



## Race management newsletter

*Editor – Peter Saxton – Chair of RYA Race Management Committee*

Welcome to the October 2017 race management newsletter. We have a few updates for you and I hope you find them interesting.



The newsletter is being sent to all qualified and part-qualified race management officials, and also to the 'major event volunteers' (MEVs) who are an important part of the national race management delivery team but don't necessarily feature on the 'officials' database.

### The updates cover:

1. **Learning about race management – courses and qualifications**
2. **Spotlight on the Race Management Advisory Service**
3. **Recent qualifications - new appointments and renewals**
4. **An idea for introducing younger people to race management (and keeping older people sailing!)**
5. **Who's who on the RYA Race Management Committee**

### 1. Learning about race management – courses and qualifications

**At Club level** - running good racing can be challenging, with venue-specific issues, multiple classes, handicap results etc. Although the pressure and responsibility may be lower than at (say) a National Championships, good Club-level race management can make a real positive difference to enjoyment and participation levels of both the competitors and the volunteers.

If you want to help your Club (or a group of local Clubs) learn more about tips and techniques for good race management at club level, then the one-day 'Club Race Team' course could be worth organising this winter? Our Regional Race Management Coordinators would be pleased to work with you to customize the course for your particular Club needs and this can also include a review of your series Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions if you want.

**At open meeting level** – the qualification above club-level training used to be called the 'Regional Race Officer' ('RRO') qualification, but it's been renamed 'RYA Race Officer'. The qualification is focused on giving you the skills to run an open meeting at your Club,

From the pre-event activities such as:

- setting up the organising authority
- preparing the NoR and SIs
- doing the risk assessment
- doing the risk assessment

Moving on to the race delivery aspects such as:

- course setting
- start procedures
- course adjustment



Finishing through to the post-race tasks such as:

- results processing & publishing
- managing arbitration, protests and redress claims
- event and team debriefs

There's a two-day course as part of the qualification, and it can be an interesting couple of days for anyone who wants to learn more about race management, regardless of whether you want to follow-through with the practical experience and work towards your full RRO qualification. On successful completion of the course you will achieve 'RRO (Theory)' status, in the same way that you can achieve RYA Yachtmaster (Theory) level.

The cost of the two-day course is £80 and from November 2017 to February 2018 there are already six RRO courses scheduled:

- Reading (Berkshire) – 11-12 November
- Ripon (Yorkshire) – 2-3 December
- Cardiff (Wales) – 27/28 January
- Rochester (Kent) – 27-28 January
- Lymington (Hampshire) – 3-4 February
- Cowes (Isle of Wight) – 10-11 February

Full details are on the race management section of the [RYA Website](#)

**At national level** – the National Race Officer ('NRO') qualification involves a mixture of practical experience and course-based assessment.

Over the last few months we've been developing an update to the National Race Officer course, to make it more practical and representative of the skills and decision-making required when running a national-level event.

We're also adding a pre-attendance online theory assessment (a bit like the theory part of the car driving test) to help ensure that everyone on the course has a reasonable knowledge base before the course, and to allow the course length to reduce from three days to two days. Although this pre-assessment might sound a bit scary, it's designed to be a helpful learning process – it has multiple choice questions and if you don't know an answer you can leave the test and go and do some reading before returning to the test to answer the question. There's a pool of questions on each subject area, so different users are likely to be asked different questions.

We're running the new two-day NRO course for some RYA staff at Hamble in late November, and then the first 'proper' course will be on 17/18 March in Slough, Berkshire. Booking details are on the RYA website.

**At international level** – there's a three-day International Race Officer ('IRO') which we were hoping to host in the UK in April 2018, but unfortunately the latest news is that our bid has been unsuccessful. We'll let you know when we find out more.....





**And finally, some new courses** – designed to cater for those volunteers who don't necessarily want to become a race officer, but want to develop their skills in the key roles of:

- Timekeeping
- Signaling
- Calling and recording

We all know that good timekeeping, signaling, calling and recording can make a huge difference to the efficiency and enjoyment of being part of a race team, so it's important to help volunteers learn the skills necessary to deliver these roles well.

Our initial plan is to develop a two-hour(?) training module on each of these areas, with a plan to have them in place by Autumn 2018.

## **2. Spotlight on the Race Management Advisory Service ('RMAS')**

The RMAS is one of two advisory groups formed with some of the country's more experienced race management officials. They're available to provide you or your Club with a considered response to your race management questions. This can be very useful if, for example, you are trying to update your Club race management processes, create a regatta NoR or resolve a query on results process. Over the last few years they have dealt with about a dozen questions each year.

For many years, the RMAS team has been chaired by Roger Palmer (South) but Roger has now taken well-deserved retirement from this role and we would like to thank him for all his work leading the RMAS team.

Replacing Roger as the new chairman is Peter Baldwin (North – NRO and committee member of RMC). The other team members are:

- David Campbell-James (South - IRO)
- Mike Butterfield (Wales – IRO, IJ, IU)
- Graham Louth (East – NRO, IJ)
- Ian Bullock (South - NRO, NML).

In addition, Tim Hancock (South - IRO) and David Lees (London & South East - IU, IJ) who were both previously members of the team continue as an extra resource available to help out when required.



If you have any questions that you would like to put to the RMAS team, please email [racemanagementadmin@rya.org.uk](mailto:racemanagementadmin@rya.org.uk) (note –this is a new email address!).

Over the last few months, the questions dealt with by RMAS include:

- a) *How to best deal with handicap racing using average lap times*

The question was initially phrased in an e-mail as "How to deal with timed races". After a short telephone conversation this was clarified to be average lap racing for handicap fleets. The club were advised of the document on [Running Races](#) using the Portsmouth Yardstick system, which is available on the Portsmouth Yardstick section of the RYA website.

b) *How to minimise errors when finishing boats and processing results for handicap racing with large fleets*

The enquirer ran regattas with large handicap and fleet racing courses (up to 100 per course). The fleet racing course results were very rarely challenged, but the handicap fleet races often went through several iterations leading to frustration for sailors and results teams. The RMAS team suggested a range of techniques that can be applied to minimise errors. The resulting suggestions are planned to be an additional Guidance Note for Race Officer's and Race Team's, adding to the [existing list](#) on the Race Officials section.

c) *Advice on allowing the use of replica Laser sails in club or Open event racing*

The club was advised on how they should deal with Laser sailors who want to sail with replica sails. A boat that sails with a replica sail does not conform to its' class rules. Thus a Laser with replica sails is not a Laser and should not be allowed to sail within a Laser fleet. Some suggestions were made on how to best deal with this situation.

It is intended that in future newsletters a short summary of the questions posed with RMAS in the period and the answer given. In addition, the RMC is looking into whether the full answers can be accessible on the RYA website.

There is also a companion service, the [Racing Rules Advisory Service](#) (RRAS) chaired by Martin Smethers. Some questions posed of RMAS are more Rules based and so may be passed to the RRAS to answer.

### 3. Recent qualifications – new appointments and renewals

I would like to welcome the following newly qualified race management officials – their appointments were approved at the July 2017 RMC meeting:

- National Race Officer (NRO)
  - Jo Lucas
- Regional Mark Layer (RML)
  - Paul Albone
  - Jon Close
  - Scott Chudley

### 4. An idea for introducing younger people to race management (and keeping older people sailing)

Jane Windsor writes to tell us about the **Ancient Mariners' Race** which was established in 1983 by Captain Hans-Hamilton at the Royal Southern YC on the Hamble in Hampshire. This keelboat race actively promotes the inclusion of older members in what is usually the last race of the Club's annual racing calendar.



The event rules state that the helm of any competing boat has to be at least 60 years old and the average age of the crew cannot be under 50. **And there's a requirement that the race officer should be under 40.**



Under the Ancient Mariners' formula, the older the crew, the kinder the handicap of the competing yacht as the IRC handicap rating is reduced by 0.05 for every year the average age of the competing crew is over 50. Many a competitive sailor has completed the course, finishing perhaps a leg ahead, only to find on handicap that they have lost to a crew of primarily 90 year olds!

This year, the Ancient Mariners' race was won by Midnight Cowboy, a Cork 1720, with a specially selected crew averaging 69 years old. The Race Officer was 22 year old Jack Neale, Head of the Royal Southern's Youth Academy.

*Editors comment - if your Club races dinghies rather than keelboats, why not add a similar event to your Club programme, but maybe reduce the PY of a boat by 5(?) points for every year the average age of the competing crew is over 50? At Grafham Water this year we had one Flying 15 crew who celebrated his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday but I think he's decided not to race any more – that's a shame because he really would have been a 'handicap bandit'!!*

*And why not insist that **all** the race team are aged under 40?*

#### **5. Who's who on the Race Management Committee ('RMC')**

There have been a few changes in the make-up of the Race Management Committee, so here's an up to date list of the committee members (and their date of appointment):

- Peter Saxton (East) – Chair – July 2017 - replaces Chris Hadden who stood down for health reasons.
- Peter Baldwin (North) – July 2015
- Richard Kingsnorth (South West ) – July 2015
- Stephen Parry (South) – January 2016
- David Kent (Scotland) – March 2016
- Tom Rusbridge (Midlands) – January 2016
- Jane Windsor (South) – July 2017

Richard Kingsnorth will be heading off cruising on a two-year circuit of the Atlantic in mid 2018, so there will be a vacancy on the committee - this will be advertised in the newsletter in due course.

The RMC is supported by two staff members at the RYA in Hamble. Many of you who will have already met Jacqui Roberts who's role is now Race Officials Development Officer, and she is supported by Charlie MacKean in the role of Race Officials Administrator. They also look after the judges and umpires officials, as well as supporting the RYA staff in the Racing Services team, led by Bas Edmonds, RYA Racing Services Manager.

**And finally....**



You may have seen the updated [Race Officials Directory](#) on the RYA website – it now provides much more information for users so thank you to those race officials who have provided up to date information. If you haven't responded to Charlie yet, then she will be sending a Survey Monkey to you for completion. Your responses will also help us to identify those race officials who would like to progress so that RYA event opportunities can be offered to you.



Thanks for reading this far – I hope the newsletter has been of some interest to you? Any feedback is welcomed, as are any suggested articles for inclusion in subsequent issues.

Regards

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*The next newsletter is scheduled for publication in January 2018.*