

IU News 2004 - Issue 1

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INTRODUCTION

Letter from the IUSC Chairman, Jan Stage

Dear International Umpires,

At the ISAF Conference in Copenhagen, I was appointed as Chairman of the International Umpires Sub-Committee. I am very honoured, and I will do my best to serve you and the sport of sailing for the next four years. Alfredo Ricci from Italy was appointed as Vice-Chairman. The other members of the IUSC have not been appointed yet, but that should happen within the next month.

In Copenhagen we said goodbye to John Doerr as Chairman of the IUSC. On behalf of the IUSC, I want to thank him for doing a great job over the last four years. He leaves the new committee with a very competent and well-organised group of International Umpires. Fortunately, he has not left us completely. He is the new Chairman of the Race Officials Committee, and from that position he will surely keep an eye on us.

There are several signs that the next four years will be even busier than the past four years. Match racing is regaining strength. The number of high-level events is increasing and there is a lot of new activity, even in places where we have seen none or very little match racing for a while. On top of this, the Nations Cup is being reintroduced. Team racing is also in good shape. This year we have appointed a group of new IUs with a primary focus on team racing. With the existing team racing IUs, this enables us to provide this discipline with better umpiring service at the highest level. And as the youngest discipline, we see that umpired fleet racing is beginning to develop on various levels. It is even included in the current America's Cup pre-regattas. The rules for this discipline are still being developed. In Copenhagen, Council approved a new experimental Appendix Q with rules for umpired fleet races. It will be interesting to see how that works out in practice and how we can provide good umpiring for this discipline.

With growing activity, the need for more and better International Umpires is also increasing. In the last four years, we have had enough seminars to maintain a constant number of international umpires. But with increasing activity, we need to educate more.

Therefore, we need clubs and national authorities that will take the effort to organize and run International Umpire Seminars.

In March this year, we organized an IU Conference for all International Umpires. This was the first step to support personal development of the existing International Umpires. The number of participants and the level of activity were very promising. Next year, we will continue with a Chief Umpire Seminar in order to support existing International Umpires in achieving competence in that important area.

Education of new and further development of existing International Umpires will require significant improvements to our assessment and feedback system. The existing system is not sufficient, so a key goal for the next years is to create something better. This will be coordinated with similar activities in the other Race Officials sub-committees. At the Chief Umpire Seminar and the Performance Assessors Workshop that follows immediately after, we will take the first steps in that direction.

I look forward to working with you.

Jan Stage
Chairman of the International Umpire's Sub-Committee

**IU Grouping and Appointments for Match Racing events in 2005
By Jan Stage**

The system with grouping of existing International Umpires was first implemented in the fall of 2003. The purpose was to evaluate the competence of all IUs in order to support the working party in ISAF that appoints umpires for high-level match racing events. This grouping was used for making appointments to events in 2004.

This fall, a modified system for the 2005 appointments was described by the Chairman of the IUSC and implemented after approval by the Chairman of the ROC and by the Executive Committee. The modifications were made to remove some of the elements of the system that had been criticized. Compared to the 2004 system, the 2005 system has been changed on the following points:

- No IU is forced to be grouped. There is no longer a group 3, although not all IUs will be assigned to group 1 or 2. Individual IUs can choose not to be grouped.
- The grouping panel have been expanded. The 2004 panel consisted of 5 members. The 2005 panel consist of 10 members. All members are IUs.
- The grouping criteria are explicit. The grouping panel have been advised to use the current performance assessment criteria in making their assignments.
- The individual IU can request feedback. IUs that question their assignment to a group will receive feedback in terms of minor or major problems the panel have identified against specific performance assessment criteria.

The Chairman of the IUSC is also chairman of the grouping panel. The process started to fall when John Doerr was still the Chairman of the IUSC. Therefore, he initiated it, and we decided that it was most appropriate that he also completed it. That is the reason why John has advised you about the result of the grouping this year. The other nine members of the grouping panel have not been disclosed, neither publicly nor to each other. Some IUs have argued that they have a right to know who evaluate them. Yet it was concluded during the conference in Copenhagen that this concern is outweighed by the risk of enabling panel members to favour each other and to be lobbied by other IUs.

The result of the grouping process this year is that out of the total of 102 IUs, the following numbers were assigned to group 1 and 2:

Group 1	22
Group 2	43

The remaining 37 IUs have not been grouped, and are thus denoted as *'ungrouped'*. This includes those who chose not apply to be grouped, those who are working for an America's Cup syndicate, those who did not meet the criteria of either group 1 or 2 and those who were appointed as new IUs in November this year. Compared to last year, a few umpires have moved from group 1 to group 2 and a few have moved the other way.

All IUs should have received information about their grouping earlier this month. If you have not received this information, please inform Ines Teresa-Palacio at Ines@isaf.co.uk at the ISAF office. If you want information on the reason for your grouping, you should also contact her. An appeals procedure will be implemented if needed.

Based on the grouping, a preliminary selection of IUs has been made for the grade 1 events and the grade 2 events that ISAF appoints umpires to. For each of these events, a number of group 1 and 2 umpires have been pre-selected. Those of you who have been pre-selected should have received information about it recently. The IUs who are ungrouped because they do not meet the performance criteria or because they are new IUs will, if possible, also be offered participation in the umpire team at one of these events.

We will continue to develop the grouping system. In Copenhagen, it was debated whether the grouping system is permitted by ISAF regulations. The Council approved the grouping system and approved a modification to the regulations accordingly. It is also important to note that the Council approved the principle of grouping/classifying Race Officials. To remove any doubt, it was decided to develop and submit for the mid-year meeting next year a regulation that clearly enables the current grouping system. This year, there have been some improvements in the feedback we can give to individual IUs, but it is still not satisfactory. In order to provide better feedback, the IUSC will examine and advance the current performance criteria.

New Call Books

The Call Books for match racing and team racing have been completed by the Call Book Working Party that is headed by Marianne O. Middelthon.

There have been the following changes to the *Call Book for Match Racing*:

- UMP 3 & UMP 30 – the wording have been adjusted for consistency
- UMP 6 now has a reference to UMP 22
- UMP 10 diagram is slightly adjusted
- UMP 27 reworded because of new wording of 18.2(d)
- UMP 31 deleted – now clarified in rule 19
- MR 31 – Q2 deleted – now in rule book
- MR 36 new reference – direct penalty for this breach
- MR 38 wording adjusted because of new rule 19

Two new calls were approved in Copenhagen and have been added: UMP 36 and UMP 37. Finally, there have been several minor adjustments or changes to references, for instance C5(a) to C5.1.

To the *Call Book for Team Racing* a new call was approved in Copenhagen and has been added to section E. Otherwise, there were very few changes to that Call Book.

The Call Books are available on ISAF website through these links:

- <http://www.sailing.org/rrs2005/mrcallbook2005.pdf>
- <http://www.sailing.org/rrs2005/trcallbook2005.pdf>

CU Seminar and Performance Assessors Workshop

ISAF will host a Chief Umpire Seminar and a Performance Assessors Workshop in Southampton, UK, from Friday 11th to Monday 14th March 2005.

All the IUs will receive further information about the Seminar and the Workshop and an application form together with this newsletter.

The deadline for submitting the applications is 21st January 2005, and following the good experience in the IU Conference in 2004, ISAF will offer travel grants to the MNAs from the groups H, J, K, L, M, O and P in order to help with the travel expenses of their IUs.

Any questions or requests of extra information regarding this matter should be forwarded to lnes@isaf.co.uk.