

# RC Racing - Common Fleet Splitting Systems

## 1. Heat Racing System (HRS) or Promotion/Relegation System:

- The **Heat Racing System** is one of the most widely used methods. In this system, fleets are split into smaller groups, called **heats**, with a certain number of boats racing at a time.
- After each race, the **top performers are promoted** to a higher heat, while the lower-performing boats may be **relegated** to a lower heat. This allows boats of similar skill levels to compete together, improving fairness and competition quality.
- **Example:** If 30 boats show up and the limit for one race is 10, the fleet is divided into three heats. The top 3 boats from each heat move up to the "A" heat for the next round, while others compete in lower heats like "B" or "C".

## 2. Odd/Even System:

- Another approach is to divide the fleet into **odd-numbered and even-numbered** boats based on registration numbers or random assignments. These two sub-fleets race separately, and the results are combined for scoring.
- This method is useful when the time is limited, and the fleet can't be managed efficiently with promotion/relegation systems.

## 3. Group Assignments Based on Skill Levels:

- Some events may assign boats into **sub-fleets based on experience or rankings**. For example, a fleet might have a "Gold" fleet and an "Silver" fleet, allowing for more even competition.
- This split can be done on resume, past performance (e.g. last year's cumulative results), or with a seeding round.
- This method is ideal for larger regattas or championship-level races where skill levels vary significantly.

## 4. Flight or Rotation System:

- This is often used when **multiple rounds** are planned. Each round features different combinations of boats from the overall fleet, ensuring that all boats race against each other at some point.
- The **results from all races** are combined to determine the overall ranking.
- **Example** - 20 boats show up and are split into 4 groups - group A, B, C & D. The groups rotate so that you get to race each other group every three times you start. So Race 1a: Group A races Group B, Race 2b: Group C races D, Race 2a: A races C, Race 2b: B races D and so on.

- You can use this method and keep going, but to be fair you need to race every other group the same amount of times.
- This method is often used as a seeding round to split fleets for Gold/Silver.

### **Key Points to Consider:**

- **Space on the water:** RC sailboats need sufficient space to maneuver, and too many boats can cause collisions and frustration.
- **Race timing:** Smaller heats allow more controlled races, but it can extend the time needed to complete a full regatta.
- **Skill levels:** Mixed skill levels can lead to uneven competition. Splitting by ranking can ensure a more balanced race.

These guidelines are often found in official RC sailing rules and regatta organizers' practices, helping to ensure a smooth, competitive, and enjoyable event when there are too many boats for a single race.

For more detailed rules and examples, organizations like the **International Radio Sailing Association (IRSA)** and the **American Model Yachting Association (AMYA)** provide specific guidelines for handling large fleets.