

RACING RULES COMMITTEE 2015 RULE CHANGE PROPOSALS FOR DISCUSSION

January 26, 2015

A. Sportsmanship

Rationale:

An incident at Nationals led some drivers to recommend including a statement about sportsmanship in the Handbook. Additional provisions to allow a Race Director to take action against drivers exhibiting unsportsmanlike conduct with follow on review by the Executive Committee could be considered.

Consequently, please consider the following provisions for inclusion in the Handbook.

Sportsmanship

1. A competitor shall not commit gross misconduct, including a gross breach of a rule, good manners or sportsmanship. 'Competitor' is defined as a driver or owner of a boat.
2. A competitor may request a hearing with the Protest Committee if they have been subject to the gross conduct or unsportsmanlike behavior of another competitor.
3. Action Against Gross Misconduct or Unsportsmanlike Behavior.
The Race Director, at his or her discretion, may disqualify a driver or a boat from competition in the current race day or event upon the recommendation of the Protest Committee after a hearing held under the provisions of clause 2 of this section.
4. Executive Committee Review
The Race Director shall submit a report of any action taken against a competitor for gross misconduct or unsportsmanlike behavior. The Executive Committee may institute additional penalties against the offending competitor after reviewing the incident and hearing from all parties involved. These additional penalties may include Exclusion from racing in CCWBRA events for a defined period of time.

B. Avoiding contact and responsibilities of right-of-way and give-way boats

Rationale:

Given the overriding goal of conducting Cocktail Class competition in a safe manner, the current rules can stand to be beefed-up even more with provisions stressing the importance of avoiding contact/collisions and the responsibility of drivers to avoid contact/collisions no matter if they are the right-of-way boat or the give-way boat.

The current rule in the Handbook states:

Boat strikes another boat; extensive or structural damage. Striking boat must retire from race and will receive points equal to the fleet or number of boats entered in the race/heat (not the number of starters) plus 2 points. Example: 6 boats in the race and a boat finishes 2nd in race but struck another boat during same causing structural or extensive damage. Score = 10 points.

This rule led Protest Committees to determine the right-of-way and give-way boats and apply the penalty to the give-way boat regardless of actions of the right-of-way boat and its contribution to the collision.

Consequently, please consider the following revision for inclusion in the Handbook.

Boats collide causing extensive or structural damage. Regardless of which boat had the right-of-way, both boats must retire from race and will receive points equal to the fleet or number of boats entered in the race/heat (not the number of starters) plus 2 points. Example: 6 boats in the race and a boat finishes 2nd in race but struck another boat during same causing structural or extensive damage. Score = 10 points.

C. Provision for Holding Area Adjacent to the Start Line

Rationale:

With race day fleets getting ever larger the need for efficient running of races increases. Having drivers ready and able to start the first race of a heat immediately upon the finish of the last race of the preceding heat is essential. As always, giving the Race Director flexibility to conduct the races in an appropriate manner is important.

Consequently, please consider the following revision for inclusion in the Handbook.

At the end of the section showing the graphic depictions of race courses add:

Holding Area:

At the discretion of the Race Director a Holding Area adjacent to the Start Line may be marked using buoys or other local features such as docks, moored boats, etc. The Holding Area should be large enough to accommodate 6 boats and be safely away from boats competing in a race. The purpose of the Holding Area is to corral competing drivers prior to their scheduled race(s) and allow the RC to quickly ascertain all boats are available and ready for the next race.

At the beginning of the Racing Procedure section:

Holding Area:

The Race Director may announce at the driver's meeting the use of a Holding Area to speed up the organization and running of races. If the use of a Holding Area is announced all drivers competing in a heat shall be in the Holding Area with engines running prior to the finish of the last race of the preceding heat.

D. Procedure for handling and scoring premature starters.

Rationale:

There has been much discussion about how to handle and score premature starters. Some of the proposals and comments made in recent months include:

- Disqualify from the whole heat.*
- Disqualify from the race.*
- Remove them (somehow) from the individual race by notifying them (somehow).*
- For scoring purposes award the usual points (1, 2, 3, etc.) only to valid starters. Score premature starters AFTER valid starters plus some amount of penalty points.*
- Encourage premature starters to retire from the race to receive fewer points. Current scheme encourages premature starters to continue in the race.*
- Notify premature starters at the first mark so they can then decide whether to retire.*
- Banish 'um cuz they're evil.*

I have gone back and read all the emails from the summer relating to this issue and keeping all of these proposals in mind but also trying to keep it simple I will list some "goals" I have come up with the following "guidelines", for discussion.

- 1. Premature starters should be penalized somewhat aggressively.*
- 2. Trying to notify premature starters is too difficult and potentially hazardous.*
- 3. Having premature starters return to the start line to re-start is potentially dangerous.*
- 4. Recalling a race because some starters were early and rerunning it is too time consuming and unfair to valid starters.*
- 4. Having premature starters SAFELY retire from the race at the earliest opportunity is favored.*
- 5. The current scoring scheme encourages premature starters to complete the race.*
- 6. While grossly misguided, premature starters are not inherently evil.*

Taking the approach that most of us generally agree with these guidelines I offer the following changes to the race scoring rules in the handbook.

Current rule:

Any boat with any part of its equipment over the line prior to the starting signal shall have points added to its finish position equal to the total number of official entrants in the race and not the number of starters (e.g., 6 boats in a race, add 6 points; 4 boats in race, add 4 points).

Proposed revision:

A. Any boat with any part of its equipment over the line prior to the starting signal that also finishes the race shall be awarded points equal to the point score of the last valid starter (see c. below) plus the total number of entrants in the race and not the number of starters (e.g., 6 boats in a race, add 6 points; 4 boats in race, add 4 points).

OR

B. Any boat with any part of its equipment over the line prior to the starting signal that also finishes the race shall be awarded points equal to DNF + 3 points.

Any boat with any part of its equipment over the line prior to the starting signal that moves off the race course (without causing any other driver to alter course in any way) and retires from the race PRIOR to completely rounding the first mark of the course shall be awarded points equal to DNF plus 1 point.

c. Boats starting correctly will receive a score of their finish position less one point for each premature starter that finishes the race in front of them.

These revisions would:

1. Reward premature starters for safely retiring from a race compared to finishing the race.
2. Score valid starters as if premature starters were ignored with respect to points awarded.
3. Not put any responsibility on the race committee for notifying premature starters.
4. Treat all premature starters the same.
5. Premature starters are penalized 1 additional point compared to a DNF if they retire.
6. Premature starters are penalized 3 additional points compared to a DNF if they complete the race.

OR

7. Premature starters are penalized 6 additional points compared to the last place finisher if they complete the race (this option might be too many points).

Some premature drivers that are not sure if they were over or not and finish the race might complain they are being penalized too much???. This proposal is modest if we really want to do something to reduce the number of premature starters.

Regards,
Jim Schmicker
Racing Rules Committee Chairman