

Rule 89.3 specifies that the Race Committee is responsible for scoring. Although a properly constituted Protest Committee may direct that one or more scores be changed as the result of a hearing, it remains the responsibility of the Race Committee to produce the Race Results.

1. Computer Programs

There are a variety of computer programs available to do scoring. Many do not work, including most home written versions. The Racing Rules of Sailing contain several rules that are hidden away in the rule book, some of which have a nasty habit of appearing at the most inopportune time – as one simple example: when is there no first place in a ten boat race, that does not involve any ties? There are at least two correct answers, and many programs flunk this test.

Ontario Sailing highly recommends that the program Sailwave be used in producing Race Results – download at www.Sailwave.com. There are many reasons for this recommendation (apart from the fact that it works). Having a standard program facilitates the interchange of computer files – remember that results may have to be changed after an appeal, when the Regatta Committee has long since been dissolved. Another benefit available with Sailwave is the ability to use registration files developed by other programs such as Microsoft EXCEL. This greatly facilitates the entering of the competitor's data.

As with any computer program, there is a learning curve involved with Sailwave. Do not attempt to use it for the first time on the day of the regatta. The Principal Race Officer should appoint a Scorer, and then make sure that they are completely familiar with its use long before regatta day. See - **Key Resource Contacts**.

2. Registration and Scoring

In conducting regattas, the first rule is safety – the Race Committee must comeback with the same number of competitors that you started with. You cannot do that if you don't know what you started with, or who is missing. This requires that the Race Committee have a complete Entry List when they leave the dock. To accomplish this task, the Entry List must be generated as part of the registration process. There is simply not enough time for the Race Committee to enter the required data after registration has closed. It is also not possible to enter the competitor data into a scoring program after the Race Committee returns to the dock, and still be able to produce Race Results in a timely manner. For all of these reasons, there must be close cooperation between Registration (which is NOT a Race Committee function), and Scoring. Be smart, enter the data once during registration, and then use it for the scoring.

3. The Scorer

In order to facilitate the accurate and timely production of Race Results, scoring should be done in a separate, quiet office. The list of those who should ever be in the scoring office is extremely short – the Principal Race Officer, the Race Officers (or their designated Recorders), and the Protest Committee Secretary – plus the Scorer. Only in very exceptional circumstances, should a competitor have direct contact with the Scorer. Scoring is a separate shore based function. The Scorer should not be part of the on the water Race Committee. They should be available as soon as the Race Committee docks, even when they come in early. Computer files should be set up waiting for the raw race results.

4. Delivering Raw Race Results

There are a variety of methods of getting raw race results to scoring quickly. One that works is to have a boat collect a copy of the results from the Race Committee while the next race is in progress. A well organized Race Committee should not take long to “scrub” a clean copy of results after they have started the next race. This copy of the results should be enclosed in a water proof container to protect them – ziplock bags work well, but the Race Committee should retain a backup copy on the Signal Boat. Phoning in raw race results is not recommended. It takes a long time to read off the results for a large fleet, and the Race Committee is busy with the running of the next race.

When the Race Committee reaches shore, one designated “Chief Recorder” from each course, should go immediately to scoring, even if the raw results were sent in to scoring already. No delays for tidying up, or Race Committee debriefs – that can wait (bathroom breaks excepted). This person should remain at scoring, until released, to answer any questions about the raw results. Nothing will delay scoring faster than having to track down the only person who can answer a question about the raw results. While it is true that with a well thought out plan, there should be a minimum of questions, the gremlins are always lurking.

5. Scoring Problems

One of the chronic problems with scoring, especially at youth events, is the discrepancy between what a competitor tells Registration, and reality. This is especially true of sail numbers, but can include boat type – “Susie” decided to race as a Radial rather than as a Laser, or “Johnny” borrowed a sail with a different number. When this happens, the race results will not match what is in the computer file. There are two things which will help with this problem:

- The first is to have a rule in the SI’s to alert competitors to the problem, such as:

“Any change to a competitor's sail number, from the one shown on her registration form, must be submitted to the Race Committee, in writing, one half hour prior to the first Warning Signal on the day the change is to take effect.”

- Secondly, when the problem occurs at scoring, simply score the boat as Did Not Complete, AND post a notice on the results board directing those competitors who DNC’d to the Protest Desk. There, they can complete a Scoring Inquiry Form, and meet with the Race Officer for their course to resolve the problem. Remember, scoring is a Race Committee function, and the Race Officer has the authority to change the results based on the best information at hand. The Protest Committee should not be involved at this stage, since they may be required to deal with a Request For Redress later. This procedure should be one of the topics raised at the Competitors Meeting. If each competitor is encouraged to check the results as soon as they are posted, these discrepancy problems can be quickly dealt with.

Sometimes problems arise with incomplete or erroneous results. In these cases, the Race Committee should initially produce the best results they can. The resolution of any scoring conflicts can then begin with a Scoring Inquiry. If the problem cannot be resolved by the Race Officer (in consultation with their Recorders) then a Request For Redress should be filed, either by the competitor, or by the Race Committee, and the matter dealt with by the Protest Committee.

6. Timely Production of Race Results

With a well thought out procedure for producing Race Results, there is no reason why Preliminary Race Results – Subject to Protests and Requests For Redress – cannot be posted within Protest Time (typically one hour after the Race Committee reaches shore). The regatta may involve large fleets, so there was more than one Scorer (and computer, and printer). There may have been a power failure, but then the Race Results were done on laptop computers with fully charged batteries. You may not be able to print off results, but you can at least copy down the key results from the screen for use at Presentation. With close cooperation between Race Committee and the Protest Committee Secretary, it is quite possible to determine if any unresolved protests will affect the results needed for Presentations. One of the keys to a successful regatta is the timely production of Race Results.