

PERFORMANCE HANDICAP RACING FLEET OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

August 28, 2018

SPECIAL FOCUS GROUP MEETING

2019 CORINTHIAN RACER ADJUSTMENT

SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS AND PROPOSALS

On August 28, 2018, the PHRF SoCal Executive Board convened a special focus group to consider changes to the “Corinthian Racer Adjustments” in Appendix F of the PHRF SoCal Rules. The suggestions from that session were refined in a meeting of the Regional Board on September 18. This memo will summarize the changes that were agreed to by the focus group and the Regional Board, and the general membership will have an opportunity to weigh in on these ideas at a special meeting of the SoCal PHRF General Membership at the Long Beach Yacht Club on September 25, 2018.

Before considering the changes, we should review the purpose of the Corinthian Adjustments. Appendix F was enacted in November 2017, in time for the 2018 racing season. The main intent of the Corinthian Adjustment program was to get more cruising-oriented boats out racing in local races even though they carry or use cruising items that put them at a serious speed disadvantage. Prior to this system, their only racing outlet was to enter the Cruising Class in the few races, such as Newport to Ensenada, that offered a cruising class. The intention of the program was not to encourage racers to change equipment for rating gain, though that seems to have happened too often.

The focus group was convened in response to growing concerns among the Membership that the Corinthian Adjustments failed to achieve their stated purpose, and instead they gave unfair advantages to boats that were already racing. The group met to address these concerns in the areas listed on the following page.

The Focus Group and Regional Board Meeting Attendees included the following individuals:

David Weil	Moderator and PHRF SoCal Judge Advocate (Long Beach)
Doug Hosford	PHRF SoCal President (Dana Point)
Jamie Myer	PHRF SoCal Vice-President (Marina Del Rey)
Bob Hubbard	PHRF SoCal Treasurer and Race Chair, Seal Beach Yacht Club
Sue Griesbach	PHRF SoCal Data Systems Manager (Dana Point)
Heinz Butner	PHRF SoCal Area C Chair (Long Beach)
Graham Forsythe	PHRF SoCal Area E/F Chair (Dana Point)
David Trude	PHRF SoCal Area A Chair (Ventura)
Bruce Cooper	PHRF SoCal Advisor and Ullman Sails representative (Newport Beach)
Bryan Dair	PHRF SoCal Advisor and Ullman Sails representative (Long Beach)
Jared Gargano	PHRF SoCal Advisor (Newport Beach)
Dan Rossen	PHRF SoCal Advisor (Newport Beach)
David Haas	PHRF SoCal Newsletter Editor (Seal Beach)
Cole Price	PHRF SoCal Former Chief Handicapper (Long Beach)
Chris Gorog	PHRF SoCal Member (Marina Del Rey)
Robert Langan	PHRF SoCal Member (Dana Point)
Owen Provence	Commodore, Shoreline Yacht Club
Randy Smith	Race Organizer / frequent Principal Race Officer, Long Beach Yacht Club
Karen Campbell	PHRF SoCal Fleet Secretary

The following issues were considered by the focus group, and this list will form the agenda for the September 25 meeting:

1. What kinds of boats are currently participating in the program?
2. Should the program be retained but modified, or should it be scrapped entirely?
3. Should the name of the program change?
4. If the program is retained, should the threshold test of which boats are eligible be modified?
5. Should the individual rating adjustments be broken down into Buoy/RLC/OWC ratings or should we use just one rating adjustment for all 3 ratings, as the system is currently designed?
6. Should the individual rating adjustments be reviewed and changed if necessary?
7. Should a boat be limited to a maximum adjustment regardless of how it is configured?
8. Should adjustments consider the age of certain equipment (such as old Dacron versus new Dacron)
9. Various questions relating to the administration of the program by Race Organizers.
10. Administrative and Implementation concerns.

Findings and Proposals of the Focus Group

1. What kinds of boats are currently participating in the program?

A review of the database revealed that over one-fourth of the current PHRF SoCal membership is participating in the Corinthian program, including over three-fourths of all Hunters and Catalinas. The boats tend to be around 30 feet long with a displacement of around 13,000 pounds. The overwhelming majority of the boats participating in the Corinthian program are in Area B (Marina Del Rey / Redondo Beach) and Area C (Long Beach / Seal Beach / San Pedro).

2. Should the program be retained but modified, or should it be scrapped entirely?

The program has generated a substantial amount of interest. Even with its problems, it has achieved its goal of getting non-racers out on the race course. It should be retained but modified.

3. If the program is retained, should the name of the program be changed?

Most definitely yes. The "Corinthian" name for the program has a bad history. Members who are ineligible consider "Corinthian" boats to be "cheaters," and Race Organizers want to put the boats into a separate "Corinthian" class. The fact that these are simply standard rating adjustments based on a boat's configuration has been lost on a lot of our members. Appendix F should be changed to "CONFIGURATION ADJUSTMENTS."

4. If the program is retained, should the threshold test of which boats are eligible be modified?

Yes. This was the biggest area of concern for the group. Keeping in mind the goals of the program -- to encourage cruising-oriented boats to get out racing -- Who should be eligible for rating adjustments?

The current program uses a phased-cutoff based on the boat's Performance Factor. Boats with a PF that is faster than 2.0 are not eligible, boats with a PF of 1.75 and below are eligible for the full configuration credits offered in the program, and boats with a PF ranging from 1.75 to 2.0 get a diminishing percentage of the stated credits.

There was an initial proposal to keep the Performance Factor as the determining cutoff, but to lower the cutoff to 1.5 or some other number. The group rejected this and instead considered using a boat's Regional RLC rating as the cutoff, since the ratings of all boats are subject to review by the Board and it is a number understood by all members. However, after the Focus Group examined the ratings of the fleet and observed that certain "sport boats" that were never intended for cruising, such as the J70 and Martin 242, would qualify for a Corinthian adjustment under a rating cutoff rule (they rate over 100) whereas they do not currently qualify under the Performance Factor cutoff.

In the end, the group decided to retain the Performance Factor cutoff as it is currently designed, but to require all boats that apply for an adjustment to be reviewed by their Area Board for a "thumbs-up" or "thumbs-down" vote on whether to accept the adjustments. The Area Boards will use their discretion in deciding which boats to accept, but their decision will be guided by the question of whether the boat is a cruising-oriented boat seeking to get into the sport rather than an active racer, and the Boards will consider whether the boat has a majority of the following equipment and configuration factors:

1. Does the boat have a roller furling main?
2. A non-adjustable backstay (i.e. a turnbuckle only)?
3. A jib or genoa track that is non-adjustable under load?
4. A bow thruster?
5. A non-overlapping headsail?
6. A fixed propeller?
7. Halyard winches on the mast?

This list is offered to guide the Area Boards in making their decision, but it is not a hard-and-fast rule. The decision will be based on the Area Board's judgment, subject to a boat owner's right to appeal to the Regional Board. And finally, the Area Boards will only consider whether a boat should be eligible for the program. The amount of the actual adjustment will be calculated by the formulas discussed below.

5. Should the individual rating adjustments be broken down into Buoy/RLC/OWC ratings or should we use just one rating adjustment for all 3 ratings, as the system is currently designed?

The Focus Group and Regional Board both proposed to break the adjustments down based on point of sail. However, our computer system simply cannot accommodate that level of detail without substantial changes. This may change in future versions of the program.

6. Should the individual rating adjustments be reviewed and changed if necessary?

Yes. The focus group recommends the following rating adjustments:

(continued on the next page)

PROPOSED NEW NUMBERS

Propellers

Fixed – 3 Blade Prop (<i>formerly +9 sec adjust</i>)	+9
Fixed - 2 Blade Prop (<i>formerly +6 sec adjust</i>)	+4

Anchor Chain Stored in Bow

At least 100' but less than 200' (<i>formerly +3 sec adjust</i>)	+1
More than 200' (<i>formerly +6 sec adjust</i>)	+2
ALSO: Change description in the rules to specify a Deployable anchor and steel anchor and chain	

Sail Fabric

Dacron Genoa (<i>formerly +6 sec adjust</i>)	
Dacron Main (<i>formerly +6 sec adjust</i>)	
Change the Rule to offer only one credit (rather than a credit for each sail), if main and all upwind headsails are woven dacron	+2

Roller Furling Sails

Roller-Furling Headsails (<i>formerly +6 sec adjust</i>)	0
Roller-Furling Mainsail (no battens) (<i>formerly +9 sec adjust</i>)	+6
Roller-Furling Mainsail (w/battens) (<i>formerly +6 sec adjust</i>)	+5

Largest Genoa Size

135% +3 (<i>formerly +3 sec adjust</i>)	+3
110% +6 (<i>formerly +6 sec adjust</i>)	+6
ALSO: Change description in the rules to specify that This credit is not available for boats that are rated with these smaller sails as a part of their standard configuration	

Spinnaker Tack

Spinnaker tacked to bow or bow roller with no sprit or pole (<i>formerly +6 sec adjust</i>)	+0
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7. Should a boat be limited to a maximum adjustment regardless of how it is configured?
Yes. The cumulative adjustment for any boat shall not exceed twenty percent (20%) of its regional PHRF RLC rating.
8. Should adjustments consider the age of certain equipment (such as old Dacron versus new Dacron)?
No. This is an unenforceable restriction. Further, age by itself is not necessarily a determining factor (such as a racing sail that may be 4 years old but is only used for important regattas). The revised rating adjustments for sail material are much more restrictive than the previous adjustments and the changes should address any remaining concerns about the age of a sail.

9. Various questions relating to the administration of the program by Race Organizers.

- The Corinthian program was not well received by race organizers. They were unsure of the purpose of the program or the proper treatment of these boats. The focus group directed that, in connection with the implementation of these modifications to Appendix F, a comprehensive memo or letter be sent to all SoCal Race Organizers to properly explain the program.
- The focus group considered whether to allow Corinthian racers to have a second certificate with their base rating, for use only when Race Organizers prohibit Corinthian racers from participating. The group decided against the proposal. The concern should be addressed through the Race Organizer letter described above. Nonetheless, the computer system will store the boat's base rating as a separate certificate for reference purposes only.

10. Administrative and Implementation Issues

- Members must continue to apply for the adjustments through the web site as currently structured.
- Implementation of the changes will require the following:
 - o Ratings for boats with 2018 "Corinthian" adjustments will be restored to their base rating prior to their 2019 renewal.
 - o A new "Configuration Adjustment" certificate will then be created for those boats based on the new adjustment numbers as set forth above.
 - o A list of those boats will be forwarded to the Area Boards for consideration.
 - o Upon approval by the Area Board and payment of 2019 fees, the 2019 Configuration Adjustment certificate will be issued, replacing the boat's base rating for 2019.