GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES
FOR RUNNING A
SUNFISH® U.S. MASTERS CHAMPIONSHIP

MARCH 2019

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With Thanks to Brian Weeks
Thank you for your inquiry regarding a Sunfish® Masters Championship! We are confident that your club and its committees will work together to make the entire experience rewarding for themselves and the sailors. Masters regattas are a special part of Sunfish life. There’s a bigger element of fun and ease that is a part of these events, though the sailors still take their racing seriously. The material which follows will provide the basic information which is required of a championship host. Your experienced sailors and Race Management team will know where to adapt and adjust to make things flow smoothly.

It is the Class’ intention to have Masters Championship dates set at least a year and a half ahead of time so the date can be included in the Sunfish® Class Schedule. Written proposals by organizations seeking to host the US Masters Championship should be submitted to the USSCA Scheduling Coordinator by May 1 of the year preceding the event. This ensures that other Clubs and Fleets can adjust their schedules and regattas to permit their sailors to participate in this event. Please work closely with the USSCA Scheduling Coordinator when setting the date for your event.

1. QUALIFICATION

All Sunfish sailors must be current year International Sunfish Class Association members (dues paid) which is accomplished by a sailor joining his or her National Sunfish Class Association (NSCA).

United States Sunfish Class Association memberships are available at www.sunfishclass.org. U.S. memberships may be confirmed by visiting www.sunfishclass.org, hovering on the right over Membership Database, and clicking on it. This will download a PDF listing of those who are members by the date indicated. Your committee will have to verify each person’s membership. Make sure their membership expiration is in the year AFTER your event. Do not wait until the last minute.

For individuals who you cannot verify their membership by your registration period, you may direct them to join the Class on line. A brief email or statement to the effect:

This regatta is the US Masters Championship for which Sunfish Class membership is required. Easy to renew/join:

https://sunfish.wildapricot.org/.

Please email me a screen shot of your payment confirmation.

Other NSCA members may have membership cards or you may have to check their eligibility with the International Sunfish Class Association office (18 Normandy Lane, New Rochelle, NY 10804, 914.834.8286, sunfishoff@gmail.com).

Your Registration Committee must find the competitor’s name on the current member list OR witness the competitor completing an online application with dues payment in order for the sailor to participate (no exceptions. If it turns out they have paid already, the Class Office will happily issue a refund to them promptly). If you have any questions on membership requirements, ask the USSCA officers who are present.

All boats should have Class legal numbers on both sides of the official sail. Boats are expected to be legally outfitted, although no official measurement is performed at a Masters event because of lack of time. However, competitor enforcement through protest is possible. The winner of the USSCA U.S. Masters Championship earns a berth for the following year’s World Championship. This berth passes down through the top 10 finishers and then reverts to the pool.
2. **FEES**

Fees for a Sunfish Masters Championship range anywhere from $80 to $140, depending on what is included, how much work is done by volunteers, and locale. This event should be set up with practice sailing on Friday and Championship racing on Saturday and Sunday (two days of racing as approved by the USSCA Board). The fees include the racing, a memento (t-shirt, hat, mug, etc.), Continental-style breakfast each morning, after race refreshments, dinner/party/BBQ on Saturday night, and awards. If possible, it is best to have lunches included, too. This will depend on your budget. You are encouraged to seek local sponsors, utilize volunteers as much as possible, and understand that Masters regattas are not intended to be “money makers” when planning your overall event budget. Low entry fees draw higher participation, which means more sailors!
3. ACCOMMODATIONS

About one-third to two-thirds of the sailors will be traveling some distance to the regatta. It is very important to provide good information on where sailors can stay. Local motels, bed & breakfasts and campgrounds will be sought. Be sure to offer on-grounds camping and/or vehicle parking if possible. Ask your membership to volunteer to host these visiting sailors in their homes. Be sure to list all housing options in your Notice of Race with location, cost range, and contact information. If you have in-home housing available, be sure to identify the Housing Chair and how to contact that individual.

4. NOTICE OF RACE

The Notice of Race should be prepared at least 4 months before the regatta. Hosts are requested, well in advance, to send a draft of their NOR to the Regatta Coordinator and Class Administrator for review. Once the content is approved, you are ready to go on to the distribution phase.

Your NOR will be published on the Class web page in its schedule by a link to the document (email the final version to the Schedule Coordinator and Class Administrator). The NOR will be held on the Class web page; your club may also have a link to it on its web page or link to the Class web page’s link.

It is a good idea to prepare a well laid out flier including the title of the event, dates, name, address, telephone number and e-mail of host, place, schedule (including time of first race and time on last day that no race will be started after), name of Regatta Chair (name, telephone number and e-mail), web site address for club (if available), a statement that it is a World Championship qualifying event, reminder of Class membership requirement, information on housing, meals, fees, social events (and appropriate dress), etc., to use for publicizing your event. This is in addition to the NOR.

You are encouraged to send a few copies of the flier to all the local clubs in your area. All Class member Masters should receive a notice of our Masters Championships. The Class office can generate an email message that will include only Masters sailors. Send your flier to the Class Administrator at sunfishoff@gmail.com.

5. SCHEDULE

The U.S. Masters Championship format has practice sailing on Friday and two days of racing on the weekend. It is important to have a firm ending time for racing on Sunday to allow sailors to make return flight arrangements or have enough time to get home for work on Monday. A typical schedule for the event is as follows:
US MASTERS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP AT FRIENDLY YACHT CLUB
AUGUST 22-24, 2009

FRI., AUG. 22
1:00 p.m. Registration
3:30 p.m. Practice Starts and/or Races
6:30 p.m. Dinner available in Dining Room

SAT., AUG. 23
8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. Registration and Continental Breakfast in Clubhouse
9:30 a.m. Skippers Meeting
10:00 a.m. Races 1 & 2, back to back
12:00 p.m. Lunch
1:30 p.m. Races 3, & 4, back to back
After racing Keg beer/refreshments
7:00 p.m. Steak Dinner at FYC

SUN., AUG. 24
10:00 a.m. Races 5 & 6, back to back
1:30 p.m. No race started after
1:30 p.m. Lunch & Awards

6. SAILING INSTRUCTIONS AND COURSES

Hosts are requested to have the Sailing Instructions approved by the Schedule Coordinator and Class Administrator. Please have this accomplished at least three weeks in advance of the event. This is to ensure the plans of the host and the expectations of the incoming racers are approximately the same.

The regatta is to be governed by the Racing Rules of Sailing with US SAILING prescriptions and the International Sunfish Class Association Rules.

As this is a championship with a World Championship berth at stake, the majority of courses should be Windward-Leeward. Keep in mind, though, Sunfish sailors and Masters particularly prefer to have some reaches—so they go fast! Have the option to have triangle courses in the event it is breezy so one or two races might use this course.

Signals should conform to the latest RRS standard. Contact the Class Office to acquire the official Class flag. The official Class Flag is mandatory: a white field with a red Sunfish® shape on it. Visual signals are required. Large cylinders or tetrahedron buoys are recommended for marks. Courses should be of appropriate size to the weather conditions so that a race takes about 45-55 minutes to finish.

The starting sequence should be the usual 5 minute sequence. The Race Committee boat should have a way to display signal flags so they can be clearly seen by boats at the far end of the starting line. You may wish to have boats at both ends of the starting line. You may also wish to utilize "limit marks” set just inside the Committee Boats to prevent collisions with the Committee boats. Err on the side of having a too-long starting line rather than too-short. A poorly set starting line will bring out the venom even in this group; a square (or 3-5° canted to port) starting line will most likely lead to clean starts.

It is strongly recommended you have one rescue boat for every 15-20 boats in the Masters event. A rescue boat has both a driver and an able bodied rescuer. While Sunfish Masters sailors are not feeble, occasionally they are surprised by a breakdown or weather conditions and may need some assistance. Rescue boats can double as mark set boats and/or lead boats (to show where the mark is in fog or rain), so long as they keep watch on the whole fleet at all times. Radio contact between shore, the Race Committee and the rescue boats is preferred. If you can arrange for more rescue boats, that’s better. Rescue boats are not spectator boats.
The Race Committee should strive to conduct at least 6 races. It is the Sunfish Class standard to require just 1 race to constitute a regatta. The Class prefers that the awards be distributed and that someone earns the World Championship berth which is available.

As a number of competitors will fly in for this event, a cutoff is needed on the last day. State a time and make sure the time announced for not starting a race after on the last day is honored. This gives travelers the opportunity to travel home in a relaxed manner.

7. **PRE-REGISTRATION**

It is important to seek pre-registration for Masters Regattas. It will give your organizing committee an idea of the size of fleet you can expect and will give you the opportunity to determine which age groups you will use. You should indicate a postmark/electronic payment deadline for pre-registration and include a discount for those who meet it (suggest two weeks in advance, but not longer than three weeks). For your discount to cause people to pre-register, it needs to be notable (likely $25 or more). You will want to set the deadline to allow enough time to adjust your awards order. You may make your age group determination (see Age Groups, below) based on pre-registrations received by the deadline. Call the USSCA Regatta Coordinator or Masters Chair with any questions.

9. **AGE GROUPS**

To be eligible, an individual must have reached his or her 40th birthday by the first day of racing. In Masters Regattas we utilize Standard Age Groups. Age Groups **may not** be adjusted to make groupings of even numbers. Each age group considers itself to be a regatta within the regatta. Each age group looks forward to the changes which come with an individual “aging out” or “aging in.” The Standard Sunfish Age Groups are:

For Regattas of fewer than 100 sailors:
- Senior Masters 80+ years of age
- Great Grand Masters 70-79 years of age
- Grand Masters 60-69 years of age
- Masters 50-59 years of age
- Apprentice Masters 40-49 years of age

For Regattas of more than 100 sailors:
- Senior Masters 80+ years of age
- Great Grand Masters II 75-79 years of age
- Great Grand Masters I 70-74 years of age
- Grand Masters II 65-69 years of age
- Grand Masters I 60-64 years of age
- Masters II 55-59 years of age
- Masters I 50-54 years of age
- Apprentice Masters II 45-49 years of age
- Apprentice Masters I 40-44 years of age

9. **AWARDS**

In the Sunfish Masters program, the age group competition is the feature, far more than the overall. At a Sunfish Masters Regatta, trophies are awarded to the Top 3 in each age group and to the Top 5 finishers overall. This is the Class standard and is not open to adjustment, except to add more. These trophies
should be of nice quality. Plaques, glasses, etc., are common. The Top 5 awards should mimic the age group awards. Gift awards (sail bags, daggerboard covers, drink holders, etc.) are inappropriate awards for this event.

There is a traveling perpetual trophy. Help remind the Masters Coordinator to check with the previous year's winner a minimum of one month before the regatta that the trophy has been engraved (their responsibility as winner) and that arrangements are made so that the trophy is present at the regatta site by Thursday for exhibit during the event and presentation at the end of the Championship.

GAG AWARDS: Masters regattas also have a tradition of including a number of fun awards. These can be simple trinkets of the “gag gift” variety and are intended to keep the event as lighthearted as it has always been. Suggestions include:

Youngest master
Oldest master
Marco Polo award (farthest traveled; maybe one for by car, another for by air)
Most consistent
Most inconsistent

Your committee’s planning, creation, observation and listening skills will come into play when coming up with these awards. These awards can be hand lettered with a paint pen and are intended to be low budget items. You may present as many or as few of these fun awards as you please.

DOOR PRIZES: Door prizes are currently very popular. Local merchants and marine suppliers will often donate items which you may give away (or raffle to help with your budget; but be careful of government laws regarding raffles). A good time to do this is the Saturday night social event. It’s best to have a rule that the winner must be present.

11. STAFFING

To be properly prepared to host a Masters Championship you will need adequate help.

You will need an overall Regatta Chair.

You will need a Race Committee Chair with a minimum of two assistants.

You will need a Safety Boat Chair with a minimum of three safety boats (one for each 15-20 competitors). Each safety boat shall have 2 able people aboard (no more, no less). The larger the fleet, the more safety boats you will need. The worse the weather, the more safety boats you will need. Keep in mind that some Masters sailors may have health conditions which will necessitate assistance sooner than you experience with some other racing fleets.

You will need a dedicated Scoring Chair who will have no other responsibilities during the days of the event. If possible, have scores sent ashore (cell phone photos work well) so the scorer may keep up rather than having to do all scoring in a rush when the Race Committee comes ashore.

You will need a Publicity Chair who will have no other responsibilities during the days of the event.

You will need enough staff to take care of all of the meals.

You will need a Registration Chair with adequate staff to handle incoming sailors.
You will need a Dock (or Beach) Chair who will be available to sailors as they arrive to give information on where to put their boats, where they can find a hose, where to park their cars and trailers, a hand to unload boats onto dollies, etc. It is suggested you have Committee members as well, who will be available for all launch and retrieval times to lend a hand with dollies and boat carrying (either at launch ramps or on the beach).

You will need to have a Protest Committee available (minimum of 3 members), and preferably present at the conclusion of racing each day. At least one member needs to be a US Sailing certified Judge. You are expected to notify the USSCA Schedule Coordinator and Masters Chair who your Protest Committee members are at least two weeks in advance of your event. The members of the Protest Committee may not be members of the Race Committee.

You may choose to have spectator boat(s). This should be a boat not involved in running the regatta in any way. Its operator should be reminded to stay far enough away from the course to not interfere. You may expect spectators to provide their own USCG flotation device. You are not expected to provide refreshments for spectators but this can be a nice touch.

11. **LUNCHES**

Lunch can be done a couple of ways. It is often included in the entry fee, especially when it is served on the water. A usual on the water lunch will have a sandwich, chips, piece of fruit, a couple cookies or a granola bar, and a beverage. Lunches on land are still often included, but you can choose to have sailors utilize your club’s dining room or snack bar. The difference should be reflected in your entry fee. It all depends on your club’s budget, facility, membership enthusiasm and availability, and the finances of the event.

12. **DINNERS OR PARTIES**

Saturday night during the event is the traditional time for either a party, a dinner or a barbecue. This is to be included in the entry fee for the competitors and you may opt to have it purchased for an additional fee for guests of the sailor. The club must decide upon the price. The party can be whatever you want to make of it. Fun games, dancing, games, and other activities to mix the sailors together make for an unforgettable event.

13. **SPONSORS**

Sponsors may be utilized for your regatta. They can donate a service, a regatta supply or need, or money. You may offer to allow them to hang a banner at the site during the event, to have a booth set up during registration, to include their logo on the event t-shirt sleeve or other memento (tastefully), and to include it on all printed matter (Notice of Race, Sailing Instructions, Press Releases, etc.) generated for the event. Sponsors can give money towards awards in return for recognition. Make sure your organization is getting fair value for the exposure the sponsor will receive. Also check the RRS advertising rules. If you have questions about finding sponsors, contact the USSCA Schedule Coordinator or Masters Chair.

14. **PUBLICITY**

The regatta will be big news if your club makes it that way. The sailing part of your event will work out, one way or another. Getting the community involved and aware that this Championship is being held in their area is a great opportunity for you to utilize this event to boost Sunfish sailing and your club in your geographic area.
To do this, you need a Publicity Chair. This individual will need to start issuing press releases three months in advance. If you can find out the defending champion is planning to come, include that. As you discover other major champions intend to participate, include that information, too. Press releases need to be sent to local newspapers, the nearest major city daily newspaper, radio stations, TV stations, and local cable access stations (if available), sailing media and the Class Office. The Publicity Chair will need to be able to be present at the event to answer questions from Press people, to host them, arrange boat rides to watch races (if wanted).

The Publicity Chair should issue a news release after each days’ sailing. It will be helpful to have someone with a digital camera available at all times to take candid shots on shore, on the water, at social events, and most importantly, the awards photos. You should have a group shot of each age group Top 3. You should have a group shot of the Top 5 overall. (Have all sailors take off hats and sunglasses for these photos so their faces can be clearly seen.) See the section on final report for more information.

Provisional scores should be emailed to the Class Administrator after each days’ sailing, as well as final scores as soon as the awards have been distributed ([sunfishoff@gmail.com](mailto:sunfishoff@gmail.com)) with a report on the sailing conditions. You also will want to have the final scores on your club’s web page.

As to the issue of drawing sailors to your event, your club’s reputation, flyer distributed by email through the Class Office, Notice of Race, Internet reminders, social media campaign, and your fleet members’ personal invitations when they go to other regattas will do the most for bringing in a good, competitive fleet.

15. **FINAL REPORT**

Once the regatta is over, there’s still one piece of work to take care of. You need to let the Sunfish and sailing world know what occurred, **IMMEDIATELY**. It is best prepared by your Publicity Chair who will have been on duty through the entire event.

Please note the layout for posting of the scoring that follows. The event is to feature the age groups and not the overall standings. The age groups are listed by **descending** age (oldest age group to youngest). This will take a little extra post-scoring-program data handling. Scores are counted as each sailor finished each race overall. While there are overall awards, these are downplayed. The bigger feature of this event is the youthful Masters, no matter the age. Your published report should resemble this:

**2009 Sunfish US Masters National Championship**  
Friendly Yacht Club, Lake Warmwater, Hometown, ST  
August 22-24, 2009  
49 boats

The regatta was sailed on a gloriously perfect weekend. It was sunny, 82 degrees, with Southwest winds 12-16, both days. John Jones, fresh from a win at the New England Regional, walked away with the overall championship. Saturday night's barbecue was enhanced by a DJ who led some line dancing. Melanie Blough was the recipient of the Golden Key award (some plastic baby teething keys), as she couldn't seem to figure out how to get her boat started!

The Regatta Chair was Bill Smith, assisted by J.T. Marsh and Stu Knapp. The Race Committee Chair was Jenna Rink, assisted by B.D. Reames, Don Cole, Jim Cobb, and Sally Forth. The Protest Committee was Mike Judd (Chair), Todd Waters and Bruce Kent. Overall event sponsor Super-Duper Products provided for all the event’s social activities and collared polo shirts! (Etc.)
Senior Masters (80+)
1. John Jones New York, NY 4-4-4-4-4-4-4 28 O4
2. Jim Janey Highland Park, IL 8-8-8-8-8-8-8 56 O8

Great Grand Masters (70-79)
1. Neal Hunding Hometown, FL 12-12-12-12-12-12-12-12 84 O12
3. Mary Smith St. Joseph, MI 14-14-14-14-14-14-14-14 98 O14

Grand Masters (60-69)
1. Jane Jones New York, NY 3-3-3-3-3-3 21 O3
2. Don Janey Highland Park, IL 7-7-7-7-7-7 49 O7
4. Etc.

Masters (50-59)
1. Sam Green New York, NY 2-2-2-2-2-2-2 14 O2
2. Mary Johnson Hamilton, BER 6-6-6-6-6-6-6 49 O6
3. Henry Queens St. Joseph, MI 10-10-10-10-10-10 77 O10
4. Etc.

Apprentice Masters
1. Henny Green Ponce, PUR 1-1-1-1-1-1-1-1 7 O1
2. George Kemper Highland Park, IL 5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5 35 O5
4. Etc.

This report is due no later than the day after the event is completed and is best emailed the same day as the regatta concludes. It is best to take care of this while the event is still fresh in your mind and before materials begin to get lost. You are strongly encouraged to keep a hard copy of the entire report in your club’s files for a minimum of one year. Be sure to keep a copy of the Notice of Race, the Sailing Instructions, all notices from the Notice Board, and any protest forms (with findings found clearly noted) with those materials. The USSCA Regatta Coordinator’s version of the report shall include a copy of each of these items.

You will need to send a copy of your report to the Class Administrator, and the Windward Leg editor (addresses available on the Class web page www.sunfishclass.org). Include a brief description of the sailing conditions and anything exceptionally notable.

Provide the name, address, telephone numbers (home and work), of the Regatta Chair, Race Committee Chair and Protest Committee Chair. From time to time it is necessary to contact these people after the event is concluded to follow up with a question. You should provide this information to all three people.

We wish you the best of luck as you organize this exciting and fun championship. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your Masters Chair or Schedule Coordinator.

(If you have any comments, suggestions or improvements you’d like to see made to this publication, please contact the Schedule Coordinator.)