



From the Executive Committee of the International J/70 Class Association

Class Rule C.3.2: Limitation on Helmsperson

The purpose of Rule C.3.2 is to preserve the owner-driver character of the Class, whilst also permitting those owners who do not wish to helm their own boat to have a Group 1 sailor helm their boat. Accordingly, Group 3 sailors are not permitted to helm a J/70 on behalf of another owner.

The J/70 Class is otherwise highly open to professional participation. There is no restriction on the number of professional sailors who may sail in any crewing role other than helming, save only for the narrow owner exception that bona fide Group 3 owners may helm their own boats.

The Class has, over time, taken steps to protect the integrity of this owner qualification. The Rule was amended in 2024 so that the required ownership threshold for such a Group 3 helm increased from 50% to 100%. This amendment was intended to strengthen the requirement that ownership be real in substance, and not merely in form. Likewise, the 100% requirement applies not only to ownership, but also to expenses.

Furthermore, as regards the determination of ownership in the context of Rule C.3.2, Rule C.3.2(c) provides that “**the Class Executive Committee shall be the sole interpreter of who qualifies as an owner**”. This catch-all provision is there to close the door on ownership arrangements constructed to bypass Rule C.3.2.

In making such determinations, the Executive Committee will consider any and all surrounding circumstances and will not be limited or bound by any defined parameters or precedents. For example, the fact that a person may be named as owner on title documents, a bill of sale, bank transfer record, entry form, or Manufacturer’s Declaration is relevant, but is not necessarily conclusive. The Executive Committee is deliberately reserving its position on this matter and will not publish guidelines or defined parameters for the determination of ownership. This is both to avoid the risk of creating a path that could inadvertently create a loophole to this important rule, and to preserve the Executive Committee’s ability to interpret who qualifies as owner for the purposes of Rule C.3.2 by reference to **substance** as well as form.

For and on behalf of the Executive Committee

Martin Dent
President
International J/70 Class Association