



PHRF PERSPECTIVE  
June 2003

## Getting Ready For The PHRF Championships!

### Race Boat Preparation (Part 2)

This year's Ullman Sails So Cal PHRF Championships will be held August 9 & 10 at Marina Del Rey on Santa Monica Bay hosted by Del Rey Yacht Club. For the first time ever, there will be, in addition to Buoy and Random Leg racing, a Southern California Cruiser Handicap Fleet Championship with rating offsets for a variety of "cruising gear." Spinnaker and non-spinnaker entries will be accepted. This is a rare opportunity to be the first winner on a Perpetual Trophy! Help spread the word.

Plans are proceeding with several exciting and novel innovations on the drawing board:

1. The Ullman Sails PHRF Championships are being held the weekend following the Santa Barbara to King Harbor race and DRYC has limited dockage available. PHRF will help to find more space if needed for visiting racers. Early reservations are encouraged.
2. Ullman Sails is trying to arrange a "How to Win in Marina Del Rey" seminar. Details are being worked out at press time.
3. DRYC is attempting to arrange for on-the-water judging at marks on the buoy courses. That should help reduce Part 2 protests and the long wait for results, etc.
4. Random Leg and Cruiser Class courses will consist of a Santa Monica Bay "Tour" that should be both challenging and fun!
5. The Saturday evening after race dinner will be a delicious Fiesta Buffet on the patio next to the pool. Ole and party on, Garth!
6. DRYC is considering a Friday evening "practice race" if there is enough interest.

We're working on other surprises. Sailing conditions in Santa Monica Bay are similar to Newport and can be tactically challenging (usually) without the white-knuckle stress and carnage of windier areas. (If any senior racers recall the PHRF Championships ever being held in MDR, let us know by calling the Fleet office # below.

As we look forward to the season's major regattas, let's review optimizing the deck and interior of your boat. The goal is to equal the speed potential to the PHRF rating by making it a lighter boat with a deck layout for easier crew work! Last month we focused on preparation of Rig and Sails. Parts 1 & 2 were originally written by Bruce Cooper of Ullman Sails and then more recently updated.

**ON DECK: Improve performance by lessening weight in the ends of the boat. Weight increases the pitching moment and causes your boat to "hobby horse" diminishing speed and acceleration. Begin at the bow of your boat and working aft make list of items that can be changed, (re)removed or modified to improve racing performance.**

Two items at the top of your list should be removing roller furling gear and ground tackle. The weight *will* make a difference. Don't use an anchor locker. Stow it all below deck in the center of the boat as near to directly over the keel as possible. Remove all cruising gear on deck including dodger and cockpit cushions! If your boat has an outboard motor store it and the bracket below.

Everyone is guilty of storing "stuff" in the lockers and below. Put all items in the dock box or put them in a box below next to the anchor. No pack rats; get the ends light!

Next, evaluate your deck gear and determine if you are getting top performance from your winches and sail control systems. The more wind you sail in, the better your deck gear needs to be. The crew needs the gear working for them, not against them! On 30' boats or longer, upgrade primary winches to three-speed for faster grinding and less wear and tear on the crew. Most production boats come with undersized winches so upgrade to a more appropriate size.

Another must do performance upgrade is to install adjustable genoa leads and a windward sheeting traveler. When sails need adjusting for optimum trim and speed, the genoa leads and main traveler need to work easily and smoothly. Also installing a spring-loaded boomvang with ample purchase of at least 16:1 to 24:1 will give you an advantage in light air to keep the boom from "hooking" the mainsail leech. It eliminates the need for a boom topping lift: Less weight and windage!

Halyards and control lines led to the cockpit allow easier adjustments with halyard winches and rope/halyard clutches led aft in an organized manner. Usually this type of deck layout reduces the number of winches needed, which means less weight! Proper labeling of halyards and control lines will be user-friendlier. Double-led adjustment lines (vang, cunningham, etc.) can allow adjustment by crew *without* getting off the rail!

**INSTRUMENTS:** One other way to optimize the "deck layout" is mast-mounted instruments or repeaters for instruments. For larger boats your instrument package should integrate jumbo repeaters at the mast making trim adjustments evident to the whole crew--not just the person sitting next to

the dial. It's heads-up sailing for the skipper *and* crew. Repeaters along with a digital compass adds instant feedback to help you keep the boat going as fast as possible at all times and in the right direction! For smaller boats, mount your compass and speedo on the mast. And make sure your instruments are calibrated properly otherwise B.S. in is B.S. out.

BELOWDECKS: Now, optimize the interior. The first rule to remember is you CANNOT remove weight or items that are FACTORY SPECIFIED or INSTALLED. This means you must leave doors, the stove, cushions, the table and the like in the boat because that is the way it came from the factory. The boat was rated with that equipment. Everything else needs to go. If you DO remove any "permanent" or factory items, your PHRF certificate *instantly* becomes invalid (that means you cannot race until a new certificate--acknowledging the modifications--is issued). You MUST report any modifications to PHRF. We strongly suggest you talk it over with your PHRF Representative before you fire up the Sawzall.

Put the interior on a diet! My crew carried off all the cassettes except for two Grateful Dead tapes. Read the sailing instructions and add only necessary safety equipment. As on deck, remove all the weight from the ends to reduce "hobby horsing." The ideal spot is centered and low over the keel (or on the dock).

Keep sails on the floorboards in an organized manner. If the crew knows where each sail is, sail changes can take less time. If you're buoy racing, empty the water tank and drink personal-size bottled water. Leave a few gallons of fuel in the tank. For offshore or overnight races, plan the fuel and water consumption accordingly.

Removing and shifting gear on deck and below can save perhaps a hundred pounds or more. This'll translate into speed in all conditions and on all legs of each race. Here's more tips to make your sailing easier and add extra non-rated speed:

1. Upgrade the foreguy to be "double ended." Lead it aft each side of the boat to be cleated and controlled while sailing on either gibe.
2. Put a code flag decal in the cockpit. Don't waste time at the start looking up the bearing, course or mark.
3. Rig adjustable "tweakers" for your spinnaker sheets on the rail. These will help overall spinnaker control and shaping. It is a good way to keep the guy from bending a lifeline stanchion while on a reach and may eliminate the need for a reaching strut.
4. Use ratchet blocks for your spinnaker sheets on the rails near the stern. This gives the trimmer better feel and frees up a winch for the next mark rounding.
5. Install rollers on forward stanchions & top lifelines for fast and easy skirting of the genoa foot when tacking.
6. Put a spinnaker bag in the front hatch for launching and dousing. Freeing up the cockpit from having the 'chute interfere with trimming the genoa at the leeward rounding there's no need to pack it. This is a MUST for buoy racing but you need to practice!

These optimizing tips can give you better performance and non-rated speed. But don't forget to practice. Practice is also a non-rated item by PHRF. Your boat's rating is based on being prepared. Prep and Practice can help you be a Champion this August at MDR!

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