

**OKLAHOMA CITY BOAT CLUB – LAKE HEFNER
HANDICAP RACING BYLAWS
February 6, 2015**

Article I. INTRODUCTION

1. These Bylaws are developed and maintained by the Handicap Rating Committee of the Oklahoma City Boat Club (OCBC) for administering the Oklahoma City-Lake Hefner Performance Handicap Racing Fleet (PHRF) rating system for keelboats and the Portsmouth Yardstick handicap rating system for centerboards and multihulls. These Bylaws were approved by the Board of Governors on the above date.
2. The Committee is established by OCBC's Bylaws, Article VIII, Section 6 to administer the appropriate rating systems to assure competitive racing for a wide range of designs. OCBC Handicapping information and links to US SAILING PHRF and Portsmouth Yardstick information are under the Handicapping tab on the OCBC website (www.okcboatclub.com).
3. The goal of handicapping is to offer a fair playing field for all boats racing in OCBC races and regattas on Lake Hefner. Toward this goal, the Committee uses all the information available to it including the most recent US SAILING published PHRF and Portsmouth Yardstick base handicaps for the same or similar classes and checking clubs having similar wind/water conditions to see if they have rated the boat.
4. It is the intent of handicap rating systems that any well-equipped, well-maintained, and well-sailed boat has a good chance of winning. Ratings are not intended to be adjusted downward based on the skill of the helmsperson or crew capability or adjusted upward to compensate for careless sailing or relaxed boat maintenance.

Article II. ADMINISTRATION

1. The **Handicap Rating Committee Chair** shall be appointed by the OCBC Commodore and the chair and its members confirmed by the Board of Governors.
2. **The Handicap Rating Committee** shall consist of the chair and at least three (3) members. To ensure continuity when a new chair is appointed, the outgoing chair shall be a member of the incoming committee. If the outgoing chair is unable to serve, the Commodore shall select a member of the preceding year's committee.
3. **Keelboat owners** apply for PHRF membership by submitting an OCBC-Lake Hefner PHRF Rating Certificate to the Committee covering their boat's configuration. **US SAILING also promotes PHRF racing for multihulls larger than 20 feet.**
4. **Centerboards and Multihulls** are scored using the US SAILING Portsmouth Yardstick wind handicap numbers. The Committee obtains initial numbers and changes for boats racing at OCBC as they are updated on the US SAILING website and provides the numbers to the Race Committee to be used in calculating corrected finishing times. Owners are accepted for competition in the Portsmouth Yardstick fleet by providing their boat's class, sail number and skipper's name to the Race Committee during the pre-start check-in period of series races and during regatta registrations. Boats not listed on Appendix B may be scored No Handicap Rating (NHR). In these cases, the Race Committee would notify the Handicap Rating Committee so the appropriate handicap numbers can be determined and provided.

Article III. PERFORMANCE HANDICAP RACING FLEET (PHRF)

Section 1. INTRODUCTION

- A. PHRF is a method of rating boats based on the speed potential of the boat, determined as much as possible on observations of performance in on-the-water competition at the local club level. It relies on the owner's certification his boat is a Standard Production Boat and that all sails, rigging and equipment comply with the standards for that boat and is sailed according to its class rules. If it's a modified boat, the modifications must be reported by the owner. If it's a custom boat, then the displacement and all measurements that could affect the rating must be fully specified on the rating certificate and certified by the owner.
- B. PHRF assumes a boat is ready to race. Adjustments are not made for a partially equipped boat, headsails 155 % of J or less, or a boat which differs from others in its class in that it is unusually heavy, out of balance, out of tune or carries growth on its bottom. Adjustments are made for certain variations (see Section 5).
- C. PHRF ratings are expressed in seconds per nautical mile to be deducted from elapsed time to produce corrected times. The higher the rating the lower performance potential of the boat. For scoring purposes, the rating is converted to a time-on-time correction factor as defined by the Committee.
- D. The Committee assigns PHRF handicap ratings and reviews the boats in the Fleet prior to the beginning of each racing season to ensure ratings are consistently applied and reflect the speed potential of the boat when sailed on Lake Hefner. Reviews during the season are conducted as needed.
- E. The PHRF rating system does not compensate for a boat's performance under varying wind speeds; so, boats designed to plane or surf, like sport boats, can have an advantage over conventional keelboats in most wind conditions. Some clubs address this by separately fleetting conventional keel and sport boats. At OCBC, this decision is made by the Race Committee.
- F. PHRF relies on honesty, sportsmanship and the Corinthian spirit; so, the success of the program is dependent upon the integrity of the participants. In signing a PHRF Rating Certificate, the owner attests to the accuracy of the information supplied. Once a Valid rating is assigned, If the Committee is notified, or discovers, a boat is being raced that may not be in compliance with its rating certificate, the Committee will contact the owner and request they meet with the Committee to resolve the matter
- G. A **Rating Certificate request** originates with the boat owner. The owner declares the sail complement to be used, details pertaining to the type of motor and propeller configuration and any deviations from the Standard Production Boat and submits the request to the Committee. In certain cases, the Committee may require actual boat and sail measurements. When this occurs, a member of the Committee will assist the owner in completing the needed details. The Committee evaluates the request and any additional information requested, applies appropriate adjustments and assigns the boat its Valid OCBC-Lake Hefner PHRF number. Once assigned, more than one helmsperson and/or crew may race the boat using its valid number.
- H. A rating certificate is issued solely for the purpose of rating the performance potential of the boat described. Neither OCBC-Lake Hefner PHRF nor OCBC makes any determination with respect to the seaworthiness or safety of the boat rated. The seaworthiness and safety of each boat is the sole responsibility of the owner.
- I. When a boat is sold, the owner is obligated to report the sale to the Committee so the boat can be removed from the Fleet's Valid Rating List.

Section 2. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Base Handicap Rating.** A boat's rating before any adjustments.
- B. **Critical Dimensions.** The critical dimensions established by the manufacturer.
- C. **Custom Boat.** A one-of-a-kind boat.
- D. **Modified Boat.** Changes made to the boat, rigging and/or appendages after production to enhance the speed potential of the boat.
- E. **OCBC-Lake Hefner Handicap Rating Committee Guidelines.** The guide developed and used by the Committee to ensure consistency of ratings for a wide range of designs.
- F. **One Design Rig (ODR) Rating.** An ODR rating requires the boat to be raced in compliance with its class rules. Only certain boats qualify for an ODR rating and they are noted on the OCBC-Lake Hefner valid rating list.
- G. **PHRF Ratings.** PHRF ratings are expressed in seconds per nautical mile to be deducted from elapsed times to produce corrected times. A higher rating indicates lower performance potential. For scoring purposes, the rating is converted to a time-on-time correction factor defined by the Committee. The smallest increment of performance used for rating is 3 seconds per mile. It is impossible to spot a boat's potential performance any more accurately than this. Differences in helmsperson and crew skill represent a much larger factor than this, probably more than 30 seconds per mile.
- H. **Sport Boat.** A physical description might include lightweight, using oversized spinnakers and capable of planning downwind in strong breezes. Most consider a boat to be in the "Sport Boat" category if it meets the following four criteria:
 - 1. A displacement/length ratio less than 100
 - 2. An upwind sail area/displacement ratio greater than 30
 - 3. A downwind sail area/displacement ratio greater than 75
 - 4. A sprit length more than 50 percent of J
- I. **Standard Production Boat.** A boat as delivered by the manufacturer.
- J. **Valid Handicap Rating and List.** The Valid OCBC-Lake Hefner PHRF number assigned after adjustments to the Base rating. If no adjustments, the Valid rating is the same as the Base rating. A list of valid ratings is posted on the OCBC website under Handicapping.

Section 3. DETERMINING RATINGS

- A. The process for determining a keelboat's OCBC-Lake Hefner PHRF rating begins with determining its Base Handicap rating. Using all available information, the Committee determines the Base Rating for the boat being rated then makes any adjustments to the base rating in accordance with Section 5. The result is the boat's Valid OCBC-Lake Hefner PHRF Handicap Rating.
- B. The Committee shall use its best efforts to rate the boat using all available resources including the most recent US SAILING base handicaps for the same or similar classes. The Committee may also consult clubs with similar racing conditions to those on Lake Hefner for their ratings for that boat.

- C. In cases when a Temporary Rating is needed for a regatta, any member of the Committee may assign one in accordance with the Rating Committee Guidelines. Actual scoring based on the rating is subject to reconsideration by the Rating Committee if protested. Scoring and awards will be adjusted according to the results of the protest.
- D. US SAILING also promotes performance handicap racing for larger multihulls. If an owner of a multihull in the US SAILING PHRF Multihull List submits a request for rating, their boat may be given a temporary rating to see if it competes fairly with keelboats on Lake Hefner. Based on race results, the Handicap Rating Committee will either assign a valid PHRF rating or cancel the temporary rating.

Section 4. BASE HANDICAP RATINGS

- A. Base Handicap Ratings for Standard Production Boats assume that:
 - 1. It is equipped with a Spinnaker and the Spinnaker pole length equals "J".
 - 2. Spinnaker maximum width is 180% of pole length
 - 3. Spinnaker maximum length is 95% of forestay length. (Forestay length as used here is actually the hypotenuse of the fore triangle.)
 - 4. The foresail LP is a maximum of 155% of J. (Staysails must not overlap the main any more than the Genoa could)
 - 5. Sails are made of woven (Dacron) or exotic (such as Kevlar) materials.
 - 6. The boat has an auxiliary engine with a folding or feathering propeller on an exposed shaft or a retractable outboard motor unless the One Design Rules for that class clearly state the motor is optional or not included.
 - 7. The hull, rig, sails and appendages are unmodified from the data in the US SAILING Critical Dimensions list.
 - 8. The boat is race ready.
- B. **Base Handicaps for One Design Rig (ODR) Classes.** The OCBC fleet captain for fleets qualifying for an ODR rating will be consulted to determine the boats in the fleet that will be sailing ODR. There will be adjustments made to a boat's rating if it deviates from its National Class Rules. When an owner of an ODR boat chooses to deviate from their National class rules and race with the PHRF fleet, they must apply for, and be granted, a valid Oklahoma City-Lake Hefner PHRF number based on the base handicap guidelines above for Standard Production Boats and any adjustments thereto for the particular boat. Inquiries for interpreting class rule compliance will be directed to the executive director of the class for resolution.

Section 5. ADJUSTMENTS TO BASE HANDICAPS

- A. Some classes have boats manufactured with different mast heights, keel configurations, etc. Differences that affect the speed potential of the boat will have their Base Handicap adjusted accordingly.
- B. Adjustments to Base Handicaps are listed in Appendix A.

Section 6. APPEALS

- 1. Any owner whose boat has a Valid OCBC-Lake Hefner Handicap Rating may appeal to the Handicap Rating Committee for a change to their boat's rating or the rating of any other boat. The appellant prepares their request for appeal on an OCBC-Lake Hefner Handicap Rating Appeal Form and submits it to the Handicap Rating Committee Chair. Forms are available on the OCBC website.

2. The Chair will coordinate with the appellant if further information is needed for the hearing. When sufficient data is available, the Chair will schedule a hearing date.
3. The Chair will notify the appellant and affected Fleet members of the hearing date by email. The hearing will be held within thirty (30) days after date of the notifying email. An announcement will also be made at the monthly OCBC General Membership meeting if it precedes the hearing date.
4. The hearing will be conducted by the Committee Chair or their designated alternate. At least two (2) additional members of the Committee must be present in order for a hearing to occur. In case the required members are not present, the hearing shall be adjourned to another time.
5. All interested parties may appear and be heard, subject to the rules of order, sportsmanship and decorum. A party may document or argue their views if they wish but the Committee will render a decision based on all the information available to it. There is no burden of proof.
6. No member of the Committee may vote on their own boat. However, any member of the Committee may appeal the rating of any other boat.

Article IV. PORTSMOUTH YARDSTICK

Section 1. INTRODUCTION

- A. The Yardstick is a widely used method of ratings boats of different classes sailing the same courses and is used by clubs and fleets across the country. It is a time-on-time handicapping system and is derived from actual records of classes of boats with thoroughly documented ratings. Portsmouth numbers are defined as the length of time boats would take to sail a common but unspecified distance. For example, the distance a boat rated at 80 could cover in 80 minutes should be able to be covered in the same race in 95 minutes by a boat rated at 95.
- B. Portsmouth Yardsticks (D-PN) are a boat's "Base" handicap without wind corrections and any permitted modification factors. Assumptions made by US SAILING in generating D-PNs are:
 1. That each boat placing first in each class was sailed to its true potential by a perfect crew according to flawless strategy;
 2. That all boats sailed the same course, experienced the same wind/water conditions and degree of interference of clear air;
 3. That all one design boats conform to class specifications and rules, and use sail specified by the class; and
 4. That boats with multiple sail inventories (genoas, spinnakers, etc) utilize the proper sails for the wind conditions and legs of the course.
- C. OCBC makes no determination with respect to the seaworthiness or safety of the boat rated. The seaworthiness and safety of each boat is the sole responsibility of the owner.

Section 2. IMPLEMENTATION

- A. US SAILING compiles and maintains Portsmouth Yardstick numbers for a wide range of centerboards, multihulls, keelboats and offshore classes that are used for scoring Portsmouth Yardstick races.
- B. At the local level, clubs decide which handicap (HC) scoring method to use: D-PNs, wind velocity handicap numbers or one of the preceding methods with permitted modification factors.

- C. **For OCBC races and regattas, wind velocity handicap numbers are used for centerboards and multihulls.**
The Race Committee records wind strength at the start, mid-race and finish and the average is the wind velocity handicap number used for calculating corrected time.
- D. Appendix B lists the centerboards and multihulls that have participated in OCBC races and regattas and their Portsmouth wind velocity handicap numbers in four (4) wind ranges.

Article V. AMENDMENTS

In accordance with **Article VIII, Section 6** of the **Bylaws of the Oklahoma City Boat Club**, these Bylaws may be amended by the Committee as needed; subject to review and approval by the Board of Governors of the Oklahoma City Boat Club. Amendments to Appendices do not require Board of Governors approval.