Producing Results for the Average Club.

Introduction

Let us start by saying that there is no such thing as an "average club". Every club "does it differently" and many are not aware that other clubs do not do things exactly as they do! This applies to defining:

➢ Series,
➢ scoring,
➢ responsibilities and
➢ in virtually every aspect of the club.

The aim of this paper is to present a realistic way of providing results that satisfy the needs of the club but without putting undue stress or pressure on the Results Person.

Unfortunately far too many clubs do little to support this Person then wonder why they get quickly get sick of the job and quit.

There is usually

➢ One results person.
➢ A small number of persons who record the finish times.
➢ A number of members of the Sailing Committee (who define the clubs racing program and the results required.)
➢ A rather larger number of sailors.

Such a system must be put in place that provides minimal pressure to the smallest number of persons i.e. the results person & the finish time recorders. It is not hard to instigate such a system.

Needs

To make it viable for the Results Person to produce fast, sensible results it is vitally important that the 5 lots of data that must be provided to the Results Person are simple, correct and sensible.

The 5 lots of data....

1. Series Set Up Information. (Results types/groups, Score type, discards etc.)
2. Series Entrants data (list of competitors who have entered the Series complete with their personal handicap if relevant.)
3. Race Set Up data (start times for each Division is key element)
4. Race Entrants list for this race (who is racing today)
5. Finish Times for this race.

Notes:

Competitors enter the Series once.

Therefore the Class and Sail Number they provide are expected to be the same for every race in the Series. If they are not the same then such changes may well cause the competitor to have to change Divisions (not normally possible in TopYacht) or to need a change of personal handicap because of a new sail. So most clubs prohibit any alteration of boat details unless applied for before a race, in writing on the approved form and approved by the Sailing Committee.

The Results Person should not be expected to guess or have to read every sign-on sheet to check if a competitor has altered boat details. Further, such alteration may make it impossible to provide

sensible results as mentioned above. Most clubs do not allow this anyway (except if there is a valid reason).

Step 1

Clearly define the series to be run.

For each Series include what type of results are required.

Consider....

> Will the Series include boats of different types? If so will results be for the overall fleet of all boats of all types and/or by Division and/or for each Class.

> Are results to be based on Elapsed Time and/or Yardstick and/or Class Based Handicap and/or Personal handicap and/or another personal handicap? It may be that some Series require several sets of results e.g. Yard Stick results and personal handicap results for each competitor in the race/Series.

> Number of and Interaction of Series? Interaction of Series. For example: Is there a Pre-Christmas Aggregate and a Post-Christmas Aggregate that are both part of the Season Aggregate?

It is not possible to provide results from TopYacht nor any other software unless the questions "What Series and what kind of results" are clearly defined, in writing, before setting up the software (It should be included in the NoR.)[1].

The Results Person is the person who knows what TopYacht can and cannot do. It is essential that they be involved as part of the Sailing Committee in developing the Club's racing program/calendar for the Season. There is no point defining Series/results that the computer simply cannot provide!

Step 2

Series Entrants data

Provide a Series Entry form to gather the competitors' information for (at least) the first Series of the Season.

Make it clear to the competitors that the boat nominated on the Entry form is the boat they are expected to sail for the whole Series and that any variation must be approved by the Sailing Committee. Such a change must be on the appropriate form, which when authorised must then be provided to the Results Person.

No form to Results Person = no change accepted.

In essence the responsibility is removed from the Results Person to the sailor and the sailing committee.

This is as it should be. Changes to the boat can have significant effects on results!

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[1] TopYacht provides a spreadsheet to aid in the process. It enables you to provide a clear definition of what the club requires and how to set up TopYacht to achieve this.

Step 3

Race Set Up data

This should be provided from the Start boat. Normally it should be provided on the Finish (Times) Sheet. Again it should not be the responsibility of the Results Person to have to chase this data.

Step 4

Race Entrants list.

This comes directly from the printed Sign On sheets for Club members and the Visitor's Entry forms. The former printed from TopYacht.)

Step 5

Finish Times

By far the most effective way to provide Finish Times is on the standard TopYacht Finish Sheet. This is the fastest way of recording the data and allows a quick check system (because it is in Finish Time order) after data has been entered into the Computer.

(For safety checks use the sign on and sign off forms and the Lap Count Forms.)

Important Note.

It is vitally important that this one sheet (i.e. the Finish Times Sheet) has all areas filled in as it then provides all information required for the Results Person to be able to provide results.

A growing number of clubs are now using TopYacht's real-time "Stop Watch" facility to record finish times. This is very simple and provides the quickest possible way of providing results as soon as the race has finished.

Caution: if you use this system then make sure you are also recording the finish information on a tape recorder as back up. Most clubs do this anyway whether they are writing the time down or using the TopYacht Stop Watch.

That covers data for the computer entry. As they say garbage in garbage out. If the data provided to the Results Person is nonsense then so will the results be!!!

The other major aspect of results production is the environment in which the Results Person works.

The Results Person is expected to enter a large amount of data and enter it with absolute accuracy. This is simply not possible in a noisy environment with various distractions such a people chatting at the end of a day's racing or the marine radio prattling away on race management issues.

Major events would simply not consider having the computer in the tower in all that noise.

Further Reading: [Entering Finish Times](#)