

AMYA Championship Regatta Guidelines

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This document defines three levels of guidelines: Required, Recommended, and Optional. Other documents referenced here (which may be separately kept up to date) should be co-located with this document.

The creation and initial publication of this document was approved by the AMYA Board of Directors.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Purpose: The purpose of this document is to collect in one convenient place a complete set of guidelines surrounding administration of AMYA Championship Regattas.
- 1.2 Guideline Only: This document is a guideline. It does not set out any new requirements for championship events. It is intended to assist in understanding elements of championship events which come from many different sources, such as the ISAF Racing Rules of Sailing, the regulations of the ISAF Radio Sailing Division where applicable, the Bylaws and other official documents of the AMYA, and the Rules of the Class and directives of Class organizations.
- 1.3 Background: National events, and to a lesser extent, Regional events, attract skippers from different clubs, states, and even countries. As a result, there can be a wide variety of understanding and expectations among the competitors. It is common for contentious disputes to erupt if the event is not run "by the book." This document attempts to outline what "the book" is.
- 1.4 Coverage: This document is primarily directed at AMYA "National" and "Regional" championships. It is designed to answer questions about what can and cannot be done with respect to these events. It is not a guideline on how to organize or run the event itself.
- 1.5 Definitions:
 - 1.5.1 Board: The AMYA Board of Directors; the nine elected officers of the AMYA.
 - 1.5.2 Bylaws: The official document of the AMYA that defines the duties of the officers, the regulations on clubs, classes, and members, and various other aspects of the organization.
 - 1.5.3 Policy: The operational standards and procedures, which the AMYA executive officers, including the Board, develop to handle situations which are not covered in the Bylaws, or interpretations of those Bylaws.
 - 1.5.4 Class Secretary: The top authority in class matters. In this document, the term should be taken to include a Class Owners Association, when one exists.
 - 1.5.5 RRS: The Racing Rules of Sailing. The RRS not only defines the racing rules, but also rules governing how races are described, administered, and scored.
 - 1.5.6 ISAF: International Sailing Federation. The body which produces the RRS.
 - 1.5.7 NOR: Notice of Race.
 - 1.5.8 SI: Sailing Instructions.
 - 1.5.9 Dues Card: The annually reissued membership card which serves as proof that a person is a current member of the AMYA.

2.0 Requirements

- 2.1 Order of Precedence. In 1998, to rectify discrepancies in the RRS and AMYA documents, the Board adopted the following: "ORDER OF PRECEDENCE POLICY: In the event of conflicts between AMYA Rules or Regulations and the following, the following shall take precedence: The ISAF Racing Rules of Sailing, the applicable ISAF RRS Appendices and the applicable USSA Prescriptions." [Board]
- 2.2 Authority: The primary authority for granting championship events to clubs is the Class Secretary (Bylaw 8.1). This means that the Class Secretary has indirect control over most aspects of the event.

- 2.3 Measurement: All boats must be measured or otherwise certified as meeting class specifications before the start of the first heat. (Bylaw 8.2) The class secretary may specify what measurements must be taken.
 - 2.4 Except as discussed below, The Bylaws require that only current AMYA members who are registered in the class may compete in National and Regional events. (Bylaw 8.3a) See also the discussion of Bylaw 8.3b, below. Proof of current membership can be verified by having competitors present a dues card, which expires on February 1 of the year following its face date. For a large event, the organizer should contact the Membership Secretary in advance and verify the membership of all registrants.
 - 2.5 An exception to the AMYA membership requirement is allowed by Bylaw 8.3b, which permits skippers from other countries to participate. Bylaw 8.3b was interpreted by the board in 1999 as follows: "Bylaw 8.3b only applies to all non-AMYA entrants who present a valid membership of their national association and boat measurement certificate per AMYA class rules, or a measurement certificate from his national organization that is acceptable to the AMYA class secretary." Note that this gives the Class Secretary final authority over eligibility.
 - 2.6 The Bylaws require that only properly registered boats may compete in championship events (Bylaw 8.3a). A boat is properly registered if the owner is both a current AMYA member and holds a registration card in their name for the boat in question. For a large event, the organizer should contact the Class Secretary in advance to verify boat registration of registrants.
 - 2.7 Slightly different rules exist for Development and One Design classes regarding the substitution of boats and skippers. See Bylaws 8.5 and 8.6 for details.
 - 2.8 Chevrons: The top 3 places in championship events are eligible for chevrons, which are distributed (for free) by the Regatta Coordinator. (Bylaw 8.7 and 8.8)
 - 2.9 Rules: AMYA Championships must be conducted according to the RRS. The RRS provides means for rule adjustment in the NOR (Notice of Race) and SI (Sailing Instructions).
- 3.0 Recommendations
- 3.1 National Championship Subsidy: The AMYA has a policy that permits the club organizing a National Championship to request a partial repayment of documented expenses, up to \$10 per skipper for up to 25 skippers. In order to qualify for the subsidy, receipts and final standings should be sent to the AMYA treasurer soon after the event. All skippers listed in the results should be current AMYA members, or qualify under Bylaw 8.3b. Note that the subsidy is a policy, and may be changed or removed by the Board if necessary. You should check while planning an event to ensure the policy is still in place. [Policy]
 - 3.2 Extension of Bylaw 8.3b to Regional Championships: It is recommended that Bylaw 8.3b, which as written only applies to Nationals, be extended to include Regional championships. The intent of 8.3b is to welcome skippers who may belong to non-US national organizations but who sail the same class of boat. There is no reason this goodwill should not extend to Regional events. [Policy]
- 4.0 Options
- 4.1 Eligibility: If a skipper claims current membership, but cannot produce a current dues card, the skipper shall pay the amount of dues, which shall be returned if it is later ascertained their membership was current. If a owner claims current boat registration, but cannot produce a current registration card, the owner shall pay the amount of registration, which shall be returned if it is later ascertained their registration was current. Note that these problems are greatly reduced if the organizers have contacted the Membership and Class Secretaries for all pre-registrants. AMYA membership may be obtained at the event. Boat registration may be obtained at the event at the discretion of the Class Secretary.
 - 4.2 Limiting of Fleet: It is permissible to set an upper limit on the number of skippers permitted to participate in a Championship.
 - 4.3 Qualification: If a fleet is limited, the method by which skippers are selected to compete is termed qualification. There are no regulations on qualification; however, the following method is suggested for National events. Obtain the regional distribution for the class. Divide the total allowable number of boats into groups apportioned to region according to the distribution. Hold these slots open until some deadline set several weeks in advance of

the event. Record the dates on which every entry is received. After the deadline, fill in unused slots on a first-come, first-served basis, regardless of region. This ensures that each region can be represented according to its relative population. It is recommended that the top 3 finishers from the prior year be directly invited.

- 4.4 NOR and SI: It is recommended that the sample NOR and SI available from the AMYA be used as a starting point for these documents.
- 4.5 Regatta Fees: There is no regulation of regatta fees. However, it is recommended that costs not associated directly with the racing be treated as separate, optional fees. For example An awards banquet could be considered part of the event; a side trip to a local attraction would not.
- 4.6 Awards, Trophies: Each class may have standard and perpetual trophies. They are part of the lore of the class and are encouraged. The number of trophies should be in relation to the size of the fleet; 1/6 of the fleet, rounded up, is a good prize level (25-30 boats, trophies to top 5 places). Costs of trophies are part of the cost of the event. Standard practice is for the host club to pay the cost of engraving of perpetual trophies. Cost of acquiring or maintaining perpetual trophies is normally borne by the class. Perpetual trophies should be obtained well in advance of the event.
- 4.7 Scoring: Scoring shall be covered in the NOR and/or SI. Scores shall not be withheld from competitors as long as posting them does not interfere with the duties of the race committee.
- 4.8 Throw-outs: Some regions use scoring systems that allow “throw outs” or “discards” after a certain number of races have been completed. A throw-out is a heat result that is not included in the final scoring. At championship events, where skippers can travel long distances, being able to discard a bad score, for whatever reason, can be the difference between a skipper considering that the event was a fair test of skill or being dissatisfied. Note that RRS A1.3 specifies that certain penalty scores are non-discardable.
- 4.9 Heat System: No particular racing system (method of determining which subgroups of the fleet compete at one time) is endorsed by the AMYA, although the AMYA RRC recommends an equal opportunity system if not all boats in the event can sail together. See the article on heat racing systems by Larry Robinson for more information. Matrix systems, when used, should be random, and blind (the person making up the matrix should not be able to determine who is in any particular heat).
- 4.10 Heat Size: The number of competitors who may compete in a single heat is a function of the size of the racing area, the visibility of the course, wind and sea conditions, and the class of boat being sailed. Large heat sizes are preferred if they can be accommodated, because it increases the number of heats in which each skipper can sail, thus ensuring that the final results reflect the ability of the competitors. All heats should contain an approximately equal number of boats.
- 4.11 Length of Start, Finish lines: The minimum distance between the starting marks should be approximately equal to the number of boats in a heat times the length of the boats.
- 4.12 Control Area: The area in which the skippers are permitted to be while racing. This area may be limited by the race committee, however it should always include the ability to sight down the start and finish lines.
- 4.13 Race Officials: Events are managed by the race committee (RC), whose authority and duty is defined in the RRS, as well as AMYA regulations mentioned in above. The race committee may elect or appoint a chairman (principal regatta official or PRO, or 'Race Director' in AMYA terminology). At many events, the Race Director (RD) is a committee of one, who fills the role of the RC. Ideally, the race director should be assisted by a starting line judge, a judge for each mark on the course, 2 finish line judges and a score keeper. The RD should inform competitors just what mark judges will and will not do at the event in question. Will they call boat-to-boat contacts? What will they hail when contact is made with a mark? What will they do if they cannot promptly identify the boat?
- 4.14 The use of the term “ACCR” which stood for “Annual Class Championship Regatta” is obsolete. It does not appear in the Bylaws. Use of the term “National Championship” or “Nationals” is much more likely to get better publicity. And please, do not use “Nats”. Similarly, the terms “RCCR” and “DCCR” are no longer used for Regional Championship.