

NEISA Judge Coordinator Report – Dec. 2021

Submitted by Amanda Callahan

As a reminder, the Judge Coordinator job is to assist host schools with finding umpires and judges for their events. Priority is given to stipend regattas as listed in the NEISA Rules and Regulations Manual and listed to the right.

The COVID Spring 2021 saw judging/umpiring at 4 events: Women's Champs, Coed Champs, TR Champs all hosted on the Thames River and Singlehanded Nationals hosted by URI at Sail Newport. We were able to fill all of the judge/umpire spots for those events. On the fly, we had to pioneer outdoors virtual protests with participants at two venues. I've included the lessons learned at the bottom for posterity and perhaps we can apply some lessons to more virtual protest hearings in the future which will require less travel from judges.

Thankfully Fall 2021 saw College Sailing back to the regularly scheduled regatta calendar. The Singles snuck up on me and we were short staffed there. Otherwise, 29 of 32 judge/umpire spots were filled at the priority events. As a reminder, the expectation of ACC-level or conference championship hosts, particularly hosts who will have on the water judging for two fleets of boats, is they must provide at least two judge boats and food (lunch) for the umpires. On the NEISA slack, you can find US Sailing's cheat sheet for hearing protests.

We ran into one problem with reimbursements this fall. Historically, we have offered the daily stipend plus mileage and other expenses for judges and umpires. NEISA has covered housing for umpires in the past at certain events (i.e. 2019 Nationals), and an occasional hotel room at a conference championship. This fall, an exorbitant hotel bill was submitted. Those types of expenses are not sustainable; both Ryan and I forgot that there is a rule in the Regs. about this: *8.2 Umpire Expenses and Stipends 8.2.1 Umpires and Judges are reimbursed by NEISA for travel expenses up to \$200.00.* I will do a better job in the future communicating this rule to our judges.

A bit of housekeeping: in 2018 we moved to add the Women's TR NIT (now the W's TR Nationals) and Showcases to the list of stipend events. We need to make sure that is added to the official Reg. 8.2.2.

Looking ahead, we need:

1. Coaches to share the contact information for recent grads with the Judge Coordinator to continue to grow the pool of umpires and judges with people who know the game we play.
2. To continue to provide more training or mentorship opportunities to younger judges/umpires.
3. To decide as a conference about stipends for Nationals level events hosted in NEISA, i.e. upcoming Women's Team Race National.
4. To discuss Franny's concern about judges being able to flag for Rule 42 and the SI ramifications: "that we have a problem with our standardized SIs that allows judges to use rule 42 on the water; We don't trust them to be consistent and up to date with class rules in college sailing. I think we are doing a disservice to have them be able to enact that rule on a whim."
5. To utilize technology to create more options for remote/virtual protest hearings.
6. Look at replacing missing umpire flags from the official NEISA flag set. Some have walked off over the years.

2021/22 Priority Events

Singlehanded Champs @ BC (4)
MR Champs @ CGA (9)
Schell @ MIT (4)
Urn @ Harvard (4)
Coed ACCs R1 @ Yale & Brown (8)
W's ACCs R2 @ MIT & Harvard (8)
W's TR Natls @ Brown (12?)
W's Champs @ ?? (4)
Dinghy Champs @ ?? (4)
SNETR (10)
Staake (6)
Friis (6)
Marchiando (12)
TR Champs @ ?? (12?)

DEBRIEF ON NEISA VIRTUAL PROTEST 4/23/2021

Hi John,

Last weekend we attempted virtual protest and redress hearings. We went into the weekend without a plan and learned some valuable lessons. (I debriefed the judges involved individually and the coaches of the teams involved to see what could be done to smooth out the process.) As the Chief Umpire for this weekend, I thought you might like to know and I'm adding Ian Burman here in case he wanted some unsolicited advice in the event they run virtual protests at Nationals this year.

Background: The teams were split between 2 venues (Conn and CGA) and all of the umpires were at Conn. The judges had 1 protest and 1 breakdown request to hear. The entire thing took place outside at Conn.

Process: handling the digital protest forms was cumbersome, and it was unclear where they should ultimately go.

Lesson learned: each venue will have a jury secretary who will be the point person at each venue for sharing protest forms.

Process: after racing, I created a zoom room and shared the link with a judge and the two coaches of the teams involved with the protest along with the time the protest would start.

Lesson learned: have rooms created ahead of time so it's not such a scramble. Again, all this should run through the jury secretary and not through a random 3rd party coach.

Process: Everyone used their own cell phones. This was problematic at first because the Chief Judge literally uses a flip phone. Eventually, another judge offered his cellphone. It's also rather hard to socially distance and crowd around a small cell phone screen.

Lesson learned: The host will provide a laptop for the judges to use. It will be easier for them to see the diagrams on the board. Competitors will still likely be using personal cell phones.

Process: Conn made available their magnetic white board. The team involved in the protest at CGA was perhaps in their van and didn't realize they could use the white board to show placement of the boats.

Lesson learned: Both venues should provide and make parties to the protest aware that the whiteboard/boats are available.

Silver lining according to Chief Judge: the competitors did an excellent job articulating the situation.

Overall, the process was timely. It just required a little more forethought. We were making things up as we went along and everyone was adaptable and made the best of it.

We are better prepared going into this weekend. Thanks again for your help.

Amanda