



MEMORANDUM

ATTN: ICSA Board of Directors

From: Caroline Bielski, MCSA Commissioner

Date: 23 April 2024

Subject: Request for ICSA policy or ruleset outlining the expectations of regatta names

In recent years, there have been multiple situations where colleges have hosted regattas with names that drew criticism for being offensive, inappropriate, or insensitive based purely on interpretation. However, the ICSA currently lacks clear guidelines that outline expectations for regatta names selected by our member teams.

Without an official policy, teams lack direction on what constitutes an acceptable or unacceptable regatta name. This ambiguity has led to regatta names that were called out for being inappropriate by ICSA leadership, often at the last minute and without warning. Teams so far have been compliant in changing regatta names, yet, they have expressed confusion and frustration. With a defined policy or ruleset, we would be able to define what is and what is not appropriate and avoid future conversations on this topic.

The MCSA requests that the ICSA Board of Directors direct a committee (ie. the Rules Committee) to develop and adopt formal regatta naming guidelines. This will provide clarity to our member teams on the expectations and standards for regatta names.

Establishing these guidelines will:

- Provide member teams a framework to ensure their regatta names reflect the team's culture, while being acceptable to the ICSA
- Prevent situations where teams unintentionally select a regatta name which the ICSA may deem unacceptable due to lack of guidance
- Provide a consistent policy of which conferences such as the MCSA can reference in order to prevent future issues with regatta names



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The guidelines would likely cover criteria such as avoiding discrimination, profanity, sexually explicit content, etc.. Member input should be solicited during the guideline development process.

Without defined parameters around regatta naming, we run the risk of continued controversies that can reflect negatively within our organization, and cause tension between leadership and teams. Clear guidelines will help teams make informed decisions and uphold the standards expected.

Thank you for your consideration,

Caroline Bielski on behalf of the Midwest Collegiate Sailing Association, Inc. a member of the ICSA