

UK Laser Association

Hayling Island – Radial Fleet

A number of queries / complaints arose from the split fleet format this weekend, which I will try to explain and / or expand upon here:

Unequal numbers in groups

This last weekend, the disparity in group numbers was greater than usual. As such, there was a considerable difference in scoring for those towards the back of the group races eg beating ten competitors in one race might score equal to someone coming last in another.

As a consequence, we intend to implement a different system for splitting into the Saturday groups. Our intention is that we will pre-group from the existing ladder only the top ten, or so, sailors. They will be split red, yellow, blue, green, red, yellow, et seq, starting from the top of the ladder.

All other sailors will be grouped as they enter and as they receive their tally numbers, ie red, yellow, blue, green, red, yellow, et seq. When a 'pre-grouped' competitor enters, he/she will be given the next tally number and group colour corresponding to their 'pre-grouped' colour.

As far as we can see, this should ensure group differences of no more than about two

Depleted groups on Sunday at HISC

A very specific problem arose and I am not sure what can be done about it. The problem was that a disproportionate number of good sailors may have gone home early from a single group *and* there was only a single race.

As such, because there was only one group race, only a limited amount of sailors benefited from the absence of those better sailors.

I have no idea what can be done about that within a group fleet format.

Combined Race 3 at HISC

On the Sunday, the RO chose to race the four groups on a single start.

However, even though it was a single start, the SIs are quite specific in that, on the Sunday, after only two races on the Saturday, the split fleet *will* race as four groups, in a round-robin, but with new colours. There is no other possible alternative. Thus, you were 'group racing' on both days.

If the RO chooses to start the races as a single start, then the SIs are unaffected in that there is only one provision for scoring, which is to be in the four group/two start combination. You will recall that the RO hoisted red, yellow, blue & green flags on the same hoist, ie the four colour groups.

If you read the SIs carefully and appreciate that we, UKLA, are bound by them, whatever happens, you will see that we have interpreted them correctly. The SIs did not anticipate that the two starts might be combined, but do not actually 'ban' it.

A complainant's only recourse, *at the time*, was to seek redress in the hope of having the race thrown out, or whatever, because of an inferior finishing position as a result of an error by the RO.

In future, the SIs can be amended to preclude such a possibility.

Double Scoring at HISC

The SIs provide for doubling the scores of the group races.

However, such double scoring of the group races is only relevant when, on the Sunday, the split progresses from group races to the alpha/beta, fleet races.

In the circumstances, the Radials were still in a group-race format on the Sunday and, so, there was/is no real point in doubling the scores because we would be doubling *all* the scores of *all* the races.

Obviously, doubling the scores would not affect a single result.

Split Fleet Policy

The split fleet format was introduced *only* because of the difficulty in starting the Radial fleet without innumerable general recalls.

Everything is fine when five good races are sailed in good conditions, but we are finding that unsatisfactory results occur when certain unusual circumstances prevail, as last weekend.

We are also finding that, although the double-scoring and combined-scoring format is absolutely the only fair format for those competitors who find themselves in the Beta fleet, such scoring method does not appear to find favour with the Alpha fleet, especially those at the 'front end'.

As such, we are beginning to sense that it may be time to abandon the split fleet format and return to simple fleet racing.

Ken Falcon – Sailing Secretary

19/04/10 @ 15:00.