

WEB SERVER OUTAGE

The Facts

The SOL web server was out of action from 00:59 until 08:09 UTC on 21st April 2019 during which time pre-set delayed commands (DCs) were implemented on each yacht but skippers were unable otherwise to access and control their yachts.

Two races were affected.

Boston to Plymouth Ocean Championship race of 2895 nm with rankings for OCCH-OCQ2-SUPERSOL-SYC and the SMPF award.

Hong Kong to Puerto Galera SYC Series Championship race of 650 nm with rankings for SYCCH-SYCQ2-SUPERSOL-SYC.

Protests or Requests for Redress

No Protests or Requests for Redress have been received by Sailonline Race Committee ('SRC') to date from participating skippers in either race. This may have been due to an In-Race message that *"SRC will now consider what action, if any, will be taken in relation to our race results."*

Some Race Chat was observed in the Puerto Galera race on the Sunday afternoon that the server outage had affected places in the top ten finishers. Manual alteration to finishing positions 1 and 2 was mooted in the chat but any change to the remaining results for any or all of the finishers was not proposed.

SRC Action

The SRC Chairman referred the situation to SRC seeking their response. The Chairman declared an interest as his yacht was in the top group for the Galera race and behind the top group for the Plymouth race. In addition the comments in Race Chat were drawn to the attention of SRC by the Chairman.

These communications were copied to Operations ('OPS') and the Co-Ordinator (COORD).

SRC Response

SRC One reply was received from a member of SRC, leaving the decision in respect of both races to the Chairman. A further response was received suggesting a manual amendment of results for the top two places on a fleet result as at 00:59. Collectively this would not rectify the situation for the whole fleet.

OPS OPS considered that the result and rankings should stand for the Plymouth race.

OPS considered that the result for the Galera race should stand but not the four rankings.

COORD COORD recommended that the results and rankings for the Plymouth race be allowed to stand as it was claimed that the “...rankings of the finish are ...as they have been for the last 5 days in the race.”

COORD considered that no manual redress should or could be applied to the Galera race. However he recommended that the result should stand but not the rankings. In consequence COORD recommended that the SYQ2 series be reduced to 2 results from 2 races, that the SYC Championship be reduced from 12 races to 11 races with 2 discards and that the SUPERSOL Championship be reduced from 48 races to 47 races with 6 discards. COORD did not mention the Sailonline Membership Paid Forward (‘SMPF’) award associated with this race.

SRC Decision

“SRC accepts that skippers were unreasonably prevented from controlling their yachts in each race (Plymouth and Galera) for the seven hours that the web server was out of action.

SRC accepts that this lack of access has compromised the finishing positions of many yachts in the Galera race in a manner that cannot be rectified and that some yachts in the Plymouth race may also have been compromised.

Accordingly SRC, to whom the decision falls, concludes that the actual finishing positions of the yachts in each race shall stand as they finished - for historic purposes only - but that no PRIZES (Cups, Medals or SMPF) for these races or POINTS for any SERIES (OCCH, OCQ2, SUPERSOL, SYCCH. SYCQ2, SYC) associated with these races shall be awarded as a result of the disruption to these two races.

In addition SRC accepts that it is unable to reschedule these races or to replace them and that consequently the associated Series (OCCH, OCQ2, SUPERSOL, SYCCH. SYCQ2) will have to be truncated as noted above with SUPERSOL reduced to 46 races with 6 discards. The re-allocation of the SMPF award to another race is left to the COORD.

Regrettable it may be, but SRC does not accept that it should be tasked to differentiate as to when a substantial disruption of service from the SOL web server is or is not material to any yacht’s finishing position in a race such that a disrupted race could be allowed to stand for Prizes, Points or Awards. This totally subjective decision would set a precedent that this SRC is not prepared to establish as it is considered indefensible.”

Richard Hardcastle
Chairman - SRC