

2016 J/109 Class Officers

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January 25, 2016

Dear North American J/109 Class Association Members and J/109 Owners,

2015 was another good year for the J/109 Class - some highlights include

- Class Association membership has increased each of the last three years—45 in 2013; 57 in 2014 and 74 as of December 31, 2015
- Participation in major J/109 regattas has increased each of the last three years—for our North American Championships, there were 10 boats in 2013, 17 boats in 2014 and 24 boats in 2015
- The J/109 website (<http://www.j109.org>) has been totally overhauled by our hard working Treasurer Bill Kneller to make it more useful, more informative and easier to navigate for all J/109 owners and sailors, including those who are not regular racers

Increased regatta participation has made the racing more fun. Congratulations to the 2015 winners of our major regattas:

- 2015 North American Championships winner: Caminos
- 2015 East Coast Championships winner: Zig Zag
- 2015 East Coast Regatta Series winner: Rush

2016 J/109 Major Regattas

The complete schedule will appear on the J/109 website and be updated regularly as events are added and regatta documents are posted by the host organizations. If there is a regatta planned that does not appear on the website, please let us know, so we can help spread the word. Here is an overview of the major J/109 events for 2016:

- **J/109 North American Championships**—July 12-16 in Newport RI, as part of New York YC Race Week at Newport
- **J/109 East Coast Championships**—September 24-25 and October 1-2, as part of American Yacht Club Fall Series
- **J/109 East Coast Regatta Series**—Annapolis NOOD (April 29-May 1); Blue Water Regatta (August 6-7); New England J/Fest (August 13-14); and American Yacht Club Fall Series (September 24-25 and October 1-2)

If you are interested in chartering a J109 for the North Americans please let the board know (our J109 comrades in Europe do a lot of chartering for their regattas). There have been owners willing to lend their boats in prior years but I believe that so far nobody has actually done this for a major regatta. It is fairly common in Europe. The borrower would probably bring their own sails and the owner/lender might join

the team for the regatta. Payment can be a good race bottom job and the class might be able to pay for insurance.

2015 Class Rule Changes

During 2015, the Class approved two rules changes designed to recognize current sail trimming practices and promote safety, without compromising the goal of maintaining strict one design racing:

1) **An in-hauler system for jib sheet aft of the mast is now allowed** (revised rule 4.3.7) You can bolt in place a block and tackle inhauler system. There are 2 benefits to this rule change. First, you will not shred your mast boot by inhauling with the lazy sheet. Second, this should make racing more even. Inhauling with the weather sheet is tricky and many boats are not inhauling in the conditions where it is a benefit, resulting in speed differences between J109s. There is no consensus yet on how to install a system. I suggest you ask your sailmaker. Unfortunately this modification will cost a bit of money and you should probably have a small plate or similar re-enforcement used underneath where you fasten the first load point. As people install inhaulers it would be nice to post photos on the class website.

2) **If the governing authority of a race, or if the J109 fleet allows it, you can install a bobstay between the bow and the outboard end of the spinnaker pole** (new rule 4.3.16) This will not be allowed for the North Americans, East Coast Championship or Regatta series this year, but it can be allowed for other races/regattas by the race organizers or the local J109 fleet authority. A Bobstay will reduce sprit flexing. This is a small advantage for normal windward/leeward racing as energy is not be lost every time the sprit flexes. The main advantage is for distance racing as a bobstay should reduce the chances of a sprit breaking under the sort of high loads that a code zero will create. The Bobstay is just a spectra line from the end of the sprit to the knuckle of the bow. At the knuckle you and either run the line through the anchor drain hole(s) or drill a new hole. (and for avoidance of doubt, a boat with a hole in the knuckle for a bobstay which is racing in a race that does not permit bobstays cannot be protested for having a hole in the knuckle of hers bow).

http://j109.org/docs/j109_class_rules_revised_1_jan_2016.pdf

Reorganization of Fleets to Help Expand Participation

The J/109 Class was organized with a number of *Fleets* based on the distribution of boats early in early 2000's. As time progressed, boats migrated to areas outside the original fleet structure. Examples of boats located with "no home" include

- Most of Canada
- Eastern US outside of New England, Long Island Sound, New Jersey & Chesapeake Bay
- US inland lakes
- Europe outside of UK & Ireland, France, the Mediterranean, Luxembourg, Netherlands & Belgium
- Hawaii, the Western Pacific and Australia

During the 2015 annual meeting, a proposal was made to reorganize the fleets so that all boats no matter where located would have a home. This could help promote J/109 participation in regional sailing while connecting boat owners for racing, cruising and social events.

Subsequent to the meeting, comments from the existing Fleet Captains were provided and the new Fleet organization was created. The new Fleet boundaries closely resemble the old structure but are

expanded to encompass all areas resulting in a few boats being added to many of the old fleets. The new Fleet structure is outlined on the class website and may be viewed by mousing over *Class*, then clicking on *Fleets*. Fleet Captains are listed, with a few vacancies left to fill. If you are located in a Fleet with a vacancy, please consider taking on this role to help get things organized.

All boat owners are now assigned to a fleet. You may see your fleet assignment on the class website under the J/109 boat list by mousing over *Class* and clicking on *Boat List*. Those who are current year Class members may see additional information including owners names and email addresses when they are logged in to the class website by mousing over *Members* and clicking on *Boat & Owners List*

J/109 Website Overhaul

The new J/109 website went live in March 2015 and was rolled out to provide more information for owners and class members. Those familiar with the previous class website will notice the new site has better organized information with a more intuitive menu. It contains a full featured calendar and prominently displays announcements. J/109 videos have been added. Technical content has been augmented with to include J/Boats documents, manuals and drawings for equipment installed on the boat. The site also includes tuning guides and performance tips.

There is an improved boat & member list only available to members logged in. When you update your information profile you may now include a mobile number, US Sailing number and ISAF number. These will help regatta organizing, and those who enter their US Sailing number are provided a direct link to their US Sailing profile where US Sailing membership may be renewed at a 20% discount through the J/109 Member Partner Program.

The most recent website update significantly streamlined the Sail Royalty Tag registration system. Sailmakers order tags online, and then those sails that are sold with sail tags have measurements entered and certified by the measurer online – no more scanning paper forms. Automatic email notification is provided to the sailmaker and sail owner when the measurements are approved. The sail registration number is then listed in the sail tag list on the class website. Certificates may be viewed and printed directly by clicking on the registration number. To view the sail tag list on the website, mouse over *Members* and click on *Sail Tag List*.

There are more updates planned, including simplifying the login for the J/109 forum – currently a separate login is required. If you have ideas to improve the website, please send them to treasurer@j109.org for consideration.

J109 Surveys

There have been a few surveys sent out of over past year and you will probably see more. The main focus of these is to try to find consensus ways to make J109 class racing less of a hassle and less intimidating for boats that have not done one design racing yet. Any ideas in that regard are very welcome.

Jim Vos

J/109 Class Association President