



# International Radio Sailing Association

## Race Management Policies for IRSA Events

**DRAFT**  
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### IRSA RACE MANAGEMENT POLICIES FOR INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

*Please note that these policies are guidelines to the Race Management Team. Failure to observe these guidelines are not grounds for redress.*

#### 1. Definitions

- 1.1 **Principal Race Officer** – a qualified Race Officer appointed or approved by IRSA or the event organizing body who has overall responsible for the

conduct of all racing.

1.2 **Race Management Team** – the Principal Race Officer and all off and on-the-water volunteers responsible for managing racing.

1.3 **Guidance Committee** – a Committee comprising the PRO, the Event Director, the Jury Chairman and an IRSA or Class Representative and a Competitor’s Representative. The Guidance Committee will advise the PRO on all matters pertaining to race management

*Any better suggestions for the name of this group?*

1.4 **Qualified Race Officer** – an experienced sailor with good knowledge of the racing rules and experience of race management who has been certified or otherwise recognized as such by his National Authority or World Sailing.

1.5 “Will” means the intentions of the race management team.

## 2. General Principle

2.1 The policies set out in this document are intended to ensure that racing is fair and that race management provided racing of the high quality expected by competitors at international events.

2.2 A shortage of time or an insufficient number completed races is not a basis for variance from these policies.

2.3 Decisions, especially when postponing or abandoning a heat, will be based on the boat-handling that can reasonably be expected from a competent, but not expert, sailor.

*The wording is taken from ISAF Case 103*

## 3. Times/Timing/Changes In Schedule

3.1 Times will be based on local time, as available on local mobile phone services, unless otherwise indicated. All times will be given using the 24 hour clock (13.00 not 1 p.m)

*I have changed GPS time to local mobile phone time as this is the time most freely available.*

3.2 Starts will not be delayed for competitors to reach the race area if they could have arrived with reasonable diligence.

3.3 After a postponement of more than 10 minutes, to alert competitors that a race or sequence of races will start soon an acoustic announcement will be made (with one sound signal) at least five minutes before the warning signal.

*After a delay in racing it seems reasonable to give competitors time to prepare. Should this be 5 minutes, more, or less?*

3.4 The race management team will use the entire day if necessary to complete the schedule.

3.5 No races will be sailed ‘ahead of schedule’ except as provided for in the Sailing Instructions.

## 4. Decision to Race

4.1 The race will be started at the scheduled time if the wind conditions and visibility are within the parameters outlined in these policies. Waiting for ‘better’ conditions may be unfair, and will be avoided.

4.2 The race management team can wait for the wind to ‘stabilise’.

4.3 The start may be postponed if a major wind shift is expected based on a known pattern or other reliable information (example: sea breeze can be seen in the distance and is expected to fill in). Otherwise, the race management team will start the race. The wind shift may not occur, the course can be corrected or the shift may occur after the race is completed.

4.4 When possible wind will be measured in the racing area from a drifting boat

4.5 Average wind speed will be determined over a five minute period.

4.6 Before the event starts the Guidance Committee will discuss the conditions under which a heat may be postponed. These conditions should be announced at the initial competitors briefing.

4.7 A heat will not be started if the wind-speed is so low that boats are unable to manoeuvre to start and complete the course within the time limit. The PRO will consult the Guidance Committee before postponing a heat for this reason

4.8 A heat will not be started when high wind speeds, combined with sea conditions, current rapid changes in wind speed or any other factors, affect the safety of boats, sailors, the race committee team and vessels. The PRO will consult the Guidance Committee before postponing a heat for this reason.

4.9 A heat will not be started if the whole course area is not visible from the control area.

## 5 Sighting the Line / Timing / Signaling / Recording

5.7 There will be a minimum of two line sighters. Whenever practical, at least one of the line sighters will be an appropriately qualified Race Officer.

5.8 At least one line-sighter will use a sighting device to visualize the line.

*There was much comment in Foster City that the start officer was NOT using such a device.*

5.9 Each line sighter may use a hand-held voice recording device and record, without stopping, from at least 30 seconds before the starting signal until after anything of interest after the start. A commentary of anything of interest will be recorded (such as boats getting close to the line, bunching, etc.).

5.10 If tapes are used, they will be labelled and preserved until after the conclusion of the entire event. If digital recorders are used, each day's recording will be saved and indexed for easy retrieval.

5.11 In no circumstances will an individual recall be signaled later than 5 seconds after the starting signal.

5.12 Competitors who have been scored OCS or penalized under rule 30, may listen to the voice recording of the applicable start.

## 6 Calling OCS

6.7 The race management team will not permit a heat to continue if it is satisfied that unidentified boats were over early.

6.8 When the race management team is satisfied that all boats over the line have been identified, an Individual Recall will be signaled.

## 7 Postponing A Race During The Starting Procedure

7.7 The race management team will postpone a race during the starting procedure in response to adverse outside effects depriving boats of an equal chance of a good

start.

7.8 The race management team will postpone the race during the starting procedure if the mean wind shifts more than 10 degrees or in the event other influences cause boats to bunch at one end of the start line. In rapid oscillations the race management team will endeavour to lay a starting line based on the mean oscillations expected.

*I would be grateful for your views on how much the line can be skewed before a start should be postponed. I hope we all agree that if boats cannot cross the line on one tack or the other the start should be postponed. 10° is perhaps too little - 15, 20, 25 degrees?*

7.9 If any wind shift occurs before the starting signal such that it significantly increases the risk of a general recall, a postponement will be considered.

7.10 If the positions boats are taking on the starting line indicate a line bias in the minds of the competitors, a postponement will be considered.

7.11 In the circumstances described in 7.1 to 7.4 if the race management team determines that adjusting the starting line is likely to improve the chances of fair start without a general recall, then a very late postponement will be considered.

7.12 The race management team will also consider postponing the start for any of the following reasons: a drifting mark, a significant error in the timing of signals, other boats interfering with the competing boats, inappropriate starting line length or angle, a reduction in visibility preventing the race management team from sighting the starting line or identifying premature starters, and other factors that might affect the fairness of the race.

7.13 For a postponement that the race management team anticipates will be longer than ten minutes, an acoustic announcement will be made and flag AP will be displayed.

*We have used this at several events and it is most useful as it provides a clear indication to all that racing is postponed*

## 8 General Recall

*Should we consider using the U flag procedure, before proceeding to black flag?*

8.7 In case of any problems with the starting line (such as length, or angle to the wind, etc.) a postponement may be signaled, even up to the last second before the start, instead of a general recall.

8.8 If a race management error is discovered after the starting signal (e.g., timing), the race management team may abandon the race. In these circumstances, the race management team will not signal a general recall.

8.9 When the race management team is not satisfied that all boats over early (or that have broken rules 30.1, 30.3) have been identified, a General Recall will be signaled.

8.10 In the event the start has been postponed, or a General Recall has been caused by the length or angle of the starting line, the race management team will adjust the starting line and make another attempt using the same preparatory signal.

8.11 If the race management team is satisfied that a General Recall was not the result of the starting line, it will use the black flag for each subsequent attempt.

8.12 An important principle followed by the race management team is that the black flag will only be used when general recalls are caused by the boats themselves, or rapid oscillations of the wind, and not by actions of the race management team.

8.13 When using the black flag, the race management team will make every effort to signal a postponement in the event of any problems with the starting

line.

## 9 Abandonment

9.7 The race management team may abandon the heat:

- if after starting boats can fetch the windward mark on either tack;
- if boats can fetch the next mark of the course on one tack on both the windward or the downwind leg of the course.

*The idea is that at a major event at least one of the main legs of the course must be a beat (but I have worded this so that the course may invert and the beat be on what was designated the downwind leg)*

The heat will not be abandoned for these reasons when at least one boat has rounded the last mark of the course and is sailing to the finish (or has already finished).

*We should not abandon just as a boat is about to finish*

9.8 The race management team will abandon a heat if the course area is not visible from the control area.

9.9 The race management team may abandon the race when it is unlikely that the leading boat will complete the course within the overall time limit, even if a new wind were to arrive. The further into the race, the less likely it is that the race management team will abandon the race. The PRO will consult the Guidance Committee before abandoning a heat for this reason.

*Such a decision is often controversial, so the PRO should ensure that he has the support of the Guidance Committee*

9.10 A heat will not be abandoned due to high wind speeds, combined with sea conditions, current rapid changes in wind speed or any other factors, except when the safety of boats, sailors, the race committee team and vessels is affected. The PRO will consult the Guidance Committee before abandoning a heat for this reason.

9.11 The race management team will consider abandoning the race if it determines that an outside influence has made the race unfair. Every effort will be made to ensure that other vessels do not interfere with racing. The PRO will consult the Guidance Committee before abandoning a heat for this reason.

9.12 Competitors will be reminded that the decision to race, or to continue to race, is their sole responsibility.

## 10 ~~Adjusting~~ Setting The Course To A New Wind Speed Or Direction

10.1 The Race Committee will consider re-setting the course following a change in wind direction. The course will definitely be re-set if :

- after starting boats can fetch the windward mark on either tack;
- boats cannot cross the starting line on both tacks.

The Race Committee will endeavor to set a new course that meets the requirements of 11, Courses.

10.1 The Race Committee will re-set the length of the course following a change in wind speed to meet the requirements of 11, Courses.

## 11 Courses

11.1 The race management team will endeavor to set a course so that boats are evenly spread:

- along the start line;
- on each side of the beats;
- on each side of the runs;
- at the gate.

*This is intended to define what a 'good course' is. It is both a target, and criteria for evaluation after the heat! This is based on a self-evaluation procedure developed by the RYA*

- 11.2 The race management team will attempt to set the longest possible first leg within the constraints of the course area.
- 11.3 The course length will be laid to give the first boat of each fleet the best chance of achieving the target time.
- 11.4 Gates will be approximately 10 hull lengths wide, laid square to the sailing wind. Variations in width and angle may be appropriate to adjust for current or other prevailing conditions.
- 11.5 The offset mark will be at least 10 hull lengths from the windward mark.

*Boats should clearly leave the windward mark 4 hull-length zone before entering the offset mark zone*

## 12 Starting Line

- 12.1 Starting lines will generally be laid square to the median sailing wind. Current, favored side of the course, expected wind shifts and other variables may justify variation from this guideline.
- 12.2 The race management team will use the following guide to determine the length of the starting line. A larger multiplier may be used in strong winds or heavy seas.

Starting line length = number of boats x boat length x 1,25.

*Is this long enough?*

## 13 Finishing Line/Finishing Procedures

- 13.1 There will be a minimum of two line sighters. Whenever practical, at least one of the line sighters will be an appropriately qualified Race Officer.
- 13.2 At least one line sighter will use a hand-held recording device to record the order of finish.
- 13.3 If tapes are used, they will be labelled and preserved until after the conclusion of the entire event. If digital recorders are used, each day's recording will be saved and indexed for easy retrieval.
- 13.4 A written record of the finishing order will also be maintained.
- 13.5 Competitors and coaches may listen to the voice recording(s) and review the written records of their finishes
- 13.6

## 14 Corrections Due to Scoring Errors/Requests for Redress

- 14.1 The race management team will adjust posted finishing places if it is satisfied that, based upon its records or observation, it has made a scoring error.
- 14.2 If the race management team believes it may have made any other error affecting the outcome of the race for which redress may be available, it may request redress on behalf of the potentially affected boat(s).
- 14.3 The race management team will consider requesting redress on behalf of a boat if it is satisfied that that boat's score has been made substantially worse

by the actions of an official boat.

## 15 Race Committee Protests

15.1 Since the primary responsibility for protesting breaches of the rules rests with competitors, the race management team will not normally protest a boat.

15.2 The race management team may protest a boat in the following circumstances:

- A breach of a sailing instruction that may not be protested by another boat;
- An apparent breach of good sportsmanship (Rule 2);
- Failing to take a penalty after knowingly touching a mark, but not protesting another boat;
- Failing to sail the course (Rule 28)

*Should we add a section on holding a daily National Representatives meeting? This has been most useful at recent events*