IRC RACE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

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This edition of the IRC Race Management Guidelines has undergone a major review. Please read all sections carefully as text may have moved or changed from previous editions.

1. INTRODUCTION

This manual is intended to provide guidance to race organisers for racing under IRC Rules. It includes scenarios specific to IRC which a race organiser may wish to consider and gives suitable wording that may be included in the Notice of Race. In many places, the detail will need tailoring to suit the specific circumstances, and Race Committees are of course free to do this. **The RORC Rating Office is happy to provide advice and detail if required. Please contact info@rorcrating.com.**

Organising Authorities and Race Officers are also encouraged to reference the World Sailing Race Management Manual (https://www.sailing.org/our-sport/race-officals/international-race-officer/international-race-officer-resource-centre/) which provides more general guidance on other aspects of event management.

The full title for IRC is International Rating Certificate, abbreviated to “IRC” for everyday use. At the simplest level, all a Race Committee need say in its sailing instructions is: "*The IRC Rules [year], Parts A, B, and C (or D) shall apply*". At the end of the race they calculate each boat's corrected time (CT) to the nearest second by multiplying her elapsed time (ET) by her TCC (CT=ET*TCC) and publish a set of results with the lowest corrected time winning. In many circumstances, this will suffice.

Up to date lists of all currently rated boats can be found on https://ircrating.org to check that each entrant holds a current certificate and has provided the correct TCC.

2. NOTICE OF RACE

When drafting the Notice of Race, event organisers should consider which IRC rules may need to be addressed for the event.

This section provides guidance on the sections of the IRC Rule that should be considered, and those which may be amended and suggested text for inclusion in the Notice of Race.

2.1 Amendments to IRC rules

IRC Rule 11, CHANGES TO CLASS RULES, confirms which IRC rules may be changed; Note that any changes to IRC Rules must be included in the Notice of Race, not just the Sailing Instructions. Rule 11 also gives IRC Rule Authorities the right to invoke National IRC prescriptions, and these too must be referenced in the Notice of Race.

Rule 11 permits the Notice of Race to amend the requirements of IRC Rules 8.6, 9.6, 14.1, 15.1, 15.2(d), 21.1.5(d), (e) and (f), and 22.4. No other IRC Rules may be amended.

2.1.1 Non-Spinnaker Ratings

IRC certificates for all boats also show a non-spinnaker TCC. Race Committees attention is drawn to Rule 8.6 which restricts the use of this TCC to races specifically defined as non-spinnaker. This restriction is deliberate and is to prevent abuse of the non-spinnaker TCC. Note however that IRC Rule 11.1 permits a Notice of Race to modify this rule.

Suitable text might read:

Notice of Race:

x.0 Non-Spinnaker Ratings

IRC non-spinnaker TCCs shall only be used for races or classes specifically designated by the Race Committee as non-spinnaker. A boat racing under her non-spinnaker TCC shall not set a spinnaker or other sail rated as a spinnaker while racing. Where a boat holds both a spinnaker and non-spinnaker TCC, the TCC to be used shall

be declared by the rating deadline or as otherwise required by the Race Committee. This changes IRC Rule 8.6.

A slightly shorter version would be:

Notice of Race:

x.0 Non-Spinnaker Ratings

IRC non-spinnaker TCCs may only be used in races or classes designated as non-spinnaker by the Race Committee. Boats racing under a non-spinnaker TCC shall not set a spinnaker while racing. This changes IRC Rule 8.6.

2.1.2 Rating Protest Limits

IRC Rules 9 and 10 address rating reviews and protests. Linked to these, Rule 11.1 permits a Race Committee to amend Rule 9.6. A suitable instruction would be:

Notice of race:

x.0 IRC Rules 9.6 is amended to the extent that 0.005 is reduced to 0.00x.

In the event of a rating or measurement protest, protest committees needing guidance are encouraged to contact the IRC Rating Authority. See also section 4 below re Equipment Inspection at events.

2.1.3 RRS 52 Manual Power

IRC Rule 15.1 deletes RRS 52, Manual Power. All boats are permitted to use stored power for the adjustment and operation of sails and movable appendages, if rated to do so. This recognises the number of boats now fitted with powered sail handling and other equipment. Deletion of RRS 52 also permits a Notice of Race to allow boats to use autopilots, recognising the steadily increasing trend towards short-handed racing.

IRC Rule 15.1 may however be modified by a Notice of Race, so Organising Authorities may wish to re-impose RRS 52, either entirely

or in a limited manner to suit the particular circumstances. Noting the variety of restrictions that might be included it is not possible to suggest a specific clause for a Notice of Race.

2.1.4 Sail Limitations

The limitations on sails onboard while racing are defined by IRC Rule 21.1.5 and specifically Rule 21.1.5(d) states that all sails onboard shall be the same for a series of races run on consecutive days (i.e. a normal regatta), this is the highly recommended default situation. While Rule 11.1 permits an Organising Authority to amend this, amendments are not recommended as the IRC rating framework considers the number of headsails and spinnakers that are carried, acknowledging the speed advantage generally gained from a larger sail wardrobe.

IRC Rule 21.1.5 may be amended in very specific circumstances, for example, a club may have a high variety of races in a series and therefore allow sail changes for only a long offshore race. Another consideration is not requiring boats to carry all the sails it is rated for each day. For example, this may be a consideration for sportsboats or other boats with restricted accommodation, where carrying all the sails may result in them compromising crew space or getting damaged from crew movement etc.

It is however a good idea to clarify whether or not Rules 21.1.5(d) and (e), which address regattas run on consecutive days, apply. Suitable text might read:

Notice of race:

x.0 For the purpose of IRC Rules 21.1.5(d) and (e) this regatta is [is not] on consecutive days and the sails carried shall [may not] remain the same.

An Organising Authority may wish to require boats carry onboard each day the number of sails for which they are rated but let them change the actual sails each day. Suitable text might read:

Notice of race:

x.0 IRC rules 21.1.5(d) and (e) are amended to the extent that sails may be changed during the event but are required to remain the same for each day. The maximum number of headsails in accordance with IRC Rule 21.7.1 and maximum number of spinnakers in accordance with IRC Rule 21.6.1 shall be on board for all races. For the purpose of this rule the day begins when the boat leaves the harbour for the first time each day and ends when the boat returns to the harbour after racing.

An Organising Authority of an offshore race may wish to permit a spare mainsail to be used as a racing replacement in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Race Committee. This exception should not extend to replacement headsails or spinnakers during the event unless expressly permitted by the applicable IRC Rule or a valid Rule Authority prescription.

Notice of race:

x.0 *IRC Rule 21.1.5(e) is amended to the extent that a spare mainsail may be used as a racing replacement, subject to the approval of the Race Committee.*

Or for a regatta on multiple days:

x.0 For the purpose of IRC Rules 21.1.5(d) and (e) this regatta is on consecutive days and the sails carried shall remain the same. IRC Rule 21.1.5(e) is amended to the extent that a spare mainsail may be used as a racing replacement, subject to the approval of the Race Committee.

It is noted IRC Rule 11.2 allows for Rule Authorities to prescribe that a boat may carry one more headsail and/or one more spinnaker than shown on its current IRC certificate for World Sailing Offshore Special Regulation Category 0,1,2 and 3 races, acknowledging the wider range of weather that may be experienced. Event organisers should seek permission from the relevant Rule Authority which must publish a relevant prescription. Suitable text might read:

Prescription:

In accordance with IRC Rule 11.2, the [country] IRC Rule Authority prescribes that for [specific race] [OSR Cat 0, 1, 2 or 3 races], IRC Rule 21.6.1 is varied to the extent that a boat may carry one (1) more spinnaker than shown on her current certificate of area not greater than rated SPA without an increase in rating.

Notice of Race:

x.0 The [relevant Rule Authority] Prescription to IRC Rule 21.6.1 applies. In accordance with IRC Rule 11, a yacht entered in IRC may carry one more spinnaker than shown on her current IRC certificate of area not greater than rated SPA without an increase in rating. This changes IRC Rule 21.6.1.

2.1.5 Crew Number/Weight

IRC certificates show both a Crew Number and a corresponding Crew Weight, and IRC Rule 22.4.2 specifies how the Crew Weight limit is derived from the Crew Number.

The recommended approach is to use Crew Number as the preferred crew limitation as this is much easier to monitor and enforce during an event. For IRC Championships, Crew Limitations shall be used.

For all other events however, the Notice of Race should specify if Crew Number or Crew Weight limitations are in force.

It is recommended that when *any* crew number or weight, race organisers should publish the crew limit for each entry (the online IRC listings here: https://ircrating.org/irc-racing/online-tcc-listings/ include IRC Crew Number – select ‘full display’ or download the complete .csv file).

For safety reasons, specifying a minimum crew number is not recommended. However, Race Committees may impose a maximum variation in crew number or weight to prevent boats leaving crew ashore on light weather days or sailing with more crew on heavy weather days.

For events wishing to impose crew number limitations, a suitable clause would be:

Notice of Race: IRC Rule 22.4.2 is deleted and replaced by "The maximum number of crew while racing shall be the Crew Number printed on her certificate. There is no weight limit."

If an Organising Authority wished to remove all crew weight limitations, including for one designs, then a suitable clause would be:

Notice of Race: IRC Rule 22.4.2 shall not apply. There will be no limitations on crew weight.

Alternatively, Race Committees may wish to apply additional or different limitations. There are many options which might be stated in a Notice of Race, a few of which follow:

Notice of Race:

EITHER x.1 Maximum Crew Number.

IRC Rule 22.4.2 is deleted and replaced by "The maximum number of crew while racing shall be the Crew Number printed on her certificate plus/minus x. There is no weight limit."

OR x.1 Maximum Crew Weight.

IRC Rule 22.4.2 is deleted and replaced by: "The maximum total weight of crew in kilograms while racing shall not exceed the product of the Crew Number printed on her certificate multiplied by 80 [or other suitable value]. There is no maximum number of crew."

AND x.2 In the case of a boat rated as a One-Design, and when her IRC crew limitation exceeds her One-design Class crew limitation, a boat shall comply with her One Design Class rules.

[x.3] [There shall be no restriction on crew changes.] [The following crew change restrictions shall apply:]

Organising Authorities may specifically wish to encourage youth and female crews at their event, and the following wording is a suggested way of implementing this incentive at an event. This has worked well

at previous championships where owners were excited they could sail with their young children and not feel disadvantaged.

Notice of Race: IRC Rule 22.4.2 Crew Number/Weight is deleted and replaced by "The maximum number of crew that may sail aboard a yacht shall be the number shown on the certificate except that; when the crew consists of either - at least 2 females, at least 2 25 years old or under (25 or under on [date]) or at least 1 female and 1 25 years old or under (25 or under on [date]) then the crew limit is certificate number plus 1. There is no weight limit."

2.2 Other Considerations

2.2.1 Certificate Validity – 'Certificate Year'

With a growing number of boats traveling to compete in major races, it becomes increasingly important for race organisers to a) specify which IRC 'certificate year' the event is to be held under and b) check certificate validity.

Organisers should explicitly specify which year's IRC Rules apply. Simply requiring a 'valid IRC certificate' is insufficient. Secondly, organisers of international events should check boats' certificate year and advise boats as appropriate.

The specific issue is that the 'certificate year' varies from the northern to the southern hemispheres for the first 5 months of each calendar year. For Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, South America and most Asian countries, the start of the IRC new year is delayed until June to better match the sailing seasons in those countries. Thus, a 'south' boat coming north in the early part of the year will need to revalidate her certificate earlier than if she was staying at home. Her certificate remains valid in her home country, but if she has travelled to a northern hemisphere country, it will not be valid there. Similarly, a 'north' boat racing in a south country in the first 5 months of a year, will need to produce a certificate for the correct year. The Rating Authority will advise and assist as necessary.

2.2.2 Advertising

IRC includes two separate but almost identical sections. Part C (Rules 16-24) is IRC with advertising permitted. Part D is IRC with advertising not permitted. It is up to Organising Authorities to specify in their Notices of Race which shall apply. If neither is explicitly specified, Part C shall apply, i.e. the default is that advertising is permitted. Parts A and B, the common Parts of the IRC Rule, will always apply. The NoR may therefore state for IRC racing with advertising:

The IRC Rules [YEAR] Parts A, B, and C shall apply.

and without advertising:

The IRC Rules [YEAR] Parts A, B, and D shall apply.

In general Part C is recommended. Organising Authorities should consider carefully before invoking Part D, IRC without advertising. If visiting competitors from further afield than the immediate locality are expected, it is recommended that racing should be held under Part C, IRC with advertising permitted.

Additionally, if it is likely that any "Class" boats will be competing, note should be taken of the advertising rules of those Classes in deciding the appropriate IRC Rules. If for instance one or more Classes have decided to permit advertising, then to run racing under IRC Part D might prevent those boats from competing.

2.2.3 Rating Changes and Deadline

It is undesirable to allow boats to change rating shortly before or during a regatta or short series of races. Allowing this to happen offers a competitor the opportunity to refine their rating by, for example, the inclusion/omission of sails depending on anticipated weather conditions. Additionally, and from a logistical and administrative point of view, it is desirable for ratings to have been submitted a few days prior to the start of the event. Suitable wording is:

Notice of Race:

x.0 "Boats shall submit a copy of their IRC certificate not later than [time / date]. No alteration to a boat's TCC will be permitted after this date, except as a result of a rating protest, or to correct Rating Authority errors."

2.2.4 IRC Classes

Apart from the obvious splits by TCC, boats may also be split into classes by type. IRC rates a wide variety of boats ranging from classics through to high tech racers and 'sportsboats'. Each of these has its own performance profile resulting in race results becoming increasingly dependent on conditions and course type (see para 5.). As a general principle, when fleets are large enough, splitting fleets by boat type and/or size or speed, for instance separating 'sportsboats' from 'cruisers', can be to the benefit of all and is highly recommended.

Physical parameters can be used to define different classes and the following outlines some of the options:

Displacement Length Ratio (DLR) Within the IRC fleet as a whole, average DLR is around 200. Typical modern cruisers are generally in the range 200 to 300. Modern cruiser/racers fall largely between 150 and 200, with boats below 150 being modern racers, racer/cruisers and sports boats. A simple split by DLR alone may however be unsatisfactory as DLR tends to reduce with increased boat size and vice versa. To better define a class it is advisable to combine it with a size limitation(s) and possibly a third criterion (see the example of Sportsboats below)

Hull Factor (HF) Historically, some events have used Hull Factor (HF) as one of several criteria when determining fleet or class divisions. From January 2027 Hull Factor and Rig Factor will no longer appear on IRC certificates. It will therefore no longer be practical to use Hull Factor (HF) in class-split criteria. Where an event considers a distinction is required between production cruiser-racers and more optimised racing yachts, organisers should work

with the IRC Rating Authority to establish suitable class divisions who may provide this information directly or provide an alternative allocation methodology that achieves the same objective while preserving the confidentiality of internal IRC rating parameters.

Age or Series Date Probably the best use of age is in identifying 'classic' boats, and qualifying dates are of course at the discretion of race committees. It is recommended that Series Date is used to include or exclude all boats of the same design if applicable.

Sportsboats Whilst the criteria are not defined in IRC, and may vary depending on local fleets, a sportsboat may generally be defined as having a DLR of less than 150, LH less than 10m, and TCC greater than 0.950.

Short-Handed While IRC allows for short-handed crews to race against fully crewed boats, it may be necessary or desirable for a race organiser to split boats by crew number for fully crewed, limited number crew or short-handed boats.

In this text, ‘short-handed’ means not more than 2 persons on board and should be considered where events have both single-handed and double-handed entries.

A clause to encompass some of the above might incorporate any of the following:

Notice of race:

x.0 Boats shall race in the following classes:

Class	Rule/Type	Parameters
0	Racing	LH greater than 9.0m and less than 16.5m.
		IRC Series Date: 2000 and later.
		IRC DLR: 145 and lower.
		Greater than 1.000 and less than 1.350.
1	IRC	TCC 1.100 to 1.199.
2	IRC	TCC 1.000 to 1.099.

Class	Rule/Type	Parameters
3	IRC	TCC 0.999 and below.
4	IRC Cruiser	IRC DLR: greater than 150.
5	IRC Classic	IRC Series Date of 1970 or earlier.
6	Sports boats	DLR less than 150, LH less than 10m, and TCC greater than 0.950
SH	Short-handed	Not more than 2 crew

x.1 A boat which meets all the requirements for class 0 shall race in class 0.

x.2 A boat which meets the requirements for both classes 4 and 5 shall race in class 5.

x.3 A boat which meets all the requirements for class 6 shall race in class 6.

x.5 Classes may be altered, amalgamated, or divided at the discretion of the race committee. The Race Committee may specify that all boats of a particular design shall race in the same class

2.2.5 Reduced Crew

Reduced-crew racing has become increasingly popular, particularly amongst club racers. Many owners enjoy racing with fewer crew where safe to do so, and some clubs have found that reduced-crew formats can encourage participation. In some cases, boats with less complex sail handling systems may also feel more competitive when all entries are subject to the same crew limitations.

Changing IRC crew number limits is permitted within the IRC Rule and may be considered to encourage entries.
Some examples are:

Notice of Race:

x.1 Maximum crew number.

Crews shall consist of no more than two-thirds of a boat's IRC Crew Number (rounded down). This changes IRC Rule 22.4.

OR

x.1 Maximum crew number.

Crew limited to 80% of the boat's IRC Crew Number, rounded to the nearest whole number. This changes IRC Rule 22.4.

2.2.6 Short-Handed and Double-Handed

Short-handed, particularly double-handed IRC racing is now a well-established part of the sport and may be offered either as a separate class or division, or as part of a wider IRC fleet. Race organisers should consider whether double-handed boats are to race for separate prizes only, be included in overall IRC results, or both. Where double-handed boats are included in an overall fleet, the Notice of Race should make clear any eligibility requirements and whether boats may change between fully crewed and double-handed configuration during an event or series.

Notice of Race: x.0 Double-handed boats shall race with no more than two persons on board. A boat entered as double-handed shall remain double-handed for all races in the event or series unless otherwise permitted by the Race Committee. Where a boat holds both a primary and secondary IRC certificate, the certificate to be used shall be declared before the rating deadline.

2.2.7 Crew Categorisation

IRC Rule 22.5 notes that IRC contains no restrictions on Crew Categorisation, in other words professionals and amateurs, but a Notice of Race may impose such restrictions. If an Organising Authority wishes to impose restrictions, it is strongly recommended that the World Sailing Sailor Categorisation Code is used. In International events invoking Crew Categorisation, the use of this particular Code will be a prerequisite.

Noting the variety of restrictions that might be included, it is not possible to suggest a specific clause for a Notice of Race. See RRS

79, RRS Appendix J NOTICE OF RACE AND SAILING INSTRUCTIONS and the World Sailing Sailor Categorization Code (Regulation 22) for further guidance (https://www.sailing.org/inside-world-sailing/rules-regulations/).

2.2.8 Endorsed Certificates

An Endorsed certificate is one where the rated data has been verified by measurement or other means, and this usually incurs a cost to the boat owner. Race Committees should therefore consider carefully before requiring all entrants to hold Endorsed certificates. Many less serious competitors will be discouraged from entering at all, while the more serious are probably already Endorsed. To avoid deterring possible entrants the second option below may be more appropriate.

Notice of race:

x.0 Boats in classes 0, 1, and 2 (3, 4, 5 etc) shall hold IRC ENDORSED certificates.

OR

x.0 To obtain class and/or overall points and/or club championship points, a competing boat shall (at the time of the race for which points are being awarded) hold an IRC ENDORSED certificate. Boats not holding ENDORSED certificates shall not be included in any points calculations.

The second option allows a boat without an Endorsed certificate to compete in an individual race, but she will not gain points towards an overall trophy.

An Endorsed IRC certificate may have been issued with a Boat Weight derived from another rating certificate (e.g. ORCi DSPM), as allowed by IRC Endorsement guidelines. However, an organizing authority for a race might include a requirement that all boats shall have been weighed to establish Boat Weight for their Endorsed certificates.

IRC Rule 8.5 is specific that an Endorsed certificate will (irrespective of certificate print language) carry a Rating Authority ENDORSED stamp. Other IRC certificates will carry a STANDARD certificate stamp.

2.2.9 Secondary Certificate

IRC Rule 8.2 permits a boat to hold a second, concurrently valid, IRC certificate for use in any racing. This permits an owner to configure their boat differently without the need to continually change their IRC certificate, for example for offshore racing or double handed racing. There are restrictions on the variations from the primary certificate in IRC Rule 8.2. The secondary certificate type replaces the previous short-handed certificate.

IRC Rule 8.2.1(c) requires owners to declare the primary or secondary certificate to the race organiser before the rating deadline. It is therefore important that the Notice of Race has a suitable rating deadline to prevent optimisation for the weather etc. See section 2.2.3.

Any boat holding a secondary certificate will appear twice in IRC rating lists, with the secondary certificate as a separate certificate number and the TCC listed.

2.2.10 Excluded scores (discards)

Allowing too many excluded scores (ref. RRS A2) in a series can lead to distortions in the overall result. For instance, if a particular boat is very competitive in a specific range of conditions and uncompetitive in other conditions, and she has the opportunity to exclude scores from all those races outside her conditions, this may produce a result which does not properly reflect her overall performance relative to others in the fleet. This should be considered when deciding on the appropriate number of excluded scores for an event or series.

2.2.11 Safety and Stability Screening

IRC Rule 23 states that race organisers may impose limits for race entry on safety grounds. The IRC certificate will show the SSS and if available the STIX and AVS for a design or individual yacht. The IRC Website includes full details of the screening of boats for races under the race management section: https://ircrating.org/irc-racing/race-management/

2.2.12 Autopilots

IRC Rule 15 disapplies RRS 52 regarding manual power; however, it does add some limitations regarding the use of non-manual power and states that boats shall not use stored power for steering (i.e. autohelm/autopilot) unless specified by the Notice of Race. A suitable instruction to permit or require an autohelm would be:

For short-handed (including double-handed) IRC racing, organisers should state clearly whether automatic and wind-vane steering devices are permitted. Where short-handed boats are racing in a mixed fleet with fully crewed boats, the Notice of Race should make clear whether the permission applies only to short-handed entries or to all boats in the race or class.

Notice of Race: x.0 Boats racing short-handed only may use automatic and wind-vane devices for steering. This changes IRC Rule 15.2(d) and RRS 52. For the avoidance of doubt, this permission applies only while a boat is racing short-handed unless otherwise stated in this Notice of Race.

Notice of Race: x.0 Automatic and Wind-vane devices for Steering

Automatic and wind-vane devices for steering are permitted (this changes IRC Rule 15.2(d) and RRS 52)

OR

x.0 A short-handed boat shall be fitted with an autohelm. (this changes IRC Rule 15.2(d) and RRS 52)

2.2.13 Equipment Inspection

The level of checking should be proportionate to the event. For club or lower-risk events, an owner declaration may provide a practical and efficient method of confirming compliance. For major events and IRC Championships, the Organising Authority may wish to require selected boats to be made available for equipment inspection, e.g. top placed boats in each class.

The Notice of Race should state which approach will apply, any deadlines for declarations, and the consequences of failing to complete a declaration or present a boat for inspection when required.

Notice of Race: x.0 Equipment inspection may be carried out before, during, or after the event. Boats shall comply with their current IRC certificate and with any event equipment requirements stated in this Notice of Race or Sailing Instructions. The Organising Authority may require each owner or person in charge to complete an IRC Equipment Inspection Checklist as an owner declaration and/or may require a boat to be made available for inspection by appointed equipment inspectors. Failure to complete a required declaration, to present a boat for inspection when requested, or to comply with her IRC certificate or event equipment requirements may be grounds for protest or other action by the Race Committee.

See also Section 4.

3. MEASUREMENT AND RATING DEADLINES

For events where Equipment Inspection is required the IRC Equipment Inspection Manual is available for event organisers on https://ircrating.org.

For higher level or championship events where boats must be measured for an Endorsed certificate before they may race, the Notice of Race should set out a clear rating and measurement process. This should include a deadline by which boats must submit a valid IRC certificate, any requirement for an Endorsed certificate,

and any latest time by which measurement, weighing, sail measurement, or other rating-related checks must be completed. The rating deadline should be discussed and agreed with the Rating Authority and allow sufficient time to issue or amend certificates and for the organiser to publish reliable rating lists before racing begins.

Where measurement is required as a condition of racing, organisers should avoid leaving rating or measurement matters to the first race day. Owners should be told whether they are responsible for arranging measurement before the event, whether event measurement facilities will be available, and whether boats that fail to complete the process by the stated deadline will be ineligible to race, ineligible for prizes, or scored using only a certificate accepted by the Race Committee. Any exceptions should be limited to errors by the Rating Authority, rating protests, or other circumstances expressly permitted in the Notice of Race.

Notice of Race: x.0 Boats shall submit a copy of their valid IRC certificate by [time/date]. Where an Endorsed certificate, weighing, sail measurement, hull measurement, or other rating-related measurement is required by this Notice of Race, all such measurement shall be completed and all required information submitted to the Rating Authority by [time/date]. A boat that has not completed the required measurement process and does not hold an accepted IRC certificate by the rating deadline shall not race unless permitted by the Race Committee. No alteration to a boat's TCC will be permitted after the rating deadline except as a result of a rating protest, to correct Rating Authority errors, or as otherwise expressly permitted by this Notice of Race.

4. POLICING AND EQUIPMENT INSPECTION

Equipment inspection and ensuring competing boats comply with their IRC certificate is fundamental to the integrity of the sport. The most effective event equipment inspection checks are those that verify whether the boat physically matches its IRC certificate rather than attempting full re-measurement.

It is important to ensure that any inspections undertaken are practical, proportionate, and deliver meaningful value contributing to the overall safety, compliance, and success of the event.

Note that Rule 9 Rating Reviews, and specifically the stated data limits, does not apply to Equipment Inspection at an event. Rule 8.10 specifically lists data which are maxima or minima. If data on a boat is found to exceed a maximum value or to be less than a minimum value, then she does not comply with her certificate.

Event organisers may wish to check the validity of entrants' certificates as part of the acceptance of entry. All valid IRC boat data is available in digital format from https://ircrating.org/boat-data-for-valid-irc-certificates/. This is a useful resource for event equipment inspectors who can review a boat's certificate ahead of conducting any inspection to verify the certified condition of the boat.

Please see https://ircrating.org/irc-racing/race-management/equipment-inspection/ for advice on Equipment Inspection at events and the IRC Equipment Inspection Manual and Checklist.

5. COURSES

With the ever-increasing range of boat types racing under IRC, it is inevitable that courses and conditions will affect race results. Race Committees can minimise these effects by considering carefully the types of courses set. Conditions are beyond the control of a race committee, but even then course location may be significant.

Clubs offering less formal racing may help build confidence and generate interest particularly amongst those new to racing. Imaginative ideas include self-timed races or lap times; or offering overlapping long, medium and short courses with each boat deciding on the way round which course to complete. It was also observed that holding round-the-cans or other varied race types rather than only windward-leeward courses proved popular and tended to attract more boats.

There has been much discussion in recent years concerning the dominance of windward-leeward courses. The IRC Technical Committee considers that if all races were windward-leeward, designers would inevitably optimise designs for this style of racing. **Noting also that a balance of course types is a fundamental part of fair yacht racing, it is strongly recommended that race committees should set a variety of courses.** For IRC regional or national championships this should be stipulated as a requirement.

Some of the issues that a race committee might then consider are:

Course Type. Courses without a downwind leg and with only reaching legs will inevitably favour bowsprit rigged boats and lighter boats generally. Conversely, all downwind legs will favour boats with conventional spinnaker poles and the heavier boats. Including both types of course will give everybody a chance on their day, but over a series a balanced range of courses should be provided wherever possible.

Current. Upwind legs against a tidal current will tend to favour faster, more windward-oriented designs and vice versa. As an extreme example, an all downwind, down current course will almost inevitably produce a winner from the small, slow end of the fleet. When possible, selecting courses to minimise these effects will produce more equitable results generally.

A second issue with tidal current is that boats will inevitably try to minimise (or maximise as appropriate) current effects. This becomes particularly relevant when there are current gradients across a course and boats are trying to get out of a foul current. Unless the shoreline is very steep-to, the smaller (shallower draft) boats will be able to do this more effectively. In these circumstances, it can be worth considering either moving the whole course away from the shore so that everybody is in the full current all the time, or including a series of passing marks to force boats into the current.

Weather Conditions. No race committee can influence the weather. They can however influence where the course is positioned. If it is particularly rough, larger heavier boats will be favoured upwind. So, if

a series features a number of heavy air races, it might if possible be worth considering a less exposed course area for some races, if this is a possibility. Similarly, very constricted course areas (narrow channels for instance), particularly in light airs, will favour the lighter and more nimble boats in the fleet.

6. SCORING

This section provides guidance on how races, series and championships under IRC may be scored.

6.1 Dual Scoring

Dual scoring with an entry-level handicap system is possible and encouraged. The logic of this is that an entry-level handicap system facilitates entry into racing for the less experienced sailors. It enables them to compete against, and gauge their performance against, the more experienced sailors, while at the same time offering parallel IRC results. NOTE: 'handicap' in this section includes rating systems (such as YTC) or personal handicap systems.

Rather than splitting fleets into separate IRC and handicap fleets for club racing, clubs are encouraged to race all boats together, split into classes as appropriate, and publish IRC results for eligible boats. Where an Organising Authority wishes to offer an entry-level handicap system alongside IRC, results may also be published under that system.

In Great Britain, clubs wishing to offer an entry-level handicap system alongside IRC may consider using YTC. YTC can provide an accessible route into racing for less experienced competitors and provides a pathway to IRC racing for those wishing to progress and compete more widely under an international rating rule.

Further advice is available from the Rating Office for clubs considering this approach.

6.2 Championship Scoring

Each fleet or class should be scored separately in accordance with the scoring system stated in the Notice of Race, and a championship prize should be awarded to the winner of each class. This ensures that class results remain the primary basis for recognition, regardless of whether an additional overall IRC Champion is awarded.

Where the event organiser's preference is for an overall IRC Champion, this may be determined using an equalisation formula only where all championship classes have sailed substantially the same programme of races and courses. If this condition is not met, the Organising Authority may decide not to award an overall champion.

A boat's series score divided by (the number of scored races minus one), divided by (the maximum number of boats coming to the starting area in that boat's division plus two).

$$\text{Equalised Score} = \frac{\text{Series Score}}{(\text{Scored Races} - 1) \times (\text{Maximum Starters in Division} + 2)}$$

This normalises results across divisions/classes by accounting for the number of races actually scored and accounting for fleet size, so winning a larger class is given greater weight than winning a very small class. The overall champion is the boat with the lowest resulting value.

The formula is only reasonably defensible when all classes are sailing the same mix of courses and conditions. If IRC 0/1 are on one course area and IRC 2/3/4 are on another, the equalisation becomes much less robust because course type and conditions can materially affect relative performance.

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