

JUG NEWS

Issues and News for Judges and Umpires

July 2007

Chairman of JUG, Peter Johnson, invites your opinions:

Welcome to another JUG Newsletter, ably put together again by Carol Haines.

Undoubtedly a highlight since the last JUG Newsletter was the highly successful Judges and Umpires Conference at Lilleshall in February. Over 60 people attended, and there seemed to be something for everyone. Many thanks to David C-J for putting it all together. Playing out the rules advisory scenarios in multiple groups of three was particularly memorable – it is enlightening how written scenarios with TSS diagrams could be interpreted in such different ways!

JUG is now considering next year's conference. Because we are planning a large conference in early 2009 (together with our race management friends) to coincide with the introduction of the next rules revision, we are minded instead to have one-day regional judging and umpiring conferences in 2008, probably organized by the Regional Rules Advisers (RRAs) but using core material supplied by JUG. The aim is to build on the largely successful appointment of RRAs and the rules advisory seminars that are being rolled out this year (the seminars that is, not the advisers!) If you have views, or suggestions for inclusion in the next conferences, please let me know.

On July 1st, revised RYA race official qualifications for appointment *and re-appointment* will have come into effect. There is now just a single application form for national/regional judge/umpire/race officer appointment/re-appointment! There is also a simplified and rationalized matrix for the qualification requirements, that is reproduced elsewhere in this Newsletter – please study carefully.

Members of JUG have been busy badgers in recent months in other ways. Class Judging and Judgelink continue to expand under the guidance of David Brunskill, and often gets particularly good reviews from outside our community. Match and team race umpiring courses, as well as judge and pre-IJ courses, have all been run in the first half of this year, often bringing new young blood into our 'trade'. Also, Guidelines on the Conduct & Competence of Race Officials have been developed (and should soon be published on the web), and a Code of Conduct is in the pipeline.

Finally, JUG is beginning to address how to set up a mentoring scheme that actually works at all levels – but more on this will come in a later issue of the Newsletter.

Not everyone has the time to be on committees, but nearly everyone has opinions about judging and umpiring issues, and you can play your part. If you have strong views or ideas, please email me – obviously, I cannot guarantee that everything may

be acted on, but I'll certainly put all such feedback into the 'mix' to ensure that JUG members are aware of the wider views of our community.

Peter M. Johnson
mq22@liv.ac.uk
07973-247893

Chris Atkins, Chairman of RYA Racing Committee, picks up the theme of participation:

Have you ever thought to yourself ... "What is the purpose of the rules?". Is it to avoid contact or to make racing "fair", or more fun? What is the purpose of the rules of golf? Or the rules of the 100 metres sprint? Or the offside rule in football? Yes, what is the purpose of the offside rule - didn't hockey improve when it got rid of it!

And what is the biggest challenge with the Racing Rules of Sailing? Is it that they are too complicated ... or that the other person doesn't understand them? Are they (and the penalty) too black and white when many incidents are grey? Is enforcing them quick and simple, or time-consuming and not enjoyable? If I protest and win, what impact does it have on the fun the other sailor has had? If I protest and lose?

So how can we best help as experts?

RYA's tagline is "promoting and protecting boating". ISAF "... envisions the lifetime sport of sailing as an attractive, united and globally thriving participation sport". And the purpose of RYA Racing Department is to make racing more fun, to encourage more people to go racing, more frequently.

As rules experts, I believe we have a wide role and responsibility to promote the sport and support the sailors. For me, some of the key initiatives that each of us should consider are:

- consistency: are we advising and following the same best practices as our colleagues? Are we learning from others, both in the UK and overseas?
- sailor advice and education: do we do what we can to ensure a sound and common understanding of the rules?
- processes for rules disputes: are we all comfortable encouraging simpler, more immediate and less adversarial processes for handling rules disputes?
- feedback from sailors: is there mutual friendship and respect, and open dialogue, between each of us and the sailor?
- standards of behaviour: do we have a common view on acceptable behaviour, and our responsibility when we witness behaviour (sailor, official, colleague or another) that falls short?

I encourage you to keep asking: what is the additional thing I could start doing that might help the sport, the sailors and other volunteers?

Chris Atkins

Nigel Vick's reflections on actual practice on the water focuses on some of the issues raised by Chris, highlighting, if not providing the final answer to, the questions that we all have to deal with on occasion:

Am I an Automaton?

John Doerr once told me that you have the rules chip implanted and all you have to do as an umpire is to apply those rules.

I disagree. As a Team Race Umpire, I see lots of cases where we shortcut the rules. For a start, under the two flag rule does it make sense to wait for the yellow flag, when you know that you are going to show a green flag? I suspect that most of us will green the incident, just to get it out of the way. In a particularly hard fought race, if we continue to wait we will miss the next incident. That is not what the rules say we should do – until there is a yellow flag we should be passive.

I am equally certain that some of us will red flag an incident, before there is a protest, or perhaps before there is a yellow flag. Particularly where we feel that there has been a blatant infringement. We could justify the penalty under the fair sailing provision, but surely the blatantness is a matter of judgement?

Then, there are the poor unfortunate inexperienced sailors who drag out the yellow flag first and request an umpire decision without first displaying a red flag. How many Umpires will green flag the incident and how many will allow the red flag to be displayed? Since it was clearly not displayed at the first reasonable opportunity, it should be a waste of time, but isn't it part of our role to educate the less experienced? Won't they think we are unduly pedantic if we don't allow them to put the correct flag up? Should we simply restrict ourselves to simple words of advice – tell them that there was no red flag and then green the incident.

What about rule 42? At some competitions we will warn competitors, particularly if the event is a "lower level" event. At others, the chief umpire will say no warnings. Do we penalize every infringement of rule 42 or do we just do the more blatant ones?

How much time do we allow for a boat to react? At the top level practically nothing, but at a "lower level" event the time will be greater. What does the rule have to say about this? Is it the universal reasonable sailor or the reasonable sailors at that event?

Should we explain all of our decisions at the finish or only when we are asked, or is it a matter of personal preference. Is it the Chief Umpire's job to define the policy? At a jury hearing, do we deliver the verdict or do we spend a little time trying to show the sailor why we reached the verdict?

I love the fact that there are no answers. You do your best and you apply your judgement. You try to be consistent but I also try to be reasonable and as competitor friendly as I can be. It is not about having a chip implanted and acting as an automaton. It is about helping fellow sailors to enjoy the sport. It is extremely challenging but, at the end of the day, it is great FUN. When we lose sight of that fact,

that is the day I quit. But it is interesting how long I have remembered and begrudged Mr Doerr's comment.

Nigel Vick

Rules Advisors Scheme

Progress report presented to the JUG committee meeting at the end of May 2007:

Robert Owens (South East): Limited progress - some contact from clubs. Any discussions at club level seem to be aimed at after the sailing season.

Trevor Lewis (East): Grafham is still on/off. Burnham and Horning are looking at a winter date.

Charlie Watson (South West): One session run at Fowey Gallants SC arranged by Ian Owers. The day went well. The clubs represented were Fowey Gallants (2), Porthpean SC (1), Penzance SC (2) and St Ives (1). There was plenty of interaction from everyone and I believe it was well received and the process will be adopted within each of these clubs. Another course at Restronguet SC on 9th June was well received. Plenty of interaction and some quite involved discussions. There was some interest in following on to becoming a Race Official and great interest in Judgelinek and requests to have a Judge at Falmouth Week.

Terence Brownrigg (Scotland): Nothing to report; I shall have a determined effort to run some courses after the sailing season is over and before the end of the year. I have got **Gilmour Manuel** to agree to look after the East Coast area as Scotland is a big area. I had one enquiry from Royal Findhorn about a protest they had. All beautifully presented and, in my view, the correct decision reached, but a pity they had not addressed the validity issue initially as the protest should never have been heard! No wonder the protestee was aggrieved and kicked up a fuss.

Nadina Lincoln (West Midlands): I have booked to do a course at South Staffs on Sept 1st. It will be open to members of other WM clubs. I am attending race officials meeting at Midland SC on 23rd June and hope to generate some interest from club representatives there for a further course in autumn

Eddie Ramsden (North East & South Wales)!: My "two" regions have so far not firmly fixed dates/venues. One date was agreed in South Wales and then could not proceed.

Bill O'Hara (Northern Ireland): I am running a course in Northern Ireland on the 11th June.

Peter Johnson (North West): Significant interest in the region with courses scheduled for September/October at West Kirby, Royal Windymere(!), Hollingworth

Lake and, possibly, Ullswater. The latter claim they can fill an entire course from their own members (I have told them it's not a rules course).

Richard Thompson (Thames Valley): No activity or interest at the moment.

Mike Butterfield (North Wales): I have run one course at Aberdyfi and am running a second on 10th June at Pwllheli.

William Jeffcoate (East Midlands): I have written formally to all the Volvo clubs in the region and am waiting to hear - aiming for an Autumn initiative. I got one enthusiastic message relayed from Carsington after the Dinghy Show. I then got no response when I sent an email.

Carol Haines (Yorkshire & Humberside): One session run at Pennine SC on June 2nd. Seven course members representing six clubs (some double entries). Well received with compliments to the devisers of the course. Offers of venues from Ripon, Royal Yorkshire, West Riding & Yorkshire Ouse. I shall be trying to agree dates this month.

Problems/difficulties:

Charlie Watson (South West): My home clubs in Weymouth have shown no interest despite being offered several dates and the option of perhaps splitting the course over a couple of evenings. I have had interest expressed from some other clubs but nothing further heard.

Mike Butterfield (North Wales): Problems were:

Lack of Rules knowledge;

Lack of ability to find facts;

Meaning of 'room' and when it overrode right of way;

Difference between advisory and arbitration when the penalty was discretionary for each.

Terence Brownrigg (Scotland): I think the timing of the initiative was unfortunate - clubs had finalised their SI's and NOR's by the time we were ready to roll this out. I did get a half hour slot at a Race Officers' course and the idea was favourably received but when I tried to convert local interest into concrete bookings, everyone was either sailing or desperately trying to get fitting out done against the clock.

Helpful ideas/ tips:

Charlie Watson (South West) had a brief chat with **David CJ** at the Eric Twiname Finals and suggested that perhaps a session could be offered to the parents of the sailors at the Regional Zone Championships during September. He was receptive to the idea and will try to work out the best method of offering it to the parents.

RACE OFFICIALS

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

COURSES AND REGIONAL CONFERENCES

We are working on Judging and Umpiring Courses for next winter with the following possibilities:

Judge Course at Carsington November 17/18th

Team Racing Umpire Course in Edinburgh December 8/9th

Match Racing Umpire Course at Queen Mary at the end of November

Judge Course at Hamble in January/February

Team Racing Umpire Course in England

The Regional Race Management Coordinators will be planning Race Management Courses through the winter.

Plans for Judging and Umpiring and Race Management Regional Conferences in early 2008 are being considered by JUG and RMG, respectively.

RACE OFFICIAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Race Officials area on the RYA website has a number of opportunities for Judges, Umpires and Race Officers. We need more opportunities, but there are positions for Umpires at the National Match Racing Championship and a number of positions at Hayling Island for Race Officers keen to gain experience on the sea.

Additionally, I am looking for a number of Judges and Race Officers for the Zone Championships to be held around the country on 29-30 September, but particularly four Race Officers for Weymouth on those dates. These are multi-class, multi-course events for the Junior classes including Windsurfers with up to 250 entries.

RACE OFFICIALS CLOTHING

The blue Oxford shirts with the 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.

REGATTA DAYS AT SAIL FOR GOLD

We intend to offer Race Officials a further opportunity to watch racing on the water at the Sail for Gold Regatta at Weymouth on Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd September. This is the major UK regatta for all the Olympic classes with up to 300 entries expected, 10 classes, 3 or 4 race courses in Portland Harbour and Weymouth Bay.

RACE OFFICIALS INSURANCE

The leaflet has finally been completed and delivered. It gives details of the Policy including what is and is not covered. There was a final hiccup with Bermuda and Israel not being included on the countries covered by the Policy, but these may be considered by the Insurers on an individual application basis. Contact me for a copy.

RACE OFFICIALS AND RACING RULES LEAFLETS

The Race Officials leaflet containing the new Qualifications Matrix (see below), 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.

RYA WEBSITE

Work continues on making the website easier to find and more information is being added in a number of areas.

For Race Officials - Go to Working with Us/Race Officials and then to Opportunities, How to become a Race Official, Directory, Courses/Conferences, etc

For Racing Rules – Go to Knowledge Base/Racing Rules

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

Judgelinek

David Brunskill reports on the activity in the junior and youth classes:

RYA Class Judge Scheme

The **Cadet** class seem very happy with the way things are going. **Penny Carter** is involved with regattas and squad training

Comment from the **Optimist** class is that more than one judge is definitely necessary for the larger events.

Charlie Watson is due to rotate out of the **Toppers** after 4 years and discussions have begun with the class chairman about his replacement.

The **420** class is not using advisory hearings for the selectors but is likely to do so at the Nationals.

William Jeffcoate is working closely with the **RS200** class. His aim is primarily to bring up rules knowledge and awareness.

Judgelink

Work with WPNSA continues.

Judgelink has been involved in putting together the protest committees for the following regattas at WPNSA:

- Laser SB3 Europeans
- Optimist Nationals
- Sharpie Europeans
- Dart Nationals

Judgelink is already working with WPNSA on the following regattas for 2008

- Moth Worlds
- Tempest Worlds
- Byte Worlds
- 9er nationals (which may combine with the Byte Worlds).

A protest committee matrix has been structured to help clubs/classes work out protest committee structures for major regattas.

RYA Racing Rules / Race Officials Administrator

Gordon Stredwick writes:

I am pleased to advise that Laura Jennings will join the RYA on 9th July as the new Racing Rules/Race Officials Administrator. Laura replaces Rebecca Collins who left to pursue her career elsewhere.

Laura can be contacted on 0845 345 0382 and laura.jennings@rya.org.uk (also rulesadmin@rya.org.uk and raceofficialsadmin@rya.org.uk).

Reappointments

Colleagues whose appointment is coming up for renewal can find the recently rationalized and simplified forms on the RYA website. The requirements for each level and stage in the process have been put together in a single table, which is attached below. Your attention is drawn to the VHF and PB2 requirements which may have changed since you first qualified.

RYA RACE OFFICIALS QUALIFICATIONS MATRIX

FIRST APPOINTMENT	SEMINAR	EXAM	PERFORM ASSESS	MINIMUM EXPERIENCE	REFERENCE	VHF	POWER BOAT 2	MANUALS
RACE OFFICERS								
National	YES	YES	NO	4 Major Events	2	YES	YES	ISAF Manual
Regional	YES	YES	NO	4 Events	1	YES	NO	NO
JUDGES								
National	YES	YES	NO	4 Major Events	2	YES	YES	ISAF Manual, Case Books
Regional	YES	YES	NO	4 Protest Committees	1	NO	NO	NO
UMPIRES								
National	YES	YES	YES	4 Major Events	2	YES	YES	ISAF Manual, Call Book
Regional	YES	NO	YES	4 Events	1	YES	YES	NO

REAPPOINTMENT

The same, except that for Race Officers and Judges a Conference replaces the Seminar and Exam, and for Umpires a Conference replaces the Seminar and either the Exam or the Performance Assessment.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Criteria (except VHF/PB2) to be achieved within last 4 years prior to 1 November of the year of application.

Member of the RYA/experienced racing sailor/email user with internet access/UK passport holder or principal residence in UK.

References must be from the 4 events demonstrating experience and on the appropriate RYA form.

Performance Assessments may not be taken before Regional Umpire experience has been gained. Exams and Performance Assessments may not be retaken within 6 months of a failure. International race officials automatically qualify for national status for the duration of their international status. Initial international applicants must hold the equivalent national qualification. Further information and Reference and Application Forms are available on the RYA website at www.rya.org.uk/workingwithus/raceofficials

Mentoring and YOG

Alan Baser introduces two new initiatives from JUG:

Mentoring

At its recent meeting, the Judge and Umpire Group resolved to set up a system to support new and aspiring judges and umpires. The group has decided that a formalized mentoring system would provide the most benefit to all stakeholders. It is intended that the mentoring scheme will be able to support new officials throughout their development to National Status.

We are in the very early days of development and we are committed to providing a scheme that will be as effective as possible. In order to ensure that the mentoring system will be as beneficial as possible to all involved there will be a period of development and trial over the coming months. Systems and guidance will be put in place to support not only the person being mentored, but also the mentor. When the trial period has been completed, the scheme will be rolled out across the activities covered by JUG.

To assist the development the mentoring scheme, JUG has appointed Alan Baser to coordinate activities. Any enquiries or comments that you may have should be directed to Alan, his email address is A.Baser@Brighton.ac.uk.

Young Officials Group

Although I've been judging and umpiring for a relatively short period of time I've made some great friends. With some of those friends we've formed what has developed into the 'Young Officials Group'. Although we're not an official group of the RYA, the sole thing that links us all is our love of the sport and our love of race officiating!

The main business of the group is to provide a platform for social interaction with other members. We regularly meet up throughout the year at various events and occasionally outside of events. Through this interaction we support each other, we discuss problems or ideas that we're having and share information relating to officiating. Other members of the group can often provide beneficial introductions to people and to events and can be an informal point of reference. Our membership is very active within judging and umpiring and can be found at numerous events throughout the year.

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@gmail.com)

Reports and articles on subjects of interest to Judges and Umpires are earnestly sought. Email chaines@tinyworld.co.uk

My thanks to all the voluntary or pressed contributors to this edition of JUG News.