

RC Observer Guidelines

Advice to Observers

NOTE -When umpires are involved ignore that reference.

Your role as an observer

Observers are formally recognized as part of the race committee during the heats for which they are appointed. When racing is umpired your role is to follow the fleet and call boat-boat or boat-mark contacts, to monitor boats that have been called to ensure penalties are completed and to report unresolved incidents to the race committee. In addition you will work with the umpire, giving him information that may assist him make a decision. As always you must hail only when absolutely sure contact has been made.

Race Committee request to observe

The race committee will have appointed an Observer Organiser (OO). Observer duties will be shared more or less equally amongst all competitors and you will only be excused if you have a valid reason and then normally only with the approval of the umpire panel. When you are requested by the OO to observe a heat you owe it to yourself and your fellow competitors to carry out the function diligently and to the best of your ability. The OO will give you a notepad to record any incidents you see. Before doing anything else write on a new page your name, sail number and the race / heat number.

Observer hails

Observers are required to hail contacts with marks and/or between boats in accordance with E5.1(b). Whilst it is not the observer's job to make a decision any details he can provide will assist the judges. Hails need to be made promptly, clearly and in a loud voice. If you are unable to identify the sail number(s) immediately initially identify the boat by description such as deck / hull colour or "the boat to windward of XX", followed as soon as possible by the sail number(s). You should repeat the hail if there is no response.. Hail contact only if you are absolutely certain that an incident has occurred and you are able to identify the boat(s) involved. It is better not to hail any boat than to hail the wrong boat

Taking notes

When you hail boats that make contact or contact with a mark, write their numbers on your pad and 'ring' the one who you believe is the boat that should take a penalty. If a competitor protests, record on your pad the sail number of the boats involved. Add a 'P' alongside the protesting boat number. When a penalty turn is complete strike through the number of that boat written on your pad. If no boat makes a penalty turn record the facts of the incident and the circumstances leading up to it that you observe. Add brief notes to the numbers marked and if possible add a small drawing, the relevant positions, where contact made on hull, marks, wind direction etc as appropriate. You may be asked to present this evidence at the end of the heat.

Record incorrect mark roundings, boats out of control etc

Record, but do not hail, the sail number of any boats which do not correctly round marks of the course. You must follow and record boats that continue to sail the wrong course. If large numbers boats fail to round a mark consult with the umpires and other observers, checking that a boat may have later rounded the mark correctly. Record the sail numbers of boats that retire or who announce that they are out of control.

At the end of the heat

If, after the heat, there are unresolved incidents discuss these with the umpire. You may then complete an Observer Report Form. You may later be required to give evidence in person at a protest hearing. If so, give your evidence clearly and concisely. The Protest Committee may need to question you to obtain the facts concerning the incident.

What the Rules Say

E3.1 Races with Observers

The race committee may appoint race observers, who may be competitors. They shall remain in the control area while boats are *racing* and they shall hail and repeat the identity of boats that contact a *mark* or another boat. Such hails shall be made from the control area. Observers shall report all unresolved incidents to the race committee at the end of the heat.

E5.2 Informing the Protestee

In rule 61.1(a) replace all after the first sentence with 'When her *protest* concerns an incident in the racing area that she is involved in or sees, she shall twice hail "(Her own sail number) protest (the sail number of the other boat)".'

E2.1 Hailing Requirements

- (a) A hail shall be made so that the competitors to whom the hail is directed might reasonably be expected to hear it.
- (b) The individual digits of a boat's sail number shall be hailed; for example 'one five', not 'fifteen'.