

OCBC Lake Hefner PHRF Fleet Bylaws

Adopted September 6, 2001 by the Board of Governors of the Oklahoma City Boat Club in accordance with its Constitution and Bylaws.

A. Preamble

Performance Handicap Racing Fleet (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 that his boat is a standard production boat and that all sails, rigging and equipment comply with the standards for that boat. Alternatively, if it is a custom boat, then the displacement and all measurements that could affect the rating must be fully specified on the application for rating and certified as such by the owner. If the boat is raced, not in compliance with the specifications stated in the certificate, the boat can be disqualified under Racing Rules Of Sailing (RRS) #78, and in certain circumstances, the owner could be banned from racing under RRS #69.1 and ISAF Appendix 2, Reg. 21.3(a).

It is the intent of PHRF handicapping that any well-equipped, well-maintained, and well-sailed boat has a good chance of winning. There is an appeal procedure so those handicaps can be adjusted as needed on the basis of the boat's performance. Before the beginning of each season, all ratings shall be re-examined, whether they have been appealed or not.

PHRF ratings are not intended to reflect helmsman or crew capability. Ratings are not adjusted to encourage poor or careless sailing, or to penalize proficiency. Intensity of competition and the influx of new and aggressive sailors require each boat to maintain consistently high performance in order to place well.

Lake Hefner PHRF, like most PHRF systems, applies only to self-righting mono-hulls. Other boats are rated by some other system, presumably the Portsmouth Yardstick system.

PHRF discourages "rule beating". If a boat is modified, its PHRF certificate is invalidated and the owner must get a new certificate. He will be penalized for the use of a taller mast, longer spinnaker pole, extra ballast, gutted interior or other such modifications determined to increase performance.

PHRF assumes that a boat is equipped to race. It does not attempt to rate a partially equipped boat or a boat which differs from others in its class in that it is unusually heavy, out of balance, out of tune, lacking a full complement of sails or carries growth on its bottom. However if the basic hull and rig differ from others in its class, it will be rated uniquely.

PHRF ratings are expressed in seconds per nautical mile to be deducted from elapsed times to produce corrected times. The higher rating indicates 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 Rating Committee.

PHRF handicaps for specified models of unmodified production boats (base ratings) are determined on the assumption that:

1. 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 155% of J. (Staysails must not overlap the main any more than the genoa could.)
5. The boat is in racing condition.
6. If the boat has auxiliary power, it has a folding or feathering propeller or is a retractable outboard motor. There is no penalty for not having a motor.
7. The hull, rig and appendages are unmodified.

An owner may experiment with different ways of improving the performance of his boat. However, if there are changes to hull, rig, sails or other factors upon which the existing certificate is based, they must be reported to the Rating committee and a new certificate must be obtained. If they are not then other contestants may protest. Obtaining a new certificate because of alterations to the boat does not require an appeal, as defined in Section D of these Bylaws.

The above notwithstanding, an owner shall not be permitted to have his certificate changed and his boat re-rated for the purpose of optimizing his configuration and rating for race-to-race variables. The Rating Committee shall use all due diligence to ensure that such applications are disallowed. For example, it may defer any decision on a rating due to a modified certificate for several days or it may refuse such a request entirely, if the request creates the appearance that the owner is attempting, whether knowingly or unknowingly, to violate this provision.

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. Difference in helmsman and crew skill represent a much larger factor than this, probably more than 30 seconds per mile.

There is a provision for base handicaps for certain classes that do not conform to all of the above number rules. These are the ODR (One Design Rig) boats and they must strictly conform to the rules of the particular class. Only certain specified classes are entitled to these handicaps. An owner whose boat is one of those classes entitled to an ODR rating may, in his certificate, either specify ODR or not. If he specifies ODR, then his boat must strictly conform to the class rules of the particular one design class specified. If it does not, then it must strictly conform to the above numbered rules but does not have to conform to the class rules.

B. Rating Certificates

To be scored in any OCBC race in a fleet that is designated as a handicap fleet a self-righting mono-hull must have a PHRF certificate. To get or change a certificate, the owner fills out a form and submits it to a member of the Rating Committee.

If the boat is a standard unmodified production boat that conforms to the above numbered rules, or is an authorized ODR class, then the certificate can be applied for on a simple one-page form that is available from the Rating Committee. By signing such a form, the owner is certifying the boat conforms. It is his responsibility to find out whether or not it does so and what the proper PHRF designation of his standard boat is. Members of the Rating Committee will assist on request.

Owners of modified or custom boats must complete the long form that may involve a substantial amount of measurement, which is the responsibility of the owner.

Once a certificate is issued, it remains valid until the boat is modified or transferred to a new owner. More than one helmsman and/or crew can race using the same certificate.

Boats must be raced in exactly the same configuration specified by their rating certificate.

A rating certificate is issued solely for the purpose of rating the performance potential of the boat described. Neither 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.

C. Procedure for Determining Ratings

Before the beginning of each racing season, the Rating Committee shall review all ratings and adjust individual ratings as it considers necessary.

Standard Production Boats

1. If the most recent Lake Hefner PHRF Master List includes the boat class, then this number shall be taken as the handicap.
2. If the class has not been rated, the Rating Committee shall assign a rating using its best judgment. The Committee shall use its best efforts to rate boats and not sailors; a boat that is exceptionally well sailed shall not be penalized. New designs shall not be given the benefit of the doubt. The Committee may use all the information available to it, including the most recent US Sailing published PHRF handicaps for the same or similar classes.

Modified Production Boats

Starting with the base rating for a standard production boat, the rating must be judiciously adjusted by the Rating Committee for each modification. No credit is given for undersized sails, lack of a spinnaker, etc. The following system of credits and penalties will be used, but it is not exclusive.

Genoa LP greater than 155% of J, up to 165%	-3	
Genoa LP greater than 165% of J		-6
Rig height increased up to 3%		-3
Rig height increased greater than 3%	-6	
Oversize spinnaker pole up to 10% of J	-3	
Oversize spinnaker width up to 200% of pole length	-6	
Spinnaker length up to 105% of forestay	-3	
Outboard motor not retractable	+3	
Fixed two-blade propeller		+3
Fixed three-blade propeller		+6
Shallow draft keel		+6
Modified keel		-6

Modifications not covered above will be rated under paragraph 2 of "Standard Production Boats."

Custom or Unrated Production Boats

A boat not listed in the current PHRF Fleet Handbook is not a standard production boat and is rated under paragraph 2 of "Standard Production Boats."

D. Appeals

Any person holding a certificate may appeal to the Rating Committee for a change to his own rating or any other boat's rating or certificate. The appeal petition may contain a statement of reasons for the proposed change, and must be in writing. Official Notice of Appeal must be submitted by the appellant for publication in "Ye Logge" and presented to the Chairman of the Rating Committee prior to the publication deadline so as to be published in the next "Ye Logge." The date for the hearing will be announced at the next OCBC general membership meeting after publication in "Ye Logge." A courtesy listing of appeals and hearings may be posted on the OCBC web site's PHRF section.

The hearing will be held within thirty (30) days after the publication date. All interested parties may appear and be heard, subject to the rules of order, sportsmanship and decorum. A party may document or argue his views if he wishes but the Rating Committee will render a decision based on all the information available to it. There is no burden of proof.

The hearing will be conducted by the Rating Committee Chairman or by his designated alternate. At least two (2) additional members of the Rating 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.

No member of the Rating Committee may vote on his own boat. However, any member of the Rating Committee may appeal the rating or certificate of any boat.

As an example of some of the kinds of evidence and argument that might be considered in an appeal, the following list is included for the information of the certificate holders:

1. The opinion of a skilled and impartial observer of the boat in question sailing against other boats, whether or not in a race, may be a determining factor in predicting performance, if the observed boats were comparably sailed, equipped and maintained.
2. Hull lines and specifications being similar to boats with known PHRF ratings may be helpful.
3. Rig and sail measurements being similar to a boat with known PHRF rating may be helpful.
4. Sometimes one can isolate one or more similarly designed boats with known PHRF ratings whose specifications indicate a somewhat faster or slower performance. Then a rating for the boat in question can be inferred between the two known ratings.
5. The designer's reputation and record for producing high performance boats may provide a clue to performance.
6. Ratings from other fleets having similar racing conditions may be helpful.
7. MHS rating certificates of the boat in question and a boat of known PHRF rating can be used to calculate a PHRF rating and can be of value. IOR and MORC ratings would be relevant but less valuable.

Protests for illegal equipment or against PHRF certificates during a race are handled by the Protest Committee and are not within the scope of this appeals process.

E. Miscellaneous

1. **Provisional Ratings** Any member of the Rating Committee may assign a provisional rating in exceptional cases, without a hearing or certificate. But any race result based on such rating is subject to protest and, if the rating is found to be erroneous after notice and hearing, all race results affected shall be appropriately adjusted as well as the awards of prizes.
2. **Other procedures** Except where inconsistent with these Bylaws, the recommended procedures in the PHRF Fleet Handbook published by US Sailing will control.
3. **Rating Committee**. The Chairman of the Rating Committee shall be appointed by the Commodore of the Oklahoma City Boat Club and approved by the Board of Governors. The Committee shall consist of a chairman, at least three (3) additional members and, to ensure continuity, the preceding year's committee chairman. If the preceding year's chairman is unable to serve, the Commodore shall select another member of the preceding year's committee to serve in the previous chairman's place.
4. **Amendments** In accordance with **Article VIII, Section 6** of the Bylaws of the Oklahoma City Boat Club, these Bylaws may be amended by the Rating Committee as needed, subject to review and approval by the Board of Governors of the Oklahoma City Boat Club.