

JSA of LIS
END OF SUMMER TOWN HALL MEETING - 9/25/2023

Discussion Summary

How was the "regatta experience" this summer?

- Strong volunteer turnout. The meeting participants have learned that the best way to recruit volunteers is to speak to them in person, rather than "online sign-up" or e-mails.
- They noted an issue with coach boat operation that seems unsafe:
 - Getting too close to the starting lines once the starting sequence has begun.
 - Some coach boats are being driven too fast.
 - Observed that coaches are texting and talking on their phones while boats are underway..
 - These "coach boat problems" might be the result of many clubs hiring younger coaches, where maturity may be an issue.
- Meeting participants noted inconsistencies in the quality of regatta organization and race management.
 - The inconsistencies in quality of race management may be due to rising expectations on the part of coaches and sailors which underscores the need and benefit of having more of our race committees formally trained through programs offered by US Sailing.
 - Later during our session the suggestion was revived of having the JSA field and make available a "Regatta Assist Team" to help those regatta hosts with less experience. But this suggestion raises the question: when does a regatta host know it needs help and, in some instances, would it be too proud to ask for help? Is there the potential for JSA to promote and support "regatta mentors"?
 - It was suggested that the JSA consider embedding a standard "regatta survey" into Clubspot that would send out a short survey addressing how well that event was managed to each of the regatta participants.
- With respect to coaches, the JSA has received feedback regarding a growing number of instances where coaches are on the race committee VHF channel sharing their opinions regarding the quality of race committee management. There was much discussion on this topic, from which the following observations were shared:
 - One regatta host uses a "private" channel for race committee communications. Any coach wishing to communicate with the race committee can do so by communicating through the safety boat.
 - A suggestion was made that the JSA encourage the assignment of a "coach representative" at regattas to act as a liaison between the coaches and the race committee. Any coach with comments/concerns that have been directed toward the race committee would instead be shared with the coach's rep who, in turn, would share those thoughts to the race committee, as appropriate. One suggestion was that the sailing director of

the host club could play that role. Or, one of the visiting coaches may be selected.

- Question: was overall regatta participation down? Answer: the JSA will be compiling that information and sharing it at the Annual General Meeting in October.

What Challenges did Your Program Face This Summer?

- Staffing continued to be a challenge for many clubs.
 - For some clubs it was the challenge of finding enough instructors.
 - For others, there were behavioral challenges with younger coaches, "You can't coach maturity."
 - There was discussion regarding successes in recruiting international coaches. But the challenge here can be finding housing for these instructors.
 - Sometimes, your best recruiters of instructors are your own instructors. You continue to be in touch with your own instructors. Then, as the season goes on, you ask them to keep on the lookout for anyone whom they think might be a potential candidate.
- It was noted that, for clinics, it is a continuing challenge to coordinate getting boats to travel to clinics located away from the club. If your child's boat is chartered, chances are they have a boat and a dolly, but no road trailer. That works for an Opti and may also work for a Laser. But transport becomes more problematic for boat classes that are longer and heavier, like the Club 420:
 - Some clubs solve this problem by buying multi-boat trailers and parents pay a delivery fee if they choose to use it to get their sailor's boat to a venue.
 - There was a wide-ranging discussion on this topic with the following important points:
 - Even with a multi-boat trailer, some of the clubs require a parent to drive the trailer with their own vehicle (not driven by a summer instructor).
 - You can't coordinate all this effectively through Google Docs and email chains alone. You benefit from getting parents together in person.
 - Early in the season, schedule a parent regatta logistics orientation. Include demonstrations on how to tie down a boat, Trailering 101, etc.

"Summer of 2023" Start Dates?

- For Connecticut Clubs, except Greenwich, many starting on June 17th.
- For New York Clubs, including Greenwich, many starting on June 24th.