

20 February 2006

IU NEWS 2006 – Issue 1

Contents in this issue:

1. Introduction: Letter from the IUSC Chairman, Jan Stage
2. Payment of IU fees
3. IU Grouping
4. Nations Cup
5. World Match Racing Tour
6. Rule 20.3 to delete or not to delete
7. The Chief Umpire's role in the Ranking List
8. Conflict of Interest
9. Abandoning a Match Race
10. How can we give better Feedback

Attachment - IU Grouping System for 2007
- Conflict of Interest (ISAF Council)

INTRODUCTION

Dear IUs,

I hope you all got well into the new year. At this point in time, it seems to become a very interesting year. I see several positive developments.

The level of activity in match racing is increasing. The number of events is growing. There are now so many grade 1 events that it has become necessary to accept that two events can overlap on dates. The America's Cup has been extended with a series of 12 pre-regattas. The Nations Cup has been revived, giving new countries and competitors a chance to enter the game. This year will also see match racing as a new discipline in the Asian Games. And last, but not least, it has been decided to introduce a world tour for match racing. All of this will give an increased focus on match racing.

Team racing is another key activity area for IUs. Since we formalised the team racing track and enabled umpires who work only with team racing to become IUs, we have seen a gradual growth in the number of IUs with focus on team racing. We had hoped to be able to run a seminar this year to support the development of more team racing IUs, but it has been necessary to defer it to next year.

The ISAF November Conference in Singapore defined a new important area: umpired fleet racing. The decision about the format for the 2008 Olympic Games, with a final medal race that is being umpired, means that we are facing new challenges. To overcome these challenges, IUs and IJs will work together. And it has already started. At the first two fleet racing Grade 1 events this year (Melbourne and Miami), umpired fleet racing has been introduced, and the three other Grade 1 events (Hyerès, Medemblik and Kiel) will follow in the next couple months. Some of the Olympic classes may also introduce it in their championships already this year. So this discipline is growing rapidly.

These changes all seem to point in the same direction. More work for our IUs and even more need to develop the quality of our umpiring. In order to accomplish this, we also need more IUs. Therefore, I will ask all of you to do two things: continue to improve the quality of your own umpiring and encourage good national umpires to enter the IU programme.

This issue of IU News includes articles on a number of topics. I want to thank the authors for their contributions and Marianne Middelthon for editing the issue.

I hope all of you will have a great year.

Jan Stage
Chairman, International Umpires Sub-Committee

PAYMENT OF IU FEES

At the ISAF conference there was a submission to create a regulation regarding the timing of payments to IUs irrespective of the receipt of fees from the event to ISAF. For a number of reasons (mostly legal) the submission was rejected by Council, but the Executive Committee has since reviewed the payment policy and we are pleased to inform you that IUs will now normally be paid soon after the event, irrespective of event fees being received. It is now clear that ISAF do not expect its Race Officials to be the 'bad guys'. However, all IUs still have a responsibility to uphold ISAF policies and would be expected to cooperate with the ISAF staff to help where ever needed to ensure that ISAF does receive the fees due by regulation. These events get great service from ISAF and its race officials, it is only reasonable that the events pay their fees promptly. It would be very unfortunate if an event lost its status, or even worse if ISAF services were withdrawn over this issue.

John Doerr
Chairman, Race Officials Committee

IU GROUPING

IU Grouping for 2006

The grouping of IUs for 2006 is now almost completed. The only thing left is to give feedback to those who have asked for it.

Out of the current total of 101 IUs, 87 had applied for a grouping. The result of the process is shown in the table below together with the numbers for 2005.

		<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>
Grouped IUs	Group 1	22	22
	Group 2	49	58
Ungrouped IUs		31	21
Total		102	101

Overall, the number of Group 1 umpires remained the same. This includes 5 new group 1 umpires who came from Group 2 or were Ungrouped in 2005. Out of the 5 who went out of Group 1, 4 moved to Group 2 and 1 did not apply for a grouping. The number of group 2 umpires increased and the number of ungrouped umpires decreased.

The grouping is now being used for composing the umpire teams for the 2006 match racing events where ISAF is responsible for appointing the umpire teams.

IU Grouping for 2007

At the ISAF Mid-Year Meeting in 2005, Council approved a new regulation that defines the Grouping System. According to that, the grouping system must be approved by the Executive Committee before it is implemented. After approval, it must be published.

The International Umpires Sub-Committee has decided that the Grouping Panel should be appointed in the beginning of the year, because that enables members of the panel to make notes throughout the year about the umpires they work with. This implies that the procedure must be approved more than a year before the grouping process is conducted.

The Executive Committee approved the Grouping System for 2007 in November 2005. It is attached to this IU News. There are two important changes. First, the Grouping Panel is appointed early in the year. Second, the Grouping Panel will be published when the whole grouping process including feedback is completed. This means that the panel that will do the groupings for 2007 will be published in about a year from now.

Jan Stage

THE ISAF NATIONS CUP



After a few false starts over the past few years, the ISAF Nations Cup is once again in our match racing calendar for 2006. The ISAF Nations Cup is a match racing competition between nations. A total of eight Regional Finals will be held in geographical groups around the world. Each group will host an Open and a Women's event, held over a four-day period, with the winning teams in the Open and Women's event qualifying to represent their nation and their group at the ISAF Nations Cup Grand Final in Cork, Ireland.

In its opening year in 1991, the ISAF Nations Cup attracted 50 nations. Its objective was to provide an inexpensive entry into the world of international match racing and it certainly succeeded with many of our top ranked sailors of today finding early international success in the Nations Cup. In 2006 we have maintained this objective and each Regional Final will have a one or two day clinic prior to the event where competitors will be able to learn more about match racing rules and tactics as well as the basics of handling a small keel boat in match racing situations. Some Regional Finals will also have a clinic for race officials – umpires and race management, with a basic umpire training package available for MNAs with no National Umpire scheme in place. The ISAF web site contains more information, contact details and Notice of Race. The Nations Cup Working Party and the ISAF have been working hard to promote the event and to encourage as many early entries as possible. However, there are still some MNAs who are yet to enter.

We need your help please check whether your MNA has entered. If they have not, please encourage them yourself. If you know a sailor who would like to enter and their MNA has so far not been in touch with ISAF, encourage the sailor to contact Trish. ISAF will accept entries from individual sailors where there is no official entry from the MNA.

If match racing is to continue to grow, it needs to have a wider base, more nations actively match racing - this competition is one of the best ways to make that happen. Our goal is 60 participating nations and with your help we will achieve this in 2006.

Regional Finals					
Group	Region	Host Nation	Host Club	Equipment	Dates
Group A – Open	Europe 1	Helsinki, Finland	NJK Match Race Center	J/80	15-18 June
Group A - Women	Europe 1	Caniçal, Machico, Madeira, Portugal	Quinta do Lorde Yacht Club	J/22	2-7 May
Group B - Open/Women	Europe 2	Izola, Slovenia	Jadralno Društvo	J/24 J/24	29 June- 2 July
Group C – Open/Women	Europe 3	Great Britain	Queen Mary Reservoir	J/80	25-29 April

Group D – Open/Women	Asia	Dubai, United Arab Emirates	Dubai International Marine Club	V1-30	2-7 April
Group E – Open/Women	South America	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Group F – Open/Women	North America	St Thomas, US Virgin Islands	St Thomas Yacht Club	IC24	8-11 June
Group G – Open/Women	Oceania	Auckland, New Zealand	Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron	Elliot 6 Metre	19-24 April

Sally Burnett
Nations Cup Working Party

WORLD TOUR SUMMARY

A new format for determining the Open Match Racing World Champion is in the process of being established. Based on a recommendation of the Match Race Committee, made in response to a submission at the ISAF meeting in Singapore, the new format will see the Open Match Race World Champion crowned as the result of a World Tour rather than by a single event.

The Tour will endeavor to make certain that the champion cannot be determined before the last event of the Tour for that year.

ISAF is currently negotiating the terms of the agreement for the Tour with a Tour operator, which is the successor to the Swedish Match Tour.

Some of the priority items to be included in that agreement are:

1. That 2 or more competitors at each Tour event will be invited from legitimate qualifying events in order to ensure that young, up and coming match racers will be invited to Tour events.
2. That ISAF will receive a financial benefit from the Tour operator.
3. That ISAF representatives will serve on the advisory Board of the Tour to oversee invitations, rankings, qualifying series and the world championship points system.

One of the principal goals is to ensure that the Tour encourages the participation of new, young and talented match racers and to give them the opportunity to test their mettle against the well known and established sailors on the match racing circuit.

Once the final agreement has been negotiated and signed by the parties, we will try to give you an update.

Henry Menin
Chairman, Match Race Committee

RULE 20.3 – TO DELETE OR NOT TO DELETE

Should we remove RRS 20.3 for all Match Racing?

At present RRS 20.3 is a rule for all Match races except the Louis Vuitton and Americas Cup Regattas.

There was a submission to the 2005 ISAF AGM; (submission 142-05) prior to the AGM there were discussions on whether the rule should be removed for all Match Races, some sailors and umpires have been poled for their thoughts on the proposal and there was a fairly even split, following are some of the thoughts and comments which arose from the discussions and subsequent thoughts.

Why delete RRS 20.3?

1. It is difficult to decide whether the boat is going backwards because of backing a sail to “steer” the boat or as a result of drag on the sails.
2. A boat backs the mainsail to stop and then starts to go backwards.
3. A boat uses its jib to steer and starts to go backwards.
4. It is difficult to concentrate on whether the boat has gone through head to wind and watch the sail handling.
5. It would be clearer for both the umpires and the sailors who was right of way and who was keep clear as normal rules would apply.

Why retain RRS 20.3?

1. It is just another decision that an umpire needs to make as with through head to wind, tack complete, mainsail full, proper course or overlap/clear at the zone all of which the boat has no way of knowing what the umpires are thinking.
2. Could you umpire with your boat in reverse, while looking over your shoulder or from the bow of the boats while they sailed in reverse for extended periods of time?
3. Could you umpire an entire pre-start with the boats sailing backwards?
4. Would it create a possible conflict with the “handling of boats” prohibited actions as with “cross sheeting of sails”, having some events allowing it and others writing the rule back in to save possible rudder damage?

The delete or retain reasons above are meant to be a stimulus for discussion and by no means a complete set of reasons. maybe an area to discuss when onshore waiting for wind gather sailors around and ask for their input and we may be able to make another submission based on responses received.

Parallel with the discussion about whether or not to delete rule 20.3 for match racing, ISAF is encouraging testing of this – however, because rule 20.3 is a rule of Part 2, it can

only be changed in accordance with rule 86.3. This requires that the MNA of the event have a prescription that allows such testing. The MNA may also prescribe that its approval is required. The change must be written in the NoR and the SI's of the event, and feedback should be distributed to ISAF.

Jack Lloyd and Marianne Middelthon
IU communication group

THE CHIEF UMPIRE'S ROLE IN THE RANKING LIST

There have been occasions lately when sailors have asked why their ranking points have not changed after a new ranking list is released, only to find that the organizers have not sent the results from the event to ISAF.

The OA should always send ISAF the results, but unfortunately, this does not always happen.

One of the tasks of the Chief Umpire at graded events is to confirm the information in the grading and report form.

This is not always easy, in particular at lower graded events; as the organizers don't always have the form available. For Grade 3, 4 and 5, only the first two pages need to be filled in, whereas for Grade 1 and 2 all pages must be completed, confirmed and sent to ISAF. The very last page of the form is actually the result list of the event, and based on the contents of this page, ISAF enters the event onto the next ISAF ranking list.

It may be helpful to have the organizers email you the form before you get to an event, this way you have it available, and you can enter the data as it becomes available. For a lower graded event, you can have the result list page filled in, and when you email your reports to ISAF, you are then assured they will also get the results of the event.

Now is this our job? Maybe not for lower level events, but it is most certainly a good service to the sailors, and isn't that what we are out there for?

Confirming the result lists with the OA and advising ISAF of the final results and confirming with the organizers that they will be sending the completed form and the result page certainly is.

One last advice: Allow time after event before you leave the venue to finish all your reports. Remember, this is the easiest and best place to get the information!

Jack Lloyd and Marianne Middelthon

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

We are quickly approaching the America's Cup 2007. Some of the AC teams have already employed rules advisors and others will follow. Therefore, I thought it was relevant to inform you about ISAF's policy on conflict of interest.

In November 2001, the ISAF Council approved a policy statement about conflict of interest for ISAF Race Officials. This statement is included as an attachment in this IU News. The policy defines when you have a conflict of interest and what you can do if you have it.

Clause 1 of the policy defines when you have a conflict of interest. If you have a conflict of interest, you are recommended to inform ISAF. If you are in doubt, you are welcome to ask for an opinion. In both cases, you can contact Trish Merrick at the ISAF secretariat (trish@isaf.co.uk).

Clause 2 defines what you can and cannot do if you have a conflict of interest. In practice, this means that ISAF will not appoint an IU with a conflict of interest to Open Grade 1 or 2 events. However, the working party that makes the appointments is trying to appoint these IUs to other events, e.g. women's events.

Clause 3 provides an opportunity for obtaining approval. This is the responsibility of the Race Officials Committee. If you have a conflict of interest and you are invited to umpire at a match racing event, you must ask for approval if a member of an AC team participates. In any case, you are recommended to ask. The Race Officials Committee has set up a procedure to handle such requests. You need to contact Trish Merrick at the ISAF secretariat (trish@isaf.co.uk).

I hope this has clarified how conflicts of interest are handled. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

Jan Stage

ABANDONING A MATCH RACE

At last year's Chief Umpire Conference there was a discussion about the conditions for abandoning a match race because of light or shifting winds. John Doerr and Henry Menin were leading the discussion. I promised to write up the result.

In match racing there is normally not an overall time limit for a race. This is because the last thing you want to do is to have to abandon a race that is a bit too long and then find you have no time to run another one. This means that when deciding whether to abandon a match race due to insufficient wind, there is no absolute measure.

The decision to abandon a match race should be based on the following criteria:

- a. At the preparatory signal, either boat does not make enough progress to be able to fulfil the entry requirements,
- b. In the pre-start, boats are unable to circle and maintain steerage,
- c. On the first beat, either boat sails into the two-length zone around the windward mark without tacking after starting, or
- d. Neither boat makes significant progress for two minutes.

These criteria and their application should be seen as an extension of match race call MR 27 that gives other criteria for abandoning.

The decision to abandon is solely the responsibility of the Race Committee. The umpires can suggest or recommend, but not decide. For the Race Committee, the criteria above are guidelines, and not directives or hard and fast rules. The Race Committee must use discretion in the application of the criteria. Abandonment must always reflect the fairness of the competition, so the longer a race continues, the less fair it is to abandon. Therefore, some of the criteria above are changing importance throughout a race. Criterion (d) is more applicable in the pre-start and on the first leg. It becomes less and less applicable on each succeeding leg.

The Race Committee must be aware that there is a trade-off between consistency and judgement based on discretion. Competitors always have difficulties understanding that one match is abandoned while another match in the same conditions is not. The aim of the criteria above is to reduce judgement in favour of consistency. Therefore, the decision to abandon must be irrespective of the position of the match at the time. Even if one boat is ahead and the other has an outstanding penalty, the match must be abandoned if one of the above criteria is met. Otherwise the decision becomes: if Yellow wins the race will stand, but if Blue catches up we will abandon.

We suggest that you share these guidelines with the race committees that you will be working with this year. Any experience or comments is very welcome.

Jan Stage

HOW CAN WE GIVE BETTER FEEDBACK

Feedback is a precious basis for improving things we do. That is true in many areas of life. In umpiring, we have a well-functioning system for giving feedback to new IU candidates. They get feedback from instructors, assessors and other umpires they work with, and I have often heard candidates say that this is very helpful for their development.

Unfortunately, we do not have an equally well-functioning system for giving feedback to existing IUs. At the moment, we only have two means for providing feedback. First, there are the Regatta Report Forms. However, ISAF receives very little valuable information this way, and there is no procedure for feeding this back to the individual IUs. The IUSC is working to develop the form and its use, but the information obtained this way will always be of a different nature. Second, there is the grouping system. This allows IUs to get detailed feedback on their performance, but it is still on a general level. Thus none of these mechanisms compare to the feedback we give the candidates.

Last year we had the Chief Umpire Seminar and the Performance Assessors Workshop. From this I learned that we need to invent new ways of providing feedback at an event to all members of the umpire team. One idea was to assign this responsibility to a member of the umpire team. I went home determined to try it out. Later in the year, at an event where I was the chief umpire, I gave a senior member of the umpire team the responsibility for development, and we discussed what this responsibility included. Basically, he should make sure that everybody gave and received feedback. I was excited to see how it worked out. I am sorry to say that nothing happened, nothing at all. Why was that?

It is not easy to give honest and constructive feedback to a candidate. But it is so much more difficult to give it to one of our peers. And it is virtually impossible to give it to somebody who is significantly more experienced than you. Moreover, this difficulty increases considerably as we move away from the incidents of the match. By the end of the day, when we are off the water or at the end of the event, well-meant feedback is so easily perceived as negative criticism.

If that is true, we should do the opposite. Provide feedback in the situation or as close to it as possible. In a couple of events, I tried to experiment with this idea. Let me give two examples. In one match, I was driving and in the pre-start my fellow umpire asked me to move somewhat forward. After the match, I asked why and we discussed it. In another match, I got out of position. After the match, I asked my fellow umpire what he thought. We went through incident and came up with a solution. I tried that solution later, and it worked well. In other matches, I commented on my fellow umpire and we discussed it right after the match. The subjects for comments were both driving and positioning, communication and rules application. It seemed to work remarkably well, and it worked even with different levels of experience.

Based on this experience, I will encourage you to try this idea out in a systematic form. It could be done this way:

- During the match, you comment in the situation. The comment can be on your own or your fellow umpire's performance. This will be a mental note that will help you remember later.
- Right after the match, you ask each other: what were the key incidents in this match?
- For each incident you discuss your positioning, communication and decisions. You also reconsider the comments you made during the match.
- If you discover a problem, you work out a solution together.

I hope some of you will try this out in practice. If you do or if you have other ideas for improving our peer feedback, please email me in a form that we can use for the next IU News.

Jan Stage

International Umpire Grouping System 2007

In response to a request from the Executive Committee Appointments Working Party, we propose to appoint a Grouping panel comprised of a number of experienced International Umpires tasked with grouping International Umpires. The purpose of this grouping is to assist the Working Party in their work of appointing the umpire teams to match race events in 2007. Therefore, the grouping system is only related to umpiring in the match racing discipline, and not to team racing etc.

The Grouping panel will be appointed in January 2006 (after consultation with the VP who is responsible for the Race Officials Area) in order to allow members to observe the performance of individual International Umpires at match race events during 2006. The grouping process described below will then be conducted in October 2006. Individual cases may be reviewed at any later point in time should it be deemed necessary.

Compared to the grouping system for 2006, the only changes in the description are the date of panel appointment (January instead of May), the fact that the panel will be disclosed when the process is completed and some editorial changes.

Criteria for Ranking

Group 1

- An IU that is deemed capable of umpiring any match at a Grade 1 event, even alongside an umpire of a lower standard. It is accepted that a Group 1 IU makes consistently good decisions and has no problems with any of the overall criteria on the ISAF Umpire Performance Assessment Form (see http://www.sailing.org/raceofficials/iuassessform_29_Mar.doc).

Group 2

- Either, an IU with the potential to be a Group 1 umpire but needs more experience, or an IU who consistently performs just below the level that is required of a Group 1 umpire. A Group 2 umpire may have minor problems with one or more of the overall criteria on the ISAF Umpire Performance Assessment Form but no major problems with any criterion.

Each existing IU will be offered the opportunity to apply for grouping in accordance with the procedure described below. If an IU has not applied for grouping by the deadline, he/she will be assigned to the 'Ungrouped' category. An IU can also request to be ungrouped.

Principles

- The identity of the members of the Grouping panel will not be known to any IU, including the other members of the panel, during the grouping process. Accordingly, panel members are required to keep their membership confidential.
- All information regarding individual IUs will remain strictly confidential within the panel and the administration of the scheme.
- The Grouping panel will use their best judgement to give input on the ability of an IU.

- Those IUs who are grouped unanimously or by a panel majority will be assigned to this Group.
- Where there are varying opinions on an IU, the panel will be consulted for further information as deemed necessary. Based on this, the Chairman of the IUSC will make the final decision.
- The identity of the members of the Grouping panel will be disclosed when the grouping process including feedback has been completed.

Process

1. All IUs are informed that they should apply before a specified deadline should they want to be considered for Group 1 or 2.
2. **Stage 1:** The Race Officials Coordinator will send each panel member a spreadsheet with the names of all IUs who have applied to be assigned to Group 1 or 2, along with instructions and criteria for grouping.
Members of the panel should provide input on each IU by allocating them to Group 1 or 2. If they think the IU has major problems with one or more of the overall performance criteria, they should mark an U by the name to indicate that this IU should be Ungrouped. If they do not have experience of umpiring with the IU they should mark an X by the name to indicate as such.
Panel members should email their completed spreadsheet to the Race Officials Coordinator.
3. The Race Officials Coordinator will collate the information and liaise with the Chairman of the IUSC. When the panel members are in agreement over an individual, he/she will be assigned to that Group or be ungrouped.
4. **Stage 2:** In cases where there are varying opinions about an individual, the panel will be requested to provide further input on why they think this IU should be allocated to a particular Group or be ungrouped. The input should be expressed in terms of the criteria in the ISAF Umpire Performance Assessment Form.
5. The Race Officials Coordinator will collate the information and liaise with the Chairman of the IUSC who will make the final decision.
6. **Late Applications:** Stage 1 and 2 may be carried out at a later point in time for individual IUs who apply late for a grouping.
7. The final Group allocation spreadsheet will be circulated to the panel. They may email any concerns over final Group allocation to the Race Officials Coordinator and the Chairman of the IUSC.
8. **Feedback:** An IU may request information on the reasons for his/her grouping. In these cases, the panel will be asked for reasons why they have assigned an IU to a specific group. The reasons should be expressed in terms of the criteria in the ISAF Umpire Performance Assessment Form.
9. The names of the members of the members of the Grouping panel will be published to all IUs.

The members of the grouping panel will be expected to commit to all of steps 2, 4, 6 and 8 (the steps in bold italics).

Jan Stage
Chairman, IUSC

AMERICA'S CUP AND RELATED EVENTS

1. For purposes of this policy statement, ISAF Race Officials shall have a conflict of interest if, within the two years preceding the start of that Americas Cup, they:
 - (i) receive, or agree to receive, remuneration, directly or indirectly, for any product created or service provided specifically for any challenger or defender (“Syndicate”).
 - (ii) provide advice to any Syndicate regarding the Racing Rules of Sailing.
 - (iii) act as an advisor or consultant to a competitor from any Syndicate during any match-race event.
2. No Race Official with a conflict of interest shall:
 - (i) be appointed to officiate at the next America's Cup or challenger or defender eliminations.
 - (ii) serve as a Race Official at any match-race event in which a competitor from any Syndicate competes.
3. ISAF Race Officials shall not be considered to have a conflict of interest, as defined in clause 1 at events where competitors from a Syndicate participate if:
 - (i) the seminar, event or training session is sanctioned by ISAF, or
 - (ii) the race official has received prior approval from ISAF. Such approval shall not be given for Open Grade 1 events.
