough and so other attractions have greater appeal.

Some would say that what I am advocating is refereeing. I prefer to think of it as education. Things do move on. In team racing, I detect an increasing move to use the single flag system so as to stop 'intimidation' protests (another reason is that the speed of the top level game has increased).

Deliberate misuse of the rules has always been the occasion for an umpire-initiated penalty under sportsmanship. Ignorance should be no excuse for their misuse.

Alan Baser takes up the topic of rules and sportsmanship as related to umpires and umpire training:

Current Sanctions and Sportsmanship

On the water sanctions currently available for officials are centred on the application of rule 2 which states '*A boat and her owner shall compete in compliance with recognised principles of sportsmanship and fair play.*'

So the question must arise, 'what are the recognised principles of sportsmanship and fair play'? My dictionary says that sportsmanship is characterised by 'A person who plays by the rules, is fair, and accepts defeat with good humour'. The definition doesn't seem to elucidate 'the

recognised principles' any further than the original rule. Nowhere else in the racing rules does it further elaborate on the recognised principles.

A number of other sports have a section in their rules/laws on the 'Spirit of the Game' which appears to be analogous to our rule 2 and basic principle. The 'Laws of Cricket' begin with a preamble about the spirit of cricket which states '*Cricket is a game that owes much of its unique appeal to the fact that it should be played not only within its Laws but also within the Spirit of the Game. Any action which is seen to abuse this spirit causes injury to the game itself. The major responsibility for ensuring the spirit of fair play rests with the captains*'.

In common with a number of other sports, cricket takes the principles of the 'spirit' and further elaborates to produce a 'Code of Conduct'. These codes often define sanctions that will be given specific to the unwanted behaviour that is displayed. These codes can be sport-wide, series-wide, tournament-wide, tour-wide or club-wide. The ICC code of conduct for players and team officials (which covers professional players) gives various sanctions depending on the level of dissent. Low level dissent will attract a penalty of an official reprimand and/or a fine of up to 50% of the player's match fee. The level of penalty increases with the severity of dissent.

An example from amateur sport is from the Lawn Tennis Association which does not differentiate between types of dissent with different penalties, but gives different penalties depending on the number of violations. It does, however, define behaviour that constitutes a breach of the code of conduct. The more violations - the higher the penalty. There is a caveat in that, if the breach of code is deemed to be flagrant and/or injurious to the tournament and/or game, then the player may be defaulted immediately for a single violation.

We don't have a code of conduct for competitors in sailing, other than what is written in rules 2 & 69 as well as interpretative guidelines on the latter published by the RYA for Race Officials.

Getting back to sportsmanship, a multi-dimensional socio-psychological theory has been proposed (Velerand & Losier, 1994) which consists of five dimensions:

1. Respect for the social conventions of sport
2. Respect for the rules and officials
3. Respect for one's full commitment to participation
4. Respect and concern for the opponent
5. The absence of a negative approach to sport

Maybe these five dimensions provide a good basis for defining the recognised principles referred to in rule 2 (I'm a particular fan of dimension number 2).

Goal Orientation Reasons for Dissent

It's interesting to note a study by Tod & Hodge, Moral Reasoning and Achievement Motivation in Sport, which states that 'An individual's achievement goal orientation profile appeared to influence the level of moral reasoning used. Individuals whose goal profiles were dominated by an ego orientation tended to use a less mature level of moral reasoning that was influenced by self-centredness and a win-at-all-costs attitude. In contrast, individuals whose

goal profiles consisted of a combination of task and ego goal orientations tended to use more mature levels of moral reasoning. Their moral reasoning was characterised by a concern for all the people involved in the moral dilemma.'

I add this in as I think it's interesting to note that an individual's moral reasoning is likely to be related to their perception of sportsmanship and so their likelihood to show dissent at the decision of an official. Those individuals who show high task orientation exhibit adaptive behaviours such as persistence and a belief that success is the result of effort. These behaviours are also predicted to be associated with an ego orientation as long as the athlete has high perceived ability. A predominant ego orientation coupled with lower perceived ability is predicted to be associated with maladaptive behaviours including the avoidance of challenge, reduced persistence, task devaluation and a belief that success results from a natural ability (Duda, 1993; Nicholls, 1992; Roberts *et al.*, 1998). Duda *et al.* (1991) showed results that suggested that a goal profile of low task orientation and high ego orientation was related to the endorsement of unsportsmanlike-play and aggressive behaviour.

In my (relatively short) experience, I have seen little dissent from top level players (e.g. Williams, Ainslie, Percy) who I would suggest have high perceived ability and so show the adaptive behaviours associated with more task orientated beliefs. I would suggest that those players who do show dissent at the decision of an official are far more likely to be ego orientated, which leads to the display of unsportsmanlike behaviour.

Gamesmanship

Some issues surrounding dissent appear to be coming down to what Chris Atkins has described as dissent between competitors and red flag try-ons. This would best be described as gamesmanship, which has been defined as 'doing all that is possible to win a game without actually cheating'. There are three common techniques of gamesmanship, the first tending to be more prevalent at higher level events;

1. Breaking the flow of an opponent's play.
2. Causing an opponent to take the game less seriously or to over-think their position.
3. Intentionally making a "mistake" which gains an advantage over an opponent.

The example cited by Chris Atkins of red flag try-ons could easily fit into both 1 and 2. It is my opinion that the shouting and protestation that comes with dissent can sometimes have the effect of distracting the opposition and thus breaking the flow of play. These shouts may also affect the umpire's willingness to make calls against that player again in the match and lead them to question their own abilities.

So does gamesmanship break the rules? The answer depends on whether or not gamesmanship is unsportsmanlike conduct. I would suggest that, using the model of sportsmanship previously mentioned, gamesmanship is a breach of sportsmanship and is a highly undesirable development in our sport.

Conclusions

We already have a comprehensive and wide ranging set of sanctions available to us in the event of dissent. I can see no benefit in warning a competitor or team before penalising for dissent: giving a warning almost gives permission for one instance of dissent. A penalty should be given if the dissent is a breach of what has been agreed as dissent.

The key issue is defining which sanction to use in each circumstance of dissent or unsportsmanlike conduct. I support proposals for a code of conduct and related specified sanctions.

Perhaps it would be appropriate for JUG to write a Best Practice document that event organisers and Race Officials could refer to at events? (*See later. Ed.*). Chief Umpires should remind competitors of what is and is not acceptable during the competitors briefing. This can also be discussed during the umpire team briefing to ensure consistency in its application.

I can understand competitor frustration when calls are not discussed and clarified: this does lead to dissent. It is therefore essential that umpires make themselves available for discussion with competitors. I do appreciate the difficulty in achieving this within team racing time constraints. With regards to the number of calls made in a team race, perhaps the same approach could be used as in match racing, i.e. if the umpire is unable to recollect the details of the incident, then use the ‘what if’ scenario. Umpire decisions must be open to constructive discussion for the development of the sailors, the umpires and the sport as a whole.

If umpires are to be more ‘strict’ in dealing with dissent, then they must be confident in themselves and the calls that they make. This has an impact on umpire education. We must ensure that we maintain the standard of National Umpires appointed and provide opportunities for those already qualified to update skills or be benchmarked against a set standard.

*And a competitor’s view of the problem and the responsibilities of competitors - **Matt Findlay**’s contribution to an email discussion between active team racers:*

Umpires – who needs them?

Firstly, I'd like to consider why we compete. My favourite team racing event was the Winter Warmer when, in the final, we had three of the closest, most exciting and challenging races I've ever had. Despite having lost in the end, I came off the water still buzzing and feeling very satisfied that I had sailed at my best in the pressure situation. I probably learned more in those three races than in the 3 months or so of events prior to that.

This then is what it is about for me (and I hope for many of you too): enjoyment through rising to a challenge and learning from the process. In addition, as I look down the list of names on the entry list, it reminds me that it is also about catching up and socialising with old friends.

A humanistic definition of competition sums it up nicely: ‘Competition is a cooperative venture in which associates agree to provide each other with the necessary resistance to catalyse development of each other's human potential. Competitors agree to respect each other's human worth and dignity by striving for excellence; to strive for equalities of rights and opportunities by respecting the contest's rules; and to seek self determination and growth by giving full effort.’

‘At the conclusion of the contest, both parties profit from the game (through individual advancement of skill and improved individual performance), even though only one is the winner.’

Cheating (i.e. wilfully and knowingly breaking the rules) is not in the spirit of competition because the competitors do not benefit from the competition in the ways outlined above. This is supported by the common observation that no one enjoys sailing against people who ‘cheat’.

Dissent falls into the same category for the same reasons; abusive behaviour is not in the spirit of the competition.

So where do umpires fit in? Our sport is, by its nature, dictated by what lies within the rules and what is forbidden by them. Umpires make it possible for us to compete well (in respect to the definition given above) by objective clarification of the framework within which we compete. Pause for a moment and imagine life without umpires.

This concept is alien to some other sports such as athletics but less so, for example, in rugby.

The key to successful use of umpires is therefore twofold: 1) that the umpires have the best possible view of the situation and understanding of the rules as they apply to it, and 2) that, as competitors, we respect their decisions on the basis that they are making objective, rational and impartial decisions that we as competitors could not make (due to the red mist, if you like.)

Umpiring skill and dissent (showing distrust of the umpires) are therefore two separate issues.

Yes, some umpires do make mistakes which could be avoided by better positioning and understanding of team racing - but that is a separate issue to be addressed elsewhere. It should be standard practice that, when time permits, umpires engage in discussion with competitors regarding their rulings. Competitors need to be aware of how and when it is appropriate to approach umpires. The comparison with match racing is partially valid, but team racing umpires often have time pressures between races that match racing umpires do not have.

The issue here is that some competitors are pushing the rules very hard, and then reacting with unacceptable behaviour when calls go against them. This is not in the spirit of competition, it isn't fun for the competitors, the umpires or the spectators, and I believe therefore that it should be dealt with in the same way as in football or rugby. It isn't a case of giving umpires more powers; it's a case of getting the umpires to use their present powers and getting the competitors to understand why they need to.

As competitors, we have to agree to accept that umpires are acting to the best of their abilities in a rational, impartial and objective way. It is important that we respect our umpires or we will lose them.

We face an interesting time in our sport. The sport has grown and is recognised more widely than ever before. Team racing is by far the most spectator friendly version of sailing, as evidenced at the Wilson Trophy, and has potential to become increasingly popular with both sailors and the media. We need to be showing spectators, organisers and newcomers to the sport (whether competitors or umpires) that it is a fun and friendly arena in which we do battle, and one in which they really ought to want to become involved. Treating your competitors with respect and exercising self control when it goes wrong is not incongruent with 'trying hard to win'. I cite Gary Lineker, who did not receive a single red or yellow card during his entire career, as an example.

Many of the events on the calendar are attended by school and university age teams whose sailors will get better and remain in the sport over the years as we all have done. It is plausible that these young sailors look to us as examples and I think it is very important that we show them that the spoilt brat type of behaviour (when it all goes wrong) that we see so much of throughout sailing is not acceptable and not welcome in our discipline.

Furthermore, I believe that we all need to look at the route down which team racing is progressing, whereby we are all pushing the rules so hard that races are won and lost by umpire decisions as often as by fast clean sailing. If we progress down this route, yes the umpires can get better but we will simply push the rules even harder and the result will be the same - it all comes down to umpire calls. I explained earlier why it is no fun racing against 'cheats'. There are people against whom many of us do not enjoy sailing because they push the rules so hard that whether you beat them or not doesn't come down to who sails more skilfully but instead down to the umpire's decisions. This is no fun. Nor is it in the spirit of competition as outlined above.

I don't offer a solution to this problem but I think this is as good a time as any to raise it because it is this mentality, and this approach to team racing, that results in the worst dissent. This is because the competitor is effectively failing to take responsibility for his actions when they go wrong, and instead blames the umpires. When I think about who the worst 'dissenters' are in our sport, they are also generally the people I least enjoy sailing against.

I encourage all team-racers to give the issue some thought, discuss it within their teams and see if this season they can win races without involving the umpires. As Paul Elvstrom said, "You haven't won if you haven't won with the respect of your competitors."

To summarise then:

- Dissent and umpire ability are separate issues.
- Dissent shows a lack of respect for the umpires and other competitors, and should be punished.
- Umpires and competitors can learn much from each other, and it should be standard practice for them to talk. Competitors have the right to know what the umpire was

thinking /seeing as this assists their personal development; however, the competitor also has to be careful how they go about this process.

- We have an opportunity to change our sport for the better, and an obligation to do so, by emphasising the importance of sailing cleanly and avoid requiring umpire decisions whenever possible.

Race Officials' Update

David Campbell-James updates us on activities and opportunities in the pipeline:

RYA WEBSITE ADDRESS www.rya.org.uk/workingwithus/raceofficials

COURSES AND REGIONAL CONFERENCES

The Regional Conferences in 2008 (to be held in February and March) will be combined Judging & Umpiring and Race Management Conferences. The agenda of topics, venues and dates are being prepared and will be published shortly, but the following venues have been agreed already:

- South Wales Region at Mumbles on 16 February
- South West Region at Royal Western at Plymouth on 23 February
- South East Region at Eastbourne on 1 March
- South Region at Royal Yacht Squadron, Cowes on 8 March
- North Regions, including North East and West, at Blackpool and Fleetwood on 8 March
- Yorkshire and Humberside at Ripon on 8 March

RULES DISPUTES COURSE

This one day course is available to all Clubs through your Regional Rules Adviser. The course deals with Advisory Hearings and how to help Clubs, Race Officials and sailors to ensure that racing is carried out in an enjoyable way within the Racing Rules. The course is practical with scenarios and role plays around the procedures involved. To arrange a course at your Club, please contact your Regional Rules Adviser whose details can be found on the website under Judging & Umpiring. We are hoping to have a one day Basic Rules Course for Clubs and Classes in place shortly to help improve on overall knowledge of the racing rules.

DINGHY SAILING SHOW

The space is booked for a stand at the Show on 1-2 March 2008; we hope the stand will be more a part of the RYA stand and slightly bigger than last year.

RACE OFFICIALS BOOKLET

We have recently reprinted the Race Officials booklet which lists details of all qualified British Race Officials. We are happy to send a copy to anyone who emails a request. This list includes all Race Officials, unlike the Directory on the website which requires a signed data protection form. If you are not included on the website directory and would like to be, then contact **Jo Moulton** and she will send you a form.

RACE OFFICIALS' CLOTHING

The blue Oxford shirts with the RYA Race Official logo have now been despatched to all National Officials who completed the application form, and extra shirts for National Officials are now available for £22 by ordering through the RYA. Contact **Joanne Moulton** for an order form.

RACE OFFICIALS AND RACING RULES LEAFLETS

The Race Officials leaflet containing the new Qualifications matrix and the Racing Rules leaflets detailing the Best Practices and Guidelines are available on the website, or can be sent to Race Officials on request. There is a slight change on the matrix in that Regional Umpires are now required to have the relevant (Team Racing or Match Racing) Call Book.

REGATTA DAYS AT COWES WEEK and SAIL FOR GOLD

We had 6 attendees on Monday and Tuesday of Skandia Cowes Week, and 8 attendees on the Sunday of Sail for Gold. The contrast between the days was extremely interesting, with the planning and organisation of the Squadron compared to the excitement of the medal races in Portland harbour. We were very grateful to Cowes and the Squadron for an excellent two days, and to **Frank and Jenny Newton** for their hospitality on Sorebones.

RULE 42 OPPORTUNITIES

Chris Watts offered two days of training at the Finn Masters, but there were no takers.

RACE OFFICIAL OPPORTUNITIES

If your Club requires an experienced Race Official, or is able to offer race official opportunities for less experienced officials, please contact **Joanne Moulton** so that we can advertise your requirement or opportunity on the RYA website.

Any queries on any Race Officials matters, contact **David Campbell James**, RYA Race Officials Education Officer by email raceofficials@rya.org.uk or telephone 02380 604157.

Mentoring and the Young Officials Group (YOG)

If there are any other young officials or would-be officials that would like to join our group, then please feel free to get in contact with either of the following people, Alan Baser (A.Baser@Brighton.ac.uk) or Jon Napier (napier.jon@googlemail.com).

Racing Rules Advisory Team

In response to requests, the Racing Rules Advisory Team (RATS) will to publish some FAQ's on the RYA website early in the New Year.

New RYA Best Practice Guideline: Dealing With Dissent

Dealing with Dissent

General

Unacceptable dissent is defined as the dispute of a race official's action or decision in a manner which implies incompetence, prejudice or insult, and which is offensive to the race official concerned. Expressing a difference or disagreement are acceptable

behaviours. Abuse and rebellion are unacceptable behaviours. Expressing opposition is a marginal behaviour. Dissent can occur on-the-water, ashore or in the Protest Committee (PC)/Jury room, and sometimes race officials may find it difficult to cope with a situation without appearing too authoritarian.

There can be a wide range of levels of dissent, and there are also differences in the perceived level of acceptance of dissent in different forms of racing (youth events, professional match racing etc).

Nevertheless, the RYA Racing Charter states that 'foul or abusive language, intimidation, aggressive behaviour or lack of respect for others and their property will not be tolerated'. This applies to competitors, race officials, coaches and other advisors. In addition, abuse of officials is identified in the RYA Guidance as 'behaviour that would justify action under Rule 69'.

It is important that all race officials work together to tackle the dissent when it is encountered. Failure to confront unacceptable behaviour at the time can lead competitors to think it is acceptable and repeat it in the future.

Event Officials

All event officials (whether or not a judge or umpire) are entitled to be treated with fairness and respect. Almost all will have given up their free time to officiate for no reward other than the fact they enjoy the sport.

It is helpful for the Chief Umpire or PC/Jury Chairman to remind the organisers that any problems with competitors should be reported to them.

Hearings

The ISAF International Judges Manual states that, if a party to a protest requires clarification, this should be given immediately, but no further discussion should be permitted at this time. It may be that, if a competitor remains unclear or unsure about a decision, the judges have not written a clear enough decision (facts found, conclusions, decision etc).

Whether or not, and to what extent, discussion with a dissatisfied party at a future time should be permitted will depend on the experience and confidence of the chairman and members of the PC/Jury. Permitting an informal discussion with the PC/Jury, and setting a time for this discussion, in response to dissatisfaction when the protest decision is announced can often defuse a stressful atmosphere; conversely, refusing any future discussion can often exacerbate the bad feeling.

Alternatively, a PC/Jury member may be appointed to explain a decision informally. If this approach is adopted, one PC/Jury member should explain the decision and

another judge should facilitate the discussion and ensure it remains cordial and to the point.

Umpiring/On-the-Water Judging

The ISAF International Umpires Manuals state that umpires have an obligation to explain their calls to all competitors and umpires. This principle covers match racing, team racing, umpired fleet racing and Rule 42 judging.

Whenever two people, umpires or competitors, think that different things happened, they are unlikely to change their mind. We all see things differently, and it is important to bear this in mind. It is important to distinguish between differences of opinion relating to what happened (facts) and interpretations of the rules.

Explanations should be restricted to giving the reason for the call - for example, "We considered you had no need to change course to avoid the port-tack boat". Any rational discussion on the applicable rules and 'what if' questions should be answered. If a competitor disputes the facts, it can be useful for the umpires to remind the competitor that they can only see an incident once and from the position they were in at the time.

Experienced racers use this discussion to confirm that their understanding of the rules is the same as that of the umpires, and therefore the conversation is likely to be quick and civil.

Less experienced racers are more likely to want to prove that 'they were right' and the conversation can easily turn into an argument. In such cases, the umpire must avoid getting pulled into an argument concerning the facts and should finish the conversation by advising the crew "See us when ashore".

Umpires should be aware that emotions can often be running high at the end of a race and it may be best to wait a couple of minutes before conversing with the crew. Indeed, unless a competitor requests a discussion, it is sometimes best for the umpires not to start one at this time.

Umpires should be prepared to own up to any errors quickly and graciously. Doing so will greatly increase the respect of competitors for the umpires.

Umpires do not have to tolerate any form of abuse, but turning a blind eye in moments of stress may often be a better approach. It is usually more helpful to speak to the competitors about such breaches away from the incident (in both time and distance).

Taking further action depends on the words, the manner in which they have been spoken, and any other related actions of the crew of the boat. If they merely express unhappiness or disappointment, or that in their opinion the decision was wrong, then a penalty is not appropriate.

However, if the total effect is to convey that the umpires are incompetent or prejudiced, a penalty may be justified, whether the meaning is directed only at the umpires or also to others nearby.

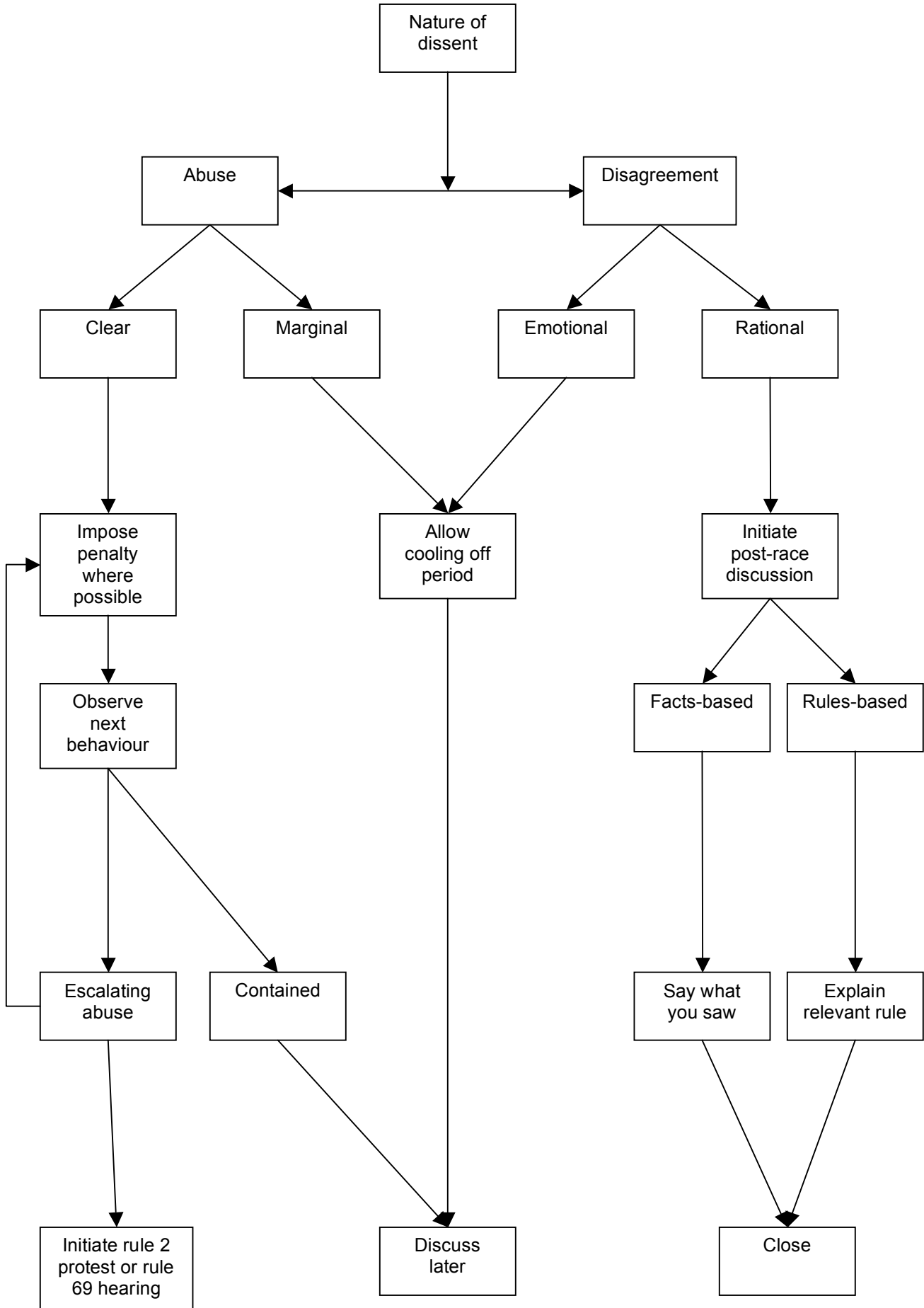
If the meaning is clearly insulting to the umpires, a penalty should be imposed and, if repeated or when particularly offensive, a rule 69 report should be made and a hearing considered by the complete PC/Jury. What one umpire may perceive as 'banter' may be regarded by others as unacceptable.

Race Management Teams

Most members of the race management team are in close proximity to competitors as they carry out their tasks. Sometimes dissent occurs which can lead to unfortunate incidents, especially in the heat of the moment.

It is wise not to be drawn into debate or argument on the water but it is recommended in the ISAF & RYA Race Management Manuals for the race officer (and other members of the race management team, if appropriate) to make themselves available ashore each day to listen to the competitors and explain (or apologise!) for their actions. The time and place for this should be given in the briefing or on the official notice board.

However, race management team members do not have to tolerate any form of abuse and, if something that has been said to them is clearly insulting, they should speak to the race officer whose job it is to speak to the competitor and decide whether to protest the competitor under rule 2 or make a rule 69 report to the Protest Committee/Jury.



Other RYA Best Practice Guidelines Updated

INFORMATION FOR COMPETITORS FROM THE PROTEST COMMITTEE/JURY

1. On-the-Water

Sailing is essentially a self-policing sport. The PC/Jury expects that competitors will take a penalty promptly when appropriate. The primary responsibility for protesting breaches of the rules is with the competitors, not the PC/Jury. However, in addition to taking action in accordance with Appendix P (Immediate Penalties for Breaking Rule 42), the PC/Jury may lodge protests in accordance with Rule 60.3.

The PC/Jury will not normally protest unless they observe an apparent breach of good sportsmanship (Rule 2). Examples of such breaches are:

- Reckless sailing – sailing likely to result in damage or injury.
- Apparent deliberate breaches of rules.
- Intimidating other boats – often evidenced by unnecessary shouting or foul language.
- Failing to take a penalty after knowingly touching a mark
- Team tactics – sailing to benefit another competitor and to the detriment of your own position.

2. Rule 41 – Outside Help

A crew that is in the water is in danger. Therefore, if recovered from the water by another boat (racing or not), they do not break Rule 41 provided the crew's boat is in the same area as the recovery when they are reunited. Receiving help to right a capsize, or having made progress in the race when a recovered crew is reunited with their boat, does break Rule 41. Any occurrence of help must be reported to the PC/Jury who shall then decide the appropriate action. The PC/Jury will not penalise actions based solely on safety.

3. Rule 42 – Propulsion

If Appendix P is operative, a single judge will signal a yellow flag protest when satisfied a boat has broken Rule 42, irrespective of the number of judges observing the incident. The following points may help understand the application of Rule 42:

- Official ISAF interpretations of rule 42, obtainable at <http://www.sailing.org/2004.php>
- When a boat's second Rule 42 protest in the regatta is signalled in a race that is subsequently postponed, recalled or abandoned, the boat may compete in the restarted race. However, for each boat, every yellow flag protest counts in the total number of such protests.
- Although judges will signal a Rule 42 protest as soon as possible, this might be after the boat has crossed the finishing line. In the case of a boat's first protest, the boat must take the Two-Turns penalty, return to the course side of the finishing line and finish.

If a boat is yellow-flag protested, the competitor may ask the judges for an explanation after the completion of the race. This can be done either on the water or by asking to arrange a meeting with the judges. The PC/Jury may brief all competitors regarding Rule 42 protests.

4. Rule 69 – Allegations of Gross Misconduct

Any form of cheating, including not telling the truth in a hearing, is considered to be a gross misconduct. This may give rise to a hearing under Rule 69, possibly resulting in heavy penalty. Other examples of behaviour that would justify action under Rule 69 include:

- Bullying, intimidation or discriminatory behaviour
- Fighting and assaults
- Theft, or damage or abuse of property
- Abuse of officials
- Using foul or abusive language intended to offend, or inappropriate to the occasion/location
- Intentional refusal to comply with Organising Authority or PC/Jury requirements or requests.

5. Requests for Redress for Alleged Race Committee Error in Scoring a Boat OCS, ZFP or BFD

Boats sometimes want to challenge the Race Committee's decision to score them OCS, ZFP or BFD by requesting redress under Rule 62.1(a). For a boat to be given redress, conclusive evidence must be presented to the PC/Jury that the Race Committee made an error. Even video evidence is rarely conclusive. In the absence of

conclusive evidence to the contrary, the PC/Jury will uphold the Race Committee's decision. Evidence of the relative positions of two boats that are scored differently is not conclusive evidence that either boat started properly.

6. Video Evidence

If a party to a hearing wishes to bring video evidence, it is their responsibility to provide the equipment required to view the video.

7. Observers at Hearings

It is intended that hearings are open to observers, but this will be subject to the space available in the hearings and at the discretion of the PC/Jury. Preference will be given to the parties to the hearing who may normally bring one person to observe although, in some circumstances, the PC/Jury may decide to restrict observers. Observers sit further back from the parties and, unless authorised by the PC/Jury Chair, are not permitted to speak, communicate with the parties, use cellular phones, or use photographic or recording equipment, even if the hearing is adjourned. An RYA document headed Information for Observers at Protest Committee or International Jury Hearings may be provided to observers prior to the hearing.

8. Failure to Attend a Hearing

Competitors should be aware that the PC/Jury may proceed with a hearing [under Rule 63.3(b)] in the absence of one or more of the parties, and this will not be grounds for re-opening unless the PC/Jury is satisfied that the party/parties made every reasonable effort to find out the time of the hearing and attend.

9. Acknowledgement of Penalties or Retirement

Forms may be available for competitors to declare that they have taken a penalty or retired. It is an advantage to complete these forms, especially if competitors are named as a party to a protest.

10. PC/Jury Chairman

The PC/Jury Chairman at this event is, whom competitors, team leaders and coaches are encouraged to contact through the Race Office if they wish to discuss PC/Jury procedure and policy.

