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# STARTING LINE

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## From the Commodore



### From the Commodore

Congratulations are in order for all the trophy winners at the Awards Banquet, held at Kell's Pub downtown. I think we all enjoyed an evening of camaraderie and fun with our sailing friends. Of course, we celebrate the race winners, but all of you who make the effort to get out on the race course should be congratulated, too. It's way easier to stay tied to the dock than to get in the game. Just getting a boat and crew to the starting line takes more effort than many people are willing to muster. Special recognition goes to Jan Burkhart for the US Sailing Sportsmanship award. Jan always arrives

Our Commodore,  
Warren Dalby.

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with a smile and boundless, positive energy. Recognition also goes to SYSCO Sailor of the Year, Gary Bruner. Gary doesn't just go the extra mile to make our corner of the sailing world a better place, he goes many extra miles. And the lovely and really smart Jacqueline Pitter deserves our thanks for organizing the whole party. It's not any easy job, but she makes it seem so.

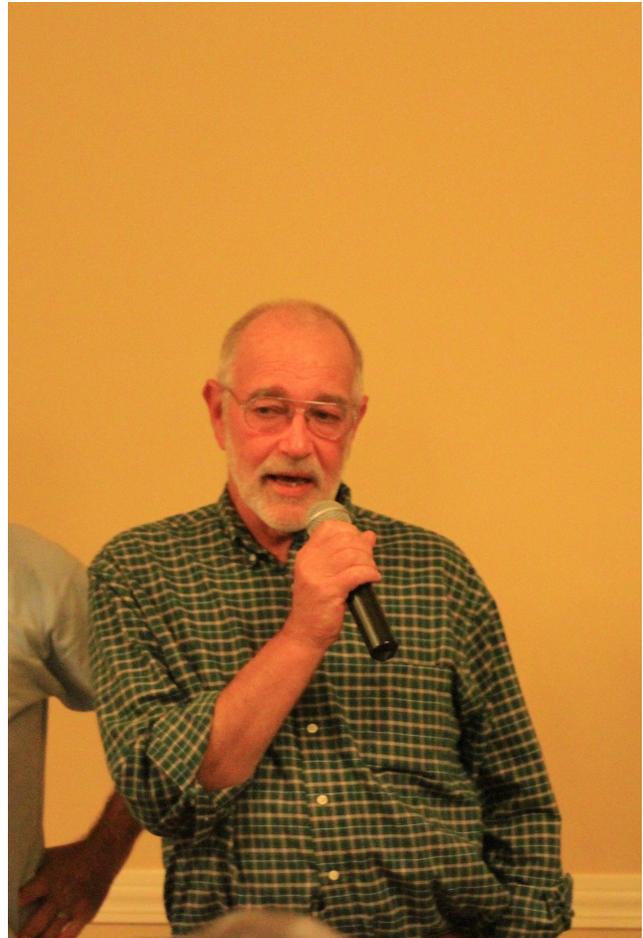
At the November annual meeting, your 2015 Board members were elected. Tod Bassham will be your Commodore. You will be in good hands with Troublemaker Tod, and I'm sure the year won't be boring. Troublemaker is an unending volcano of new ideas. Don Woodhouse and Gary Bruner will share co-secretary duties. Bruce Newton will take over the SYSCO fortune as your treasurer. I will slide over into the Rear Commodore spot. What is missing is the Race-

Captain/Vice-Commodore candidate. If you have any ideas on who would be good, let us know.

**“As with most racing topics, skippers have strong and opposing viewpoints”**

Past SYSCO Commodores tell me that every few years the question of why SYSCO organizes races by level fleets and not PHRF pops up. Apparently it's time for this question to surface again, because it has. As with most racing topics, skippers have strong and opposing viewpoints, and this kerfuffle is no exception. Tod has put together a piece on what we think are the pros and cons of level verses PHRF, which you will find in this newsletter. We would like to survey our entire membership, but we really need to hear from those of you who would be most affected by a change to PHRF: the A, B, E, and F fleet boats. Cruising class and the one design fleets would NOT be changed, but I'm sure those skippers will have an opinion, too.

Warren Dalby



**Congratulations to Gary Bruner, Sailor of the Year!**



## Level or PHRF? Why Not Both?

Tod Bassham, Vice-Commodore

From its beginning in 1978, a distinctive feature of SYSCO racing has always been level fleet racing, where small groups of similarly rated boats race level against each other with no handicaps. There were several good reasons for racing level rather than handicap. Some of those reasons are still valid today, some are less so. Over the years there have been many discussions about whether SYSCO should join the rest of the world in using a handicapped system such as PHRF. I would like to argue that it is possible to have our cake and eat it too: SYSCO can offer both level and handicapped racing, and let fleets choose which they prefer. It is not a choice between level racing or PHRF; we can have both.

In fact, many SYSCO members have already expressed a preference. In Summer SYSCO, almost all of the boats in Tuesday evening A, B, E and F fleets had PHRF-NW certificates, even though SYSCO did not require them. From that, and from conversations with some of those skippers, I suspect that most if not all of those skippers would prefer to race handicap rather than level. By contrast, almost none of the boats in the Thursday evening no-fly Cruising Classes had PHRF-NW certificates. Evidently, the skippers in the Cruising classes prefer to race level rather than handicap. *Vive le difference!*

So, the current reality is that mixed fleet skippers have already voted with their feet and sorted themselves into two groups: those who prefer racing spinnaker under handicap and those who prefer racing no fly in a level class. My proposal is basically to recognize those preferences. I think we should allow the Tuesday night A, B, E and F fleets to score their races under PHRF handicaps rather than level, while continuing to race the Thursday Cruising classes as level.

The upside to this proposal is that it will make racing more enjoyable for skippers in A, B, E and F fleets, and possibly encourage new members to join (die-hards who refuse to race level). A possible bonus is that, for the first time ever, SYSCO races will count towards the OCSA Participation Trophy. Any real downsides? As far as I can tell, not much. Cruising class would not be affected and would continue to race level, as would one-design. There might be a few skippers currently in A, B, E or F fleets who prefer racing spinnaker but want to continue racing level. If so, we could create a spinnaker level class for them.

One of the traditional arguments against PHRF racing was that it requires extra work for the Race Committee or Race Captain. This used to be true under Time on Distance scoring, but is not true under current Time on Time scoring. SYSCO already records finishing times, so there would be no extra work for race committee. The only extra work I can think of is that the Race Captain would have to check that entrants in handicapped fleets have current PHRF-NW certificates, but that is not a big hassle, and something that must be done anyway for Dual Bridge Duel, which currently is SYSCO's only PHRF event. (Note that DBD is also one of SYSCO's most

popular events, attracting a number of non-SYSCO members. One reason for its popularity, I believe, is that it offers both PHRF and level (cruising class) racing.

One of the good arguments for level racing has been that it reduces barriers for new or inexperienced racers. This aspect is preserved under this proposal: new or inexperienced racers can race in Cruising class without bothering to obtain a handicapped rating. Later, if they want a different kind of competition, they can join a spinnaker or handicapped class. The choice is theirs.

The current bylaws limit SYSCO to one handicapped event per season, so this proposal would need a majority vote of the membership to amend the bylaws to allow SYSCO to provide more than one handicapped event per year. This vote will likely occur at the next meeting on December 1, 2014, at 7:00 p.m. at the Delta Park Elmer's restaurant. In the meantime, SYSCO is circulating a survey to members via e-mail to obtain your views on the topic. It will take about 10 seconds to participate. Please respond to the survey, or if you want to provide more detailed feedback, send me an e-mail at [race\\_captain@syscosailing.org](mailto:race_captain@syscosailing.org).

As for me, the question is not PHRF or Level. The question is why not both?

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### PHRF Q and A

Your SYSCO Board is considering a proposal by some members of A, B, E and F fleets to amend the Bylaws to allow those fleets to score their races using PHRF handicaps rather than level. This proposal would not affect other SYSCO fleets, such as the one-design fleets or the Cruising class fleets, which would continue to be scored one-design or level.

SYSCO is all about the fleets and what its members want, so the perspective of the SYSCO Board is that if certain fleets want to score their races PHRF, then that desire should be accommodated if it does not cause harm to the club or other fleets. The Board is conducting a survey and talking with members to find out whether a majority of members want this change, or if the change would cause any harm to the club or to any fleet. To provide your input, please answer the survey e-mailed to you or e-mail Tod Bassham at [race\\_captain@syscosailing.org](mailto:race_captain@syscosailing.org).

Below, the Board provides responses to some of the questions or objections raised.

1. SYSCO has been doing level racing for 36 years, why change?

Because members of some fleets (A, B, E and F) believe that PHRF scoring provides a more fair and more fun racing experience compared to level scoring. If we can make fleets happier without harming the club or other fleets, we should.

2. I'm in a one design or cruising class fleet. Would this change affect me?

No. However, some members of your fleet may be tempted to try racing PHRF. Or not. It's a matter

of choice.

3. I don't like PHRF. It is expensive, getting a rating is a hassle, and I can't immediately tell by finish order who won the race.

It's a matter of preference. Some people really like PHRF. In SYSCO Summer this year, 15 of 18 boats in A, B, E and F fleets had a current PHRF certificate, even though SYSCO did not require it. Some skippers clearly think it is worthwhile to get a PHRF certificate, despite the extra expense and hassle. As to knowing the finish order, those familiar with PHRF ratings can usually tell who is ahead on corrected time by a glance at the watch and a quick calculation.

4. I am one of the members of A, B, E or F fleet that does not have a PHRF certificate, and I would prefer to race level. What are my options if A, B, E and F fleets convert to PHRF?

First, you can decide to get a PHRF certificate anyway and continue to race with A, B, E or F fleet. As a bonus, that would allow you to race PHRF in the many other races that other clubs run on the river. Second, you could decide to join one of the cruising fleets, which race level (but without a spinnaker). Third, if there are at least three boats that would prefer to race level with a spinnaker, SYSCO could create or retain a level spinnaker fleet just for those boats. For example, if at least three boats in F fleet wish to remain a level fleet, SYSCO would attempt to accommodate their wishes.

5. What are the upsides to this proposal?

First, those SYSCO members who prefer PHRF scoring will have a better racing experience. Second, the club may gain some new members or participants who for whatever reason dislike level racing and refuse to race in SYSCO events for that reason. One of the most popular SYSCO events is the Dual Bridge Duel, which is SYSCO's only PHRF race, and one reason for its popularity may be that it allows both PHRF and level racing. Third, if OCSA approves, SYSCO races may become eligible for scoring in the OCSA Performance Trophy. Fourth, PHRF fleets tend to be larger than level fleets, so this proposal may result in fleet consolidation and larger fleets. For example, we may wind up with PHRF A, B and C fleets, instead of Level A, B, E and F. All other things being equal, a larger fleet is a stronger and more fun fleet.

6. What are the possible downsides of this proposal?

First, those boats that race in PHRF fleets will be required to obtain a PHRF-NW certificate, which costs \$45 per year. Most of the boats in those fleets get certificates anyway (in order to race in other clubs' events), so for those boats there should be no additional expense or hassle. However, any boats without certificates will be required to either obtain a certificate or find a level fleet. Second, the Race Captain will be required to confirm that each racer in a PHRF fleet has a current PHRF-NW certificate. This is done on-line and is not very time-consuming, but it is an extra step. Third,

although SYSCO Race Committees already record finish times, which is usually all that is needed to score PHRF, there may be additional stress on Race Committees to record time accurately.

7. How would this change be accomplished?

Currently, SYSCO's Bylaws limit SYSCO to one PHRF event (the Dual Bridge Duel), so this proposal requires amending the Bylaws to remove that restriction, which requires a majority vote of the members at a special meeting. Due to Race Book deadlines, the last opportunity to hold a special meeting will be the December 1, 2014 meeting.

## OCSA RaceBook Goes On-Line

In September, the Oregon Corinthian Sailing Association (OCSA)—the volunteer umbrella organization that coordinates racing events among the four Portland-area racing clubs—decided that next year the RaceBook will be available for free on sailpdx.org. At this point, you are probably asking yourself: “Self, selling the RaceBook is how OCSA pays for all the many wonderful services that make racing happen on the river: the sailpdx.org website, the race calendar, NORs, General Instructions, educational seminars, protest committee, Otto Horn, the Tropical Party, etc. What will happen to the services we depend upon if OCSA goes bankrupt giving away the RaceBook for free?”

Glad you asked. Thankfully, OCSA will continue to provide all the services we depend upon. The big difference is that you, gentle reader, can save some money on OCSA membership. Here's how it will work.

In the old days (i.e., 2014), when you paid \$25 for OCSA membership you got a physical copy of the RaceBook and the Course Chart. A portion of the \$25 membership fee paid for all the OCSA services, while another portion paid the cost of printing the RaceBook and Course Chart. But if you lost your RaceBook or left it at home, you were SOL. In the future (i.e., 2015), the RaceBook and Course Chart will be available on-line, and can be downloaded to devices and go everywhere with you. Moreover, OCSA will now save much of the cost of printing, and can pass that savings on to you. How much savings? Not sure yet, but the cost of membership will probably be reduced to somewhere under \$20 per year. There will be several ways to renew your OCSA membership, but one easy way will be to renew at the Boat Show, at SYSCO Fleet Night in January, or at the SYSCO Race Clinic in March. Later, when you register for a race on Regatta Network, you simply indicate that you are an OCSA member in good standing, and you're good to go.

Now, let's answer some probing questions from our readers:

**Q:** Free RaceBook on-line? Not that I would ever do this, but what would keep me from just down-loading the RaceBook, getting all the info I need to race, and then racing all summer without paying OCSA a dime? Freebies! Whoo-hoo!

**A:** You're absolutely right that no sailor would ever think of taking advantage of this deal to avoid paying for OCSA services. We are a clean and wholesome bunch, who never swear, drink, or pee off the transom. But, hypothetically, let's say that a sailor absent-mindedly forgets to renew

her OCSA membership. The simple answer is that until she renews her OCSA membership that she will not be able to race in any local regatta or series. Basically, the four area racing clubs (SYSCO, CYC, PYC and RCYC) have agreed to allow only OCSA members to race in their events. When someone registers for a local race on Regatta Network, she will certify that she is a current OCSA member. If it happens that she is not a current OCSA member, then the host club will not score her or allow her to race until she renews her OCSA membership.

Q: Oh. Well, what happens if my cousin Vinny sails into town from Hood River and wants to race just one regatta or race series. Does he have to buy a full OCSA membership for one race?

A: Not necessarily. If Vinny wants to register for just one regatta or race series, he can pay an extra fee when registering, probably around \$10, for “temporary” OCSA membership, good for just that regatta or race series. The fee would be paid to the registering club, and then passed on to OCSA. Obviously, if Vinny plans to race two or more regattas or series, it would make more sense to pay for the full OCSA membership, which as mentioned, will probably cost less than \$20 per year.

Q: Having the RaceBook and Course Chart in .pdf format will make it easy to download onto my devices and access them wherever I go. But I like having a physical RaceBook, with a laminated Course Chart. Can I still get those?

A: Yes. OCSA will print up a limited supply of carbon-based RaceBooks and laminated Course Charts, and will sell those separately to those who want them, basically for the cost of printing.

Q: Sounds good. I guess I should thank OCSA and its constituent clubs for taking local racing into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and maybe saving me a little money.

A: You’re welcome.

Q: I didn’t *say* thank you, I just said I *should* thank you.

A: Yeah, we picked up on that. But you’re still welcome.

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### Endangered Kittens and Other Adventures of a SYSCO Race Captain

One of the many thrills of being SYSCO Race Captain is that you never know what the day will bring. A perfect example happened the day before the Leukemia Cup, when I went down to put Otto Horn on Pancho and to prep the boat for the regatta. I heaved Otto aboard and prepared to follow when a plaintive squeek stopped me plunking my foot down. Curled up on the floor were four adorable black kittens, eyes open, mewling for their mother. I assumed mama cat had parked them there last night, and would be back soon, so I left them there undisturbed. I did, however, send an e-mail to the RC crew, with a cc to Gary Bruner, whose boat was in the next slip, alerting them to the situation and suggesting that if mama had not moved them by race time that maybe the RC crew could gently put them in Gary’s cockpit, and would he mind?



Gary didn't mind, but he had alarming news. He related that when he and Pancho Engineer Joe Hoffman had gone down to the boatyard to de-winterize and launch Pancho, a black cat had leaped out from under the tarp. Gary realized that the kittens had likely been on board Pancho the whole time while the two drove the boat down the road to the launch ramp, launched the boat, and motored it to the slip in Tomahawk Bay. The odds of re-uniting mama cat and her kittens were now next to nil.

At SYSCO World Headquarters the alert level went to Defcon 5, and CINC-SYSCO ordered the club's crack Rescue Squad recalled from the Persian Gulf and deployed into action. Covered by F-15s scrambled from PDX, a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter ferried Joe and his daughter to Tomahawk Bay, where they rappelled down into Pancho, and managed to extract the kittens moments before they would have been squashed underfoot by the eager race committee crew. The kittens were then taken to the Humane Society, where they will be put up for adoption in some comfortable domicile. Well done, guys!

Yes, just an ordinary day in the life of a SYSCO Race Captain. What's that? How can *you* become SYSCO Race Captain, and go around coordinating the rescue of adorable kittens? Well, let's see if you meet the stringent minimum qualifications. Do you have a pulse? Are you now, or have you ever been, a carbon-based life-form? If you answered yes to at least one of these questions, then you qualify! All you have to do to become the next SYSCO Race Captain is show up at the meeting in December without too much drool on your chin, and the odds are pretty good that you will be unanimously elected as the next Race Captain. Heck, if I can do it, anyone can!

Come to think of it, SYSCO also needs a bunch of other positions filled for 2015, like Pancho engineer and social chair. Unlike Race Captain, these positions require some actual skills. But here is the cool thing about this great club of ours: we got each other's backs. There is so much experience and can-do spirit in this club, if help is needed, then people pitch in, whether the need is to rescue kittens or to balance the club's checkbook. For 36 years, this club has always been there when you need it. Are you there when the club needs *you*? Volunteer today!



Ailona Dundore. (October 20, 2014). SYSCO Celebrates Thirty-Six. In <http://www.sailpdx.org/>. Retrieved November 13, 2014, from <http://www.sailpdx.org/sysco-celebrates-36>

## **SYSCO Celebrates Thirty-Six**

The 36th Annual SYSCO (Small Yacht Sailing Club of Oregon) Awards Party took place on October 18th at Portland's Kells Irish Pub. Over 100 sailors, friends and family celebrated the accomplishments of fellow racers.

Huge kudos go to the following 2014 trophy and first-place award winners!

SYSCO Sailor of the Year: Gary Bruner

SYSCO Commodore's Trophy: Warren Dalby

SYSCO/U.S. Sailing Sportsmanship Award: Jan Burkhart

**PHRF**

A-1 Fleet

SYSCO Spring Series: Myst, Rod Buck

SYCSO Summer Series: Panama Red, Chris Schweiger

A-2 Fleet

SYSCO Spring Series: Yeah Baby, Michael Pitarresi

SYSCO Summer Series: Elixir, Mark Fischer

A Fleet

SYSCO Dual Bridge Duel: Panama Red, Chris Schweiger

B Fleet

SYSCO Summer Series: Kokopelli, Eric Collins

SYSCO Dual Bridge Duel: Yeah Baby, Michael Pitarresi

E Fleet

SYSCO Spring Series, SYCSO Summer Series: Pajema, James Shaw

SYSCO Dual Bridge Duel: Knuckle Buster, Jim Severs

F Fleet

SYSCO Spring Series, SYSCO Dual Bridge Duel: Lipstick, Bill Brennan/Todd Boire

SYSCO Summer Series: Blew Streak, Gary Kapezynski

H Fleet

SYSCO Dual Bridge Duel: Milagro, Marv Dunn

I Fleet

SYSCO Spring Series, SYCSO Summer Series, SYSCO Dual Bridge Duel: Dennis Winner (31R)

**One-Design**

### Cal 20 Fleet

SYSCO Spring Series, SYSCO Summer Series, SYSCO Dual Bridge Duel: Check Ride, Jim Cullison

### Catalina 22

SYSCO Spring Series: Togarty, Don Woodhouse

SYSCO Summer Series: Celeste, Weston Becker

### J-24 Fleet

SYSCO Spring Series: Star Eyed Stella, Ryan Rodgers

SYSCO Summer Series: Bite Me, Phillip Campagna

### Martin 24x Fleet

SYSCO Spring Series, SYSCO Dual Bridge Duel: Apple Pi, Rock Kent

SYSCO Summer Series: Bad Habit, Karen Anderson

### Merit 25 Fleet

SYSCO Spring Series: Raicilla, Randy Poff

SYSCO Summer Series: Paradox, Rhys Balmer

SYSCO Dual Bridge Dual: Nausicaa, Tod Bassham

### Ranger 20 Fleet

SYSCO Spring Series: Flying Frog, Gregg Bryden

SYSCO Summer Series: Papagayo, Michael Barth

SYSCO Dual Bridge Dual: Dannebrog, Ron Fairley

### Cruising

#### A Fleet

SYSCO Spring Series: Blue Fin, Frank Bocarde

SYSCO Summer Series: Amaretto, Jeffrey Crass

#### B Fleet

SYSCO Spring Series, SYSCO Summer Series: Second Half, Warren Dalby

## C Fleet

SYSCO Spring Series: La Dolce Vita, Scott Stevenson

SYSCO Summer Series: Estrella Del Mar, Michael Nance

## D Fleet

SYSCO Summer Series: Trane, Jim Caldwell

## General

SYSCO Dual Bridge Duel: Second Half, Warren Dalby

Detailed results for 2014 SYSCO races can be viewed at [SailPDX Race Results](#).

## **SYSCO Meeting 10/06/2014**

Present; Jackie Pitter , George Brown , Mike Daly , Bill Sanborn , Gary Bruner , Warren Dalby , Frank Colistro , Scott Stevenson , Jan Burkhart , Tod Bassham , Don Woodhouse

### **Banquet**

The main item of business was the upcoming banquet at Kell's Irish Pub. Each Fleet needs to be reminded to provide a door prize for the event. People who are receiving an award and have not yet registered through Regatta Network will be contacted and urges to come . Warren will distribute the names amongst the board members so they can make contacts. During the banquet we will advertise the open board positions and recruit for next year.

### **Race Book**

OCSA is changing to an "On-Line Racebook" for next year. It will reduce the cost of the membership although a hard copy will be available for an additional fee. We support the new format as a group. We recognize that in the past our "Fleet Night" was an opportunity to meet , preseason and collect our racebooks. We are looking into providing more program content to our "Fleet Night" to make up for the lack of printed racebooks.

### **Budget**

No report.

### **Pancho**

No report, except for an interesting story about kittens that will be shared elsewhere.

### **Membership**

We have 127 members. No new , but some renewals . A short discussion ensued about what the trend is of membership and their desires from SYSCO. Basically it appears they want racing to be administered by SYSCO.

adjourned 8:00 pm

Minutes by Don Woodhouse



**SYSCO Minutes 11/03/2014**

In attendance were Warren Dalby, Bill Sanborn, Gary Bruner, Mike Daly, Jim Severs, Tod Bassham, Don Woodhouse, Rhys Balmer, Dave Paligo, Bruce Newton, Michael Nance, Liz Nance, Phil Campagna, Kerry Poe

The first agenda item was the Awards Banquet Recap. The item was tabled until Jaqueline Pitter could be present.

Next was the Budget- We are basically in good shape and a copy of the budget report was distributed.

Membership- One new member was voted in. Michael Morrisy of OB1

Boat Show- A lively discussion of the merits of doing the Boat Show broke out. We thought as a group we could provide more content at the SYSCO booth. Possibilities include promoting Youth Sailing, Offering a Crew List Sign-up Sheet and promoting Coaching for Sailors. Tod Bassham, Mike Daly and Jim Severs volunteered to work on the Boat Show content.

**Elections to the 2015 Board**

Commodore - Tod Bassham

Secretary - Don Woodhouse/Gary Bruner

Treasurer - Bruce Newton

Vice Commodore/Race Captain - open

Rear Commodore - Warren Dalby

Other - 2015 Duel Bridge Dual might have a shorter "half-marathon" option, Other "Fun Races" proposed for next year. "Daylight Dash" could correspond with the beginning of Daylight Savings Time and have a "safety component" of required MOB drills during the race. Other ideas were "Buoy unexpected", where the roundings are announced via VHF after the race has started. We would need to collect a marginal fee \$2 or so to cover Regatta Network expenses for these events.

More other- It was discussed and agreed that we should try moving a few, like 5 Beer Can races to the Weekends rather than Friday nights and have "Themes" like "Pirate Night", "Toga", "Sports Team" etc. The thought is that Friday night road traffic makes the getting to the evening races anything but fun. Based on the success of Sailing on Sundays and failure of registration for two day weekend regattas, this seems like a viable option.

Even more Other- PHRF scoring. The conversation followed these lines. We will discuss PHRF scoring for next year for the A,B,E,F Fleets. There would be no change for the one design and

cruising fleets. We already record times and most already have been rated by PHRF. This discussion was initiated by E&F Fleet skippers. The final decision was to take a select survey and analyze the results . A change to PHRF would require a rewrite of the clubs bylaws.

Respectfully Submitted

Don Woodhouse