

215151

To: Off Soundings Club Board of Governors
From: Off Soundings Club Long Range Planning Committee
Subject: Minutes of Long Range Planning Committee Meeting held on February 19, 1990 at 7:00pm at Rod Johnstone's home in Stonington CT.

All members were present at the first meeting: Andy Anderson, Bill Fortmann, Rodney Johnstone, Steve O'Connell, Norm Rabe, and Dick Steinhilber.

The committee has adopted literally the OSC Board of Governors' definition of the LRPC's role, namely: "to evaluate Off Soundings race activities with the object of recommending to the Board such changes, if any, which might enhance and/or improve member interest and participation."

1. MEMBERSHIP - Discussion included review of membership statistics over the past several years which indicate steady decline as well as increasing age of members. The question of how many invited "Guests" (since 1986) had become members is being investigated by Andy. The issue is to find out if "Guests" are somehow being turned off to joining OSC. Discussion centered on admissions policy as it pertains to attracting qualified (younger) sailors. Increased member and family participation in OSC races was also viewed as an important objective.

It was unanimously felt that admission of women members will enhance participation in our existing fleet, and will help foster interest in membership by younger and more active sailors. Many members' wives are well qualified to be captain and should also be admitted as members. Admission of wives of present members would improve the chances that the family yacht would race, because, often, the husband cannot make both races in a series. Sailboat racing is no longer strictly a "man's" sport as it once was. In many cases the sailor in the family is the wife, not the husband. This is a common situation with couples in their twenties and thirties. There is now little incentive for such a couple to join OSC, because the "sailor" in the family (if a woman) cannot join directly. In addition there are many competent women sailors of all ages who would do credit to OSC. Active encouragement of the admission of women members by the Board of Governors will remove a huge stumbling block in the way of improving interest and participation, and will help attract qualified young sailors.

2. THE HANDICAP RULE - It is generally agreed that the PHRF handicapping system is adequate, and that changing to another handicapping system would not necessarily improve the racing nor be an incentive to greater participation. The only area where handicapping might be improved is the application of PHRF numbers to time on the race course rather than distance. It was agreed that Norm Rabe, Andy Anderson and Rod Johnstone would combine to review elapsed and corrected times on all races since 1986 for an A, C and Cruising Canvas class to see if time-on-time handicapping would produce a tighter spread in corrected time results than the present time-on-distance method. We have no recommendation at this time and will present a complete report at a later date.

3. RACE FORMAT -

A. It is unanimously agreed that the Cruising Canvas class should be split into two classes. This would create better racing by reducing the large rating spread that now exists. It is also suggested that the largest CC division might sail the longer course if conditions warrant. At present the largest entries in cruising canvas give the "Empress" a good race to the finish line.

B. It is also felt that Classes A1, A2, and B should be combined into two classes (A and B). There are now only about 40 entries total that race in this category - not enough to justify three classes. This change should occur at the same time the CC class is split in two so as not to increase the total number of classes now racing.

C. It is agreed that the five C classes are the right number for the "racing" category, but that the makeup of the five classes should be redistributed according to PHRF rating. The attempt to arbitrarily separate light displacement boats into separate sub-categories may well be hurting participation in these classes. It certainly results in wide rating spreads which do not foster competitive racing, particularly in Classes C2, C3, and C4. There have been some complaints here by participants. Norm Rabe and Dick Steinhilber are working on suggestions for how the classes would be split on the basis of PHRF ratings.

D. Other topics discussed were:

1. The possibility of having a two-handed division (CC rules).

2. The possibility of limiting total crew to decrease the advantage of lightweight boats in heavy air and upwind: the idea being to limit crew to the number of fixed berths on the boat, or even to require that all crew must sleep on boat. Does the spirit of Off Soundings allow stripped-out boats without adequate accommodations, food and stores aboard for whole weekend for whole crew? This would be tough to enforce but perhaps a desirable goal.

GENERAL: The whole idea is to keep it simple and fun. OSC has done a great job to date: better than any other race organization. Any suggestions made by the LRPC to the Board will be based on promoting fun and camaraderie among the participants.

Other items were deferred to the next meeting scheduled for Norm Rabe's house in Salem CT on March 19 at 7:00pm.

Respectfully yours



Rodney S. Johnstone, Chairman

c: LRB Committee

To: Off Soundings Board of Governors

From: Long Range Planning Committee

Subject: Minutes of Meeting March 19, 1991 held at the home of Norm Rabe in Salem CT at 7:00pm.

Present at the meeting were Andy Anderson, Rodney Johnstone, Steve O'Connell, and Norm Rabe.

A. The Long Range Planning Committee recommends that the Board of Governors adopts the following resolutions for immediate implementation; namely that

1. the Off Soundings Board of Governors make it known to the membership immediately and in every way possible that qualified women are encouraged to apply for full membership to the Off Soundings Club.

2. the five "C" Classes shall be grouped according to PHRF numbers effective with the Spring Series 1991.

B. The Long Range Planning Committee believes that action may need to be taken as early as 1992 on the following issues. The committee urges consideration on these issues and welcomes input by the Board of Governors and the general membership. No action is recommended by the committee for implementation in 1991:

1. Cruising canvas should be split into two divisions in order to accommodate increased interest in this type of racing.

2. Declining entries in the A and B classes forecast the need for combining A1, A2, and B into two classes. Because of a desire not to increase the number of classes, this change should be made in conjunction with Paragraph B.1 above.

3. The idea of limiting crew (therefore encouraging live-aboard-for-the-weekend racing) would take away some of the edge now enjoyed by some lightweight boats with meager accommodations which sail with heavyweight crews. While the committee seems to favor crew limits (such as limiting the crew to the number of fixed berths), we have no formula to recommend at this time. One suggestion is to post in the entry list the maximum crew number permitted to each entry based on the number paid for with the entry. Crew carried in excess of this number would subject a yacht to disqualification.

A brief discussion was held on other issues as raised in the February 19, 1991 meeting.

Respectfully yours


Rodney S. Johnstone, Chairman

e: LRP Committee