



Cost Control for Championship Events

J/24[®]

By Nancy Zangerle

The time commitment and costs of putting on a Championship event often stop great organizers from volunteering. Organizing a Championship event can seem to be an insurmountable task.

Organizing and hosting a Championship event does not have to be expensive or overwhelming. It does require a change in thinking and a break in tradition.

Some J/24 Continental Championships have traditionally been 10 races, five days of racing, plus two days for check-in and inspection. There is nothing in the J/24 Class regulations that require this arrangement. North America has frequently held successful Continental Championships with fewer days of racing.

It is possible to have two to four races per day. While the standard has been 10 races for a championship event, it could be as few as four races.

As much as J/24 sailors like exclusive Class events, many Classes have recognized that their Championships do not have to be stand-alone events.

Look for existing multi-class regattas, particularly those that occur every year, as they often have the built-in framework for a regatta in popular locations. Those events with multiple racecourses have the personnel, equipment and Race Committee organized to set-up multiple race circles. They offer online registration, collection of fees, onshore parties, dockage and pre-arranged juries or protest committees.

All this can be a huge help in the planning for a J/24 Championship. If it's a planned two-day regatta, the J/24 fleet can ask if an extra day of racing for J/24s can be added to the program. If it is a Friday - Saturday - Sunday regatta, can your event start racing on Thursday? You may have to pay extra fees for the costs associated with that extra day on the water, which is reasonable and expected.

In discussions with the regatta event organizers, discuss whether your Championship event should have its own NoR or be incorporated as part of the regatta. The same goes for the Sailing Instructions. If the J/24s get their own course, then a separate Sailing Instruction document would work. If the J/24s have to share the racecourse with another Class(es), then work with the organizers to be incorporated into their existing SIs. Preference would be to have the first start for the Class on the course.

You don't have to rely on the pre-planned onshore events to make your Championship special. Plan one night offsite. This can be as simple as announcing that the J/24 fleet will meet at a certain location after racing with competitors paying for what they eat or drink to something as elaborate as a full sit-down dinner with ticket costs included in registration fees or by separate ticket sales.

For a Continental Championship, an International Jury is required. This is so the results of a protest cannot be appealed. When working within the framework of an existing multi-class regatta, it is important to ascertain that there will be enough IJs at the event to compose an International Jury. Big multi-class events may have multiple panels of judges. You can often communicate with the Chief Judge about the needs for any hearing requests from the J/24 Class. The benefit is you don't have to arrange for (and pay for) the costs of a stand-alone International Jury.

Another way to distinguish your Championship event is to arrange for your own awards and award ceremony. Many Class Championships have perpetual awards, as well as keeper trophies. You can ask the organizers to hold an award ceremony in a separate location or at a different time than their regatta awards. It does bring good attention to the J/24 Class if awards are incorporated as part of the larger regatta event.

The approach of capitalizing on an existing event can greatly ease the planning burden for the local organizing fleet. There is still work involved, but it is greatly reduced by utilizing the existing "infrastructure" of an existing regatta.