

INTERNATIONAL HOBIE CLASS ASSOCIATION

October 15, 2003

Rich McVeigh, Chairman, North American Hobie Class Association
14813 Fireside Drive
Silver Springs, MD 20905-5542
USA

Dear Rich McVeigh,

It has come to our attention that the NAHCA is allowing open class multi-hull racing at regattas that are designated for Hobies. Please be advised that this practice is in complete violation of the goals, purposes and intent of the IHCA as defined in the IHCA constitution and rules book. As you know, the NAHCA is a region of the IHCA and is bound by the international association's constitution, bylaws, rules and ISAF contract. Should the NAHCA wish to allow open class racing, it would have to make a submission to the IHCA requesting a change of the constitution and rules. Until such a submission is approved by both IHCA and ISAF, the NAHCA is hereby given notice that open class multi-hull racing at Hobie regattas must cease.

The current situation, as it has been presented to the IHCA executive, arose about a decade ago out of an annual general meeting of the NAHCA where members proposed a motion to allow open class racing at Hobie regattas. The NAHCA's chairman at the time assured the membership that approval of open class racing had been obtained from the IHCA. A review of IHCA records has shown that no such approval was ever granted, and in fact was never even requested. Had the approval been requested, the IHCA would most likely have denied it for many reasons, not the least of which is we are partially funded and strongly supported by the Hobie Cat manufacturers. In the absence at the AGM of accurate information regarding IHCA approval, it became obvious that the motion would carry, so some of the more traditional class members insisted on a set of criteria, which were adopted, including that no open class member could become an officer of a fleet, division or region.

Since this time some Hobie regattas have included open class racing, mostly in Michigan, Florida and a few other places on the east coast. The practice has diminished Hobie classes throughout the east, particularly in Divisions 8 and 10. In both divisions Hobie fleets were infiltrated by open class members who eventually became officers contrary to the NAHCA's criteria described above--and took over the administration of these fleets. In some cases they dissolved the Hobie fleets to create new multi-hull associations composed of open class fleets. There is a strong indication that this practice is starting to spread to other divisions as well, and in the interests of our members we feel strongly about stopping it.

We fully understand that after 10 years of allowing open class racing at Hobie regattas it may be extremely difficult for the NAHCA to implement this directive to stop the practice. Recognizing the far reaching and immediate negative results the implementation will no doubt have for your organization, we request that you develop a plan for meeting this directive and submit it to the IHCA Executive Director by December 31, 2003.

The NAHCA phase out plan must include several IHCA imposed conditions, specifically; The plan must terminate by December 31, 2004.

- Open Class boats permitted to participate under a phase out program will be restricted only to boats that have previously participated in a Hobie event prior to August 1, 2003 i.e Only Skipper and boat combinations that were raced in Hobie events prior to August 1, 2003 will be permitted to race in any 2004 Hobie event.
- No new Open Class boats will be permitted to participate.
- Skippers of all Open Class boats eligible and desiring to participate in this phase out program will be required to obtain IHCA or Regional Annual Membership for 2004.

This has been a very difficult decision, but we are bound by the constitution, rules and the ISAF contract. There is no other choice. It is now a matter of when and how you implement this directive. Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Paul Ulibarri, IHCA President
Lori Mohny, IHCA Vice President
Brian Phipps, IHCA Vice President
David Brookes, IHCA Vice President and Executive Director