

Interpretation 2003-A-1

INTERPRETATION ON THE INTERNATIONAL "A" CLASS RULES

Interpretation requested by the designer Graham Bantock, as follows:

Do Class Rules 3 and/or 4 prohibit one or more appendages, placed on the centreline and aft of the aft waterline ending and wholly above the waterline, which is/are:

- movable?
- fixed?

Relevant rules

International "A" Class Rules 1.1.1, 3.3 and 4.1.1.

Discussion

The current "A" Class Rules were written in 1994 and at that time there were no ERS applicable to the hull and its component parts. However the current definitions given in the ERS may be used to give an insight into the meaning of the "A" Class rules because they objectively define various parts of the boat using commonly understood terms.

Even though the "A" Class rules do not refer to the current ERS definitions, ERS D.1 Hull and E.1.1 Hull Appendage, it may be assumed that most people associated with the sport would accept the definitions of the hull and hull appendages. There should be a good reason not to use the ERS definitions before rejecting them as invalid.

Restrictions regarding appendages are given in the "A" Class Rule 4.1.1. Number and shape of fixed appendages are not restricted. As to movable appendages, only those which move fore and aft and retracting appendages are not permitted.

The "A" Class is described in the Class Rule 1.1.1 as a Development Class (now called an Open Class) where anything is permitted unless it is specifically prohibited. We do not have to observe the original intention of the class rules but only the meaning of the current ones. The original intentions are lost to us now anyway and the intentions and original ideas are of no consequence if an item in question complies with the relevant current rule.

The recent example of the HULA appendage on the Team New Zealand ACC boats showed that the intention of the rules is of no consequence when the class rules themselves are quite specific. The designer's intention was undoubtedly to obtain a faster boat probably by the effect of lengthening the boat without a rating penalty using the HULA appendage. His solution complied with the current class rules even if the intention of the ACC class rules might be challenged.

Decisions

One or more fixed and/or movable appendages joining the hull aft of the aft waterline ending and wholly above the waterline are permitted if they are:

- within 25 mm of the centreline and
- are not movable fore and aft and
- are not retractable.