

## Pacific Northwest Handicapping Survey – 2017

Can we find an area that is thriving and copy some ideas?

SH or DH divisions for all races. Please.....

The best boats are untouchable. Id love to spend a year on a rotation through experienced boats so I can learn how to race properly and gain enough confidence to campaign a boat of my own.

Like other recreational sports, sailing is dealing with the demographics issue of participants getting older. Also, the availability of non-sailing activities in the NW makes participation and crew scheduling more difficult (i.e. I want to do other activities (hiking, climbing, cycling, travel, etc.) as does my crew). Basically, not enough time to do everything! Cost is also an issue. The new sail restrictions of one-design classes such as J/105 is attractive.

PHRF NW (no idea if BC also) need to listen, not dictate.

I actually think less can be more. We have so many events all competing for interest/participation that things get watered down. I have to pick and choose when I get to sail very carefully, because I work most weekends. That means I'm going to try to get to the big events where there are lots of boats and high level competition. Youth sailing is booming because they've figured out a good formula and balanced schedule. Keep focus on racing and really cater to the middle of the fleet. Get rid of expensive dinners, prizes, etc. Spend the extra on a couple kegs of Rainier and sailors will figure out the rest of the "social activities."

You are correct, the number has fallen off. The cruising classes (spinnaker and non spinnaker) were growing, in fact for the Southern Sound Series, they were the largest classes, but now they have leveled off in numbers. This may indicate that the \$60 PHRF dues may not be as much of a deterrent as some have speculated and that low key (no spinnaker death rolls) races may have increased the numbers, but now they are leveled off. It takes a one-on-one encouragement, old skipper to new skipper, to increase the numbers, I think.

One reason that I give people that ask about racing (& cruising) is that it gives me a reason to use my boat as opposed to leaving it in the marina all the time. Reminding people that they have a easily accessible way to have fun might encourage them to go out more. Finding reliable crew is a big problem. We have a notice for people looking for or wanting to crew, but that system is rarely used. Another thing I tell people is that it is cheap to be crew- show up & bring beer or snacks.

Race Chairs can be more proactive in encouraging skippers to go out & help them line up crew.

Stop with just windward leeward. Make the day shorter on the water. Increase Destination Double handed racing.

Over the years I've helped out newbies with getting their boats sorted for racing and I am usually appalled at how they are "welcomed" by the fleets in which they race. It seems to me that there's a bit of a freeze-out to new sailors around here, especially new boat owners interested in racing, and it takes a bit of determination on the part of the new owner to muscle through it. It's like a hazing ritual or something, and that sort of thing needs to stop. I think the sport needs rookie rallies. Organized regattas where experienced volunteer owners/skippers are paired with new owners for a weekend to help them get the hang of the racing structure and rules. For a new owner it's insanely intimidating to mix it up on a start line with a bunch of boats in close proximity, and some practice with some calm heads aboard to help them through the process would help a lot. In the same venue, new aspiring crew can be placed on established race boats where they can learn how things are done. New owners could sail on one course, and established

boats on another to keep things balanced. The days should start early, the racing should not be too intense, and it should end early so that a social hour could expect maximum attendance, giving the newbies a chance to meet and get to know the established sailors. I know of plenty of sailors who help new crew and owners, so the volunteers are almost certainly there, but it would need to be organized.

I'm just starting to get back into PHRF racing from One Design dinghies (which I will still do). My early reaction to the small fleets is it makes racing in a fleet with a large points spread frustrating. When we were the slowest boat by a lot in our fleet at PITCH we have to race by a different set of tactics than racing the boats in the fleet, it usually meant going the wrong way just to avoid getting rolled by a fleet of larger, faster boats. I think that's why I will be focusing on the distance races in the PHRF fleet and stick to one design around the buoy's. Still wrapping my head around the whole PHRF thing and developing an opinion.

If you want greater participation you have to go out of your way to be friendly to the competition. If you see a new boat in your class welcome them to the fleet. Seek them out after the race and get to know them. We all like to be recognized and feel a part of the group. What better way than to congratulate a boat that just kicked your ass off. If you are obviously having fun it is contagious. If you are just bitching all the time it is a turn off for everyone. If you are the top dog in your fleet, tell the competition how their improvement is making it more fun to you, and to keep it up. Ask them to crew for you in a race. It is all about making the other guy feel good. Give it a try.

I find it discouraging that an older boat takes such a significant PHRF handicap hit when upgraded and improved in order to be more competitive with the newer more "turbo" style boats. I feel that our handicap system should encourage people to do what they can to stay competitive with what they have, and work with boat owners with a revised PHRF rating that keeps them in the game. I plan to sell my boat because I can't hang with a small fractional spinnaker. If I could turbo my boat without being assigned a completely different rating, that now makes it so I am not competitive with corrected time, I would keep my boat.

I'm having fun sailing and wish I had even more time to do this.

We race very regularly. There are two reasons that are frustrating. 1. Melges 24 racing phrase and not carrying safety gear and the yacht club not rating the correctly when they don't carry a motor off back if boat. 2. PHRF reps at Bellingham are basically not consistent- we have to go out of town to get fair review. And since Abraham Lincoln and George Washington (Ed. Note – not their real names) are friends and race together....well if you are smart you get it. People up here are sick of the bullshit. Sorry for venting. It's just turning slot of people off.

I gave up with PHRF and now have a J105. But PHRF is not the problem. The "fun" races seem to be the big draw, as you pointed out. So maybe more of those. STYC seems to be doing a great job with that. And I think there are too many races, so participation for each one is less. So more "fun" races and fewer CSS, Tri Is/Pt, PSSR, PSSC, Pods, or whatever. Thanks for asking. Keep up the good work Kurt.

As a Junior Sailing Director there are two elements that might help, long term, with more PHRF racing: 1) community support and information of summer and high school racing - bring those kids into the game, provide fast dinghy races, encourage them as crew, and 2) get local news media to cover the events. We communicate via social media, but there are so many great people and stories that are not being told to those outside the sailing community.

We have to get people sailing before they begin racing. To promote sailing, take newbies and get them sailing. There are hundreds of boats sitting in marinas not getting out. What we need to do is to get those idle boats out there on the course. But how? First find out why they're not getting out there and second, find out what kind of enticement would get them to join us. Many venues have a cruising class, maybe it's time for an old rags class as well. Just about every sailor tries to go

faster when at the helm, or tries to get ahead of that boat over there even when cruising. Take cruisers and get them racing. In short, with the right events just regular sailors could be turned into at least part time racers. The sailboat industry spends very little money in the grand scheme of things selling itself. And that money that is spent is spent in sailing magazines and other related venues, like boat shows. People out side of the sport don't see it. We need to do a lot more cross marketing with other sports where people are likely to embrace the sailing lifestyle. We have a good product to sell, and great ways to sell it. Even Clive Fesler, who is credited with saving Harley Davidson, told Sail America, he learned everything he knows about marketing from Hobie Alter, and he modeled Harley's come back on Hobie. So, how are we supposed to figure out what will motivate non-sailors to try the sport? We have no perspective on this. So, I suggest everyone talk to their non-sailing friends, co-workers etc. Find out what would get them to try sailing, and if they have ever thought about sailing, what prevented them from doing it - in other words, what do they need to get going? Start with your golf buddies. Anyone who spends half the day hitting a little white ball up and down a course just so he can get outside with his buddies and have a few drinks at the club bar afterwards is perfect for sailing. They might even have a bit of a competitive streak.

1/ Get the planning sport boats out of the displacement divisions by creating a separate sport boat division. In other words don't just rely on rating splits alone to establish division splits. 2/ Create a casual and simple rating application (no measuring) with a reduced cost to attract all those casual cruising boats tied up at the dock. 3/ Reduce pain and suffering by keeping the racing simple and focus on the fun. 4/ Remember that the socializing should come before the racing.

More outreach might help. I started racing in PNW 8 years ago. It was not a welcoming environment. We were a new boat with a green crew. Nobody reached out to us. We did get shouted at a bit on the race course for making some stupid mistakes. We probably deserved that, but we got ignored off the course. Nobody reached out to us and said, "let me help you here" or "welcome to the sport". Were it not for the fact that I raced back in the 1980s and knew how awesome the sport could be, I would have walked away there and then. Instead I stuck it out and I am glad I did, but many other people may not. Another issue, PHRF ratings don't change to reflect new information. Ratings should probably be reviewed every year and shifted to reflect performance jumps. There seem to be all sorts of rating anomalies that simply persist instead of being changed. A further problem with PHRF - you just get one number. This is a real issue when the performance aspects of some boats in the fleet are so dependent on wind conditions. Case in point, my boat will die in 5 knots or less, but does well in 12-18 knots. My rating may be too harsh in light wind conditions, and too easy in moderate wind conditions. Then you have sport boats that can do 15-20 knots on the plane downwind, but carry a rating that does not capture that capability. Having 3 numbers like ORC might help. Having a separate class/division for sport boats is always a good idea. But the most significant problem in my view is getting good crew, and holding onto them.

The PNW has a distinct lack of Windward/Leeward racing. There is far too much distance racing. Distance racing takes too long, especially if the wind is light. W/L racing is more fun for the crew. Sails going up/down means people are involved and doing things on the boat. Just sitting there on the boat while the skipper drives on a distance race is no fun for the crew. W/L racing means that you can be done in just a few hours and go drink beer. Look at Newport, RI. They have a lot of one-design but healthy PHRF racing also. They do a lot of W/L racing - the same as everywhere else that still has good racing. The issue with W/L is you need someone to set marks - no one in the PNW does this. Go do a Wednesday night race in Newport, they use some gov marks for the windward mark, but use an actual race committee to drop a pin for a square line and usually a Leeward mark for a true race course. If you want to have more PHRF participation, you

need better racing. That comes from races that are more fun and actually involve a RC to make it a good race. Drop the distance racing in the PNW and go for the marks!

In the Portland area weekend racing is not doing well. Too many other things are taking folks away from sailing. We are thinking of more one day weekend events to try to get more interest. What to do? Offer more cruising classes, encourage other types like double handed races/ classes. Maybe some two day races to and from one place where people can socialize after the first day(or even two get together)

Better trophies, and not to the same ole boats. Creativity. Not the samo-samo. Mix it up.

I've raced for years and still do as much as possible, but the 'Ravages of Maturity' take a toll (I'm 78), and I find that getting crew (youth) is more difficult...even my own grandkids who love sailing, have SO many conflicting commitments! I'm intrigued, and thrilled, at the success of Round the County, which we've done since it started...a unique format that seems to have 'hit a chord' here in the PNW! I'm not sure why ( we love it but we live here...why do so many come from afar for totally weird weather, tides, accomodations, etc)We have good turnouts for our Wednesday nights at AYC (thanks to the likes of Andy and Steph's enthusiasms) but somehow the 'newer' boat owners of cruising boats (French boats) don't have racing, even 'beer can', interests. I think the rules are intimidating to the 'beginners'. Keep it simple, make it fun and they'll come.

The current handicap system dictates that there is no point in spending a lot of money on sails or other go fast toys if you are sailing an older displacement hull boat. For that reason I pretty much stick to more casual events or my clubs local races. PSSC and that level of racing is not realistic. I sail a 40' cruiser which is not optimized for racing, my prior boat was 70's 30' "racer/cruiser". Both boats have decent sails but nothing high tech, lots of Dacron. Bottoms are good and both boats have folding or feathering props. I don't believe there is any viable way to rate a displacement hull against a boat that can get on a plane. In addition the ability of the light weights to accelerate out of a tack and in light airs is very difficult to rate. I think that the Swiftsure Organizers are on the right track with the Light and Heavy classes, I would much rather race other displacement boats even with a 60 second rating spread, than to try to compete in a narrow rating band with dis-similar boats.

More inexpensive entry level basic sailing lessons. In the under \$200 range. Existing examples; the Seattle and Tacoma Mountaineers, TWSA.. I'm not sure if any clubs offer this kind of introductory type of lessons. It would be good if they align with the evening racing season. A welcoming casual race program which will welcome newbies. Example; CYCT Wednesday evening Windseekers. I'm sure there are events like this in the rest of the sound but I'm only familiar with my area. I love youth programs but it appears that very few graduate up to keel boats. I've read where some areas are having success with youth keel boat programs. I am a proponent of no flying sail or entry level flying sail classes...race what you have. A good way to get newbie owners out there as well as those with a limited budget for sails and burnished bottoms. Talking about these low budget racers...there is no handicap system for them other than races like the Southern Sound Series which will give them an off the cuff handicap. I'm sure it would be opening a can of worms but if PHRF-NW wants to keep more boats, develop a system for these folks. Serious racing is just that but you are seeing very few high handicap boats racing in them. Race courses need shortened course options and Race Committees need to gear their races to the back of the fleet. Everyone should have a chance to finish. This may bring some of the slower boats back. Sport boats don't mix well with non-planing keel boats. They should be in their own class. I know this is getting hard to do with fleets getting smaller. Just a few thoughts.. Thanks

I have a multihull so I left type of racing blank and we do not hike out.

Get people hooked in small boats (dinghies), windsurfers, kite boards, Hobie cats and then have them graduate up to keel boats. Sheet in - max out, smile big.

Something got lost in the last 20 years - freshness. Look at a SARC - same shit different year. How many times can one actually sail Duwamish Dead and not lose their minds? YCs don't talk to each other much so the problem just repeats yearly. YCs should change their courses, at least, if not their schedules, every year. Can you imagine how interesting it would be if Winter Vashon at least did what RTC does? alter direction every year? So simple. this is the reason I only sail RTTS and RTC now, they are super scenic and still worth it. everything else: pretty much Groundhog Day, so fucking boring. Seems these days people are far less likely to buy a boat and get into it; they are content to "ROPB" Race Other People's Boats forever, even if they have some money. I find it frustrating how few people commit now vs 20 years ago, when I first bought my Olson 30. Also, the average sailor's skill set these days is pretty bad; people just aren't interested in getting better. What are they out there for? One can just stand outside drinking a beer in the rain and it's about the same. Who is teaching what? Very little formal instruction happening at any level, locally. It's a giant vacuum. There are one or two top programs investing in real coaching. Those are the programs I aspire to emulate, or mimic. Very few people actually challenging themselves. Who goes to the Bank these days? Who does a Vic Maui? Handful of boats. Who does N100 double handed? Handful of boats. Maybe the coaching is where I could contribute? I recently wrapped up 3 years of mentoring up and coming climbers, we need informal or formal coaching for serious crews. One pet peeve is how some skippers hold on to their boats for soooooo long and also never ever ever sail on something else...leading to low skill levels all around. They don't realize how little they know because they've never done anything else. It translates to their crew. Oh well.

Ok complex problem. Too many hard answers. Here is what I see as a handicap and one design guy whose been in keel boats for 25 years now. 1) people are less inclined to spend all day waiting for wind. They want events that happen regardless. So make a no air day a party. Wednesday night used to be the place to be seen in the early 90s, Why? It was a race to the bar. 2) communication. Most clubs haven't modernized into easy to use web services. A few weeks ago I was told I could fax my registration in, wtf. 3) cost is not the issue, however competing with the many things people spend money on is. What was your household entertainment and communications budget in 1990? \$15 for a land line and another \$15 for cable? What is it in 2017? \$50 for cell, \$50 for internet, \$80 for cable, throw in Netflix and a few others, most of us spend way more on household entertainment and communications than we do on our boats. Convince young people to buy a boat, lol good luck. 5) what was the average age of most boat owners in 1990? What is it now? Ok so what are the fixes? The fixes need to be simple, because volunteers are limited. We need to make sailing entertainment, let's get some evening fireworks? More inclusive with families, offer a daycare, I bet most couples are both sailors. Let's take racing on Wednesday night and make it less serious, use a golf handicap? PHRF needs to adapt quicker, how the fuck does a Melges 24 rate 99? I own one, if I lose a handicap race it's because I lost to Melges 24. Fix some of these ratings. I have more but my drink is empty now.

Having the peeps with the big bucks and the big boats get a life and quit whining about their handicaps and how unfair PHRF is. It just makes them seem like spoiled brats that feel if they can't get their way they're going to take their ball and go home. It makes for divisions of "loyalty" that are destructive to all, and mostly it's based on what they feel instead of what they know. BTW, global warming IS REAL, even if you don't like the feel of that fact! Most of us don't have the big bucks, the big boats, and the big egos. Most of us have smaller, older boats and we want to get out there and have fun. We're not in the VOR or the America's Cup. We just want to get out and have some fun on the water with our friends. Yes, we want to win. Yes, we should come ready to compete. Yes, we should take it seriously...but not too seriously. At the end of the day we should all compete with a Corinthian spirit.

I don't blame PHRF for the downturn. I think that's a red herring. PHRF works fine especially for mid-level racer/cruisers. Perhaps it's a convenient excuse for some; but with the diminishing fleet sizes PHRF does need to do a better job addressing member concerns with visible action. Remember also however, that PHRF is an organization driven by volunteers (with a diminishing pool, and potential waning enthusiasm as well)... That said, I think we should try a "Golf handicap" system. Might be perfect for some Sloop Tavern and CYC evening series... Ken Read wrote an article on this approach a few years back, and I think he was spot on. I imagine there are multiple factors contributing to the downturn (aging population, baby-boomers moving on, shrinking middle class, cost of new boats, etc...).

I have a cruiser with a handicap over 200 with cruising sails. I know I would do better if I invested in racing sails and a foldable prop, but I have chosen not to make the investment. Having said that, I do enjoy the time on the water and plan to sail in most of the South Sound Sailing Society winter races and the Southern Sound Sailing series. I do not sail in the buoy races because of other commitments and concerns about too many other boats in a small space.

People whining about ratings put other off racing

Would be nice if there were more big boats with mid range handicaps (90's) to compete against. It's hard to race someone who is an hour behind you and will still win due to handicap spread. The flip side is even though the handicap is the same you can't put an x-yacht performance cruiser against Uno and have a race of any meaning... depending on wind speeds one will win and the other can't even compete due to boat weight. We need to do something to recruit and make crew feel like they are a more involved part of the community as a whole. While this job is currently left up to individual boat owners I believe more could be done by the race community as a collective.

Hiya. I actually created a meetup group with CYCT that put over 50 crew members on boats this year. It was a ton of work, but it worked great! It pulled in a completely different audience than we usually encounter. I highly recommend it for other areas. Now several issues arose. One was while trying to get people interested, I put links on other social media thinking we were all just hoping to spread the word of sailing, and I was almost banned from the site for advertising a competing crew finding app. Crazy. I have so many ideas about this whole issue. Please contact me if you want any help. I'm on the board with cyct so you can easily track me down if you want.

More adventure/short handed/distance racing.

I have quite a few actually. Let's set up a time to chat.

Better Marketing - I have found the perception of daily/racing is its only for professionals and the rich

I think weather plays a part. Too many blown off races gets frustrating. Too many races to choose from could be a problem too. I prefer to focus on a few good ones with high odds of having wind and try not to commit to too many race over the course of the year. ORC has promise, I would like to see more medium sized boats go to it, 35-45' boats. I really don't like getting smoked by boats I never see for more than 5 minutes. Not sure if ORC ratings would solve this. Thanks for looking into the issue by gaining insight. Hope it leads to some positive changes.

Why limit ORC to the top end? I'll wager besides one design (obvious) more sailors and wider variety of boats would benefit. PHRF is/was a good effort at making a fair rating system but most would favor something less likely to be exploited. BC seems to have embraced ORC why not the PNW?

In the Puget Sound winds vary greatly in strength because of topography. Light boats accelerate quicker and leave the heavier boats behind which then favors the light boat rating. Example.....A C&C 40 cannot consistently compete with a j35.....j35's accelerate too quickly.

I agree there are less phrf. not sure if more one design. but the one design classes take more crew now which would have raced differently 20-30 years ago? a six meter is a 4 man boat? seems like

big jboats carry a lot of crew. The popularity of Race to the Straits is a real measure. There used to be a lot of Jack and Jill by every club. but SBYC dropped, cyc doesnt have one, syc i guess. styc yep, yep yep. Jeez, the single handed races have had 40 plus boats the last couple years. all phrf. But, jack jill sucess has produced a side effect. Jill and Jill, which opens to doublehanded, and that is a good side effect. but there wasnt one jill in the single handed. they are social? huh. anyway, there seems an oppportunity to make big news of jack and jill and double handed and that gets more boats out too. The course are ok. destination gigs seem good for turnout (rtts, dts, duck dodge rum run, round vashon, etc, and more serious ones rtc, swiftsure, etc.). the ratings are ok. I get hammered by a couple boats I owe time to in flying sails. so moved into the very competitive non-flying sails. I mean, they are more casual.. but the lead changes hands lots of times and every boat is rated so close every boat is in the money at some point in a race. when said well sailed flying sail boats sometimes drop into non-flying they correct to middle of the fleet. so maybe that is interesting. Mike mcguane.

we have to focus on the youth,....so many can't do anything that doesn't involve a video screen!! Take kids sailing , let them trim and steer , get them sailing dingies etc.... Sailing is about "family" that is out sailing family so figuring out how to make the social part of it work will help. Thanks for caring about this, J

I've been wondering how to get people out sailing forever! I've tried everything that I can think of. Time to think of new things I guess. It needs to be fun, more fun than the other stuff people might be doing. Richmond Yacht Club in San Francisco seems to have it nailed, although there's an advantage to sun and wind! But they do better than the other yacht clubs down there. They do separate displacement and sport boats, but it's easier when you have 200 boats signed up. They get 200 because their regattas are fun!

Thank you for your active interest in our sport! For us, it's good to be on the water and the camaraderie of the crew is great but racing is not really a competitive event. Older boats like ours have a healthy rating but that rating does not compensate for differences in the boats. In many ways, older boats are penalized in racing.

Less issues with getting a PHRF cert as well as cost. I race a 1D Express 27 and it seems silly that I pay the same amount as a one off boat when I race my boat in a 1D config and it should be boiler plate for getting a cert. I also think that some boats, the rating system greatly favors (read as B25 (Modified), Moore 24, Hallman Shark, Wabbit, etc) and it would be nice to see that minimized although this will always be a game. For this reason, if I can get 1D racing, that is where I would prefer to sail. Nothing is worse that losing to a Wabbit for example (based on personal experience) that corrects out 6 minutes ahead when they sailed like complete shit. Ended up on the hard at least once and maybe twice and still beat us by 6 minutes corrected. That is not right and makes me rethink my racing choices. Keep in mind that some of this is based on bay area PHRF ratings but I think it holds true across the board since the rating system seems fairly relative between the 2 areas. By this I mean that an SC 27 and an E27 are 6 seconds a mile different (just an approx but you get the idea) between the PNW and the bay area.

Some kind of system that lowers your rating as you and your crew get better so that the same boat doesn't win every weekend because they're basically professional Racers on a really good boat but it never gets re-rated

Look hard at yourself and your organization before pointing fingers.

A lot of the racing has become too political bad this turns off new racers. Not a welcoming atmosphere. That has to be squashed. The old racers also have to understand that the new racers are going to make mistakes and that telling at them on the course is not helpful in getting back again. Maybe a free pass for the old racer or finish time reduction to help make it more fun for everyone. The racers left doing beer can racing are serious and there is no real way for a new racer to easy into the racing. It has to be fun or they will not return!

The cost of keeping the boat in saltwater is high (Slip Fees, insurance, taxes, etc) The cost of hauling & having the bottom tended to is egregious. All detract from the overall enjoyment. Would help greatly if there were more reasonable places to haul and do work. Most yards won't allow the owner to do his own work.

Lighten up! When I started racing the emphasis was on having fun in a friendly atmosphere. Everyone seems so uber competitive these days it has really taken the fun out of it for me. I still LOVE sailing but cruising is more fun for me at this point than racing.

Having raced for many years in/out of Sydney, Australia then in the Northeast (Long Island Sound/Newport/Marblehead etc) and having recently moved to the Seattle area, one issue that strikes me is the small number of serious middle distance races. Yes there is Swiftsure of course, Northern Century (nice but no wind), RTC, VanIsle (every 2 years - and logistics make it hard for a lot of skippers) but beyond that you're looking at Vic-Maui and a lot of us with full time jobs simply cannot spare the time. By comparison in the Northeast, Newport-Bermuda at ~650miles is achievable in 3-5 days by most boats and there are also many other 150-300 mile races e.g. Around Block, Vineyard, Marblehead-Halifax etc. Would be great to have more options like that around here. In the interest of disclosure I have a J/80 and race OD but also enjoy crewing for others on larger handicap boats for distance and would love to see more of it in our area.

I found it easy to break into the racing scene here because I raced through youth sailing and college. However, a number of my friends (also in their 20's) feel like there isn't a pathway to break from the beer-can, duck-dodge kind of sailing into doing real races. Is there a way to encourage competitive owners to take out new crew?

I think the general problem is people are too spread out with their interests/ commitments these days. I also see that there a lot more people involved these days that are not as passionate about sailing; it is just one of there cool hobbies (they are good at posting selfies on the web during the races) and they are almost more interested in the social after the race. They are not available for the "non-racing" parts of the program (deliveries; maintenance etc); and they don't necessarily commit to the one program, they pick and choose. At least that is what we run into trying to maintain the crew on our boat. That paired with the economic downturn there are fewer fully committed skippers/programs. The gap between the well funded programs and the normal guy seems to be getting larger; and these skippers tend to burn out on the organizing of the herd (I predominantly have been sailing 35-40ft boats the last years that require sizable crews). That said, for me I travel 4-9 hours to get to the races I am sailing in these days; I live away from the sailing hot spots. I am committed and passionate about sailing. I don't care much for the parties and the "race culture" these days; too much fluff too little content - but that is the general trend in our society :-)

Keep the racing fair and fun

Cross-club crew board for easy sign-up/interest. Organized crew recruiting events (learn to race or simple social events). Commitment from local club to always get someone out that simply shows up on race night. Cross-club proactive promotion of sailing opportunities (Viper group in Anacortes was welcoming to me, but could do more to market that the program even exists--ditto for the growing Martin fleet I'm part of). Discounted club fees for younger/new members to get them into a club. Club boats (like mini 12/2.4m fleet and club Martins that Victoria has). Secondary race day, even if using rabbit starts and no committee. More inclusive debriefs after a regatta on improvements to make (PITCH had enough issues this year that I'm hearing several boats may not return next year).

It's a tough nut to crack. Here in Vancouver, how is new blood (the 20-somethings) supposed to bring more boats into the sport when they're spending every penny they have on accommodations, and anyway affordable moorage is near impossible to come by? They get into the sport by coming crewing with me, which is great, but precious few ever manage to move up

into their own boat. That said, I do see young boaters out there on perfectly raceable boats (Haida 26, Catalina 27, etc) cruising regularly on the same nights we're racing (saw the same Haida four Thursday in a row), so there are at least some young boat owners out there who could be racing. Partly its a vicious/virtuous cycle thing: The fewer the number of boats racing, the less it seems like a thing to do. The more boats racing, the more it will seem like a thing to do. I think it would help to have after-parties (or just random pop-up racing parties) right at the local dock heads, to give some of these not-yet-racing boat owners a chance to "accidentally" meet racers and get talked into trying it. But then they need a truly fun and non-intimidating route into the sport. Because we're down to the experienced die-hards still racing, it means that even the supposedly "casual" Thursday night racing here in Vancouver is now extremely competitive and downright intimidating for a newcomer. Which then ties into handicapping issues and what-not. In theory I should take my experienced crew and go race in the supposedly more "serious" Wednesday night series. But there I'd get lumped in as one of only a couple racer-cruisers racing and scoring within a mixed fleet of Melges 24s, Elliotts and 6-metres. No thanks! The Thursday crowd is plenty competitive now, and has more realistic rating splits so I'm with a chance against similar boats. Which is what makes it fun.

a lot of it starts with classes coming together to build the fleets out there and get people out there sailing. the race committee needs to come forward with changes as well ie; using new technology and being able to announce there plan over the VHF rather than keep it secret, every boat is requited to carry a VHF so lets use them! Simplify the courses, course 1, course 2 etc... not this S a bunch of letters F that will confuse people. Coming with the times that people need to work to play now so making better use of time when there out there is key, aim for quality of races not quantity of races, yes I know in the past CYC Seattle was featured in Sailing World for the quantity of races they held each year, most of those races were not of high quality... times change and we need to remember that and be able to adapt to the changing times.

From talking to people that used to race in the past, a big difference was that there were more smaller boats. Now we have lots of 40' and bigger so fewer boats but still a good amount of people. Also, a new 27' boat then was less than \$30k. Prices for a new boat today are obscene. Affordability is difficult. After purchasing the boat, you need good sails, a slip, insurance, and regular maintenance and then all the race and yacht club fees. CYC lowering costs did help the club a lot. Cost of living in the Seattle area is sky-rocketing so taking on the extra cost of boat ownership is prohibitive to a lot of people. There are lots of options for other things to do as well, that cost less (but are also more expensive as time goes on). We are in a great area for hiking and skiing, paddling, biking, etc. I think the main things that are prohibitive to the sailing community is longer work hours to make the same amount of money, other obligations that take up free time, commute distances and times especially for weeknight racing, huge cost of living increases, and cost increase of boat ownership.

I really like 1-day distance races on the weekend - frees up the second day for other things, and it's fun not to be sailing windward/leeward legs sometimes. My thoughts as a 20-something that has been racing for ~3 years: -Finding (well matched) boats to crew on is challenging. A more robust crewfinder system could work wonders. -Gender dynamics make everything much harder. I think that the sport is losing a significant number of ladies who would otherwise be a great part of the community, and more can be done to address this. A lot is subtle and hard to change - new guy on board is often immediately taught how to do a job, new lady often gets an "easy" job, or a comfy position on the rail (less learning, less engaged, less fulfilling, less likely to want to come back). My male friends vouched for me and got me onto boats when I expressed interest in racing - without them, I would not be racing. Awareness would be a good place to start. -RTS/DTS and similar are great because they are competitive but still fun/engaging for a bigger variety of boats

(and are more forgiving of crummy sails), and the party is always a good time. Money, and owning a "race boat" are less of a factor. Can this extend to more events?

Get PHRF-BC -NW to use the same ratings. Our rating is 12 sec/mile different between the two systems

Sunday, rather than Saturday, races. Saturdays are often dominated by kid sports, and so it's harder for me, as a dad, to make them. I would do a lot more weekend racing if they were held on Sundays.

EZ PHRF application. What kind of boat? Have you done anything weird to it? If no, here is your rating, if yes - fill out this extra form and we will get back to you.

Less crew, more 2 - 4 hour race or races. Let's get out have fun and compete for a couple of hours and have time for the rest of the day, family, chores, golf. In my experience more people like sailing to get away from it all for a couple of hours not necessarily to kill the whole day. That being said there is still room for destination sailing / racing. A lot of the problem is in your survey results. Look who's answering it is us male old farts that have been doing it forever. We need to attract the new blood. Some Yacht Clubs and commercial Sailing Clubs are working hard at it. Since "serious racing" usually means "serious money", have more "fun" racing and/or racing for a cause (e.g. STYC Blakley Rock) to get more people started with older, cheaper boats and sails.

I might have put the question the other way around: what should there be less of to increase participation? The main observation I have is that there are too many events for the number of participating sailors and that just causes a downward spiral of smaller fleet sizes, less fun for participants and participant fatigue. As noted there are much fewer boats racing. However there are still pretty much the same number of events so it just dilutes the fleet as not everyone can/wants to spend every single weekend of the year sailing. I'm not sure what the solution is: maybe kill off some "old" events? replace several events with a collaborative one organized jointly by several clubs? Pair events and run them alternate years? Maybe a shared online database to have your PHRF, insurance and safety papers all filed so that regatta organizers can check them off that way instead of having to provide them at check-in for each event would help streamline registration. A joint calendar showing all the events for the region would be really useful too (especially if someone could figure out a way to have displayed on a map and filter by dates, etc) Having a website showing up to date list of registered boats can boost last minute entries but not every club has the resources to make it happen... Maybe if clubs joined forces they could create a fancy website/database for all to use that could make all this a reality (calendar, paperwork for each boat, online payments, etc.), in the same spirit as the Swiftsure tracker that has been re-used by many races for example. This could streamline the process for both organizers and participants and make it easier to plan things.

Do whatever is necessary to get PHRF BC and PHRF NW to combine the handicapping system (not necessarily the administrative system). Have an overall trophy for the PNW based on participation in significant races (Straits, Swiftsure, RTC, Northern Century etc.) - VIRS has been a huge success and has contributed significantly to participation on Vancouver Island. Regattas need better technology (drones etc.) to capture video of the events. Old sail credits under PHRF - this is a biggie because sails are the biggest cost in racing and wear and tear on sails is often the biggest decision-making factor in my decision to participate in a regatta or not.

Rating boats using actual, or at least more accurate displacement measures would help. We live aboard a boat with list displacement of 10900, delivered from factory about 13750, and sitting in slings now at about 18000 lbs. Somehow I don't think we are competitive in DIV 2 with an 81 rating unless we see a sustained 15+ knots true, so around here it isn't worth going out if anything better comes up (cruising interferes with most race days for this reason).

I am 72, a moderately skilled inland cruising sailor. Little flying sail experience. Have been ballast on some local races. Have sailed for over 30 years with several long hiatuses when I lived

far from water or wind. It would help me tremendously if there were some racing instruction. Not just the rules, but tactics and some of the local knowledge that gives others an advantage. I realize that people want to win and don't necessarily want to share their knowledge, but it is intimidating for a newbie to start racing without feeling that he will imperil his or someone else's boat or get yelled at. I am not by nature very competitive and winning is not my primary goal in racing. I enjoy the teamwork and the opportunity to improve my sailing skills. People do answer direct questions when you are on their crew, but there is a lot I still don't understand. Again, an introductory course on rules and tactics would really help me.

Golf style handicap for more casual races.

To me, it's simple. Boat owning has become absurdly expensive - moorage, sails, time finding crew (time = money), etc. Used to be, most everyone could afford a boat, and you could race a 20-year-old beat-up 30-foot sloop for under ten grand in 1990 dollars. And then cruise it with the kids - not the most comfortable, but reasonable, especially given the spectacular scenery here. But that was 20 years ago. So, after a decade and change of racing 15-25 times a year and moving up from boat to boat, and dealing with more expensive sails, and moorage, and hard-to-find crew with other things to do, we sold our last boat and moved on. Now I play golf and occasionally race an Etchells with co-owners on Lopez, a \_keel\_ boat that takes virtually no maintenance, can be raced with two but which is comfortable and dry - and most importantly, still costs under \$10K in today's dollars, and there's no arm's race with new sails because we're all in it casually and for fun. Like the old glorious days, except we can't cruise the boat... but we're already in the San Juans, where we want to be!

To launch a campaign is intense. Needing commitment from crew for nearly every weekend in a season months in advance! That's the hardest part. Most crew have other things going on, even the skipper may have to mow the lawn at home. Personally I like later in the day on weekends races due to work. Like leave the dock at noon, start at 1pm, done at 5pm meeting at bar by 6pm. Doesn't matter what the wind is adjust the course so it is predictable when it will finish. The goosebumps on lake union at only 6 weeks is about the most commitment I can get from crew. And I like the timing. Anyway that's my 2 cents

Need more youth programs to develop interest early on. Get more corporate involvement to provide funding.

1). Sunday only events. - less schedule conflicts with family stuff like soccer games. 2). More events with format like race to straits. 3) I'd like to know more about ORC. 4) Mix short distance races into buoy regattas.

Honestly, as a 32 year old who's been racing for 14 years, the two main barriers I see friends encountering are a) not being able to afford our own boats due to student loans/depressed economy when we hit the job market, leaving us less able to purchase boats upfront or, in my opinion, primarily pay the moorage fees, b) child rearing/family obligation. I've raced every year except this one due to having a baby. Between full time work and baby care, I'm not in a position to take the time for racing, even though it's always been a drop everything priority in my life. Things I see helping in the long term: a) better access to junior sailing programs. Get kids/teens involved and many will carry on for the rest of their lives. b) more opportunities for newbie skippers to practice racing and learn the rules. c) get more ladies on the helm! Sailboat racing can feel like such a good old boys club it's hard to break in unless you're willing to take a lot of duff. For some of us that's not a problem but I think it can improve. d) advertise racing e) make it more known that you don't have to have a 'fast' boat to get in on the racing scene.

Better management of "club" races. Take the "serious" out of having fun and getting good at managing a racing sailboat... it's serious fun! Too many have little knowledge and respect for the rules.

Being a family racer, I know first hand that we need to get more families involved. And that means everyone — kids, wives, friends. I think that there also needs to be less of a racing focus at a young age and more of a sailing focus. Small boats, big boats, racing, cruising, anything and everything. I grew up racing dinghies and at some point didn't want to sail at all anymore. Then my dad bought a keelboat that we cruised on. When I found cruising, I started racing again.

Hmmm...

How about throwing in an extra mark at the CSS to add a reaching leg, or something to make it different? Marks deeper in Elliot Bay? I'm just looking for something different. I think that's part of the appeal of the new Hein Bank course at Swiftsure; at least it's something different!

DFL is not fun- have a learner/cruiser/ short handed club rating that adjusts when you start performing well. Not everyone lives and breathes racing - doesn't mean we don't want to do it. The current system is elitist and it is crazy to put sportboats and Winnebagos in the same div. I prefer to race my 36 in the slow div, because it is more fun to be with other boats

Stronger middle class. More youth in bigboats

I have no ideas at this time

-no ideas, but I'm going to forward this/encourage our PRYC racers to fill out this questionnaire.

Declining involvement is a concern within our club as well.

Handicapping is seen by many as very political. And in some cases it is. Although I see it as much less political in my area than it use to be.

I'm a cruiser/racer. Short windward/leeward courses absolutely suck! We love middle distance day races like the south sound series.

There are a number of One designs and daysailers that don't have enough boats in a location to race in a one design class division or enough one design events. E.g. Solings, Etchells, Flying Fifteens, Dragons, 5.5 and 6 metres, Shields, Vipers, Elliots etc... There is nothing prohibiting these classes from getting a PHRF rating BUT local safety rules require compliance with OSR Category 4. These types of boats have for years, raced and sailed safely during daylight in inshore/nearshore events when racing in the one design class, without lifelines or motors, or half the "safety" requirements of Cat 4 . Despite being able to get a handicap, they are now lumbered with extraneous equipment requirements to sail the same waters and courses with "cruiser/racers". It makes no real safety sense and limits getting more boats out on the water for DAYTIME events. I recommend that the racing associations relax the Cat4 requirements, (Or make practical exceptions for these types of boats for inshore/nearshore daylight events), by using the World Sailing rules similar to those used by these classes when they race in inshore/ nearshore events in their One Design classes. E.g. Dragons and 6 metre boats are capable of sailing in daylight in their class divisions in the same waters as a Catalina 30 and cover the same distances. They should be allowed to join the fun a handicap division in windward leeward races or even daylight point to point races.

The club's should coordinate and collaborate. Club board members should meet

Overlay PHRF with golf-type handicapping system. Score races both ways. Anyone who sails way better than they normally sail would have a chance at trophy/recognition. One complaint I hear all the time is: I have know chance of winning/scoring well, so why bother?

Appreciate the effort. I'm a little concerned about survey design as it assumes that the participants are NOT racing which is not necessarily the case. That said I believe that a huge impediment is the system as such. The handicap system makes it difficult for small or less skilled crews in decent boats to be competitive. The cruising class needs to be more fully marketed and respected. That seems to be a draw for Ebm's Thursday night series. There's no doubt that all sorts of other activities vie for attention but it seems like a key might be a cruising class with a handicapping system like used in golfing might be a way to level the playing fielding help grow the sport . Add

in some marketing to spread the word that there are opportunities that are less formal and shorter. We are off on a three year cruise otherwise I'd love to help.

Make it easier for older boats and less experienced crews to participate. The rules are getting far too complex.

More casual cruiser class races, (maybe with NFS.)

We don't need another measurement formula handicapping system dividing the fleet some more. And changing them annually is not helpful either. Is it realistic to think that it is even possible for a formula to estimate the speed potential of a broadly divergent range of boat types and how they might interact with their infinitely variable fluid environments? Some boats ratings might appear close and others will be obviously miles wrong - and every accuracy variable in between. With a measurement formula what do you do when the rating output of a design is plainly wrong? Type forming, as designers figure out how to game the formulas, speeds up design obsolescence. IOR, IMS other "I" systems and now sounds like IRC measurement formulas fill up the marinas (and trash bins) with unused boats. One of the great strengths of the PHRF NW system of ratings is when the numbers (measurements) don't accurately reflect a boats speed potential they can be corrected based on Observed Performance. And that gets messy. PHRF NW tries to rate the perfect in the absence of crew - or really as if it were perfectly prepared and sailed. Every individual sailor knows that he has the perfect crew, the best boat preparation, a smooth bottom, a crisp set of sails and he always goes the right way - he knows better what his boat should rate - yet the Handicappers Council conspires against him! So it's really about bias. Will you take yours; to varying degrees (depending on how outside of "normal" or "formula friendly" your boat is) based on the speed potential estimation of an obviously flawed concept of (yet another) measurement formula - which if found to be incorrect can then not be changed? Or do you prefer bias in your rating (probable error) which is developed by a group of volunteers from all across our broad region and which then is always open to review and adjustment based on Observed Performance? There are a bunch of ordinary racer cruisers tied to the docks that rarely move. Getting them back on the starting line would be a big improvement to the fleet. The new glamour boats attract all the attention, the best young crew and in large measure most of the trophies. How long should we have expected the historic meat and potatoes of the Handicap Racing Fleet to continue to come and flesh out the fleet? Ideally modern and sports designs, which are just better for racing than the bulk of racer cruisers that have been lost, would race in separate divisions. Just identifying these advantaged boats is a challenge. Rather than black or white I would suggest a spectrum that recognizes the sports factor. I think a wider rating spread that keeps these boat types racing together is preferred over sprinkling them into the divisions with less sports oriented designs.

Performance Handicap Racing needs to be more formalized. Well known performers should be the basis for comparison, performers who do well should have a rating adjustment at the end of each year. Effort should be made to sort boats by performance characteristics.

In BC 90% of boats racing are light weight or purpose built race boats, BUT 100% of new boats sold are not these, they are cruiser-racers (Catalina, Beneteau etc). No new race boats have been bought in the last few years, but plenty of the others have and they are not racing because they cannot compete. Obviously this is not sustainable. No wonder racing is declining! The PHRF system has given beneficial ratings to light weight outboard driven boats. And for sprit boats the advances in A-sail design have further compounded the advantage these boats enjoy. Also 6 seconds credit for inboard engines is no where near enough. One trial showed at least 21 seconds. Think about the weight difference and the drag from a prop and deteriorating zincs etc. My suggestions are: 1. Review and upgrade the base ratings of cruiser racers. 2. Review the credit for inboards versus outboards. 3. Over penalize boats that make alterations because these are almost

always to get rating advantage. 4. Give rating disadvantage to one-designs because they will invariably win in mixed fleets and besides they can always race one-design.

Need to get more Millennials and younger folks interested in the sport.

Doing something with the "Rating Buster Boats", nothing more defeating than a boat of same "Rating" and getting crushed because of "Improvements" they have done. along those lines, how about a standard or stock sail cloth. Again in the same thought of a rating buster boat that crushes mine, they do it with 20,000 worth of tricked out sails. My boat is a classic racer cruiser. IOR 3/4 tonner. it has a history of racing, I love to sail, race and compete. but when i have to spend three or four times what the boat cost for sails just to keep up, its not fun. DFL every race sucks. i have had professional crews on my boat that are paid to race, and all of them say "You gotta spend some money on sails" Another area that is bothersome and frustrating is the starting sequence of races. I get that sailboat racing is a "Gentlemen" sport, "A good old boys club" to make it fun, less stuffy, and opened up to those of us that just want to race, is there some way to standardize the starts of races. i often single hand or double hand race, paper signs, flags flying, trying to start and watch flags is hectic. Some clubs use the VHF. it is sooooo much easier to start. A full commentary of whats happening, who is starting, countdown, gun, next up, countdown etc. easy start. then the next weekend the club does nothing. flags only, no radio. check in at commitee boat, no check in at commitee boat. then when you do ask on the radio, your berated and belittled by Thurston Howell the third to read the SI's, watch the flags, etc. and still get no answer. Have all the clubs do the same. why is that a problem? This is one of the single reasons that i choose to race in some clubs events and not others. we have to get rid of the stigma of traditional sail boat racing. maintaining structure is important. standardizing rules is important. quality of competition is important. but do it in a way that is fun, open and welcoming to regular sailors. The pacific northwest is home to some of the most brilliant technological minds on earth. But somehow we can not seem to get a standard way to enter races. seems like every club has a different website and payment policy. some you mail in! Like regular mail?? who does that anymore? Oh that's right..... the old Thurston Howell the third guys do. A central site for all races in the puget sound that you can enter, pay fees and plan your boats racing calendar. accessable by a device that is in everyones pocket. Except Mr. Thurston Howell, we could still have a phone number that he could use his rotary dial phone to call. The Salish Sea is my playground. I love to sail, race and compete. I want nothing more than to grow the sport for many more to join us to sail, race and compete Thanks for you time

To rate my boat I would be happy to pay a rater to come to the boat to measure and assess it rather than depend on a self reporting system. I doubt any rating rule will take my bimini, solar panels and wind turbine into consideration so maybe cruising is my only option. The solution has been to race as crew on a friend's boat.

This is a tough issue. But... phrf breaks for old boats racing with old sails(maybe a few extra seconds). Not lumping sport boats in with displacement boats. They knew what they were buying. Don't punish me because our rating is similar. There is no right solution except to separate them. Starting small boats 1st no matter what (reverse starting sequence). This still let them have clear air for a bit and make roundings and crossings more intetesting. More double handed races... Boats rating under 50 are required to do long course. Boats under 100 should be encouraged to do long corse. At least the little boats might be able to get some of the keg at the end of thw race then... Maybe try some new events... you can only sail foul-weather Bluff, Blake Island, Vashon Island, so many times before they get boring... Ill think of more. This was just a quick few things.

I really think PHRF isn't working well as a handicap system. I'd like to at least see Time on Time used more INCLUDING the wind speed factors, which are almost never used. I have a mid-size, displacement, racer/cruiser that we sail fairly competitively. We work hard as a crew to improve maneuvers and tactics, invest in sails, haul the boat regularly, etc. However at regattas we are

often thrown into divisions with smaller ULDB boats that we owe time too and that we only RARELY beat boat for boat in average conditions much less correct ahead of. It starts to feel pointless after awhile and we end up hoping to have at least one other similar boat in our division to race against mid fleet while the same boats walk away with podium finishes at every event. I'm not being a sore loser, I enjoy good competition and look up to those that beat us and want to learn from these experiences. But when we're crossing tacks with the same boats we owe time to at every event....the rating system starts to seem broken. I also don't understand the regional discrepancies in PHRF scores. As in, why are the same boats rated differently in California vs. Washington? It seems certain classes have been given "gift" base ratings in Puget Sound and there's never a good explanation. It seems the base rating should be for the boat regardless of location. If it's due to different conditions in different locations then maybe the wind speed factor in TOT can correct that. I can understand a different rating between salt and fresh water but otherwise? Also, more fun, creative events and less old stogy club scenes after racing would be a great way to bring some younger energy.

Definitely separate classes for sport boats. I remember the riptide 35 changing the races for the big boats. I like Brad but I don't want to try to beat Uno on a day he can plane. My 1/2 toner suits me. I race on 6meters. We just depress the guys that are dragging a prop. Have elimination series to get to Grand Prix. At the top no one likes the guy that only show up at the worlds or PCC's for his one regatta of the year and fouls up the starts and roundings.

Additional Comments from Survey:

There are too many factors to be played properly. I think that instead of focusing on handicap in particular, there are many old but good boats out there to create great and big one design fleets. Take for instance San Juan 21 once a big fleet now not so much. Also splitting up the bigger taller boats from the smaller and sport boat fleet will keep frustrating moments on the start line at bay. I spent some time in Arizona, yes Arizona of all places. They have a great program on lake pleasant. This is ran by the Arizona yacht club. If you are at all interested in speaking with them I have a person to contact that would be happy to help out.

My perspective is as a crew member and boat owner. As a crew member, I've raced on all sorts of phrf. Handicaps are worthless for competitive racing. If I want a competitive race, I will crew in a one-design fleet. As a boat owner, I am more interested in participation. I honestly could care less about being competitive. Our desire is having a set objective - clean start and good sail. PHRF in this instance is a mere formality for the sign-up form. If you look at the article that led me here from 3sheets, the main problem of why PHRF is in a decline is mentioned as one of the "joys" of days past. " Imagine re-measuring and re-rating right up until the night before the race" ... well, that's not interesting to most folks nowadays. I am not interested as a crew member being on PHRF boat and as a captain of my own boat I don't want to mess with it either. Here's something worth thinking about... there's too many races. I honestly think we've hit the point of dilution. When there's a race every weekend ... there's a point in time where that doesn't make it more convenient... it actually hurts the racing scene. If there were fewer races, you might see some races actually rise in participation because people will be hungry. For example, the article mentions the Blakely Rock Race as being big... ok... lot at today's schedule... how many times have orgs setup a race out to BR? So if 2+ orgs have their own BR race... how do you compare? Well, if I as a captain want to participate in just 1... which one do I pick? This is dilution. Summary - as a crew member, I have no interest in competitive sailing unless it's in a one-design fleet. As a captain, handicap racing is a reality due to the nature of my vessel but racing is more about participation and not competition.

Less emphasis on the podium and more emphasis on participation. Cheaper registration fees. Consolidation of race programs in the Puget Sound area to keep race fees and expenses down for boat owners. PHRF adjustments to make it easier for boats to be competitive.

The answer is getting the younger generation involved. Anything we can do to promote youth sailing is key to the future. In the shorter term, finding a way to reach out to the age group that is less than retirement age, but just got the kids out of the house can help for the shorter term.

I'm 43 yo. and my dad had boats. That's probably the only reason I have/had boats. My wife had no experience on water except in crew shells, she is now the driver/skipper. I don't think the sport itself is the biggest barrier, but the expense. Or perceived expense. Nearly zero of my contemporaries are involved in yachting and they generally seem to have no interest in it. Yet they spend vast amounts of money on skiing and family vacations. I try to point out that the cost of a boat isn't much (often less than a used car), the moorage is a drag but any weekend can be a vacation without spending any more, and without driving. Racing is a step further detached. I have tried to sell a race as a two-week's boat vacation worth of boat handling skills in one day, with a safety net around you. It sorta works... for people who already have a boat.

A few thoughts: It would be good to see more multi club events to bring together the phrf boats that typically stay in their own areas. Mill town Sailing association uses the CYC Edmonds Foulweather Bluff race as part of their fall sailing series to encourage boats to mix it up. I think this is a great idea to put emphasis on some of the longstanding local races. It is frustrating when clubs host so many small races during big events. Which I feel detracts from big event participation. I have been sailing for almost ten years now, in that time my wife and I have raced our own boats and have raced on several others. We currently own and race our Baba 30. Yes by handicap standard she is slow but we still try to prep, plan, and sail well. We also crew on a J145 so we see both ends of the fleets. One thing I've noticed recently is inflating costs of boat maintenance and moorage. This coupled with the confusing avenues in which we meet racing reqs (phrf, piya, us sailing, world sailing, club dues, USCG, etc) and I can see why some people don't want to race their own boats. We love sailing and hope it will grow rather than dwindle! See ya on the water!

At one point in time, it is my understanding that successful programs at a local level could be run by average folks. I have a SC27. The SC27 fleet is 50 years old. I'm not sure what sailing past looked like, but I'm aware that participation is dwindling. While I love the sport, I believe that sailing is prohibitively expensive and frankly uninteresting to race semi-casually. While Duck Dodge remains popular, I think the lack of interest in real racing is a combination of rising cost and lack of time. In terms of cost, racing is simply out of reach for normal humans. On an absolute scale, boating is expensive. I got it. With increased technology, however, we're seeing huge upticks in sails, rigging, equipment...and performance. All boats are \*not\* created equal...we all rate the same in PHRF & 1D though! On top of that, moorage costs are through the roof. I pay my hull value every year in moorage. Even if I did have the money to build a fast boat, I don't have the time to compete at the sharp end of the fleet. Developing skills to be good crew and/or a good skipper takes time, and my crew and I commonly don't have it on the same dates/times, despite our best efforts. Back to the SC27. In this fleet, folks at the sharp end of the fleet have new, high-end sails, new rigging, meticulous bottoms, and years of experience, their crew members competing many of the the major regattas. I don't/won't, and neither do others, so we stop racing and buy McGregors. Why aren't people interested? Ultimately, racing isn't fun when you can't win.

Great topic. I hope you will share results and engage with CYC and other local clubs to help them take advantage of what you learn. I know they are very interested in getting more people on the water racing and otherwise. You have captured a lot of the ideas I have heard kicked around. I personally have seen that offering mentoring helps get people less intimidated to join the fun. I think it is telling also that Sloop Tavern's Monday Racing is more popular than CYC's Wednesday nights. I'm sure that is a factor of expense and a casual vs. "serious" perception issue. That said, I would hate to see CYC lose the focus on windward leeward racing, which is much more expensive to produce. This kind of racing has an important place in helping sailors test their skills and is what fuels my jets. I think the biggest issue is that PHRF really doesn't do a very good job of handling all the variables. I am not convinced that any system could. I got into a one-design fleet because I was tired of PHRF issues. I had a boat that rated even with other boats that I knew would beat me in light air and I would win in heavy air. There is really no sense of accomplishment or learning when variables outside my control seem so pivotal to results. Thanks for taking on this challenging topic. I hope this doesn't get hijacked into a series of bitch sessions and can be guided toward creative solutions that encourage more participation. Jerry Diercks Past CYC Commodore

I have an old IOR boat (Santana 30). When I first got into racing about 15 years ago, any of us with old classic plastic were pretty much made to feel unwelcome if we didn't move to new one-design boats. There was a really strong feeling of "clique". Since I didn't have the cash at the time, I allowed youth sports in the family to take up a lot more of my time. Now close to being an empty nester, I could race again and am (via MSA in Everett), but many of those who I sailed with/against 15 yrs ago have given up their boats or moved to power. I know there's no solution in this but I'm listening...

I live aboard a Catalina 34 and race her on Friday nights and some special weekend races. I would love a mentor though to get her up to speed so I'm improving more. I don't have a phrf rating because it requires a bit of work and money for a boat that isn't really a race boat. Take your time Fridays have been a really fun way to introduce people to racing and to help other boat owners build confidence and get out more. I also race 105s because Seattle has a really healthy one design fleet and culture. Feel free to reach out to my email if you have follow up questions.

I filled this survey out for myself yesterday, but got into a long discussion about it with an old friend of mine that I've been sailing with for 10 years or so, so I wanted to reflect it. I think we both agree that time & money prohibit folks from joining/contributing; the costs & skills associated with being on the sharp end of the fleet are so intense that it's impossible to compete with. There are some serious racers with some serious skill in the fleet, and these folks have spent serious amounts of time, money, and energy to get where they are. There just isn't a place for people that sail 'only' semi-seriously. Sharp sailors with big budgets aren't sailing sharp boats; they're sailing pimped out, carbon/kevlar-everything San Juans. Where do the rest of us go? Despite these differences, we're all paying the same registration, we're all rated the same, and we're all on the same starting line; it's become an arms race that most common sailors will never win due to time & resources. As a result, the sailing community is small & serious. At a local level, I don't think that's a good thing. At any marina, count the number of fast boats that haven't left their slip in 6 months. In addition, yacht clubs need to get their shit together. The last 2 races I've attended started late, were not sequenced according to their own rule books, presented a single start PHRF (24' PHRF200 and 60' PHRF20 boats enter the start sequence together), and courses have been modified incorrectly (according to their own rules). The committee never left the start line. The idea that you need to be in a particular yacht club to participate in races is self-defeating, and events should really be coordinated a bit better. For clarity, in my previous message, I mentioned 'winning' in a race as an important thing. I wasn't talking about first

place...more or less, having folks around that are on the same 'level' is nice. Duck Dodge, for example, is pretty popular and filled with folks of all ages and skill sets. It's a shit show, but it's probably one of the more fun regattas (leave your fenders out) because there is a bit of diversity. The \$100k Olympic programs don't attend. It's kind of nice... We talked a bit about drumming up \$15,000 to buy 5 Etchells. BYO sails on a common interval (dacron main, 3, and kite or something like that, replacing torn sails with used sails as required), put your name in a hat, and you're assigned a hull number and maybe even a position. Fun.

I don't think thing the survey is aimed at me... I sail every other weekend on a PHRF boat. I am an experienced racer, and have no shortage of options to sail. But I have (at least) 2 acquaintances who want to sail, but find it hard to get started. All skippers want experienced crews, and I wouldn't feel right about placing a rookie on someone else's boat (and my boats have no room for rookies). I am racing enough that I don't have time to train my friends (and to be honest, these are acquaintances, not true friends). Perhaps if we could entice skippers to take rookies, either by giving them a weight allowance, or PHRF break, or make it a requirement once a year (or once a month). The clubs could have a list of "want to learn" sailors, and they would be placed on boats. The barrier to racing is not at the owner level, it is obvious there are tons of owners, all paying their yacht club bills and maintaining their boats. I read one comment that said it would be expensive to add more sails, change to a racing prop etc, but PHRF has room for corrections for non flying sails and fixed props. The barrier to racing at the less competitive end of the fleets is committed crew. Rookies should be welcomed and crew memberships at clubs should be affordable. Another idea is "golf handicaps". Handicap the skippers based on past performance and give out two sets of trophies at each event, one based on normal PHRF rating, and another with handicaps. The very competitive among us might only care about the PHRF trophy, but the new skippers would be very motivated to improve their handicap.

The question should be how to get more boats out, not the handicap system. The handicap system we use, PHRF, is as good as it can be to get new and more boats out. After more than 30+ years racing PHRF I finally got smart and went to one design. Never been happier! We need to get folks, like Kurt, to go out and play even with a fixed prop and no spin. ALSO there just are to many race events planned. If there were fewer serious type races, there would probably be more participation for each race then. Look at the fun double handed casual races like STYC does and how many sign up for those.

As a racer that travels something needs to be done to get PHRF-NW and PHRF-BC to have some more commonality a different rating in Vancouver and Seattle is a defiant barrier to entry.

This year the events we participated in were plagued with two issues: 1) Many of our 'big' events of the year got double booked with other events elsewhere so turnout was low, or were over holiday weekends and many didn't turnout due to family commitments, 2) Not as much with weekend regattas, but many of our regular weekly in-season races were very poorly run— confusion on courses, poor flag management, confusing horns, committee boat forgetting which course was set and not taking our times because they thought it was a 2-lapper even though it was a 1-lap. All of this was compounded in Bellingham because this year many boats decided to try going back to BYC wednesday racing with the hope that events would be more consistently and professionally run. Unfortunately, a number of keelboats weren't able to make the switch so it tore the regularly healthy Thursday night race turnout in half, and Wednesday racing didn't end up being any better for most of the races this year. Things that I think would be beneficial across the board are: 1) Consistency in PHRF handicapping by using TOT instead of TOD for all races. This makes it much simpler to gauge your position on course vs. other boats because it can be computed on course fairly simply by using a pre-printed PHRF calculation sheet showing times

and adjusted times by PHRF/boat. TOD is impossible to calculate without knowing the distances the committee boat will be using. 2) More public outreach to encourage sailing. I've lived in Bellingham for 37 years and not once was I even aware of the possibility that I could go sailboat racing until about 4 years ago when a friend got a boat and invited me to crew. This would include youth AND adult classes, small boat evening sails for a reasonable price, exploratory courses, etc. 3) Consistency when running races. Timely, organized, serious. Nothing is worse than finishing a race and not getting a horn.

More connections with kid's programs and clubs would've helped while my kids were growing up. Yacht clubs should make it almost free to join if you have a boat and under 30...

More buoy racing for the big boats. A scheduled ORC championship series that we could link with B.C.

The social scene is lacking compared to other venues I've experienced. Eg for winter racing, it seems like more socializing occurs the night before and everybody jets as soon as possible. That said, duck dodge, Sloop Tavern and to a degree Seattle Corinthian do a great job. Also, Gig Harbour Le Mans race is spectacular. Love doing new things every once in a while.

Most people I know learned organically, which typically means they didn't learn the "correct way." :) We should look for creative ways to 'recruit' new sailors deliberately, as a community of supportive mentors, without forcing them to run the old gauntlet of "intimidating, hierarchy based boats." Teach them what makes a good boat and a good team. Expose them to different boats, different size boats, 1D and PHRF, etc. I'm not particularly extroverted so I have, and continue to, struggle to find a spot on more boats. Clubs could encourage boats to always have one or two rookies per race. Skippers could build a culture of support and teaching on their boat. Get the club's to centralized on a short list of social media locations to pull new talent from. Find volunteers to monitor and introduce new members on what to expect and how to best find a boat. Club meets and post race events could consistently include 5 minutes for skippers to announce they're looking for novice crew. These are just ideas, but the theme is to build a new cultural norm that promotes rokkie recruitment and advancement across the club, the skippers, the crew, and the rewards. "Top 3 recruiting boats for the series / club / year / whatever..." should be standard.

I'm racing a Catalina/Capri 26 and it would be more fun to have boats (not sport boats) less than 30' to race. I like what CYC Tacoma is doing with races that can be shortened so my chances of finishing are greater. A question. Are there fewer sailors or just fewer boats? Seems like there are many more huge boats than there used to be and those soak up three or four 26' boat crews.

In our club races the "cruising class" is open to any boat. Regardless of rating, experience, or # of crew, or investment into go fast gear, Etc. It seems to me that this is where you/we could get more participation from the average boat owner. Limiting this class to just cruising boats and crews would be a start. Let the serious racers compete in A and B fleets. There's plenty of boats in the marina, it has to be fun first and as we all know any time there's 2 or more boats on the water the competitive spirit seems to take care of itself. thanks for your efforts.

I don't like time on time race scoring. Some of the longstanding races are getting stale and clubs participation isn't encouraged enough. It would be fun to have a few more local long distance races. There are too many small races throughout the week and weekends for boats to complete a series. Overall sailing atmosphere is welcoming.

Experienced crew spending time on new boats in low key events.

mixing fun races with serious races so the guy sailing with his friends on his Catalina 22 can see a wavelength 24 in action....get to talk with serious racers and see that they all aren't screaming dick heads...

I sail in DSS every thursday, which is great: 1) starts at a time that everyone can make it after work (7p) so easier to get crew, 2) separates the fast boats from the cruisers, 3) is way easier for most of us to get to vs. shilshole, 4) the organized after-events \*\*at the marina\*\* are a great way to end it. Only downside is that the rules are too loose and there is no handicap. So something with the positive features but more serious rules would be fantastic. I could probably muster a crew for a 2nd day during the week if it was also in the bay. I less frequently sail in Sloop Tavern events, because: 1) it's hard to get crew on weekends especially for races that take most of a day, 2) it's impossible for me to get the boat to shilshole after work during the week, and 3) there's just not very many of them to choose from, and 4) my club rating of 84 is really aggressive for a cruiser, which makes it very difficult to compete (especially in the frequent light-wind conditions we have on the sound)

There needs to be more socializing after racing. That is when people regale their race, learn rules, make friends who also participate in the sport. Coming to the PNW from other places, it is very noticeable that people don't socialize. I know that it is because many racers travel long distances throughout the sound and want to get back, but making those parties more accessible could make a difference.

My observation on PHRF racing; Newer purpose built race boats are sexy and fun to race to the point that non purpose built boats are regarded as nerdish and not worth spending the money for bottom and sails. Hard to justify the expense and non-family nature of a purpose built boat. Cruiser racers are older, for that matter most boats are, and are no longer properly rigged to race, have 40 years of rolled on paint, and not one raceable sail. The boat might have originally been financed completely equipped to race in the 70's and 80's. Refitting an old boat to race with cash money nowadays is lunacy. It is hard to maintain a race boat in salt water. After a month of neglect the boat is no longer competitive with maintained boats, possibly the owner discounts the affect and thinks it is his lack of skill and stops coming out permanently. It is expensive nowadays to have a yard maintain a race bottom. Modern spinnakers and control gear that allows for smaller crews, such as assyms, sprits, and snuffers are disadvantaged in PHRF (the most actively defended aspect of the system I might add). New or newer cruiser racers are out there and are sexier and competitive but are quite expensive. A huge premium is paid for the racing features. An old cruiser for 25 cents on the dollar is the only affordable way to get on the water. Knowledge, tech, and race skill has developed so far that it is daunting to start racing as a newby. Advice; -Heavily promoted plastic classics fleets and regattas like in the Bay area. -Bottom condition standardized. Only boatyard rolled paint. One dive per month. -Race sail buyers groups. Many international lofts might be able to get the price down with some volume. -Promote short handed (a coefficient of size not just single or double handed) racing on compatable courses to someplace. Not overnight trips through the convergence zone twice. 25 miles is a perfect phrf distance, make it easily shortened if the wind dies. -Real time race blogs so that competitors know who is racing what when and who needs crew. -Inverted starts -Someone needs to write a book or a blog on how to effectively upgrade and maintain PHRF boats. Get people excited about tricking out an Ericson 27 or Ranger 33.

Fire all the handicappers. Raise phrf fee to 150 per year and hire 3 handicappers to do the job.

I love racing against similar boats. My Express 37 rates 72 and we have the most fun when racing against a big fleet of J/35s, C&C 115s, J/109s, and other similar boats in the mid 60s to mid 70s. It's difficult when half or more of our fleet is sport boats (FT10 and Farr 30 rate closely enough to us) which perform entirely differently. It's really weird when get dumped into a -200 to 100 rating class, that is just way too big. I really like mid-distance races like CSS, and Round the County, and some of the Tri-Island courses. It is too bad that CSS happens all at once (4 races in 3 weeks) instead of being spread out, this makes it difficult to schedule around family obligations. I'm happier racing around gov't marks than doing just W/L buoy racing. It would be great to have another casual racing/party event like RttS in early fall. Doesn't need to be double handed. I love Round the County and Swiftsure, but family obligations can make 4 day weekends (half for delivery) very hard to manage. When I first got into racing I tried the casual classes with CYC and SYC. I had a Pearson 28-2 that rated 192 or something. The casual classes were too small, so I'd be racing against huge cruising boats that rated under 100, it was just too much of a spread. I think there are better ways to encourage people to jump from casual to serious.

What I enjoy about racing is its an excuse to take the boat out all year. While it can be fun to do well in a race and a great way to improve my skills I do feel that racing can also ruin the sailing experience for me. Even on "casual" events some skippers take it to seriously, I've crewed on a lot of boats and have seen constant bitching, and even yelling threats of violence in the parking lot afterwards! Really? Ya boys need to chill out or it will be the racers that are responsible for killing racing in the pnw. If you really want to increase your numbers there needs to be an effort to pull in the average Joe skipper by having shorter races that focus on the fun of sailing. I'd race my own boat if it was an hour or two so I could sail off once crossing the line.

Where are the overnight distance races? I move here 3 years ago from the east coast and what shocked to find out how few true "distance races" there are... there seems to be a few ~100 mile race and there's Vic-Maui, but theres a big gap of 200-600 mile races that we are lacking.

The cost of ownership has gotten so high, maybe more boat sharing/smaller shared fleet boats would help. That's also an avenue for younger people to get involved. Sand point is a good model.

I massively prefer one design and will always do that first (Farr 30, Melges 24, Martin 242, J/80). The racing is more fun, tighter, everyone know how they did, and OD fleets really support each other and promote themselves to new potential owners and crew. Almost none of that happens with handicap racing. In fact, in the NW (BC/WA) PHRF is working completely counter to this. As a very active OD boat, I have to register with PHRF every year just to do a few handicap events. In the scheme of sailboat racing, \$100 Canadian isn't a big deal, but it's infuriating. That's \$100 for NOTHING. As a strict OD class, my boat has never been measured and will never change. I have raised this many times to people involved in PHRF, and they acknowledge the problem and say they will work on it, then nothing. No action, no follow-up. And we wonder why people just take their toys and don't play in the PHRF handicap sandbox? In our neck of the woods, this is TWENTY boats. It's hard to get new people into racing boats, or get them out racing, but it's a LOT easier to make it easy for existing active racers to do events they want to do. Why make it hard for no valid reason?? I love serious performance racing, but in area (Victoria) we need more casual fun racing. We've lost all of the Jack&Jill, casual team racing, Generations , parent/child, etc races. Those were great opportunities to introduce people to racing, connect generations (super important), and try something new. We also need to be doing a LOT more to transition youth racers into keelboating to generate crew and generate the next generation. This is a whole topic on its own.

Yacht clubs are putting on events, some are not that well organized or promoted. Could possibly have a regatta Council that works with yacht clubs for each event. This would help consistency and promotion.

In all honesty, handicap racing is meaningless. It sucks to "win" a race and then wait for what can be hours for a bath tub to finish and find out they corrected over you. This is why if I want a competitive race, I will find a one design fleet. That gives us the best measure of skill and talent. If our boat wins, we know immediately. If we frack something up, we see our mistake and how it directly impacts our perf. In handicap, you don't get that all once there is anything more than a 4-5 seconds of differential. PHRF racing for me nowadays is about participation more than competition. Take a look at Race to the Straits - that is personal challenge (unless there are other similar boats)... and the dinner in between is a great way to hang out with others.

A friend of mine who has done the Mackinac races often laughs whenever Swiftsure is brought up. He thinks Swiftsure is technically fun but overall boring. Why? There is nothing to keep you engaged after the race. No party, no awards. He's got a point - at the end of the race, all you get is a bowl of soup and everyone scatters asap. I've done Swiftsure many times and I'm very familiar with process - how fast can we turn things around to get home is SOP. Race awards is so meaningless... until the next year when everyone has forgotten about it. It makes a lot of sense why RTS is so popular.... you get a chance to hang out with folks over a nice dinner. As for WIRW, I think the organizers are failing to account for the single biggest reason they saw a drop in attendance in the last two years -- the lift is BROKEN. It was like night and day in 2015 when the lift went out of service. That knocked out anywhere from 20-25 small boats. They're reaction to trim down to 3 days (with a "practice" day on Thursday - that's what I recall hearing at the tent) with racing in Sunday is quite honestly ass-backwards. Oak Harbor is not close-by to anything. Even Seattle is nearly 7-9 hours away for most boats (i've done the delivery many times). Who thinks having racing through Sunday is a good idea? Who really wants to deliver on Sunday night? Now they're asking crews to burn vacation time on the back side of the event? Ok.. save me a day on the front but charge me on the back. It's the same overall cost. With the suggested change in format, they actually make the event LESS enticing. It's too far away, requires way too much effort (deliveries, crew, crab pots, tents, etc.) for an ordinary 3 day event (with a high probability that most folks will ditch on Sunday so they can deliver home in time for Monday). After 16+ years of WIRW, next year is the first time I will probably not attend b/c it's not worth it. I fully realize they can't fix the lift but maybe they need to look at ways to get the small boats back to WIRW. As how this related to PHRF? It's not. I think WIRW has done ok (i.e. facing same general handicap issues) but they need to realize that their biggest detriment is not PHRF but lack of facilities and distance. What's the common element in my feedback? Off-boat activities is what makes racing exciting nowadays. Give me RTS, give me old-school WIRW where it's a vacation destination, give me a reason to hang out and meet other folks... if i really want to be competitive, you'll find me in a one design fleet.

From the Blog

Awesome that you are doing this!

Wanted to take the survey but Google hates me and denied me access. Too much personality conflict not enough sport. Need to keep egos in check. More education on rules and tactics Programs to introduce people to the sport. Especially women and minorities. Let's sponsor some PHRF introductory boats. Yacht club events to introduce racing to non racers. EG be a better, safer cruiser by racing.

I had trouble as well, I needed to refresh the page and take the survey again. Thanks for collecting this feedback and working with the local race committees.

(Editor's Note: I eventually did get that Google problem fixed)

From Bob Ross:

So tell us why aren't you racing your C&C 36, a classic racer/cruiser. It's a great family activity. You used to be so active with your San Juan.

Kurt's Answer:

Of course you've got a good point, Bob. And it's a fair question. The mighty C&C 36 Slipstream I share with two other families would be a perfectly good family racer. A lot of those survey questions apply to me, i.e. family not (yet) being into it, cost, time etc. Assuming I could get the other owners to buy into the racing thing, Slipstream would need a 4-5 sails (yes, NEED), spinnaker gear and something other than a solid 3-bladed prop. We did "race" the Blakely Rock Benefit with what we had, and it was a lot of fun. If we did race her, it would be in a cruising class so we could keep our anchor on the bow and water in the tanks.

Thank you for opening up this conversation. It's a topic being kicked around at most yacht and sailing clubs around the country as racing numbers continue to decline. Many of us remember participating at Whidbey Island Race Week, PSSC and PSSR back in the day when there were always over 100 PHRF boats (with many new rookies in the mix). At Race Week, we've definitely seen a decline in PHRF and a rise in OD participation, but have remained steady around 60 boats for the past few years now, (despite efforts to build participation by enhancing the post-race experience and making the event more family friendly.)

What I think it comes down to is time and money: People only have so much vacation (and personal) time and there is significantly more demands on people's discretionary incomes – especially in Seattle.

Race Weeks across the country are all but gone. Many that are still afloat and attracting new sailors have adopted a shorter format that includes weekend dates. This is why we have shifted Race Week to a 4-day race event for 2018 that will run Thursday through Sunday in an effort to make it easier for people to participate. In addition to shifting from 5 days of racing M-F to 4 days of racing Th-Su, here are some other features in store for Whidbey Island Race Week in 2018:

1. In addition to PHRF and OD racing options, we're introducing a NFS/Jam Performance Cruising Class for people who want just one casual distance race per day. We're hoping this attracts our cruising friends and people new to racing who want to be a part of the Race Week experience.

2. We'll be presenting the First Annual Molly Kool Cup trophy that will be a perpetual overall award available only to women skippers.

3. We're inviting sailors to tell us what THEY want to do. If 6 or more boats commit and come to us with a fleet idea (ie: fleet championships, a double handed class, etc), we'll work with our PRO and Race Committee to give the fleet their own start.

So, we keep tweaking things in an effort to build participation and are hoping that some of the changes above bring new players to the sport. I'll be really interested to see the results of your survey and appreciate all the great work you do to enhance the local sailing community.

Best regards,

Schelleen Rathkopf  
Whidbey Island Race Week

- 1: More beer can racing
- 2: More destination racing
- 3: perhaps a newer better cooler crew list site with profiles and shit.

Good work

Love your show.

Back to the PHRF situation and lack of racers: I was too shy to take the survey and have my thoughts made public because I am new to the scene, and so what do I know. But I have done other sports, and so here's what I suggest: one, reward the behavior you want, and two, have ambassadors.

If you want more PHRF boats, then have a PHRF boat of the year, or something like that. I know there is a boat of the year, but I don't really know what goes into it except a lot of first and second places and so on. But if you added or divvied that up into classes and so on, then there are more rewards. For me, it isn't so much about the chance of winning a prize, it's just the fact that someone is tracking PHRF boats and not just the heavy hitters. You could even take it further by awarding several PHRF boats of the year rewards broken down by rating: 1-50,51-100, and so on. Also you could do best boat of the year for each one design class to be consistent. You could keep the boat of the year tradition while adding in these prizes.

Also if you want more new racers, then have best novice of the year, as determined by a clearly advertised set of suitable races that are eligible for points.

I think it might be worth it to have a regional or visiting yacht club of the year award to encourage regional participation. This one is tough, because you'd basically have to make SYC, CYC and Sloop ineligible so that another club had the chance to win. But I hope you see where I'm going with that. It might encourage other yacht clubs to mobilize more often.

And ambassadors: round up some nice, chatty and knowledgeable people who can be reached before the race and during the weekend for stupid questions and encouragement. They could help with race-specific information - not the rules of racing, but etiquette, schedule, tradition, local knowledge (at least a little) and other things that can only be learned by doing the race for the first time. Jarred and I did offroad rally racing for a while, and they used to have ambassadors who would answer these types of questions the whole weekend. They were gold for me as a novice co-driver facing a lot of the same issues: a lot of rules, a packed schedule, a lot of etiquette, and not a lot of room for error. The race websites are often short on details. And

ambassadors can also encourage people on the fence, and even maybe connect crew and boats, and so on.