

## Gaffers Handicapping

The sailing 'Committee' have been looking at our current handicap system over the past couple of years as question have been raised about its suitability or fairness considering some of the new boats we have at our races. The Current OGA rating handicap formula does not really cater for all of the boats that race with us.

To many of our association members sailing handicaps seems to be a bit of a mystery. The OGA handicap is based on the old Channel Handicap which was developed in the 1950's. Boats tended to be generally heavy displacement. The formula used a series of measurement which would include length(LOD), beam, sail area or fore triangle and "d" the depth of the boat. This formula was used up until the middle of the 1980's when the formula was modified to make some allowance for GRP construction where the "d" measurement skewed the formula. It has remained the same since then with minor adjustment for propeller configuration.

Below is the Rating formula we use now

$$\text{Measured Rating} = MR = 0.15 \left( \frac{L \times S}{\sqrt{B} \times 0.67B} \right) + 0.2(L + S)$$

Where  $L = \frac{LOD+LWL}{2}$  B = Max Beam, S = Corrected sail area (Allowance sloop 100%,

Cutter = 96%, Yawl 94%, Schooner =92%, Ketch = 90%.

Final rating R = MR – (prop allowance X MR). Prop allowance None =0%, folding = 1.5%, fixed=3%.

$$T(H)CF = 0.125 (3 + \sqrt{R}) \text{ where } R = \text{Rating}$$

Last year we looked at the new RYA NHC handicapping system to see if it would be suitable for the association's needs. Unfortunately the system is still in its infancy and many clubs using it have expressed its limitations. The NHC is a performance based system as opposed to a purely rating system that we have now.

Fifty years on and we still have the heavyweight boats many now rebuilt and as good as new but also we have a newer breed that tend to be lighter weight with large efficient sail areas. It is these newer boats that do not effectively fit the formula. Some of these boats include

Shrimpers, Memorys, Swallow Boats, Roxane, Romily type and Cape Cutters.

To anyone who has looked at boats performance it will be no surprise that displacement works against hull speed and sail area helps it.

If one compares a Deben 4 tonner with 3.31 tons displacement versus a Swallow 24 displacement 1.25 tons both with the same sail area. The Deben 4 has to give the Swallow time!!! SA/D ratio of 91.5 to 205 for the swallow. Even greater if the ballast is pumped out.