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From: Jason Vandergaag, Chief Handicapper, PHRF BC

To: All PHRF members, PHRF 60-100 rating band

PHRF Fleet Rating Review Update

As you are hopefully aware, last fall PHRF BC's Handicappers committee elected to conduct a broad review of the fleet with an eye to updating ratings across the fleet. As our system has relied primarily on the appeals process for a number of years, a number of outlier PHRF handicaps have been able to go untested. The handicappers' committee believes that the low rate of appeals is due to the confrontational nature of appealing a competitor's rating, and the effort required to prepare a successful appeal.

The review proposal for the first block of ratings, 60-100, was approved at this spring's meeting, April 10, 2019.

I would like to make clear, to all affected members, the reasoning and process carried out in this review.

The intention, goals, and timelines of this review were documented extensively in the meeting minutes of the Fall 2018 handicappers meeting. As with any change to the base ratings of PHRF, the twice- (now thrice, with the addition of island meetings) annual appeals meetings are the only time a design's rating will be adjusted.

The process to conduct and implement this review was defined and carried out as follows:

- a subcommittee was struck at the Fall 2018 meeting, with the assignment to prepare a recommended list of changes to the first 'block' of ratings, from 60-100
- the minutes of this meeting posted on our website served as notice of the beginning of this process
- the proposed changes were publicized and emailed to affected members in early January 2019, with the intention of eliciting feedback to the committee
- an open discussion was held at the Spring Van Isle handicappers' meeting, in March 2019
- the vote to ratify, requiring a majority of the committee members approval, was held at the Spring 2019 handicappers' meeting in Vancouver

Regarding the rating changes themselves:

Roughly half of the active ratings have changed by some amount. In the case of most, the goal is an alignment of boats on 3-second increments. This was originally a feature of PHRF, in recognition of the lack of absolute accuracy in an observed performance system. It is the committee's belief that the 3-second increment system creates better racing, with many 'level' groupings racing, rather than a 1-second difference deciding what may have otherwise been essentially a match race between similar boats. So there are many 1 or 2 second

adjustments. These have been used where possible to shift boats together or apart as desirable, without a major impact on how they interact with the larger portion of the fleet.

Where possible, we have identified “base boats”, that is, designs with well-known performance and many local boats sailing. From these, competing boats can be rated in relative terms, and then compared back to the rest of the fleet for verification.

Many of the proposed adjustments are moving designs closer to the North American averages, which is in keeping with our general philosophy that a larger pool of data makes for better results. Exceptions to this rule do exist, which may relate to the specific mix of boats, wind ranges, and popularity of certain designs in a region. An example could be the Melges 24 fleet which races frequently here in PHRF, but in many other large centres sticks mostly to One-Design and offers up few results to allow evaluation. Also in many regions a design like this races in a fleet of sportboats, in others such as ours, it races against a number of cruiser/racer type designs. This can affect the quality of the reported results.

Another point to consider regards the nature of the appeals process. Consider the following example. A few years ago the Martin 242 ODR was successfully appealed from 165 to 156. This was a relatively large adjustment for PHRF, although needed. Unfortunately, a number of similar boats probably should have moved in response also, but the appeal ONLY included the M242, so boats with very similar characteristics such as the J/24, Moore 24, Kirby 25, etc all stayed right where they were. A benefit, we believe, of this 'fleet review' model is that the boats receiving larger changes can have the blow 'softened' by incrementally moving other boats at the same time. The chances of creating new and bigger problems are reduced in this manner.

Our hope with this fleet review is that we have improved our handicapping system, and brought it forward to match the current state of the fleet. It is also our hope that these changes will encourage a greater awareness of the process, and an increase in participation in the appeals process in the coming years.

As agreed at the recent spring handicapper's meeting, the review process will continue, next covering the block of ratings between 100 and 200 by two separate review committees.

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