

Advice to the Race Committee

Numbers of observers and umpires to be appointed

The Race Committee will appoint observers as E3.1 for each heat. It is recommended that there is an observer for every 4 boats in the heat. It is likely that competitors from heats not scheduled to sail, will form the majority of observers, but the race committee may appoint other suitable people as observers. The number of umpires to work with observers is flexible and will depend on the number of umpires available at the event and the requirement at any particular time for those umpires to perform other duties.

Selection of observers

The race committee may select observers for the next heat from the heat before the one in progress; for example observers from C to observe A. The race committee will allocate observers to a group of boats within the heat; 1st group of 4 boats, 2nd group of 4 boats etc. This is an approximate guide only, to the part of the heat to observe, as boat positions will change throughout the race.

As far as possible, the race committee will select competitors from the fleet so that they are observers for a similar number of duties during the event and where possible select a mixture of nationalities in each heat.

Potential umpire availability for an event

In an ideal world, for 20 boat heats, there would be at least 10 umpires available who would be split into 2 groups of 5 to watch every other heat. In this case each umpire would have an observer buddy and would approach each heat fresh from a break. However this number of umpires is likely to be unrealistic. A more likely scenario, at the other end of the scale, is a minimum number of five umpires.

Umpire allocation

The race committee observer/umpire organiser will agree the allocation with the umpires before each heat. The table below gives a guide for an umpire working with an observer buddy depending on the number of umpires available. The numbers of boats being watched by an individual umpire is flexible, as there are often not any specific numbers of boats in a 'group'. For boat numbers per heat less than 20, a similar pattern may be adopted.

GROUPS OF 4 BOATS SHOWING WHICH PART OF HEAT TO BE OBSERVED BY OBSERVERS/UMPIRES

Umpires Available	1 st group of 4 boats	2 nd group of 4 boats	3 rd group of 4 boats	4 th group of 4 boats	5 th group of 4 boats
	Observer 1	Observer 2	Observer 3	Observer 4	Observer 5
0					
1		Umpire 1			
2		Umpire 1		Umpire 2	
3	Umpire 1		Umpire 2		Umpire 3
4	Umpire 1	Umpire 2	Umpire 3		Umpire 4
5 or more	Umpire 1	Umpire 2	Umpire 3	Umpire 4	Umpire 5

An example with 3 umpires undertaking other duties

The race committee observer/umpire organiser should as far as possible ensure that each umpire stays relatively fresh and spends no more than 2 heats umpiring and then has a break for a heat, so that the need for their concentration does not exceed approximately 40 minutes in every hour. In a normal scenario when there is no protest hearing, the race committee should appoint 2 umpires (of the 3) to work with 2 observer buddies for the 2nd and 4th groups of 4 boats in the heat. For some of the heats in which the most non-compliance with the rules is experienced/expected or other reason, all 3 umpires might work with observers.

Umpire availability for a heat

There may be circumstances beyond the control of the race committee where umpire numbers are reduced. Racing may continue with either 1 or no umpires in order not to delay the flow of racing provided that observers are appointed. The race committee observer/umpire organiser will allocate umpires to achieve a similar number of duties during the event to distribute the load evenly.

Advice to Umpires

Introduction to umpiring of radio racing

Radio racing is sailed under the RRS Appendix E, in which rule observance is normally controlled by observers who hail contacts and record the incidents, but give no decisions. You will be giving those decisions in accordance with IRSA Addendum Q and will be working with an observer who will fulfil the role set by RRS E3.1 and will assist you by recording your decisions and checking that turns are properly made.

You will position yourself in the control area with your observer buddy and communicate as necessary about your positioning, the build up to impending incidents, your hails etc so that the observer may check that the boat that you have penalised by hailing does the penalty turn. Generally being observed is sufficient to make competitors behave, but umpiring will greatly reinforce this pressure and reduce the number of hearings.

Positioning

You may agree with other umpires/observers how to split watching the heat at the starting line. However this is often difficult as the boats are light and can accelerate quickly to another location on the line. So watching a relatively large part of the line is often more practical than specific sections because it is all within everyone's line of vision for the only time in the race. It is often useful to have some observers ahead of and some behind the line.

Your observer buddy will show you the normal positioning in the control area close to the skippers of the boats you are observing in order to get a similar viewpoint. The closer the boats are together the nearer you have to be to them to get a good competitor's view. Competitors' movements can give a clue to this.

Boat identification

If you are unable to distinguish a boat's sail number, you may identify the boat by description, such as deck or hull colour, and then as soon as possible, by sail number. If you are not absolutely sure about the identity of the obliged boat **it is better not to hail any boat** specifically than to inflict a penalty on an innocent boat. A general description like "the boat on the outside of the group rounding the mark" might be better until 100% certain identification is established.

Communication with competitors

Only answer questions from competitors relating to decisions you have made. Umpires should raise all other issues with the race committee. In response to some competitors, umpires may need to give brief answers such as 'protest refused' or 'not observed'.

De-briefing meetings may be held with competitors and race committee, either after the day's racing or at the following morning briefing, to discuss any problems or questions that might arise from umpire decisions or the umpiring system.

Hailing a penalty in the middle of the course

It is expected that in a 'non time pressure' area of the course, such as midway between marks you may hail your penalty or no penalty decision after the contact hail from your observer buddy and after allowing the competitor a little time to acknowledge or start his penalty turn. This will prevent the competitor thinking that he is being 'refereed' by just waiting for the umpire hail before he/she does anything. The short delay will encourage the competitor to think for himself and take responsibility for the incident and comply with the BASIC PRINCIPLE of the RRS. Make sure that when you do penalise a boat your hail is loud, clear and contains both the boat's number and a brief reason. In 'high pressure' circumstances, such as at a start with multiple collisions, umpires may hail immediately, without waiting for an observer hail, to help ensure that all the obliged boats are penalised.

Hailing a Penalty at Marks etc

In crowded 'high pressure' situations at marks etc a greater speed of response may also be desirable and a boat may be penalised by hailing without any delay, for example at a multiple pile up at the first windward mark when there may be several decisions to be hailed. You may only impose an additional single turn penalty under a few specific rules, when for example the obliged boat gains an advantage despite having done a penalty turn. These are to be used only when absolutely necessary. Make sure that the competitor knows that this hail is a second penalty when giving the reason. Make sure that your observer buddy, who is effectively acting as your secretary in carrying out his normal role as an observer, has heard your hail and can follow the obliged boat and check that the turn is done.

Advice to Competitors

Introduction to racing with umpires working with observers

You will be sailing under the RRS Appendix E with observers appointed as E3.1, but with the one important change. IRSA Addendum Q requires that umpires will work with observers in the control area. Observers will hail contacts in the normal way. It is expected that you will comply with the RRS BASIC PRINCIPLE by thinking about any incident that involves your boat and either protesting if you are the Right of Way boat or taking responsibility by making your single penalty turn promptly, if you are the obliged boat. However if you don't and an umpire has seen the incident he/she will hail you to do a single penalty turn. This decision cannot be challenged. The umpire may hail your number independently from the observer and he may impose an additional single turn penalty under a few specific rules if, for example, you gained an advantage over the Right of Way boat even after having made your penalty turn. Not every observer will have an umpire buddy and if you don't think about the rules and comply with them the observer's evidence will be used after the heat. This may result in a DSQ, so it is in your interest to behave as required by the BASIC PRINCIPLE in the RRS. There will be plenty of eyes watching you!

Protest procedures while racing

Except when an umpire hail has been made for your incident, you may protest other boats in the normal way. Initially, hail just once to make your protest. Hail loudly! Listen for the other boat's response and/or an umpire penalty hail. If you get no response to your first hail, you are obliged to repeat your hail at least once to make your protest valid. This is to make sure the observers/umpires and the boat you are protesting have heard the hail.

Penalties while racing

If you are protested by another boat and you accept that you are the obliged boat, you shall make a single turn penalty immediately after the incident.

If you decide to take a penalty, but need to get clear of other boats or a mark, it is a good idea to hail the observers/umpires "(your boat number) acknowledges" or say "(your boat number) – OK".

If no boat takes a penalty and an umpire has seen the incident, the umpire will either dismiss the protest by hailing "umpire – no penalty to (the boat numbers)" or penalise you by hailing "umpire penalty to (the boat numbers) for incident with (boat number), (giving a brief reason)". The umpire may repeat the hail if you fail to respond.

If you know you have broken a rule, you are obligated by the BASIC PRINCIPLE, Sportsmanship and the Rules, to take a penalty immediately. Waiting for a hail when you know you have broken a rule may be seen as breaking a rule deliberately.

The umpires may penalise you without a protest from another boat or without an observer hail if you touch a mark without taking a penalty, break rule 42 by sculling, gain an advantage after taking a penalty or fail to take a penalty correctly.

If these breaches are severe or repeated, break a rule deliberately or commit a breach of sportsmanship the umpires may report your actions to the race committee for consideration under RRS 2 or 69.

Protests or requests for redress after racing

All incidents should be decided on the water by your good behaviour. However, you may protest or request redress immediately after finishing for breaches or circumstances that you cannot protest while racing.

Follow the procedures for protesting as set out in RRS Appendix E.

Actions of Umpires

You cannot request redress because of actions or non-actions by the umpires.

Advice to Observers

Introduction to observing with an umpire buddy

Each competitor will be expected to participate in the important task of observing in compliance with the requirements of RRS E3.1. Whilst you are racing you will expect a high standard of race observation by your fellow competitors, so when your turn comes, concentrate at all times as if you were racing. The race committee will ask you to do one or more observing duties during the event. The observer/umpire organiser may also ask you to work with an umpire as a buddy. Your role with or without an umpire buddy will be as RRS E3.1, to hail contacts, see that turns are done and make records, but give no decisions. That is the umpire's job. Please communicate with him as necessary and at the start of the event inform an umpire who may be unused to radio racing of standard observer procedure.

Race Committee request to observe

When you are asked to observe the next heat present yourself to the observer/umpire organiser at race control. He will give you a pad and pencil. Write your name, sail number together with the race number and heat letter on the next clean page on the pad. He will inform you whether or not you are working with an umpire buddy. He may tell you which part of the heat to watch, the 1st group of 4 boats, 2nd group of 4 boats, last group of 4 boats etc as appropriate or you may agree another similar arrangement with the other observers/umpires.

Observer hails

From the preparatory signal observe the racing closely. You may agree with other umpires/observers how to split watching the heat at the starting line. However this is often difficult, so watching a relatively large part of the line is often more practical than specific sections because it is all within everyone's line of vision for the only time in the race. It is often useful to have some observers ahead of and some behind the line.

Follow your section of the heat on the first leg and pay particular attention to the circumstances that may lead to an incident, changes of course before contact etc. If there is a contact between boats promptly hail their sail numbers loudly and clearly. The same applies with contacts between boats and marks. You may repeat the hail as appropriate. Hail contact only if you are absolutely certain that an incident has occurred. If you are in any doubt do not hail. You must not make any penalty hails. This is the umpire's job.

Boat identification

If you are unable to distinguish a boat's sail number, you may identify the boat by description, such as deck or hull colour, and then as soon as possible, by sail number. If you are not absolutely sure about the identity of the contacting boats it is better not to hail any boat than to hail the wrong boat.

Check for penalty turns of the obliged or penalised boat

As you hail the boat numbers that make contact, write those numbers on your pad and 'ring' the one who you believe is the obliged boat. This may be confirmed by your umpire buddy if you are working with one, but whatever happens watch the 'ringed' boat number after the incident and check that a penalty turn has been properly made. You may need to watch the other boat that you have recorded as he may be the obliged boat and accept responsibility. Strike through the number of the boat that made the turn. If the obliged boat did not complete a correct penalty turn, (a tack AND a gybe) make contact with an umpire to require another penalty to be imposed.

Record the circumstances leading up to the incident and the collision

If no boat makes a penalty turn record the facts of the incident and the circumstances leading up to it that you observe. Add brief notes to the numbers marked and if possible add a small drawing, the relevant positions, where contact made on hull, marks, wind direction etc as appropriate. You may be asked to present this evidence at the end of the heat.

Competitor protest

If a competitor protests, record on your pad the sail number of the protesting boat(s). Add a 'P' alongside the protesting boat number. When a penalty turn is done strike through the number of that boat written on your pad.

Record incorrect mark roundings, boats out of control etc

Record the sail number of any boats, which did not correctly round marks of the course. Make no hails to these boats. You must follow and record boats that continue to sail the wrong course. Talk to the other observers for some concentrated recording action and maybe get more help from the race committee to check for corrections made if large numbers of boats are involved. Record the sail number of any boats claiming to be out of control, as they must retire from the heat.

At the end of the heat

If you have unresolved incidents from the race you observe, discuss these with the other observers and complete an Observer Report Form. You may then be required to give written and/or oral evidence in person at a protest hearing. If so, give your evidence clearly and concisely. The Protest Committee may need to question you to obtain the facts concerning the incident.