

Sailing Committee Minutes – Thursday 23rd September 2021

Present on Zoom: Bob Joce, Ross Malloy, Andrew Craig, Liz Pescod, Tony Woods, Andy Draper and Janet Hawkins.

1. Matters arising

Covered elsewhere in the minutes.

2. Sunday Series

2.1 *Slow Handicap Cut-off:* Noted that the Aeros currently racing would like to do so together, rather than in different fleets; noted also request from the 2000 sailors to reconsider their fleet. SC considered the boats that would be left in the Slow Handicap Fleet and agreed that it made sense to keep slow handicap to Fevas, Toppers, etc. Agreed that the fleets would now be assigned: 1147 and below to Fast Handicap; 1148 and above to Slow Handicap. This would start from Winter Series 2021. Noted that using W flag could also prove useful to avoid delays for other fleets and the start of the second race on a Sunday.

2.2 *Use of U Flag:* Noted there had been a request not to use U flag for Sunday racing. Discussion ranged across issues – ILCA fleet quite like use of U flag as it is more likely to lead to a race rather than general recalls. Noted that it was better to get racing started than have a series of recalls. Agreed that the prep flag default for first ILCA start is P, with option for U if a big turn-out defined as 25+. Agreed that RO Teams need to be informed/reminded of this and LP/JH would send out an update.

2.3 *Location of the Windward Mark:* Agreed that this should be kept away from the bank and the bund. Noted there was a calculation of 9 x height of barrier for downwind and 5 x for upwind to get cleaner wind. Discussion ranged over difficulties arising from sudden wind shifts and the view from the committee boat whilst adjusting courses and the balance between avoiding dead air and having shorter courses leading to more rounds (less than ideal). Noted that course setters and RO Teams should be encouraged to use a larger area of the reservoir that that longer beats made racing more interesting. Noted that the average height of the wall was between 4-6 m as a rule of thumb and that the views of the course setters could be crucial to guide the RO Team on the committee boat on setting windward marks in wind and out of shifty/dead zones as much as conditions allowed. Noted also that leeward marks needed to be set as leeward as possible. Good communication between course setters and the RO Team would facilitate this greatly. Noted the balance between leaving a corridor for windsurfers to launch and the operation of the barge was also something to be factored into course setting. RM explained that there are 5 more staff going through training as safety helms and course setters so most of the regular weekend team would soon be able to assist and be aware of the above. Agreed that RO Teams and course setters to be reminded/informed of this; encourage and understand that constant and constructive communication between safety teams and RO Team is helpful – RM and LP/JH to action.

2.4 *Role of Pin End boat:* Noted that request for clarification and consistency of role had been requested. There had been constructive discussions on the role of the Pin End boat in club and open meeting races at QMSC. Noted that this can be different in coastal locations. Agreed that it is the role of the RO to decide which boats are over / not over, but that they may need assistance in identifying the sail number – which can be provided by the Pin End boat. It is absolutely the case that safety boats, Pin End Boats should not be making the call. Noted that for open meetings, it may be possible to anchor a safety boat at the Pin End, but that this decision would be discussed with the RO and the Duty Officer on the day; this is the exception and will not be the norm for club racing. Agreed that communication of the respective roles to be shared with safety teams and RO Teams; RM and LP/JH to action.

Agreed that the position of safety boats at Pin End (discussed earlier in the year) had been actioned and that being as close to transit as possible, whilst keeping out of the way for those crossing the line was the ideal and this had improved.

3. Wednesday Evening Series for 2022

- 3.1 *Use of the U Flag and Flag H during start sequence:* Noted that both U and H flags were red and white and that particularly early in the season with lower light levels, might lead to difficulties distinguishing. Agreed to keep current flags and that separating them on the halyard system of the committee boat should avoid any such confusion. Agreed this to be communicated to RO Teams (LP/JH).
- 3.2 *Light levels, sunset times and the last race of the season:* Noted that the last race of the Wednesday Series was in second week of September and that at this point, sunset times are insufficient to run a race of a decent length. Agreed for 2022, the latest race should be first week of September and the series would run for 22 weeks.
- 3.3 *The P Course:* Noted this had been the 2nd season since the reintroduction of the P course. Agreed that the defined course geometry had improved course setting but there were issues with wind shifts that did affect the angles within the course. Agreed that tweaking the course to make reaches shorter if broader angles was an option. Agreed that P course to be kept and to review the geometry for this course at the next SC meeting.
- 3.4 *Request for 2 starts for Wednesday Evening Series:* Noted that the Summer Sprints had been set up to trial 2 starts (but there had only been ILCAs participating). Noted that the issue of starts had implications for the start sequence for Wednesday evenings which would need to move to 3-minute start sequence. Issues to resolve were the fleets to start first (Handicap first; ILCA second?), class flags, prizes, recording results and dealing with general recalls. Noted also that flexibility to run just one start if small ILCA fleet turnout. Agreed in principal to do a season with separate starts for ILCA fleet and handicap fleet, then review.

4. Handicap Update

- 4.1 Noted no changes made this year by RYA due to lack of racing. Agreed that the RS200 fleet handicap should be adjusted, as the fleet was now substantial and very active. There had been a recent adjustment; AC proposed a change to 1037 from 1043. Agreed that this, and any other minor adjustments to handicaps (once reviewed by AC) would be incorporated into the Winter Series 2021.

5. QMSC Office Support for Racing

- 5.1 Noted that for various reasons, earlier in the year, NORs and SIs had been published late and there had been issues with preparing documents and admin for open meetings. Noted that following a review, a strategy for catching-up and deadlines had been agreed.
- 5.2 Noted that there were changes needed to the event planning documents and clarification of roles within QMSC. AC, LP and JH would meet to re-agree target timings for event planning and to review and ensure planning documents met current club policy.
- 5.3 Agreed that we should always prepare our own racing documents and that a draft would be forwarded to organisers/class associations along with planning forms.

6. August Racing and Start of the Autumn Series; Racing Calendar for 2022

- 6.1 Agreed that starting the Autumn Series in August did not feel right and agreed that a separate August Series would be incorporated into the Club Racing Calendar for 2022.

- 6.2 Agreed that the format of this series did not need to be finalised at this meeting, but would be added to agenda for future meeting.
- 6.3 Agreed that any series of events should not be too taxing for RO Teams, but could include a range of different types of races, possibly: pursuit, handicap racing, fleet racing, sprints. Agreed that canvassing opinion from within the racing community would be a good idea.
- 6.3 Agreed that it would be helpful to know roughly the numbers attending racing events over the course of the summer. JH to produce a breakdown of this between June and September, for the next meeting to review when considering the nature of next summer's August series.
- 6.4 Agreed to keep the usual pattern of Spring and Summer Sprints in the racing calendar as well as the August Series.
- 6.5 Agreed that the Autumn Series should start at the beginning of September; JH to draw up draft racing calendar in time for the next SC meeting in line with these decisions.
- 6.6 Agreed that RO Teams for club racing events that proved more challenging for RO Teams to run, such as sprints and club championships, would be added to the list of events including Open Meetings, for which RO Teams were selected at the start of the year, rather than leaving volunteers to offer to cover these duties, which had caused issues in 2021 racing season. Once these events had been covered, the bookings for regular club racing would then open for volunteers to book onto.

7. RO Training and Mentoring

- 7.1 AC and LP reported that there had been a number of newly trained ROs who had joined the committee boat for Rookie Racing on Saturdays.
- 7.2 JH has started to book the new batch of 7 people onto the committee boat for club racing as 3rd person as soon as possible. Noted a couple of people had joined committee boat for Rookie Racing but not done the training – JH to contact and invite to join as 3rd on boat for club racing.
- 7.3 Noted that there were still several of those trained before racing was curtailed by the pandemic, who had not had much experience on the committee boat as 3rd person. JH, AC, LP to talk to them to encourage onto the boat. Agreed that any reluctant or reticent members of the RO Team to be identified and that members of SC would establish contact to try and encourage back and support in the best way to get them actively involved in club racing management again in the future.

8. Open Meetings – the future

- 8.1 Noted that with options for on the day entries and paper rather than online bookings, there was a high risk of very low numbers. Agreed that online booking for all open meetings would be the norm going forward; agreed also that a minimum number of entries would be stated and shared with organisers / class associations and entrants, with the option for the club to cancel events if they fall short of the numbers required to make an event viable for the club to run. Agreed that if numbers are very low, discussions with the organisers / class associations would take place with the option to fund the costs to the club for running a small event, although understood that not many organisations would have funding to be able to do so.
- 8.2 Noted that the costs of running open meetings for a club with professional staff meant that not only the costs of on-water safety teams needed to be covered, but maintenance and overheads for the safety equipment used should be factored into the club's fees charged. Noted that this was under review and would be raised at a future meeting.
- 8.3 Agreed that the strategy of trying to pair up smaller classes would be pursued, with the onus on the organisers to find suitable partner classes interested in doing so.

- 8.4 Noted that the option to include single-hander or double-hander events in the SailRacer events programme might be an option (but the club needed to look at the issue of bookings and fees being taken by that organisation before committing to any such events).
- 8.5 Noted that there were a number of events at different clubs where the NOR and SIs allowed for RO Team discretion to combine fleets and starts; QMSC would need to consider this if deciding to run larger multi-class events. Noted also that dates in 2023 could be offered at this stage.
- 8.6 Agreed: JH to circulate any dates pencilled in so far for the open meeting calendar for 2022 and the current open meeting policy to be shared with SC.
- 8.7 Summary of actions agreed:
- Online bookings only, with a cut-off midnight on Weds before the event
 - Agreed minimum and maximum capacity for the event in advance with the organisers
 - Smaller classes to be asked to find partner class/es to join with them
 - Early discussions with organisers if numbers look really low, club to reserve the right to cancel event if numbers don't reach agreed minimum;

9. Any Other Business

- 9.1 *Pricing for Open Events* – Noted that Tony Bishop would join the next meeting of SC and would put forward proposals to review and raise prices for open meetings for 2022; in the light of discussions about club financing raised by Council. AC would circulate information to SC for consideration.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Agreed that another SC meeting be scheduled for 24th November; timing and nature of the meeting to be confirmed nearer the date.