

SPACESAILER 27 ASSOCIATION

SPECIAL MEETING

5 April 2016

FSC RACING CONCERNS

A special meeting was held to discuss the growing concerns with the quality of the racing format of the ocean race held at and administered by, Fremantle Sailing Club.

The SS27s have had FSC run the only ocean race as part of the season State Championships for many years.

However, there have been various problems with the conduct of the races.

To this end, a meeting was convened as a prelude to a normal monthly meeting. This was so that as many interested skippers as possible could have their say.

The FSC representative was the FSC Inshore Captain, Steve Delfos. The SS27 Chairman, Garrick Aberle chaired the meeting.

Those in attendance were -

G. Aberle, S Delfos, C. Stevenson, G. Manners, S. Figgins, G. Murray, P. Rees, A. Hobbs, G. Northover, B. Saleeba.

Apologies were received from -

P. Willmott, C. Long, T. Harrison, M. Popham, J. Murray, R. Beissel.

The Chairman opened the discussion by explaining the format of the championship series. That is, each season there are six races run from different clubs. One of these races is an ocean race, as the design of the SS27 vessel makes it suitable for open water.

S. Delfos was then invited to respond to any questions and opinions.

The future of this event is now in doubt due to perceived shortcomings on the conduct of the race.

1. Wind speed limitation. FSC have a policy of a max. wind speed of 28kn, or a strong wind warning being given out by the BoM. The decision as to whether to cancel the event for that day is made by 1100. This cancellation can be broadcast on VHF 72.

2. Missing mark. This related to a previous race where a windward mark was missing. S. Delfos advised that a check of the marks was made the night before and all were correct. However by the time the race commenced the next day, one of them had disappeared. As a result of this incident, FSC have now included in their SIs that where a mark is missing, vessels should instead sail around the GPS coordinate of that mark. S Delfos explained that a commercial lime sands dredging vessel often transits the FSC racing area at various times of day and night and is often believed to be responsible for moving/destroying marks.

2.

3. Windward-leeward course. The object was to try and make the event more "exciting". However after trialling it, they now deem that it was unsuccessful.

4. Wing mark. S. Delfos felt that this may be a possibility in future. The conditions in Cockburn Sound often make the reliable anchoring of temporary marks more challenging than in the river.

5. Course Leg lengths. Meeting required that the leg length be between 1 to 1.5nm only.

6. Rescue boat. There was a RIB on the course for part of the last race. However it returned to the club before the race ended, due to the conditions on the day. If a vessel requires assistance, then FSC policy is to call up Fremantle Volunteer Sea Rescue. Steve Delphos has previously had to use their service, and their response time was about ten minutes.

7. General Safety issues were discussed, in particular an event such as a Lost mast. It was recommended that bolt cutters be included in any boat's equipment. Future SS27 SIs are to include the need for dan buoy, heaving line and bolt cutters for ALL yachts participating in an ocean race.

8. Advising participants of changes to race instructions or "cancellations". It was agreed that should FSC again run an ocean race, a decision will be made by 0900 on the day. Should the race be called off, then FSC will notify the Chairman by phone. The chairman will then call all intended skippers by phone and VHF to advise them of the cancellation.

9. FSC computation. S. Delfos advised that the FSC computer system is now configured to accept any additional fleets into their programming. This should avoid the problems in the past where it has been difficult to calculate the results for visiting fleets. It is still FSC policy that visiting fleets must vet the results before they can be announced. To this end, an SS27 Association Representative would be required to report to the FSC race administration team as soon as possible after racing finishes.

10. Countdown. FSC starters provide a verbal countdown on channel 72 for the start of each fleet.

11. Courses. Meeting advised that it preferred more complexity in the courses than have been provided so far. This will be considered before the next event.

12. Fixture. S. Delfos advised that FSC have set aside the date of Sat, 11 Feb 2017 for the SS27s, should they decide to race there again,

The Chairman closed this discussion after one hour and thanked Steve Delfos for giving his time and comments.

Secretary.