# Constant Contact Survey Results

**Survey Name**: August 24, 2016, NAC Survey

**Response Status**: Partial & Completed

**Filter**: None

September 15, 2016, 10:26:32 PM

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## How many Lightning North American Championships have you participated in (as either skipper or crew) over the last 5 years? (Note: they were in Rochester, New Orleans, Sheboygan, Cedar Point and Houston) - Comments

| | #Responses | Response Ratio |
|---|---|---|
| one | 34 | 32% |
| two | 31 | 30% |
| three | 18 | 17% |
| four | 13 | 12% |
| five | 7 | 7% |
| No Responses | 2 | 2% |
| Total | 105 | 100% |
| 10 Comment(s) | | |

**Answers**

New Orleans was where I sailed

It would have been more, but family health issues have limited my sailing.

I know...super lame

New to the class

Very well organized.

I didn't go to New Orleans because I couldn't get the time off (I work for a school)

Prior to Houston, I had sailed every NAs since 1986. I did not go to New Orleans (the first NAs I have skipped in 16 years) because I had a fantastic time at the WJMs and Masters Worlds, and I do not like the modified format. Racing in a fleet over 40 boats for the NAs is only fun/interesting for the top 10 or 15 boats. For the rest of us, all you see is transoms, and dirty air. I had a lousy time on the water in Houston (the shore stuff was fantastic), and it was not worth the drive to New Orleans for only a couple of days of hot, humid sailing.

Both Rochester and Sheboygan were well run and enjoyable Regattas.

Too many weird venues like Houston, New Orleans and San Diego

Top

## What was your favorite part about the 2016 Samson Lightning North American Championships? - Responses

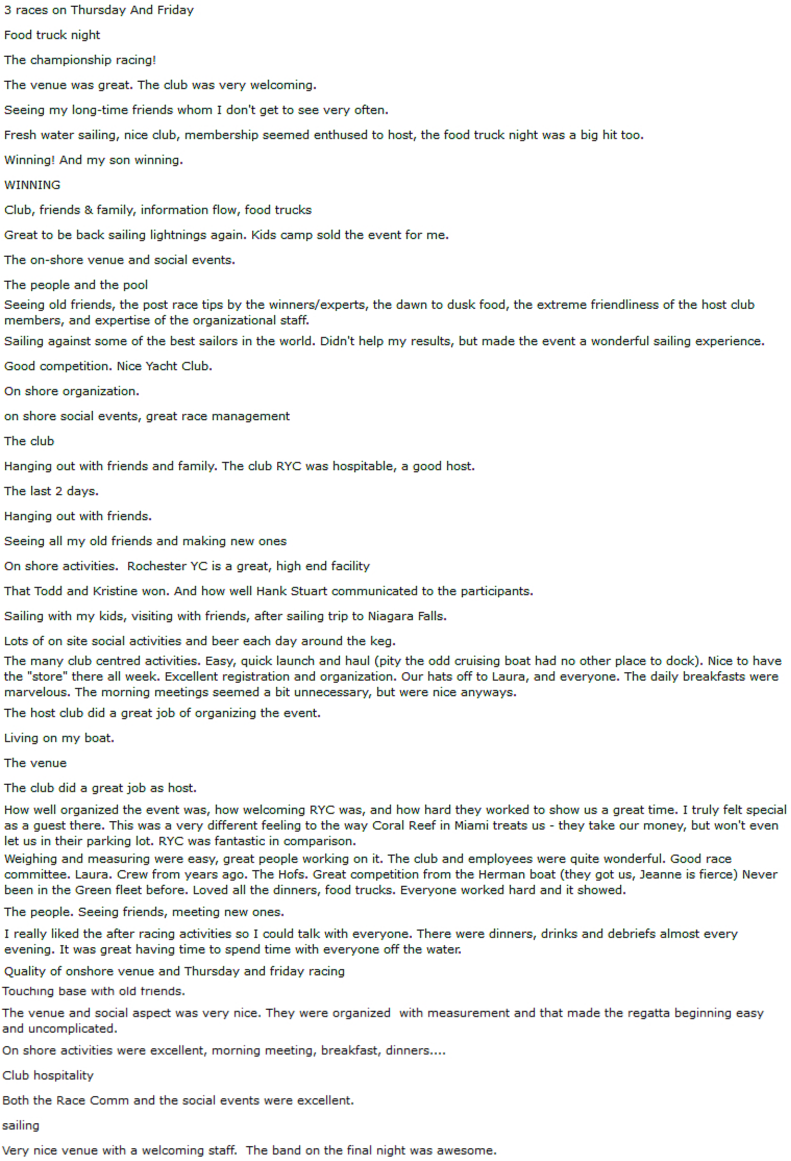
**Answers-48**

Sailing with my brother; bringing a new person into the class

Fast reaching in the squall on the second day of racing.

Fast reaching in the squall on the second day of racing.

Last two days of racing. Food truck. Beer truck. Pinnies were a neat touch



3 races on Thursday And Friday

Food truck night

The championship racing!

The venue was great. The club was very welcoming.

Seeing my long-time friends whom I don't get to see very often.

Fresh water sailing, nice club, membership seemed enthused to host, the food truck night was a big hit too.

Winning! And my son winning.

WINNING

Club, friends & family, information flow, food trucks

Great to be back sailing lightnings again. Kids camp sold the event for me.

The on-shore venue and social events.

The people and the pool

Seeing old friends, the post race tips by the winners/experts, the dawn to dusk food, the extreme friendliness of the host club members, and expertise of the organizational staff.

Sailing against some of the best sailors in the world. Didn't help my results, but made the event a wonderful sailing experience.

Good competition. Nice Yacht Club.

On shore organization.

on shore social events, great race management

The club

Hanging out with friends and family. The club RYC was hospitable, a good host.

The last 2 days.

Hanging out with friends.

Seeing all my old friends and making new ones

On shore activities. Rochester YC is a great, high end facility

That Todd and Kristine won. And how well Hank Stuart communicated to the participants.

Sailing with my kids, visiting with friends, after sailing trip to Niagara Falls.

Lots of on site social activities and beer each day around the keg.

The many club centred activities. Easy, quick launch and haul (pity the odd cruising boat had no other place to dock). Nice to have the "store" there all week. Excellent registration and organization. Our hats off to Laura, and everyone. The daily breakfasts were marvelous. The morning meetings seemed a bit unnecessary, but were nice anyways.

The host club did a great job of organizing the event.

Living on my boat.

The venue

The club did a great job as host.

How well organized the event was, how welcoming RYC was, and how hard they worked to show us a great time. I truly felt special as a guest there. This was a very different feeling to the way Coral Reef in Miami treats us - they take our money, but won't even let us in their parking lot. RYC was fantastic in comparison.

Weighing and measuring were easy, great people working on it. The club and employees were quite wonderful. Good race committee. Laura. Crew from years ago. The Hofs. Great competition from the Herman boat (they got us, Jeanne is fierce) Never been in the Green fleet before. Loved all the dinners, food trucks. Everyone worked hard and it showed.

The people. Seeing friends, meeting new ones.

I really liked the after racing activities so I could talk with everyone. There were dinners, drinks and debriefs almost every evening. It was great having time to spend time with everyone off the water.

Quality of onshore venue and Thursday and friday racing

Touching base with old friends.

The venue and social aspect was very nice. They were organized with measurement and that made the regatta beginning easy and uncomplicated.

On shore activities were excellent, morning meeting, breakfast, dinners....

Club hospitality

Both the Race Comm and the social events were excellent.

sailing

Very nice venue with a welcoming staff. The band on the final night was awesome.

Fabulous YC, site, and service.  Convienient

Events at the club after sailing, food trucks etc and food.

Top

## What was your favorite part about participating in a Lightning North American Championship?  - Responses from Non-Rochester Attendees

**Answers-41**

Great racing; the fleet split after qualifiers balanced the field a lot and allowed competition against sailors closer to my ability.

Comradery and competing with top sailors in the class.

Venue and depth of talent

The competition and camaraderie .

making the blue fleet

The people and an interesting place where I could be a bit of a tourist.  Gave me a reason to travel and take the time to go.  I like the people in the class.  They are interesting and "good people"

Sailing in a large fleet and boats I usually don't sail against.

The top competition, seeing old friends.

I enjoy the racing on the water and the people on the shore

The experience sailing in a large competitive fleet and meeting other Lightning sailors.

The competitive racing & social events.

The class folks I don't often see

Welcoming venue with good breeze.  Camping nearby.

Comers derive

The people, the sailing and overall experience.

Sailing

Sailing and evening parties and suppers with friends.

Reconnecting with old friends, sailing in big fleets

The parts when we were racing well.

Racing against top-flight competition.

The camaraderie is probably the best part, but the locations are always something special.

the camaraderie

Competition and people

The chance to spend time with Lightning friends, meet new friends, and engage in top notch completion.

Sailing reasonably well with my family on board.

The competition and the entire experience.

Good friendship with good racing.

1. Quaility racing against good competition
2. Post sailing discussions with the experts
3. Socializing with the Lightning family

Quality of sailing.  Convenience of boat lot, parking, launch facility (low hassle factor).  Social activities.  Club amenities.

Seeing, and interacting with the other participants.

Competition and spending fun times with old friends

Seeing old friends and having a chance to compete against the very best lightning sailors in the country.

The competition and the camaraderie.

Racing sailboats with and against friends.  Social activities (dinners,snacks, etc).  Friendly atmosphere.

Excellent race management and comrodary with sailors on land.

Competing against a large number of top notch boats.

Fellowship

Competition and comaradity.

I like all parts about compete ding  in less there is poor organizetion

The competition and the Corinthian Spirit of the class.

The very high standard competition

Top

**Please tell us if any of the statements below influenced your decision not to attend the 2016 Samson North American Championships in Rochester August 15-19. Or tell us why in the comment box below.  - Comments**

| Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option. | No Influence | Influenced | Highly Influenced |
|---|---|---|---|
| Lack of vacation time | 20<br>54% | 11<br>30% | 6<br>16% |
| Prefer a different type of vacation during this time of year | 25<br>71% | 8<br>23% | 2<br>6% |
| Expenses too high/Costs too much | 16<br>48% | 10<br>30% | 7<br>21% |
| Couldn't find a crew | 17<br>50% | 14<br>41% | 3<br>9% |
| Don't have a boat | 30<br>94% | 1<br>3% | 1<br>3% |
| Too far to travel for me | 25<br>71% | 8<br>23% | 2<br>6% |
| Other - please explain in the box below | 6<br>35% | 4<br>24% | 7<br>41% |

21 Comment(s)

**Answers**

Attended WJM but didn't have crew or vacation time for NAs too.

Had to sail with my boss in event that overlapped with the NAs.

I did enjoy the NO regatta for the travel reasons and my crew were interested in going to NO. The NA's as a week event are a BIG Committment and we just did not sail at a high enough level to spend the time and money to do the NA's in Rochester. In previous years it has been more of a crew problem. NO motivated the crew last year so we went.

Family health issue kept me from attending.

New child this year.

Crew weight to be competitive has gone from 550lbs to 420lbs. We come to compete, not follow the winners around the race course.

We can compete but at an extreme disadvantage...it is worth being serious when you have such a disadvantage?
Most venues are too far away or too expensive to take a chance on a venue that has inconsistent sailing conditions.

Other commitments.

New job, couldn't take the time off. I still like that it's a week event though. Makes it worth it when you are traveling far.

Housing availability, active engagement from local fleets helping to drive excitement.

Conflict with another event I was committed to.

Other sailing commitments.

Start of school.

Duration in days and availability of crew for the NAs influences my choice. Masters is a great option for more experienced sailors and crews that can take 2 days off from work.

My kids sailed in the Jr. event. I crewed in the master event. Couldn't take the time to stay for the NAs.

Recovering from surgery.

Did not want to have my boat intentionally hit by one of the listed competitors who makes a practice of doing so.

Canadian exchange rate and other unexpected summer costs made the trip have to be cancelled for us.

(1) Based on boat speed at Districts, didn't feel I had what I needed to compete at that level.
(2) Time away from non-sailing family.
(3) Location appeal.

On a book tour.

Let my son steer this one. I crewed for him.

Top

### I would be more likely to attend the North American Championships in the future if the event was held in: - Comments

| | # of Response(s) | Response Ratio |
|---|---|---|
| July | 11 | 10% |
| August | 30 | 28% |
| September | 3 | 3% |
| October-November | 6 | 6% |
| I will likely attend regardless of timing | 48 | 46% |
| I don't anticipate doing the NAC in the near future due to other factors. | 3 | 3% |
| No Responses | 4 | 4% |
| Total | 105 | 100% |
| 40 Comment(s) | | |

**Answers**

We should ELIMINATE/AMEND the current format to either 1 or 2 fleets max. 65 boats or less = 1 fleet, 9 races over 3 racing days. Same numbers of days/races if 2 fleets.

At my age, I have no particular time commitments that make one month better than another. Although the summer is somewhat preferable. The more important factor for me is if the event is a qualifier for worlds, or if I am attending the worlds that year (do to PTO considerations). In the case of next year the NAs are a great warm-up for worlds, while last year NOLA was a non-critical regatta, too far, and not especially useful for practice.

Clubs with less financial overhead.

Once the kids go back to school and all their activities begin it's hard to get away. So NAC in July or August only work for me.

I think the class should choose a venue and time frame that works for the best possible conditions for that region/venue not necessarily the 2nd week of August. That said with two young school age kids non school months with kids camp is easier to get away, but the shortened 2017 NAC should be good with one fleet. Was this 2017 time frame chosen for best conditions at this time or for easier shipping of boats to SA after?

Anytime in the summer - the fall ones are a no-go

I probably will miss 2017 but looking forward to hosting the NAc in San Diego in 2018.

Or july

If in the NORTH.

But to a venue that is more likely to have good wond conditions.

I think it depends upon the location and format.

For me it doesn't matter what month. Obviously we think we will lose college kids when NAs is in Sept. We'll see next year. The NAs need to be shorter. I haven't looked ahead at the questions on the regatta schedule but hopefully you have sent this to everyone who has competed in the last 5 NAs and find out why we got 70 instead of 100. The regatta is too long and needs to be shorter.

Having it in September or October/November is very attractive. Might increase the opportunity for more breeze.

That is August well above the Mason-Dixon Line.

Skippers can usually find the time, but most crew must book summer holidays for this regatta.

Because of work commitments, It is unlikely that I can sail any North Americans that is not in August.

With the exception of July. July in San Diego just chews up too much of the prime time sailing season. We will not be attending.

August is the best time of year to keep the younger kids and families going to the regatta

Note - This question would be better if you could rank order the months. I prefer Aug, then July.
DO NOT hold the event during the school year. If families and youths cannot attend, we will quickly devolve into a small event for semi-pro and pro sailors

The summer is a great time of year for me. I have a hard time attending regattas in the Fall/Spring.

July or August

This is a tough call. Schools are opening in early August - a problem that has crept into our scheduling. Without district qualifiers July is possible. Generally the late July-august weather sux everywhere.

I really like the format and time of year that we did last year in New Orleans.

So much depends on being able to enlist 2 crew. The best odds from finding 2 crew seems to be during the summer when they can get away for 5-8 days.

I am ambivalant re when it is run. If it is where I want to go I will work around the time as my crew tends to be flexible. I am open to different times vs the constitutional normal dates.

August is best. Early August. How can the class be committed to younger sailors if we have the NAs in the fall. No college age kids can go to Wrightsville in Sept.

Depends on the location

School starts in early August in my area so it is easier for my family to travel in July.

It's encouraging that the ILCA is now willing to consider having the NAs in months other than August.

Better breeze in October November and less heat

Date is not the issue, average crew weight is an issue which I feel will hinder the class' ability to bring the depth it needs. I hope to sail future NA's...

Depends on the venue...lets not do August on the Long Island Sound again. Later in the Fall down south sounds fun! Undecided at this point though.

I simpley prefer the time of year to be in relation to locations weather.

Having the NA's after college has begun sends a bad message to our younger class members. I did enjoy the shorter format in New Orleans. There are some wonderful venues in the South, for which the later dates are critical - Houston was a great venue and wonderful people, but the weather was absolutely unbearable.

August is the best time but straddling weekend to minimize work days off may help

August or September are my preferences.

With my job i can only attend North American Championships that are held in July or August.

Dates should be location dependent - e.g. NAs in August may not be best for TX (hot) or CT (wind).

Top

## Even if the timing doesn't matter, what month do you prefer the NAC be held in? - Other responses/Comments

| | # of Response(s) | Response Ratio |
|---|---|---|
| July | 2 | 4% |
| August | 25 | 52% |
| September | 5 | 11% |
| October/November | 1 | 2% |
| Other | 11 | 23% |
| No Responses | 4 | 8% |
| Total | 48 | 100% |
| 30 Comment(s) | | |

**Answers**

Time of year chosen to suit location

Whenever the venue has the best, most reliable breeze

Best conditions for chosen venue

Depends

Aug, then July

rotate summer / fall

August is a comfortable choice giving time for summer practice leading up to the event, but still fitting in with schedules for other younger sailors, skippers and crew...

Depends when the best sailing conditions are for the host club

It depends where it is. Some places have better wind in a particular season, than others.

1st week of Aug. would allow for more juniors and college students to participate

Where there is wind! August on the coasts and inland lakes in Sept or Oct.

3rd week of August

It should be held at the time when the sailing is the best for the location chosen.

I say this because Summer is crowded.
More Fall Lightning sailing has always been attractive.

Later (September-October) if it's south.

School starts earlier than it did a generation ago, many are back in class by Aug 20 or so. I suggest a change to the class rules allowing the event to be held between July 20-Aug 15.
Note - It might be a good idea to find out when school starts near each fleets home water, and use that data. Here in Colorado, By Aug 22-24 or so, kids are back in class

August if it is north is fine, obviously.

Early August, or Mid October. Florida schools start early.

I think rotating between summer and fall is good idea Aug - Oct/Nov

Being flexible on the NAs month is key in order to sail at different venues.

end July, early August

Depends on the venue

I am pretty involved with Race Management of regattas so I can live with almost any month and I am truly ambivalent

I prefer the time should be based on the best sailing conditions on the location. If sailing is not good in August at the location, then don't schedule the event for August

Either the end of July or the beginning of August would be preferable

I don't think July and August are the best time to sail due to the lack of consistent wind, but it allows kids to participate.

See previous comment.  If we want to leverage some of the very nice sites in the South, having the NA's later in the year is critical.

The location is a big influence for the timing because of the best chance for the best weather conditions can depend on the venue.

August when the event is north (like Sheboygan, Buffalo, etc.).  October/November when it is south (Charleston, NC, Florida)

If you hold it after the middle of August you will start to lose the juniors (back to school) and college age kids.  This is where we draw many of our crew.

Top

## We are sorry to hear you are not planning to attend the NAC in the near future. Please let us know why? - Responses

**Answers-3**

Average Crew Weight is the biggest issue. I can remember the days where the average crew weight ranged between 550 and 600lbs...not it is 420-440 on average. Just look at the top 5-10 boats if not deeper. Put reaches back into the mix and nobody can survive at 420-440 and the youth will love the complexity and speed.

Too much time commitment, prefer to invest in other vacation opportunities (ski trips, cruising)

age

Top

## How many scheduled days of racing would you like to see at a Lightning North American Championships? - Comments

| Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option. | Most Desired 1 | 2 | Least Desired 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3 Days | 10<br>11% | 15<br>17% | 64<br>72% |
| 4 Days | 34<br>38% | 53<br>60% | 2<br>2% |
| 5 Days | 45<br>51% | 21<br>24% | 23<br>25% |
| 55 Comment(s) | | | |

**Answers**

I much prefer the qualifier/division format.

If I am going to travel a long way, then 4-5 days makes it more worthwhile.

Only really needs to be 3 days as long as there are no qualifiers. 2 quality races per day, 6 race series.  Not trying to cram 3 races per day for a 9 race series.  Quality, not quantity.

I can live with a 60 boat fleet and make it short but if we are going to have a big fleet and need qualifiersI prefer longer regatta

More race days the better, gives more time to get races in.

I starting to like was done in New Orleans: show up for measurement on Thursday and race Friday through Sunday.

3 , or 4 with a lay day

I like it the way it has always been. 4 would still be fine though

I like the longer regattas because your more likely to sail in a variety of conditions, it is easier to justify the long trips, and more time for social events.

I like the format the way it is with 2 days of qualifying and 3 days of the championship scheduled.

5 days is OK, over a weekend

4 days

At least 4 days. Less than that inclement weather can make the NAs be less than a true championship.

If I travel to the site, I would prefer to make it worthwhile with 5 days of sailing. Also, 5 planned days gives us a better chance to recover fr0m days that we cannot sail due to weather.

Qualifying+racing

No practice race; 1 day qualifier; 2-3 days of real racing.

3 race days, 4 days regatta

I like the week long event, required whey you split the fleets.

Its difficult for people to take a whole week. Should be able to do it with 3 days off work.

Keep it open, one day maybe awful and the other great. Knowing there could be hard condition one day will slow is to sail perhaps 4 another day. Less rigid plans are best.

I think the regatta should do everything it can to overlap a weekend. When it overlaps a weekend more people will be able to attend as they won't miss as much work. I could not skipper this year because my crew (asked lots) could not take the whole week off. If it had overlapped a weekend they would have been able to swing it.

One fleet, let others choose the other fleets rather than qualifier. If noone volunteers have qualifier. Increase the percentage that advances to championship series (50+ would be a good target).
Provide a coach to the volunteer fleet(s).

3 days is not long enough for a champiOnship

The J22 Worlds format provides 3 race days with 10 races scheduled - 1 drop after completion of 6 races

Shorter is easier to schedule, but three days might be too short to guarantee good sailing weather.

Given the large fleet size you need qualifiers which adds 1-2 days to the event. I would limit qualifiying to 2 days and 2 days for finals

4 days

Minimum of 9 races.

If a worlds qualifier I believe it should be 5 days. If not, then 3 days is probably more appropriate

OK, so you asked if it should be shorter. Please look at making it shorter but ask the previous contestants. The regatta is too long. Shorten it for San Diego. The problem is that this part of the planning has been run by the racers who want to sail all week. At Rochester we weren't short because of the top 20 being absent. They were there; it was a competitive fleet. We were short because of the 30-80 boats being gone. We need to know why they didn't come

2 days of qualifiers and 3 days of championship is fine. Even with a 3 day event there are still 2 travel days which makes at least 3 days off of work. Might as well take the week and get more days of sailing.

For most of us it is a learning experience. Most weekend regattas see you just starting to gel as they finish. Quite nice to have the last couple of days to work on lessons learned.

I believe qualifying, multiple fleets, and fleet sizes between 20 - 35 boats are extremely important. The back half of a big fleet on a light to mild air day is an extremely ugly place to be. People will not come back for that experience year after year. It is a lot more fun to win/place in the green fleet (or yellow, for that matter) than to be 40th or 60th in a huge fleet. Give people a chance to win or place, and they will keep coming back. If they can only loose, they will leave.

I would be okay with less racing days if the racing format changed to all races count, but with the current format you need a long event.

The NAs should be an event (not just another weekend regatta!!

I'm not going a thousand miles to sail 3 days

This is a National Championship. If you can't sail for 5 days, that is unfortunate, but don't belittle the event to get 10 more boats.

Qualifying should count, or be shorter.

The shorter we make it the better chance of losing the event due to wind conditions. If we had a three sailing day event this year we may not have had a regatta.

I much prefer the qualifier/division format.

If I am going to travel a long way, then 4-5 days makes it more worthwhile.

Only really needs to be 3 days as long as there are no qualifiers. 2 quality races per day, 6 race series. Not trying to cram 3 races per day for a 9 race series. Quality, not quantity.

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If I travel to the site, I would prefer to make it worthwhile with 5 days of sailing. Also, 5 planned days gives us a better chance to recover fr0m days that we cannot sail due to weather.

Qualifying+racing

No practice race; 1 day qualifier; 2-3 days of real racing.

Top

**Please rank the maximum number of races per day you would like to see: - Comments**

| **Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.** | **Most Desired**<br>**1** | **2** | **3** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Two - Longer races (estimated finish time of approx 90 minutes with longer legs) | 22<br>24% | 29<br>32% | 40<br>44% |
| Three - Medium length races (estimated finish time of approx 65-70 minutes) | 56<br>62% | 34<br>37% | 1<br>1% |
| More than Three - Shorter length races (estimated finish time of approx 50-55 minutes with shorter legs) | 13<br>14% | 28<br>31% | 50<br>55% |
| 33 Comment(s) | | | |

**Answers**

The options do not get at what I think the best option. I would prefer (an I know this isn't a practical option) that we sail races that are long enough to spread the fleet somewhat (not an easy measure), but I would also like to sail as may races in a day as we can. In essence I would vote for 3-4 70-90min races, or there-about. Practically we would need to plan according to the conditions but I wouldn't mind some days like this with the possibility of exceeding the typical 10 race quota.

It's my opinion a 90 minute race is too long. Maximum race time should be 75 minutes. Leg length should be set based on this. Also more than 3 races in a day unless absolutely pressed to get a series in is too much as well.

It sort of depends on the fleet size. Bigger fleets--larger courses with longer races. If the fleets stay in 20-30 boat range. I think slightly shorter and more races is better. If we have fleets bigger than 35, then two longer races are better

I believe these decision should be made with conditions of the day
. If we can get an extra race in we should if time allowed to do it. This should be determined with everything in mind. Why do you have a pro otherwise ?

I think races do not need to be much more than an hour in any case. In light air luck comes into play in a longer race and in breeze the fleet is sorted and spread out quickly

Why limit the number of races per day in the NOR? For example, during the NAs, the best day of sailing (Qualifiers) had us going to shore at 2:45 and we should have sailed a 4th race, but the PRO commented in the morning meeting to only have 3 that day. Why?

I would prefer to think of it as time on the water than number of races. Roughly 6.5 hours from dock departure to return would be ideal . . . factoring in postponements, length of races, etc.

The format would dictate # of races. Right now, this questions is meaningless because we have a max 4 qualifier/6 championship format, which I think we need to change.

if you shorten the regatta you also need to eliminate the qualifying series or combine all of the qualifying races into the final score. For Wrightsville Beach and San Diego you likely won't have a problem since you will have less than 60 and can put everyone on one line. But you should combine and try to decrease length of regatta for BCC also. With a qualifying series once we get behind in the series we are chasing the schedule the entire week.

More than 3 if necessary and conditions aren't brutal and we get back in time for the beer truck!

schedule 3 but be able to hold 4 if necessary to get in the entire series with a throwout.

Shorter races, once averaged out most certainly allow the expertise to rise to the top. A 90 minute race is just wasting time and inviting those back in the field to shoot corners in hopes of a lucky shift.

We should sail as many races as possible that the conditions allow for.

Maybe more laps with less distance.

This is a championship regatta and should be treated as such.

I think 60-70 minutes is a good length race to aim for. Sailing three strong races in a day leaves us very tired. planning for 2 a day with the option for three allows the RC to make up races if the weather gets interesting (as it did this year at Rochester).

3 is good for us. We get tired after race 2 it seems.

If weather permits, keep racing.

Longer races are better. More than two OK if weather requires it. 3 usually plenty.

If the races get too short there is no time to come back. the fleet all will get to the first mark at the same time if the race is short and the fleet is large. Larger fleets have been talked about. ie if we drop the qualifying.

I think two races per day is fine unless the weather requires more.

Since I don't often finish in the upper 3rd, I don't have an impression of whether the fleet has spread out and the race has been pretty much resolved by 50 minutes. Somewhere between 50-70 minutes, I would think would be sufficient. I prefer more shorter races. I find I get better with each race.

2 good length races. On the water for more than 4 hrs is too long - at least for me.

I think the olden days of 2 hour races are gone. by 45 minutes we have good races and group races within the fleet where we are sailing against equals. Long races are just painful. too many and it really wears out crew (and skippers) and if you have a boat problem you really lose out if you break early in the day.

90 minutes too long. Under 60 is a joke.

I would like to see 1 PM starts so one can enjoy the evening rather than getting up at the crack of dawn

Two normal races around an hour in length

I'm a fan of more races...1 mile legs are fine, 1.5 miles is a little excessive and spreads the fleet out too much

I like good races with reasonably long weather legs. I do not want to see short races.

More races more fun but lengthy enough to give people a chance to fight back from start or wind shifts

This is not a weekend regatta. With the number of boats competing the legs need to be long enough so that the course does not become crowded in one area.

Do not enjoy spending excessively long days on the water every day. Keep it reasonable.

This may Depend on the format of the North americans (ie qualifiers, and championships or just one mass start). I can see long races causing problems with qualifiers and three fleets.

Top

### Would you be willing to pay an additional $25-$35 in entry fee to have a professional PRO in place for all North American Championships? - Comments

| | # of Response(s) | Response Ratio |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 68 | 65% |
| No | 26 | 25% |
| No Responses | 11 | 10% |
| Total | 105 | 100% |
| 43 Comment(s) | | |

**Answers**

A 5% increase does not seem significant. Don't have a great sense for when the crews were pro or not, so it is difficult to provide meaningful input.

Personally I struggled with some of the decisions that the PRO this year made. Mainly course length in the qualifying series in light air with a narrow window of time between storms. This caused the entire fleet to get caught in a fairly substantial squall. Fortunately everyone was safe and there was only a few broken boats. To me it seemed as if this years PRO was not familiar with the nuances of the Lightning class.

See below

Though I would imagine the Class could subsidize a portion, considering this is an extremely important event. I think an extra $35/entry seems steep and would likely be a deterrent for some. But I also fully admit I do not know the cost that this would incur. Perhaps it's only needed in Worlds qualifying years.

For the most part Hank was decent PRO. He had a very hard job but I was disappointed one decision he made.
There was no reason we should have been out in that squall
with plus 40 wind. Someone needed to be watching radar. It was clear something was coming. Luckily the direction it came in helped with getting us in. I believe we all were very lucky that only two boats were damaged.

Last two NAs poor PROs

I'm not positive but I bet we paid Hank plenty and that did not go perfectly smooth. I know the melges classes have been down this path and it has its good and bad...

Some "professionals" are worse than volunteers. I don't want someone with a big ego running our races the "World Sailing Way". I'd prefer someone who accepts feedback and adjust . . . I think Hank Stuart did a great job, although you weren't asking that . . .

YES! Worth it to not be stuck in a storm

There are a lot of good amateurs, but a pro PRO might provide more consistency.

Depends on the alternatives.

I can't quite afford the registration to begin with so that's hard.

If a strong class rep. is on the committee boat and is qualified and on the ball a paid PRO is not needed. Frankly, having a paid PRO does not ensure any better RC work than an non-paid based on my experience

This regatta fee was expensive as is. Not sure if he was paid pro. Paying for a pro should not be required by our class. It is not that hard to run races. Paying more for pro perpetuates the notion that only a few people are qualifed to run races. I dont buy that notion.

The wind and the race committees performance are the most important items for a great regatta.

That wasn't the problem. That was frustrated parking lot talk.

Yes, missed Todd Fedyzyn. You can't start a race, finish some competitors then finish the rest of the fleet as of the rounding of the previos mark. That was pretty crazy. If the Class needs to put something in writing to keep US Sailing judges from being not too smart

Professionals often are not what they claim to be so if knowledgeable volunteer race committees can be used, a better event is the result.
General Recalls are a complete waste of everyone's time. Appendix L, Rule 11.6 should always be used, calling over-earlies right up to the starting signal.

PRO work at this NAs was only average.

It's already high enough.

I agree with this provided we have the right person hired. Our last two "pro" PROs in Todd and Hank did not do a good job when winds got light and managing the regatta.

Professional RC is a joy and a delight to have.
Note - the entry fees are very high to begin with. I am beginning to wonder what I am buying. I think an informational article in the Flashes showing a notional budget for a fictional event might help people understand where the money goes, and how the costs add up. Give me the data and I will write it.

If thats what people want. I thought the PRO was fine this year. Difficult conditions.

sure if its only $25-35

I think the PROs the past few years have been fine, but I'm also okay with a professional PRO.

yes, competent race committees make great ragattas!!

My first choice is a qualified non-professional. If that isn't an option, the $ for professional is fine.

Hank did an excellent job at the recent Rochester NA Championship.

Absolutely not!!! PROs are bad enough without being PROfessionals. We need folks that understand the class and a class that understans PROing.

I thought we already did this?

I fail to see how this is a problem. PRO in Sheboygan (and Tawas and Rochester for WJM) were great.

If the professionalism of the RC has often been an issue in the past then it would be worthwhile to at least experiment with a professionals. I'll defer to the leaders on this one.

I have a conflict of interest here as I do race management and do NOT charge for it. Paying for an RO does not mean you will get better Race Management. I expect room and some board for running races but no pay and I am not the only one. I have done my certification to the IRO level and just ran the J22 World Championships with a great team and think we did a good job. Not one of those people in the race committee got paid. We have some great people in the class we just have to use them well

Yes Josh, I agree.

I have no problem with the RC we have used. I prefer RC from the local area that is familiar with the local area

I feel that should be up to the club sponsoring the event to arrange

I guess so...good RC is important. You need local input though at most venues which pros sometimes are hesitant to accept.

Well - it's pretty expensive already, and some non-professional PRO's can be wonderful, and vice-versa. Bad PRO's makes the entire thing a waste.

The PROs at all the recent NAs have all done a very good job as far as I am concerned.

High Communication PROs preferred

The PRO in Rochester was great. Was he a professional?

Is Tom Farquar a professional pro? If so, I believe we don't add value with a professional over a competent amateur team. Bill Clausen, for example, often provides the class with a valuable resource in conducting or assisting with the race committees.

Willing yes but not always necessary. Might further reduce bids to run a NA championship.

Top

## If fewer than 75 boats are registered, would you like to eliminate the qualifying series and everyone sail in one Fleet? - Comments

| | # of Response(s) | Response Ratio |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 58 | 55% |
| No | 39 | 37% |
| No Responses | 8 | 8% |
| Total | 105 | 100% |
| 44 Comment(s) | | |

**Answers**

I enjoy aspects of both formats, but qualifying seems like a waste of time once the full fleet is of a more manageable size. Hard to tell what the impact would be on those who tend to compete in the 2nd and 3rd fleets. I would be in favor of making the option available to an OA and plan on using the combined format, when appropriate, and reevaluate at a later date.

Perhaps if it were 60-65 I would be more in favor of one fleet. I like the allure of 'making the blue fleet'. For those that may not place, it gives a sense of accomplishment and pride.

We need to modernize our NAs. Look at other classes and compare what they do. I know many other classes that do things much differently with great participation.
I was hoping for one fleet this NAs.

Absolutely. Too many days are used/wasted on qualifying races.

Raise it to 80 and allow contestants to volunteer to smaller presidents cup, etc.

I believe a qualifying series and format of the Lightning NAs is outdated. The event cost too much time to allow for qualifiers

No question! 9+ races

I enjoy a big fleet, but 75 might be too big. 60? 61-80 have 2 fleets.

A single fleet if there are less than 50-55 boats.

It gives chances for the non professionals to win something. Also world qualifiers.

75 is on the big side for 1 fleet. Less than 50 is OK to be one

Let's try it and see if over a few years if the participation picks up. SHorter period for the NA's, all races count, with same district qualifier.Change to either 3-4 days of races. 9-11 races total. that would be great. So the only question is do we do 2 fleets, self chosen, like i think flyingscot? What if same 75 boats and 20-25 identified for the second fleet, other 50 for say championship fleet. now move to the next question

I changed my mind on this one. Having 2 or 3 fleets let everyone have a competitive and fun time.

It would have to be fewer than 60 to eliminate qualifying

Already addressed that above.

I believe it is time to eliminate the qualifying series under all circumstances.

It would put too large a premium on the start for those not able to experience large fleets on a regular basis.

Studies in the 70's and 80's determined that 30 -35 boats was the sweet spot for a championship fleet. This size is manageable, and sailors get great races. After that, giving people the chance to win/place in the green/yellow fleet provides a better experience. The S. Circuit provides the "big fleet" experience, the NAs provides competition of equal skill, and the WJMs provide age/gender equal racing. Altogether, this is a great mix of formats. We should keep all the offerings in mind.

Those blue fleeters would be sooooo upset.

Maybe the blue should top out at 40. then the remainder in 2nd fleet and 3rd fleet if necessary.

Absolutely!

Fleet size should be managed to no more than 45 boats on the line! When more than that are present it becomes more of a spectral than a boat race. We have seen it and participated in similar events and it is just toooo much to go much over forty boats on the line at one time.

60 = one fleet
75 = 2 fleets
85 = 3 fleets

I strongly oppose the elimination of the qualifying series. As an true amateur our goal is to make the blue fleet. i don't really like sailing in a 75 boat fleet. there are no lanes. most boats are stuck in the middle. i suspect elimination of the qualifying series would lead to further decreased participation.

Lots of reasons but basically I like the way it is now. I think the blue fleet lets the best sailors race in a mid size fleet

I prefer the current system where we start with 20-35 boats in each division.

75 boats is too big a fleet.

YES! The division of fleets can be morally degrading. The qualifiers can be very high level stress, depending on how seriously you take the event... and for one I do.

75 is pushing the limit for fleet management but 60 is fine.

Under 60 is the right number for no Q series.

Get rid of the Qualifier totally. Many classes are sailing with more than 75 boats.

I am not one of the top sailors and would like to have a fleet with other sailors on a similar level.

If the fleet is smaller than 50 boats, then sail everyone in the same fleet.

Self register into fleets or one fleet

Have qualifying series and divide fleet into 2 divisions.

I would say less than 60. 70 boat lines are crazy

I think 75 is too high to eliminate qualifiers. Maybe 50 or less? What are the Southern Circuit limits?

34 boats is about right for one fleet. More then that and most of the fleet can't find clear air. There are also severe log jams at marks and sportsmanship suffers.

75 seems like to big a flee to me. I think a single fleet should be limited to no more than 40.

Fewer than 50 boats should be one fleet. 50-75 should have 2 qualifying races in one day and 2 final fleets. Over 75 should have 3 qualifying races.

Target the fleet size to 35 to 50 boats. If you have 60 to 75 boats maybe have two fleets. 85 have three. Problem you run into is not knowing the number of sailors that will register. Very difficult to run a NAs with qualifying in less than 5 days.

Big fleet racing is more fun, and is something that we do not get to enjoy often enough.

In favor of eliminating qualifying series period. 75 boats in 1 race is a bit high; maybe 60 max.

However I would rather sail the Championship as separate fleet as not to eliminate the President fleet

Top

**In the event 75 or more boats are registered, would you prefer the Fleet sail in one, two or three divisions/fleets? - Comments**

| | # of Response(s) | Response Ratio |
|---|---|---|
| One Division/Fleet | 16 | 15% |
| Two Divisions/Fleets | 54 | 51% |
| Three Divisions/Fleets | 26 | 25% |
| No Responses | 9 | 9% |
| Total | 105 | 100% |

22 Comment(s)

**Answers**

I would be fine with one fleet but feel many sailors would enjoy a Presidents/Green fleet. No need anymore for a 3rd fleet

I would probably break the fleet in 2 if over 80 and into 3 if over 120

I would rather not spend racing time with a qualifying series. An opt in division should be considered.

I think if there are more than 85 boats, there should be three fleets.

Allow smaller 'b' fleet made up of contestants that volunteer. Provide a coach to the b fleet.

3 fleets if over 100 boats.

Rabbit starts? Never done one of those. A single huge line would be exciting...

...over 75, say 100 boats, want to come every year. WOuld you think that 30-35 might reasonably request to be in the Presidents fleet? I think that is quite possible.

Spread the awards and accolades around.

a champ fleet, then everyone else unless its over 100+ boats at the event

If we do not give people a way to "climb the ladder", or have a great sailing vacation with all of their friends in the tribe, they will not come year over year. I am beginning to believe that people are dropping out now, and think we have experimented too much in the last couple of years, but cannot prove this. the mix of ages faces seemed very different in Rochester, which is both good and bad. more research needed here.

In Rochester with 72 boats, 2 fleets would have been very manageable for both competitor and RC.

I would keep the blue fleet the same and then decide if the rest of the fleet should be split into two or just have the one additional fleet. If there are exactly 75 i would go with two fleets.

See above

Over 75 boast on one line would at most venues be logistically tough, so 2 fleets. Ending up yellow though can make one feel very small.

I like the traditional format.

I would say make it 40 boats max for fleets...the green and yellow fleets of 20 this year seems a little small.

34 or 35 boats is enough for one fleet.

see qualifying comments above

But if it gets above 90 you need three. The history and tradition of the Lightning class and its championships will be lost when you drop qualifying. Top 33 NA sailors and ties and last years champ (assuming he does not go through qualifying) has a lot of history and makes for a lot of excitement. Have you ever tried to start a race with 75 boats on the starting line? Not fun and you better know what you are doing. Not all PROs are capable of meeting that challenge

Two is a nice balance between an excessively large fleet, and 3 smaller fleets that are no bigger than a regional regatta. I would like the NAs to be something special; that is, different than a regional regatta.

Race management becomes easier 2 fleet qualifying series as well.

Top

### If a qualifying series is sailed, would you like your qualifying position of the series to count as a race in the final NAC scoring? - Comments

| | **# of Response(s)** | **Response Ratio** |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 36 | 34% |
| No | 61 | 58% |
| No Responses | 8 | 8% |
| Total | 105 | 100% |
| 30 Comment(s) | | |

Answers

No in general but yes in the case specifically allowed under current rules (or at least in this year's SIs). Different qualifying races vary quite a bit and the redress situation from the second race of this year's qualifier had some concerning implications about fairness of results.

I would rather see points rather than position be carried in like other classes do. See thistle and world sailing classes laser ect.

I'm actually pretty indifferent on this one.

Absolutely. I don't know of any other fleets where they throw out the qualifying series.

Allow bigger percentage into top fleet. There seems to be a few on the cusp that in my opinion were good enough to make the top fleet, a loss in the quality pf competition. A Target of 50 in the championship series would be better in my opinion if a qualifier is required.

IF we have to have a qualifying series, the scores need to account for something - so yes, the position of the qualifiers could be your score for "race 1"

1 drop with 6, 2 drops with 9+. If 9+ races are sailed you can drop 1 race from the quality and 1 from the series.

Maybe use it as a tiebreaker.

shit happens in the qualifiers - don't count them

Pros and cons to both answers, though by saying yes, at least you make qualifying count towards your final score, but I think the dynamics of racing would change and not neccesarily for the better. Saying no, furthers those comments of waisting two or three days just to get into final fleet placement.

Starting fresh for the championship in division is the way to go, after the competition has been divided up. For people not competing for the Blue fleet the qualifying races might be too cut throat.

I would like ALL qualifying races to count.

I do not favor this approach.

Only to make a 3 race score. The current system is fine.

No Strong Opinion ether way

I like starting the championship series with a clean slate. We drive tremendous distances to get to these events, and sometimes need more time than is available to adjust to a new place/conditions. If something goes wrong in qualifying, at least we have a clean start at a trophy in the championship events. Bottom line - To keep people racing, they need to always have a fair chance to win.

I think that racing should count somehow.

Qualifiers should be counted somehow towards the final results.

reseting after the qualifiying favors the amatuers, which most of us are.

we aren't the thistles. stop trying to change how we are set up.

I feel you qualify then race in the finals. You never know what can happen in the qualifying series that may not be your fault. I know that can happen any time but I feel it is more likely with the mixed level of sailors. I also think there is less pressure and more comradery. People also get the chance to learn the area and get their boat and team up to speed.

This needs a "don't know" category. It would be interesting to see how this might have impacted past results, and how the scoring would be set in Presidents and Governors Cup divisions

hmmmmm, tough one. How about yes, but only your best scores.

assumes that the seeding system is good.

Want people to take risks to make Blue. Plus, you don't see everyone, and the flights are never even.

Starting with a fresh scoreline after the qualifying series is appropriate.

sure lets try it and see how it goes!

No way. Qualifying races are not equal and would be totally unfair. Conditions vary between races. This is a really bad idea. This would make me less likely to attend.

There may be an inequity in the level of competition within the qualifying fleets, especially if some top competitors sit out the last race after securing their place in the blue fleet.

Once the fleet is establish by way of the qualifying serias everyone deserves a chance to win the Series

Top

## What type of race courses would you prefer to see sailed at the North American Championships? - Comments

| **Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.** | **Most Desired**<br>**1** | **2** | **3** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Windward/Leeward | 67<br>74% | 17<br>18% | 7<br>8% |
| Olympic or Triangle Courses | 4<br>4% | 14<br>15% | 73<br>81% |
| Mixture of courses listed above | 20<br>22% | 60<br>66% | 11<br>12% |

32 Comment(s)

Answers

W/L or O. Not triangle. What about a trapezoid?

Can we do an inner-outer loop for qualifying? Use in I/O trapezoid with only two starts up to 120 boats and give a 10min window between starts. The wind-shadow made starting at an end far more advantaged in later starts.

I only ranked the Olympic and mixture because I had to.

i think we should do at least two races with reaching at each event.

Linking this question to a paid PRO is important. Square courses are important or windward/leewards are a great test of skill.

Bring back reaching only in 15-22, it's a lost art and skill! No light air parades here pls.

How about a trapezoid? Keeps clearer air/separation between fleets and allows the boats to move with some reach legs, and doesn't eliminate the tactics of a dead downwind.

triangles are just a parade it's hard to pass anyone on a reach.

the boat was designed to reach. W/L favor lighter teams which makes it tough on full grown men to be competitive.

If you are a 195lb guy you need two 150 lbs people to sail with - not easy to find

1 only. If we have square courses, downwind on windward/leewards courses are ok.

Would prefer all windward/ leeward

It is a mistake that we don't sail reaches in heavy air. The boats are so exciting to sail in those conditions. It is costing us members because other boats are considered "more exciting"
. This question is asked poorly. I prefer a mixture of courses. There is no correct applicable 2nd and 3rd choice, as they are both part of a "mixture of courses listed above".

Windward/Leeward only please!

We NEED to sail Triangles again in order to have the boat sail to its full potential and to get crew weights in line.

I most prefer windward/leeward with upwind finishes, and think we are using too many downwind finish courses. This year, someone suggested setting a second course just upwind of the Race 1 finish so that the second race could start quickly, when a fleet finished the first one. This is a very interesting idea when the sailing area supports it.
Broad reaches (not beam or tight ones) could give a "reaching experience" without requiring people to bulk up crews. Family Teams matter to our future.

Ewwww

I really enjoy windward/leeward courses.

Courses should be selected appropriate to the conditions.
A mixture is always good!

Mostly W/L, but a small percentage Olympic.

If you are going to run triangle courses, run them in reverse order. That way you get the tactical down wind first and then you have the fun reach leg second, when it isn't as crucial. we always remember the great times and never the bad. those reaches could be brutal train rides often.

Triangles and olympic courses are cool

Olympic and triangle courses should be run only when there is a chance to plane on the reaches. Otherwise the reaches are a march.
If we go back to any sort of triangles we will mess with the current sex and age range for the boat. The reason the boat is successful now is because it has become much friendlier to youth and females as you do not need to be a brute to get it around the triangles we used to do. I can sail with lesss experienced crew because I can choose when I gybe or how I do it. Also it is easier to control the boat with less strength on runs vs reaches.

We need to reincorporate reaches if we ever want to plane again. Reaches help with crew weight "problem".

Windward leewards

W/L only, and that's not even a question

No experience outside of windward/leeward

Olympic or Triangle Courses are of zero interest and frankly serve little purpose in competition. Demonstration maybe. If I knew there were to be Olympic or Triangle Courses it would likely influence me not to attend.

No preference.

Mix of courses

There are good reasons that racing has migrated to windward/ leeward in general.

Triangle courses often become difficult for the race committee when wind shifts occur. Especially if running 2 or three fleets on the same course. How about (windward mark,leeward mark,windward mark,gybe mark,finish)?

Top

## If you could change anything about the North American Championships what would it be? - Responses

**Answers-69**

Changes I would make:
1 or 2 fleets max. If qualifiers, either carry all races forward or count finish position as your first NAC race. 3 or 4 race days MAX. Need to shorten the overall regatta. It's too long. 9 or 10 race series. Currently we sail 10 races of which count 5 over a week of sailing. That's a formula that no longer works.
Change the documents that govern the NA's so we don't need to re-visit every year.

Sail more races is my preference. I do think waiting for reasonable wind was the right call so this is not a criticism of this year's RC. I think having to come in to close the qualifiers lost us 1-2 races in great breeze (I know this is very specific, but the format does structurally restrict the RC).

More racing that carries to the end of the week.

Revisit qualification series. Possibly not have it if the fleet size is smaller

The overall length of the event. It would be much more appealing to me if it were one day shorter. Maybe do away with the practice race day?

Get more boats there!

Better race management. Overall, The PRO did a great job, but Monday was a really bad day for him. First, he did not take into account the choke point of two hoists and 66 boats in a rush after the rain storm. He was at his club; he should have known. I spent thousands and drove 24 hrs to reach the first qualifier with only 3 minutes left in the sequence. My boat was the farthest from the hoists, and the only way we could have been on the line any sooner was to go out an launch my boat in the pouring rain. When we radioed the PRO of our plight, he was totally indifferent. Then there was the second Blue Fleet qualifier. The race should have been abandoned on the first windward leg, but, no, he waited until some boats finished,creating a nightmare, and he still didn't get the fleet off the lake before the squall that fortunately only resulted in a single broken mast.
If a professional PRO would solve stuff like that, then yeah, I'd pay extra.

An emphasis on bringing in top-tiered PROs and judges. I imagine this adds complexity due to cost, but for this type of event, it would behoove the class to have the best of the best - not just one or two good ones.

Get rid of qualifiers or sail first 3 races with entire fleet and then break fleets up into the three fleets. This way there is not the pressure for the race commitee to get the qualifiers in poor conditions. This year it was questionable in my point of view if there was enough breeze to actually start and complete qualifier races. In this technology advance time we can sail one fleets of 100 boats. Hank did J22 Worlds 130 boats 1fleet. It is not difficult to set a line and course with gps. Get rid of the Districts races. This may bring in more boats for NAs. This year I had a family commitment during Districts. I paid the reg fee included in it were meals that we never eaten added $ with hotel etc. Perhaps we pay an entry fee for the racing if we still need to reg for Districts. I don't quite understand how Districts at large qualify for NAs. Do they have to pay an extra fee to go to NAs ? By cutting qualifiers put day off between Masters-NAs. It was tough doing both.

Eliminate qualifying series and sail more championship days.
Consider making the Presidents Cup a "volunteer" event. People register for Presidents Cup or NA's. Other classed do this.

Overlap a weekend. Measurement may not be necessary if the boat has measured in before.

Keep the spectator boats the same, allow coach boats for b fleet.

Slightly shorter event

Focus on social aspects. This year sucked as we were out too early (thanks meeting and lack of close housing) and back soon after racing. It was exhausting and not fun.

No qualifiers

I think that sailing and getting all races in takes precedence over any and all social or class events scheduled. We should do our best to remove any wording in the bylaws that back us into a corner for tricky events.

Depends on the year. The on-shore aspects are crucial to me . . convenient and safe parking, good socializing spaces, convenient housing are key factors.

On the coast in the summer- some breeze would be fantastic

Add Yoga classes in the am before continental breakfast.

I would have a better system in place for helping younger and financially strapped people be able to participate. The discount in place right now is a good idea but it's a refund of money. I f they don't have enough to begin with but can pay the discounted price there should be something in place where they can do that. Another boat could sponsor them for the extra portion which gives others a chance to show they want the fleet to expand or there could be a fund for the under 30's that would help cut costs for them. Promoting this and advertising the discounted prices may help to expand the younger participation in the class.
I would also like to see some more recognition on the professional vs. regular sailor front. It's a hard competition and it may be good to recognize the accomplishments of those that can't be on a boat every day, week, or month.

maximum 2 days of qualifing

Starts to be no earlier than 11:00, make sure people enjoy the event and not be so stressed about being so rushed. This past event left very little time to enjoy getting together with fellow sailors because housing was more than 20min away.

We need to change a little with changing demographics and regatta styles.Shorten the total racing to 4 days max, and make all the races count. pretty simple.

There should be Corinthian team, master, grand master recognition on at least the score sheet.

The entry fee is pretty steep considering the limited number of dinners provided. I think that Cedar Point provided more good quality meals for the same $500 entry fee.
I feel like we competitors are helping the host club pay their taxes.

If I haven't made it clear please SHORTEN the event. Especially for San Diego. People want to go to California, but they likely don't want to take 2 weeks off to do one for sight seeing and one for sailing.

Eliminate the qualifying series.
It has outlived its usefulness. And now it seems a foolish
use of time that is in ever more short supply.

Other than the abandonment then the un abandonment and unannounced shortened course: 1.Get better US Sailing Judges (if there is such a thing) I guess we HAVE to have them. Maybe they are good to have for a Protest Committee. Leave them on land. It is expensive to have them on the water, cost of the boat, food and drinks. Those that can do, those that can't Judge. A good race committee doesn't need Judges in the way. Put Todd on the payroll. The R/C talked so much I turned off the radio
2.Cheaper entry fee. Less frills. No breakfast unless sponsored. I think most people stay at a hotel that has breakfast.
3.Keg beer available after racing. Not 5:30. That is why 3 people sail a Lightning. One holds the boat, 1 gets the trailer and 1 goes for the beer!
4.Enjoyed the week, compliments to RYC, staff and volunteers, Laura and the ILCA Committee's that made the NA's happen.

Dont overlap the last day of the WJMs with the Championships

General Recalls are a complete waste of everyone's time. Appendix L, Rule 11.6 should always be used, calling over-earlies right up to the starting signal. Calling from both ends and perhaps a boat to windward of the line for sighting hidden over-earlies would catch most of the problem boats. In addition, if a designated person on each of those boats actually pointed at over early boats, it would be quite easy for all involved to identify the over-earlies before the start.
When a boat who is over before the start is called, they will back up, helping hold the pack back, but also, those near that called boat will also stop pushing forward.
This system was used at an NA's at Cedar Point YC in the mid 80-90's and I still think it the best RC work I have ever seen.
Having to automatically resort to the Black Flag and Over Early Starting Penalties is extremely oppressive, and regrettably simply bad RC work.
This system is often used in 100 plus boat Opti regattas and is quite successful.

Site Selection and timing of event. Keep the regattas in early to mid August so college and high school students can attend, and sail in areas where there are larger nearby populations of boats so that people are more likely to attend.
Go back to Tom's River NJ - that was the best sailing NA's that I have ever sailed. Conditions were awesome, club was welcoming and RC work was great.

Eliminating the Qualifying Series

This is our premiere regatta. not much needs to be changed but venue selection and time are crucial.

1. Stop experimenting! I think people are getting tired of constant change.
2. Market the complete Lightning experience, not just the national championships. As a business, we need to sell a complete experience (family sailing, local racing, district level racing, big fleets (S Circuit), managed fleets (WJMs) and national championships in order to keep the entire organization healthy. Remember that people have many options, and the value we provide has to exceed the effort to be involved.
3. Younger, college coached teams are lighter, highly skilled, and more athletic. This is a difficult combination for working adult sailors to compete against. We need to find ways to bring what the kids have learned to the adults that did not get it in college, or the adults will stop supporting the class, and it could die. Not sure how to mold this into the NAs (may not be possible), but I am hearing this concern from many people this year.

I generally have a great time

For the qualifying to count in some manner.
The debrief sessions are Great! Getting different perspectives from different levels of sailors and the different fleets was well done. keep mixing up the perspectives, etc. Good stuff.

I think it's a great event as is, but if the format were to change I think it would generally be a good thing.

Allow for more flexibility to change the qualifying series or eliminate it altogether dependent on weather and ability to get racing off. Have the option for a competitors vote or just leave the decisions to the organizing authority and class representatives.

Keep it a season ending culminating regatta.

Counting the qualifiers towards final results!

I think the format is really great. I like it best in more traditional venues.

If it could be 10 degrees cooler I could take most anything......

Went really well and was alot of fun!

I'm not sure that this ping-ponging between traditional 5-day event and the combined 3-day event is a good thing.

No qualifying series.

No qualifiers - everyone gets to race against the pros for the entire event, and not just during the q races. No more than 2 races per day unless you have floating port-a-potties!

Make sure we get people to mix more and get to know others better via a variety of ways.  Not a great creative myself but lets try more things to get people mixing and getting to know one another.

Having a three day regatta.

Olympic or triangle courses used sometime, hosted at venues that can clearly host 60+ boats (very skeptical about Wrightsville after ACCs, 40 was too much for that facility)

Eliminate the requirement that you must sail/register for your District Champs. This would increase NAs participation levels.

No measurement or qualifying

Shorten the. Umber of days.

Fewer days.

Figure out a way to keep the Blue Fleet from catching/passing through the Yellow Fleet.

For me to be there more often!

I like venues that don't require you to sail long distances to get out to the race course.

Focus on off-the-water activities and team-building

The event should be held when the kids are not in school.

I have had a great time at all of the events I have attended since 1977.

I really like having masters, juniors, women's at a different time from NAs.

More races per day and/or start racing on Saturday.

The Youth event needs more "mandatory" social events to get the kids together.  It seems clique-ish. I have liked the recent NAs I've been to.

As originally spelled out nothing.  Once we got over the "follow the leader" problem with the double triangle and went to windward leeward courses it makes for great sailing and racing.  Running more than 2 races per day also takes a toll on the competitors as we get older.  Personally, I think the Masters was ruined when we got away from a 3 race championship over a three day period.

I know that it takes lots of money to run the event but Cost of entry is getting up there.

Require top sailors to hold debrief sessions. Continue to recognize family teams.

Cost

Not a thing

To Win! Thanks for this effort to make the NA's better for all.  This is another example of how the Lightning Class shines!

I would start later the races, at 12:00, weather permitting.

Top

**I would be more likely to participate (as either skipper if applicable, crew or in a support position) in the Women's, Junior or Master North American Championships if:  - Other responses**

| | # of Response(s) | Response Ratio |
|---|---|---|
| they were held back to back in a similar location with the regular NAC. | 45 | 43% |
| they were held at a different time separate from the NAC. | 18 | 17% |
| non applicable to me at this time | 26 | 25% |
| Other | 6 | 6% |
| No Responses | 10 | 9% |
| Total | 105 | 100% |
| 27 Comment(s) | | |

**Answer**

women's separate from MJs

location

do not know yet

I don't have the time to do both (not that I am your target market here)

Sailing events back to back is too taxing for me.

No preference.

At this point in time, I don't see myself traveling to a separate location at a different time, especially during an already busy time of year for sailing. However, I do see both sides. I think having it coincide with the NAC will bring the most amount of boats because it offers a better opportunity for borrowing. But, I get that it's a lot of time off in a row - making it harder for people to do both.

Even at a different venue would be fine. It's hard to ask for that much time off work

I have done it both ways and I enjoyed the wjm as a stand alone event.

I know that there are a lot of women who also sail masters and juniors and it may be good to hold them at a separate time to increase the numbers in the women's fleet.

I did both this year. It was a real grind sailing 9 days in a row.

Stating the obvious, this is a lot for one facility to take on. I don't want to do masters and then NAs the following week. It seems like we had plenty of participation last year at Tawas when they were held at two different locations

My participation is venue/ timing driven. The physical connection of the two regattas has no Impact.

2 weeks off to do both. Had a great time at Metedeconk / Toms River but it was a stretch to be away from work. Maybe I need to learn to take more time off work!

Currently, I much prefer the format where there is a day in-between the events.
Remember - We do not need everyone in the ILCA to go to the Circuit, AND the WJMs, AND the NAs to have a fantastic class. Our brand is the complete package/experience. Fleet/District events might even matter more to our growth.

2 weeks vacation is hard

Another toughie. In great locations i.e. RYC, BCC it is advantageous to have all generations together and it is a special time. Lack of a lay day between in Rochester was a big MINUS.

I do not have a opinion at this time. I do not have enough personal info to make a recommendation.

I think back to back works best in general, but a separate event also can work well (Tawas). I suspect that event planning would be smoother for a combined event. I might be more likely to attend both events if they weren't back to back, though.

I am a master at 66 and never made the Masters (worlds or NAC) because if I have the time and crew I will go to the open regatta. when I get to my 70's maybe that will change but not yet. I keep trying to get my crew to do the Women's and have almost gotten them to go once or twice but not yet.

The Junior event need to be hosted in late July or August. It depends on if it works well for the NAs. When the NAs were held in San Diego, there were virtually no participation in the Juniors. Too far for them the travel...not enough locally. That Junior event should have been help out east. The NAs in San Diego was great. I will do it again in a heart beat in 2018

I think back-to back is best

Shorter Races, more per day, one day shorter regatta

It's virtually impossible to take the 12 days required to do both events.

I already would be going. One less trip i guess.

Have the WJMs at the same time as the NAC's (like in St. Pete)

It depends

**Thank you to those who participated in the survey!**