

Explanation of Alternative Penalty, Rule 5.5 in Amendment 3

A competitor has requested an explanation of Rule 5.5 in Amendment 3, and the following was provided.

“The alternative penalty comes from RRS Appendix V, paragraph V2, and is computed as a Scoring Penalty per RRS 44.3(c).

Basically, US Sailing provides alternative penalties that encourage competitors to take a penalty when they may have broken a rule of Part 2 or rule 31 in an incident, instead of Retiring or going to the Jury room and risking Disqualification.

Here is an example:

You are racing in a fleet of 8 boats. All boats finish, and you are 2nd across the line, but you fouled another boat while racing. You can take an alternative penalty. To start, figure out how many points a DNF would be. In this regatta, it is the number of boats entered + 1, namely 9 points. Amendment 5.5 says the scoring penalty is 25%, so multiply 9 times 25%, which is 2.25. Round to the nearest whole number, giving 2. Your alternative scoring penalty is therefore 2 points. Your score for the race is 2 (your finishing place) + 2 (your scoring penalty) = 4. No other boats move up. The first place boat gets 1 point, the 3rd place boat still gets 3 points, you and the 4th place boat both get 4 points, and nobody winds up with 2 points. If you went to a jury you would be disqualified (DSQ) and get 9 points, so the alternative penalty is 5 points preferable, in this example.”