

Racing Rules of Sailing

Race Signals, Abandonment Signals

A submission from US Sailing

Purpose or Objective

Describe abandonment signals in Race Signals clearly and in line with the general usage of those signals.

Proposal 1

In Race Signals, change the text under Flag N as follows:

N All races **in progress** ~~that have started~~ are *abandoned*. Return to the starting area. The warning signal will be made 1 minute after removal unless at that time the race is *abandoned* again or *postponed*.

Proposal 2

In Race Signals, change the text under Flags N over H and under Flags N over A as follows:

N over H All races **in progress or not started** are *abandoned*. Further signals ashore.

N over A All races **in progress or not started** are *abandoned*. No more racing today.

Current Position

As above.

Reasons

1. Proposal 1: "Races that have started" is not what is meant. All races that have finished have started, but we do not intend those races to be abandoned when N is displayed. What we want is to abandon only races in progress.
 2. Proposal 2: The current descriptions of race signals N over H and N over A could be (and have been) interpreted as abandoning all races for the day, including those that have started and finished. (The race committee may, of course, abandon all races for the day including those already finished, but that would be a separate action that does not require an on-the-water signal.)
 3. The reason that the proposed language for flag N is different than that for signals N over A and N over H is that the situations are different. When N is displayed with no other signal, the race
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committee only wants to abandon races in progress; races not yet started can be expected to start as soon as the race committee can do so. However, when a race committee displays N over H or N over A with no class flags, they invariably want all boats to leave the racing area and go ashore, whether or not they are currently racing or about to race. In situations where the races are abandoned because of extreme conditions, failure to make this clear is dangerous, as boats that have not yet started are given no clear instructions to go ashore.