

THOMAS R. LEITH

May 3, 2009

Dear CYC Skippers,

If you don't know me, my name is Tom Leith, and I am the 2009 Sail Fleet Captain. For the past four seasons, I have been the tactician, trimmer, and trainer-of-crew on Joan Hall's boats, Tangerine (a Viper 640) and RJ (a J-24). Before that, I sailed at CSA on any number of boats over the years, including my Star, *Not Sirius*, which I sold when I went to grad school in 2000.

PROGRAM CHANGES

We implemented a couple of experiments last season, a *Level Handicap Division* where handicaps work like golf or bowling handicaps, and a *Once a Month Division*, to provide a season-long series that requires less time commitment than the three "seasonal" series require. Because of a very low level of interest in either of these programs, they are not offered in 2009. Feedback indicated that the majority of the Jib & Main Fleet prefer to sail three races on the days when weather permits, and so this fleet is no longer limited to two races per date.

Bottom Line: the Wet/Dry JAM Divisions stay, three races return, and the rest of 2008's experiments go.

The PRO will continue to wait for sufficient breeze for fair racing. He's looking for a consistent 4 MPH over the whole racing area. The Sailing Instructions for the Buoy Series now specify that when no warning signal has been made by 1:55 P.M. all races shall be abandoned. The PRO *generally* will not abandon races before that time except for reasons of safety (think thunderstorms), and so the mark-setters and RC should be prepared to set a course up until this time. This gives us the best chance to get in at least one race.

RACING RULES CHANGES

The International Sailing Federation (ISAF) has released an update to [The Racing Rules of Sailing](#) now in effect through 2012. Everyone who sails in a sailboat race ought to have better-than-passing familiarity with the rules.

The most noteworthy change for most of us has to do with *The Zone*. It is bigger now in order to define what "about to round" a mark means. People were often dousing chutes, jockeying for position and so-forth before they got to *The Zone*, which was two boat lengths. You naturally do all this when you're "about to round" in reality, but the rules more or less ignored this fact of life, or at least pretended it all took place within *The Zone*.

So to clear up the ambiguity, the "about to round" terminology has been dropped from the rules—they only talk about being in *The Zone*, which is now three boat lengths. Note that Sailing Instructions may now change the size of *The Zone*, so be sure to read them when you enter a regatta. This is also new.

There are numerous other changes, mostly clarifications and reorganization. For example, ISAF have separated the rules concerning room at marks and obstructions and have clarified them. (Rules 18 & 19). Sea-lawyers beware.

CYC HANDICAPPING

The CYC Handicapping Committee was hard at work over the winter, and decided after long discussion to use essentially the same PHRF ratings in 2009 as in 2008.

There have been a handful of individual rating changes. There were two appeals, and the Committee acted on both. There were a few other boats that suffered clerical errors last season, and have been corrected for 2009. The current list of CYC ratings is on the website.

I am pleased to announce that Boulder Yacht Club has adopted the CYC ratings for 2009. This is a terrific step towards creating harmony among all the racing programs at Carlyle Lake.

Experimental Jib & Main Ratings

Last year's Moonlight Regatta was run last year for the first time as a pursuit race – where the boats are started in reverse PHRF Rating order. In that race, I made a flat “Jib & Main Allowance” of four minutes to try to equalize Jib & Main boats with Spinnaker Boats. But we know this isn't quite right: some boats have bigger spinnakers than others, which means that sailing without a spinnaker hurts some boats more than it does others. Especially on a long-distance race, this can make a noticeable difference.

In 2009 the CYC Technical Committee is experimenting with a method of accounting for this, mainly based on the ratio of a boat's mainsail area to jib area, which generally is proportional to the spinnaker size. This method generates a rating which can be used just like a normal PHRF Rating. Using these ratings, most boats are predicted to have about a four minute difference around the lake versus the same boat with a spinnaker, but it varies. These experimental ratings may be used for some CYC events like *The Spring Shakedown* and *The Moonlight Regatta*. For the time being, we'll still score JAM and Spinnaker boats in separate divisions even at these laid-back events while we see how well the ratings work.

The High SA/D boats don't have a JAM Rating — this is not a mistake. The method probably can't work for these boats, they're simply “too different”.

The Experimental JAM Ratings will not be used at all for the CYC Buoy Series this year

HELP WANTED

The racing program always needs more help – specifically we need a couple more “scorers” and “registrars” – people who will learn to use the QuickScore program, and who can learn how to assign PHRF Ratings, especially for regattas. A number of people are very generous with their time, and have carried perhaps too much of the weight for too long. Learning these jobs is also a great way to prepare for the Sail Fleet Captain role in the Club, who will have to be elected this fall. I'll be looking for two or three people during the season to step in and learn. Volunteers and nominations are of course welcome.

As ever, if you have questions or an idea, e-mail me or call any time between 9 A.M. & 9 P.M. I hope everyone who wants to play the sailboat racing game can find a CYC program to have fun and compete in.

See you on the water,



Tom Leith