

**NORTH AMERICAN CRUISER ASSOCIATION**  
**RECOMMENDED PREDICTED LOG CONTEST RULES**

**ADOPTED AUGUST 1980**

**AS AMENDED AUGUST 2012**

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### INTRODUCTION

A Predicted Log (Cruiser Navigation) contest tests the power cruiser skipper's ability to precisely navigate his vessel over a predetermined course. The contestant predicts the time it will take his cruiser to complete each of a number of legs comprising a given course. He then runs the course without benefit of a timepiece and other specified equipment. The contestant with the lowest percentage of error is the winner of the contest.

Contestants use published information such as charts, light lists, tide and current tables, and exercise their skills by minor modification of heading and speed to adjust for disturbing factors such as wind, waves, current, course changes for safety reasons, and navigational errors. Such skills exemplify those needed in actual navigational situations such as timing a vessel's arrival at a narrows or entrance bar at the time of slack water.

This 2012 revision of the NACA Rule Book seeks to bring log racing out of the "horse-and-buggy" era and into the twenty-first century by conditionally permitting the use of the modern electronic navigation suite typically found on today's power cruisers.

Traditionally contestants were limited to using only tachometer and compass. More recently with the development of navigational tools such as electronic chart displays and GPS, some NACA member associations have begun variably permitting use of these tools to better challenge navigational skills. NACA encourages Associations to experiment with variations in the Rules and allowed equipment so that the skipper-navigator contestants may more fully develop their skills in all aspects concerning cruiser navigation. Mastering the use of more advanced onboard navigational equipment is an important skill for today's cruiser navigator.

Paper charts are expensive and difficult to obtain while digital raster and vector US charts are readily available at no charge on the internet. Use of chart plotters is in line with current navigational standards and recommended by NACA. Display of vessel position on the chart plotter may or may not be permitted as specified in the contest instructions.

Typically in the past, contestants were not permitted to know their actual times at checkpoints until the contest was finished. In the real world a navigator uses all information available to him. A good test of a navigator's skill is his ability to interpret recent data and selectively apply it to the present navigational situation. NACA encourages Associations to routinely run contests that provide for an Open Log.

## **PART I – DEFINITIONS & REQUIREMENTS**

1. The acronym "NACA" used in these rules refers to the North American Cruiser Association. The term "regional association" used in these rules refers to formal organizations of member club(s) in a particular geographic area (i.e. International Power Boat Association, San Diego Cruiser Association, St. Petersburg Yacht Club)
2. The use of "shall" or "must" in these rules means that compliance is mandatory unless waived by the contest instructions, and a violation shall result in a penalty or disqualification as provided in the rules.
3. A regional association may adopt these rules in whole or in part or may use any other contest rules. However, the regional association must conform to the NACA requirements for NACA scoring and sanctioning in order for the contestants to be scored for NACA points.
4. The use of the word "he/his" shall be construed to refer equally to both genders without prejudice.
5. Use of the word "cruiser" shall refer to a power cruiser, either inboard or outboard. Sailboats that satisfy the requirements for inboard or outboard cruisers are included.
6. Inboard Cruisers - Minimum Requirements
  - a. Nineteen-feet in length.
  - b. Two berths, head, sink, icebox or refrigerator, and stove.
  - c. One inboard engine.
  - d. Meet the requirements of the United States Coast Guard for cruising local waters.
7. Outboard Cruisers-Minimum Requirements
  - a. Sixteen-feet in length.
  - b. Sleeping, Sanitary and cooking facilities for two persons.
  - c. One outboard engine.
  - d. Meet the requirements of the United States Coast Guard for cruising local waters.
8. Equipment. During a contest each competing cruiser shall have on board the equipment required by law and the Contest Committee. Contest numbers approximately 14 inches high, or any identifying number authorized by an association shall be affixed to the cruiser so as to be plainly visible from port and starboard.
9. Crew. During the contest, each competing cruiser shall have on board at least one person in addition to the contestant competent to operate the vessel.
10. Eligibility. To be eligible to enter a contest:
  - a. A cruiser must conform with the requirements in paragraphs 6 or 7 above and with such additional requirements as may be established by the Contest Committee.
  - b. A contestant must meet the membership requirements of the regional association or club. Non-member contestants shall be subject to such special rules as may be established by the Contest Committee or regional association.
11. Inspection. A cruiser must be made available prior to the contest for inspection if so requested by the committee.

## **PART II - AUTHORITY & RESPONSIBILITY**

1. NACA establishes and publishes the Recommended Predicted Log Contest Rules, provides a point scoring service for NACA trophies, and publishes results in the Skipper's Log.
2. Regional associations establish policies and rules governing local contests, authorize, schedule, sanction all contests in their geographic area, resolve any protests or appeals, provide a point scoring service for regional trophies, and forward the contest scoring reports to NACA.
3. Club or Group. The individual club or group sponsors each contest, designates the Contest Committee, and makes facilities available for the contest.
4. Contest Committee is responsible for planning and conducting the contest. All matters relating to the contest shall be subject to the Contest Committee's approval and control, and all questions and disputes shall be referred to it for its decision.
5. Contest Chairman shall be responsible for the contest as a whole and for the proper performance of the Contest Committee.
6. Contest Scorer shall be responsible for scoring the contestant logs.
7. Observer assigned to a contestant's cruiser is responsible for recording actual times at checkpoints, passage side and distance, and noting any rule infractions.

## **PART III - MEMBERSHIP & SANCTION**

1. Membership. A regional association's membership in NACA is required for the members of the regional association to participate in NACA point scoring and compete for NACA trophies. A club's, group's or individual's membership in the regional association shall be at the discretion of the regional organization.
2. Regional association Sanction. A regional association must sanction a contest in order that it be run under its aegis and for NACA approval.
3. NACA approval of a contest is for the purpose of NACA point scoring and trophies only. Scores reported to NACA are considered final and no appeal or protest will be heard or handled by NACA. A contest shall not be scored for NACA points unless the requirements of Part IV. 2.c. are met.

## **PART IV – CONTEST INSTRUCTIONS & COURSE**

1. Contest Instructions shall be prepared by the Contest Committee and submitted for sanction to the regional association at least thirty days before the date of the contest. Contest instructions shall contain the following information:
  - a. Entry requirements.
  - b. Date and common point time if applicable.
  - c. Sponsor and sanction body.
  - d. Trophies, perpetual and take home.
  - e. Contest Committee members and phone numbers.
  - f. Effective contest rules.
  - g. Date, location and time of contestant's instruction meeting and/or method of submitting predicted log.
  - h. Place and time of actual log delivery after the contest.
  - i. Instructions regarding moorings, parades, communications, dinner, safety, etc.
  - j. Availability and assignment of Observers.
  - k. Course checkpoints description as shown on the chart, distance and side of passage, total approximate contest distance, and chart numbers.
  - l. Rule changes not contained in the current rule book.
  - m. For any deviation from normal contest practice, method for judging compliance.
  - n. Instructions for communication regarding postponement or cancellation.
2. Contest Course
  - a. Charts. The contest committee shall lay out the course on official government charts using buoys, channel markers, lighthouses, range markers, or prominent points of land. The description of all checkpoints shall be exactly as shown on the most recent charts available.
  - b. Checkpoints. The start, intermediate points, and finish are checkpoints. Checkpoints must be completely described including chart number, name, type of light, type of buoy (bell, gong, whistle, etc.) and any other data required for positive identification. Checkpoints may be described by latitude and longitude.
  - c. Distance & Legs. The minimum length of the course shall be twelve nautical miles and the minimum distance between checkpoints shall be one-half nautical mile. There shall be a minimum of four (4) scored (not blind point) legs with three checkpoints in addition to the start and finish.

## **PART V - RULES UNDERWAY**

1. Contestants shall be subject to all contest rules and conditions from five minutes before the time of the earliest start, until the time of the latest finish when within 1000 yards of the course.
2. No competing boat shall interfere with the fair start of another competing boat.
3. If competing boats are about to pass a visual checkpoint at about the same time, the outside boat(s) shall give the inside boat(s) room to clear.
4. The contest rules in order of precedence are:
  - a. The rules of the road in effect shall prevail at all times.
  - b. Contest instructions.
  - c. These contest rules.
5. The Observer is not under any circumstances to have access to the predicted times or predicted elapsed times nor is the crew allowed to know the time of day.
6. All predictions must be made by the contestant on the log form specified and the form must be submitted to the Contest Committee by the time specified. Predicted logs shall be signed by the contestant.
7. Times
  - a. No means for determining the time of day or time intervals shall be allowed the contestant or crew during the contest, except the contestant may assign one crew member who has not had access to the predicted times to verify accurate recording of "mark" times on the log together with distance from checkpoints and side on which passed. This person, known as the Scrutinizer, may not communicate the time to any other member of the crew. If the Scrutinizer and Observer disagree as to any items, both versions shall be noted on the back of the log form.
  - b. The Observer shall not permit the contestant to know the actual times recorded until after the finish mark is called. However if the contest instructions specify that it is an Open Log contest, the contestant may view or be told the times recorded on the actual log during the running of the contest.
8. Permitted Equipment
  - a. No speed or distance measuring devices or navigational aids such as radar, radio direction finders, omega, omni, loran or GPS are allowed except in cases of reduced visibility. However, contests may permit the use of some or all equipment onboard the vessel provided no time or speed based information is available to the contestant. Variations on this may include limited use of certain equipment. Permitted equipment may differ between contests. Such determinations are entirely at the discretion of the regional association.
  - b. Autopilots and non-recording Depth Sounders may be used.
  - c. Use of Radar, if available, is required by the USCG COLREGS and permitting its use is strongly recommended by NACA.
  - d. The contest instructions may allow use of a Chart Plotter with or without vessel position displayed. Prohibited information such as time and speed shall be hidden through the use of opaque tape or other means.

- e. The contest instructions shall clearly describe what equipment is allowed and the permitted extent of its use.
9. All contestants having VHF Radio shall monitor VHF Channel 16 or other channel designated for distress calling during the contest. Where possible, they should also monitor the communication channel specified by the Committee.
10. Deviation from a straight-line course shall be the minimum required for safety while maintaining the shortest distance between checkpoints.
11. The call "Mark" shall be at the time at which the checkpoint is first abeam while on course from the previous checkpoint.
12. The Observer shall not be a paid crew member or a "permanent" crew member of the contestant unless approved by the Contest committee. Family members may serve as Observer provided they are at least sixteen years of age, knowledgeable of the Rules, and approved by the Committee.
13. A contestant shall not take time-out or know the elapsed time on any stop, mechanical failure, or interruption except for safety, by order of an authority, or to render aid if requested or needed. In the event a time-out is required, the Observer shall record the time and circumstances and the Scorer shall correct the actual running time provided the Committee approves the time-out after reviewing the facts.
14. The passage distances for the checkpoints, as stated in the contest instructions, are maximum distances and contestants shall pass within these limits, safety permitting. If no distance is specified, 50 yards shall be the maximum.
15. A contestant shall be disqualified for the following subject to a protest committee's decision that there were no extenuating circumstances.
  - a. Using a timepiece or any other device for timing purposes.
  - b. Using unauthorized equipment.
  - c. Failure to comply with a substantive part of the contest instructions.
  - d. Intentionally and substantially deviating from the prescribed course in calculating the predicted log or in running the course, other than for safety reasons.
  - e. Turning in circles, stopping, or other maneuvers for reasons other than safety, by order of authority, to render aid, or breakdown.
  - f. Fouling another boat or causing another boat to foul any other boat, mark, or obstruction, or to run aground.
  - g. Running any leg of the official course after publication of the contest instructions.
  - h. Failure to find or call the start or finish checkpoint.
  - i. Violation of the Rules of the Road (COLREGS)
16. A contestant shall be penalized the percent of error shown for the following acts or violations. The penalty-error shall be added to the log percentage error after handicap adjustment, if any.
  - a. Using the radio to transmit or receive any information that would afford anyone a racing advantage (may be waived if the Committee determines no advantage was gained by the contestant): 3%
  - b. Failure to display racing numbers or other required insignia: 0.5%
  - c. Failure to pass a checkpoint on the specified side except for reasons of safety: 0.5%

- d. Failure to pass a checkpoint within specified distance except for reasons of safety: 0.5%
  - e. Failure to comply with any part of the contest instructions or any part of these racing rules for which no penalty has otherwise been provided: 1%
  - f. Failure to find or call an intermediate checkpoint. The legs having in common the point not called or found shall be scored as a single leg and a 2% penalty added.
  - g. If the actual start is not within 60 seconds of the predicted starting time: 1.0%
  - h. If on the completion of the contest, the official timepiece is off more than 60 seconds from the official time: 1.0%
17. Should the Observer fail in the proper performance of his duties during the contest due to being incapacitated, or if there is evidence that he is not properly recording the log, the contestant may appoint a member of the crew to serve as temporary observer for the balance of the contest. The temporary observer will prepare a signed statement that he honorably carried out the duties of Observer to the best of his ability. This statement, together with a signed statement by the contestant giving the reasons for relieving the observer, shall be delivered with the Observer's log to the Contest Committee at the finish of the contest.
18. Safety Rule
- a. If a contestant believes that conditions have become unsafe because of reduced visibility or unusual sea conditions, he may invoke the Safety Rule by notifying the Observer that he intends to proceed under the Safety Rule until further notice.
  - b. After invoking this rule, the contestant may take all means he considers necessary for the safe navigation of his vessel including slowing, stopping, maneuvering and using radar, radio, or other equipment. The contestant may receive from the Observer a signal when he has run a requested time from the last mark.
  - c. The Observer shall, to the best of his ability, list matters pertinent to the contest occurring during the time the Safety Rule is invoked, including the following listed items, and the contestant shall wherever possible advise the Observer as to the information to be set forth.
    - (1) Times during which the Safety Rule was invoked
    - (2) Navigational and operational action taken by the contestant.
    - (3) Time of use of radar and other navigational equipment
    - (4) The mileage scale used in operation of radar and identity of radar operator(s).
    - (5) Significant changes in direction during the use of radar other than evasive action or maneuvers for safety purposes.
    - (6) Estimated range of visibility, together with significant changes in such range.
    - (7) Sea and weather conditions.
  - d. The contestant shall as soon as possible, either during or after the contest, advise the Contest Committee that he has invoked the Safety Rule, and at the first opportunity after the contest he shall request Committee approval of his action.

## **PART VI - DUTIES OF CONTEST COMMITTEE & OFFICIALS**

1. The Contest Committee shall be appointed by the club or group sponsoring a contest. The Contest Committee shall be responsible for planning, conducting, and judging the contest using regional association rules, contest instructions and, when applicable, other rules of proper authority. The Contest Committee shall consist of a Chairman, a Scorer, such other members as may be desirable, and Observers on contestants' cruisers. Observers shall be non-voting members of the Contest Committee.
2. The Contest Chairman shall be responsible for the proper performance of the Contest Committee according to the policies and rules of the appropriate regional association.
3. The Contest Scorer shall insure that all computations leading to the actual percent error are correct and so certify on each actual log. He shall issue scores only when all Observer notes of rule infractions and protest are resolved. He shall deliver the results to the Contest Chairman as soon as possible, and to the regional association scorer within five days after the contest. Within ten (10) days after the contest, the regional association scorer shall send a scoring report to NACA certifying that all protests and appeals were completed and that the scores are accurate. Any race with less than three starting contestants shall not be scored for NACA points. Each contest is to be numbered consecutively.
4. The Observer shall:
  - a. Be recruited and assigned or approved by the Contest Committee. Each competing cruiser shall carry an officially designated observer during the contest.
  - b. Have full knowledge of the Association rules and possess the contest instructions and the actual log form. He shall use all the foregoing information in performing his duties.
  - c. Verify with the contestant that the official timepiece is set as closely as possible to correct local time.
  - d. Report to the Contest Committee if he believes the condition of the crew or cruiser to which he/she has been assigned is such that running in the contest would be unsafe or fails the criteria established by the regional association and the Committee. If the Contest Committee sustains the Observer's opinion, an observer shall not be assigned until the condition has been corrected.
  - e. Immediately after crossing the starting line, ask everyone aboard to place in his custody all portable timepieces. The Contestant will cover and muffle all fixed timepieces. The Observer shall insure that all time and speed measuring devices are covered, e.g. clocks, engine hour meters, speedometers, etc. The Observer shall determine that no prohibited equipment or information is used.
  - f. Maintain and record on the actual log as follows:
    - (1) During the contest, handle the log form and the official timepiece so that no other person on board, except the Scrutinizer, becomes aware of the time of day or the log form's contents unless Open Log is specified in the contest instructions.
    - (2) At each checkpoint at the call of "mark", record the hours, minutes and seconds in the appropriate space in the actual log.
    - (3) Note failure to pass any checkpoint within the required distance and on the correct side.
    - (4) Note on the actual log any failure by the contestant to find or call a checkpoint.

- (5) Record on the log facts regarding rule infractions, stops, rescues, assistance to other boats, time out/in, and use of restricted equipment.
  - (6) Make such additional entries on the actual log as are pertinent, and sign the log in the required place(s).
  - (7) After crossing the finish line, return all timepieces and other equipment placed in his custody except the official timepiece.
  - (8) Personally deliver the actual log and the official timepiece to the Scorer or other individual specified by the Contest Committee.
- g. Conduct oneself as an invited guest aboard the contestant's cruiser.

## **PART VII - PROTESTS & APPEALS**

1. A Protest Committee shall be formed by the Contest Committee and shall consist of three persons, a chairman and two members. They shall be chosen from knowledgeable yachtsmen or experienced observers. The individuals' chosen shall be disinterested parties, i.e., not a guest or an Observer on a cruiser protesting or being protested, or a contestant whose contest or seasonal point standing would be materially affected by the outcome of the hearing. More than one Protest committee may be necessary. The word "materially" as used herein shall be defined to mean "a reasonable possibility that the contestant's opportunity for obtaining a contest, contest series, or annual trophy or award will be affected".
2. Who may file a protest:
  - a. A contestant may protest another contestant by alleging an infraction of a contest rule. He must make a written statement indicating that it is intended as a protest and outline the pertinent facts and designate the contest rule or instruction violated.
  - b. The Contest Committee itself may protest a contestant as a result of Observer remarks or other data brought to the attention of the Contest Committee. The Committee's allegations must be formalized in writing.
3. A protest must be submitted to the Contest Committee within the time specified for the submittal of the actual log form. If the facts upon which a protest would be based are not known at such time, then the protest must be made at such time as the protestor learns of such facts, but in no event later than the completion of scoring for the contest.
4. Upon receipt of a protest, the Contest committee shall notify the interested parties so that data and witnesses may be made available at the proper time to the Protest Committee.
5. The Protest Committee shall convene in a timely manner; hear the evidence of the alleged rule infraction, essential witnesses, and the defense of the protested contestant.
6. If, after hearing all of the evidence, the Protest Committee decides that a contestant, beyond reasonable doubt, has violated a contest rule or a substantive part of a contest instruction, he shall be disqualified or penalized as set forth in the rules.
7. The Protest committee shall issue a signed statement setting forth their findings and decision. A copy of the statement shall be given to the Committee Chairman and Scorer, who will submit it to the regional association and the interested parties if requested.

8. A contestant shall not be disqualified or penalized without a hearing by the Protest Committee except that a contestant may accept disqualification or penalty without a hearing.
9. A Protest Committee may convene a hearing and render its decision in the absence of the Protestor or Protestee if he fails or refuses to appear at a Committee hearing after timely notice.
10. Under extenuating circumstances the Commodore of the regional association may authorize a protest to be made after the time limitation set forth in these rules.
11. A Protestee may appeal the decision of the Protest Committee to the regional association. On appeal, only the facts and findings of the Protest Committee may be considered. No new evidence will be allowed. No award of trophies will be affected by any decision of the appeal. The appeal should be directed to the regional association Commodore who with the Flag Officers and the Junior Staff Commodore will consider the appeal. If this appeals board contains interested parties, they must be replaced by yachtsmen mutually agreed-to by the appealing contestant and the Commodore of the regional association. The appealing party must give notice of his intention to appeal within two hours after receipt of the decision of the Protest Committee.
12. If an appeal is upheld, the regional association must correct the point standings for the contest.

## PART VIII - SCORING

1. The winner of a contest shall be the skipper who has the lowest percentage of error of all contestants. The percentage of error shall be computed by dividing the sum of the absolute (positive) values of the elapsed time errors on each leg, expressed in seconds, by the total predicted elapsed time in seconds and then multiplying the quotient by 100. In the event a discrepancy exists between the predicted clock times and the predicted elapsed times submitted, the predicted clock times shall be considered as superseding. For the purposes of computing the actual elapsed time for the first leg of the contest, the predicted clock starting time shall be used instead of the actual clock starting time.
2. The decisions of the Committee will be final as to award of trophies.
3. A skipper shall be awarded points toward season standings and trophies for each race entered, except no points shall be awarded in any race with less than three starters. Points shall be determined by the following method:
  - a.  $\text{Points} = 1,000 - (700 \times (\text{Finish place} - 0.79) / (\text{Number of Contestants} - 0.79))$
  - b. The "Number of Contestants" shall be defined as the number of skippers who, in the opinion of the Contest committee have started the contest course with the intention of completing the contest.
  - c. A skipper who started the contest but is unable to finish shall receive 300 points.
  - d. A skipper who is disqualified shall receive no points but shall be counted as a contestant for point scoring purposes.
  - e. The points shall be rounded to the nearest whole number as follows:  
 $X.000 \text{ to } X.4999 = X$   
 $X.500 \text{ to } X.999 = X+1$
4. In the event a tie exists in determining season standings or making other determination based on accumulated point standings, fraction of numbers shall be computed to the extent necessary to break the tie.
5. Qualification for the "500 Club" requires a contest score of less than 0.5% as a raw score without handicap in a contest with a minimum of four (4) scored legs (not including blind point legs scored as perfect legs), and a distance of at least 12.0 Nautical Miles.