

## **Thistle Class Association INSTRUCTIONS TO OWNERS**

*No yacht shall be eligible to enter any race where Thistles race as a Class until an Official Certificate of Measurement and Registration has been granted to the owner of said yacht. (See By-Laws, Article VI, Measurement and Certificates and Article XX Registration Procedure.)*

Upon completion and/or purchase of a Thistle, or when the ownership of a Thistle is transferred or changes, the new owner shall measure and fill out the Measurement Certificate, in duplicate, with a Thistle owner in good standing as a witness, and send the completed forms to the Class National Secretary for registration, on behalf of the Chief Measurer. The charge for each reregistration is \$10.

Warning! The Measurement Certificate contains only a few of the measurements of the Thistle. It is the owner's responsibility to see that his/her boat meets all the specifications of the Class.

For reference, the tolerances of many of the check measurements are shown, but it should not be assumed that these are the only tolerances in the specifications of the Thistle; for example, the centerboard and rudder girth dimensions shown in the specifications are subject to a variation no greater than the tolerance of the check measurements. The Class Chief Measurer determines the acceptability of variation in measurements from the Official Specifications.

### **INFORMATION**

1. The following WARNING is reprinted from the Official Specifications.

*It is impossible to foresee every conceivable innovation which may be thought of in the future or mention every suggestion that has been ruled illegal in the past. When in doubt, it must be assumed that anything in connection with the boat, sails or rigging which is not clearly covered by the Official Plans and Specifications or published Measurer's Rulings, is illegal and that a ruling must be obtained from the Chief Measurer before attempting such an innovation.*

2. The Constitution, Specifications and Rulings may be amended by action of the Class in Annual Meeting provided that the amendment is:
  - a. Proposed by a Fleet or the Governing Board.
  - b. Published in the Bagpipe thirty days prior to the meeting.
  - c. Subject to proper wording by the Amendments Committee.
3. The By-Laws may be modified by the Governing Board.
4. Measurer's Rulings may be adopted by the Governing Board and shall become part of the Constitution when properly proposed by the Chief Measurer within the limits of his office as defined in the Constitution.
5. The specifications are a series of written specifications and a series of drawings owned by the Class and remaining in the custody of the Chief Measurer.
6. Official plans are the property of the official builders and are designed as an aid to an owner to build

a Thistle from a kit. Official plans may be obtained from the Class Secretary for \$15.

7. *Fleet Secretary's Guide* (On national level)

- a. Report to TCA results of the election of fleet officers within two weeks after said election at the fleet annual meeting.
- b. Collect and forward dues to the national office with the Annual Report which must be filed during January on a form supplied by TCA.
- c. Certify to the District Governor the yachts qualified for the District Elimination Series.

8. *Guide to Running Blue Chevron Events*

General:

- a. The regatta shall be solely for Thistles.
- b. The regatta shall be sailed in open water, as free of headlands and other "local knowledge" factors as possible.
- c. With the exception of the Mid-Winters, the regatta shall be rotated among the districts that make up the Region in which the championship is held. The district rotation for the various regions shall be as follows: Atlantic Coast: Central Atlantic, New England, Long Island Sound, New Jersey. Central Southern: Delta, Middle America. Great Lakes: Lake Erie West, Michiana, Niagara Frontier, Lake Erie East, Lake Michigan. Pacific Coast: Southern California, Pacific Northwest, Northern California. South Eastern: Florida, Carolinas, South Atlantic.
- d. The regatta shall only be conducted by clubs with an active Thistle fleet and this fleet must assume complete responsibility for the conduct of the regatta.
- e. The club must have adequate and safe launching and mooring facilities.
- f. The club must allow all R&D Thistles to launch, moor, and compete.
- g. Only two suits of working sails and one spinnaker will be approved for use by each contestant.
- h. Charters will be permitted subject to the intent and provisions of By-Laws Article XIII - 2O, Charters.

Race Conduct:

- a. A minimum of three races shall be scheduled with two on Saturday and one on Sunday. This affords an opportunity for makeup races on Sunday afternoon.
- b. The line must be as nearly square to the wind as possible-there must be no conscious effort to favor either end of the line.
- c. All marks must be taken to port.
- d. The course will be laid out as described for the National Championship.
- e. Marks will be of the "carry out" variety and stationed by two well identified stake boats.
- f. Scoring, shall be done on the low point basis in accordance with the scoring; system used in the National Championship.
- g. A minimum of two races must be sailed in order for the top five overall finishers to qualify for participation in that year's National Championship under the provisions of the By-Laws, Article XIII, 9, (b), Step 2b.

Administration:

- a. By December 1, the fleet sponsoring the Interdistrict Regatta shall issue a report to their District Governor including:
  - 1) Date

- 2) Location
  - 3) Race Committee capabilities
  - 4) compliance with all provisions herein or details or any exceptions requested.
  - b. By January 1, the District Governor shall forward his recommendations to his Regional Vice President.
  - c. By February 15, or prior to the Governing Board meeting at the Mid-Winters, the First Vice President, after resolving any differences such as conflicting dates, exceptions to the above, etc. shall forward his recommendations to the Executive Committee for regatta sanction and Bagpipe notification.
9. *District Governor's Guide.* This guide outlines the major areas of responsibility. A more complete guide is sent to each District Governor upon his election.
- a. Governing Board Member - attend or provide proxy at meetings.
  - b. District Supervision.
    - 1) Host annual meeting, elect new Governor and advise National Office.
    - 2) Publicity and Communications, periodic newsletters to fleets, report regatta dates to Bagpipe.
    - 3) Confirm locale and dates of District Championships, rotating through the fleets. Check R&D status of all entrants. Course shall be as near as possible to National Championship and standards shall follow those outlined above for blue chevron events.

## OFFICIAL THISTLE INSIGNIA

### OFFICER

### HONORARY OFFICER

### MEMBER

President - three gold stars, First Vice President - two gold stars, Second Vice President - one gold star, Third Vice President - one gold diamond, Chief Measurer - one gold bar, Regional Vice President - one blue star, Commodore - three gold stars, Vice Commodore - two gold stars, near Commodore - one gold star, District Governor - one gold oak leaf.

Each member may wear his appropriate insignia while in office. When he retires from an office he is entitled to wear the insignia of the highest rank attained except that the special device above the Thistle shall be in silver.

Hat insignia is the same as the blazer device except the outer gold circle is omitted. Flags follow same design; gold circle becomes circle of stars.

## QUALIFICATION FOR THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP Explanation of Registration, Quota, Dropdown

### Registration

The By-Laws state that "dues of all participating skippers, except junior members, must have been

paid and the registration of their boats completed before the District Elimination, and not later than July 1, to be eligible for the district. Elimination's and the National Championship of that year" (By-Laws, Article II, 7).

A boat is not registered as a Thistle until the registration procedure set out in Article XX of the By-Laws is completed. Registration is completed only when the TCA Secretary-Treasurer has approved the filled-in certificate in behalf of the Chief Measurer, recorded it, and issued it to the owner. In other words, the filling out of the Official Certificate of Measurement and Registration by the owner (and having it witnessed by a Thistle owner in good standing), while necessary steps in the registration process, do not in themselves constitute registration. It is important to note that other TCA officers, such as District Governors, have no authority to make changes in the established registration procedures.

Most of the problems relating to registration involve misunderstanding of the timing provisions of the By-Laws. A Measurement Certificate being submitted for registration must be received by the Class Secretary-Treasurer so that it can be processed before the District Elimination's, if the District Elimination's fall prior to July 1, or, if the District Elimination's fall after July 1, the Measurement Certificate must be submitted so that it can be processed prior to July 1. Normally, it takes very little time for the Secretary-Treasurer to process a measurement Certificate. However, before trying to cut the deadline too close, remember that if there is an error in the measurements or if measurements are missing, the Secretary-Treasurer has no option but to return the Certificates to the owner for correction, and, if the corrected Certificates are received after the deadline, the registration process cannot be completed within the prescribed timing requirements.

Example I: The X District is holding its District Elimination series on June 7. Vaughan Vang sends his Measurement Certificates special delivery on June 6. Vaughan will not be eligible to sail in the Districts because he has not allowed time for the registration procedure.

Example II: The Y District is holding its District Elimination series on July 10. Billy Boottop has had his boat for six months but has just gotten around to having it measured. He rushes down to the corner mailbox with the certificates at midnight, June 30. Billy will not be registered before the deadline of July 1; Billy will not be eligible to sail in the Districts.

There is only one exception to the above and it is clearly set out in the By-Laws (Article II, 7(a)): "A skipper who was a dues-paid owner of a registered Thistle the preceding year and is purchasing another boat, must complete measurement prior to his/her District Championship and request an extension by June 21 if the District Championship is after June 30.

Example I: Tim Transom has bought a Thistle in mid-June, never having owned one before. He can't get it measured and registered before July 1 and applies for an exception. Tim is not eligible for exception because he has not been a dues paid owner of a registered Thistle the preceding year.

Example II: Greg Gunwale sells his registered Thistle and buys a new boat the end of June. He calls the Secretary-Treasurer to ask for more time to get the boat measured.

Greg is not eligible for exception because he has not asked for an extension of time by June 21.

### **The Quota**

In accordance with Article XIII, Section 9 (c) of the By-Laws, the Governing Board annually establishes for each District a Nationals quota that is expressed as a percentage of dues-paid and registered boats in that District as of July 1. At its option, the Governing Board may also establish a minimum number of boats quota in addition to the percentage quota. If the Governing Board so opts, the quota for each District shall be the larger of the two quotas (percentage or minimum boat).

When determining the percentage quota, decimals equal to or greater than 0.5 are rounded up and decimals less than 0.5 are rounded down.

### **The Dropdown**

The Governing Board also specifies a position in the District elimination standing (expressed as a percentage of the number of boats competing in the District Eliminations) to which the District may drop down in filling its quota. The dropdown applies only when it serves to broaden the base from which a District may select its quota. Whenever a District's quota is greater than the calculated dropdown, the dropdown criterion does not apply.

As above, decimals equal to or greater than 0.5 are rounded up and decimals less than 0.5 are rounded down.

### **Prequalifiers and the District Quota**

There are two classes of prequalified skippers. The first group includes those individuals deemed essential for the conduct of a Nationals: the Thistle Class President, First, Second, and Third Vice Presidents, Chief Measurer, and the defending National Champion. This group does not have to sail in the Districts and thus is qualified "regardless of quota". The second group of prequalifiers includes those skippers who have placed in positions 2 through 5 at the previous year's Nationals, positions 1 through 5 in a Mid-Winter Championship, or in the top five or 25% (whichever is greater) of a sanctioned Inter-District Championship that has occurred before the Districts in question. This group must compete in the District Elimination series.

#### **Group I and the Quota**

If they participate in the District Championship, they are simply excluded from the final standing for the purposes of determining qualifiers for the Nationals.

Example: District A has 115 boats. The quota is 12 (10% quota, 11.5 rounded up to the next whole number). The National Champion competes along with 41 other boats. No matter where he finishes, his name is taken out of the final standings and all boats finishing below him are moved up one place. This leaves 41 boats as a base for the dropdown; 40% is 16.4, so the quota may be filled by dropping down to the 16th place.

#### **Group II and the Quota**

Group II (positions 2 through 5 at the previous year's Nationals, positions 1 through 5 at a Mid-Winters, or the top five or 25% [whichever is greater] at a sanctioned Inter-District Championship of that year) must compete in the District Eliminations. They are regarded in exactly the same way as any other participants in the Districts for quota and dropdown purposes. It is only when their final

standings fall outside the quota or dropdown that they become a special case; they can then make use of their prequalified status.

Example: District B has 124 boats. The quota is 12 (10% quota, 12.4 or 12). The Mid-Winter Champion competes along with 41 other boats. The total number of boats participating is then 42; 40% is 16.8, so the quota may be filled by dropping down to the 17th place

Situation I: The Mid-Winter Champion finishes 10th and thus falls within the District's quota of 12. (The quota may be filled by dropping down as far as the 17th place.)

Situation II: The Mid-Winter Champion finishes 14th. The top 12 finishers Plus the Mid-Winter Champion are qualified. Two skippers among the top 12 finishers elect not to attend the Nationals. The 13th and 14th finishers (14th being the Mid-Winter Champion) are thereby qualified within the normal quota. The 15th finisher is not qualified unless another of the qualified boats ahead of him decides not to attend, and the final dropdown cannot exceed 17th place.

Situation III: The Mid-Winter Champion finishes 18th. The District's quota of 12 can be filled by dropping down as far as 17th place. The Mid-Winter Champion falls outside of the quota and dropdown and becomes an additional qualifier.