

Growing Stronger Every Year

The countless individuals, organizations, and clubs that helped establish IRC racing in the United States have done so in order to increase participation in both offshore and inshore racing. After three years, the success of everyone's labor is evident in blossoming IRC fleets in many parts of the country. As you'll discover in the pages of this third-edition *US-IRC Handbook*, regatta organizers, yacht designers, boat builders, measurers, and sailors have indeed pushed IRC to the forefront of the sport.

Early on in the planting of IRC in the United States, it was apparent that one of the most valuable bi-

ministrating and processing a significant volume of highly technical measurement data. The certification mechanisms at both the US SAILING Offshore and RORC Rating offices were severely taxed to cope with the demand in May and June of 2006, in advance of the racing seasons of US-IRC's strongholds in the Northeast and Great Lakes. More than 500 certificates were processed in this period, with many more trial certificates added to the system. Through all of this, and to date, however, not one boat has been kept off the water due to a measurement or rating snafu. US-IRC's nearly 24 active measurers are the primary conduits of the rule's success, and without the due diligence and patience of these individuals, big-boat handicap racing would be nowhere near its reinvigorated state.

The existing service organizations—the measurers, US SAILING, and RORC—are making improvements to internal communication, customer service, and staff size in order to be prepared for additional growth of the US-IRC fleet. Looking forward, we're pushing for solutions, both domestically and abroad. At home, there will be many more IRC Measurer training seminars in the coming months (dates can be found at www.us-irc.org), which will continue to expand the pool of active measurers and greatly improve customer service. US SAILING and RORC must also work to bring today's Internet-based technology into the rating

process by developing an e-commerce site that allows the measurers to more efficiently process new applications, revalidations, amendments, and trial certificates.

This year we also await the formation of a US-IRC Owners Association. The owners who race under IRC are the most important stakeholders in the success of the IRC initiative, so it's the willingness of these individuals to attend events and compete in a major series that will determine its success. IRC is second only to PHRF in the number of events and boats racing, and it is the only international rule in use in North America.

As we prepare to start 2007 on the water with the 2007 Gulf Stream Series opener—the Fort Lauderdale to Key West Race—we're looking out across a vibrant and varied championship series that, in addition to the staple summer regattas of the Northeast, now includes additional events in the Caribbean, and most recently Charleston, S.C. The IRC fleet in San Francisco is on the verge of reestablishing itself as one of sailing's most competitive big-boat handicap racing scenes. The competition is strong and the word is spreading one competitor at a time. After three years, we can confidently say IRC is here to stay.



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US-IRC PURPOSE

- To encourage and expand handicap offshore racing in the U.S., and U.S. participation in international offshore events, through adoption of the IRC Rule as the measurement system
- Consistently apply the rule among member organizations to ensure the maximum transportability of IRC certificates from event to event, and to minimize rating confusion and crew disruption
- Provide cost-effective, user-friendly access to the IRC Rule and IRC services for interested owners, event organizers, and industry professionals
- Provide coordination among members to enhance their events
- Provide information and educational services to all interested parties
- Solicit and react to feedback from owners, crews, and organizers regarding the practical application of the IRC Rule
- Represent U.S. interests in the continuing development of IRC at the international level.
- Represent U.S. interests in the development of future race-boat rules at the international level.

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These yacht clubs and regatta organizers proudly support US-IRC Handbook

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Casa De Campo Yacht Club

Charleston Race Week

St. Thomas Yacht Club

Boston Yacht Club

Ida Lewis Yacht Club

HSH Noorbank Blue Race

Acura Key West Race Week

Annapolis Yacht Club



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