



PHRF Northwest  
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### What we are about ...

The primary objective of PHRF Northwest is to promote competitive sailboat racing in the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia by establishing and maintaining an equitable system of handicap ratings.

### A brief history ...

The Pacific Handicap Racing Fleet (PHRF) was established in Southern California as an alternative to the Cruising Club of America (CCA) and International Offshore Racing (IOR) rating systems.

1966: Under the leadership of Walt Little, Chief Handicapper, and Tom Wheeler, President, the first organizational meeting of the Pacific Handicap Racing Fleet of Puget Sound (the original name) was held at Seattle Yacht Club on March 15, 1966.

1967: Membership increased from 40 to 127 and additional handicappers were appointed to better serve the needs of PHRF members.

1969: PHRF of Puget Sound was incorporated in the State of Washington with management vested in the Board of Directors.

1970: In recognition of a growing number of Canadian PHRF members, the name of the organization was changed to Pacific Handicap Racing Fleet Northwest (PHRF-NW).

PHRF-NW has become the predominate sailboat handicapping system serving sailors in Oregon, Washington, British Columbia, Alaska and Idaho.

### How PHRF works ...

PHRF NW is a non-profit organization developed and run by an ever-evolving team of volunteer sailors. We have only one paid employee who administers the vast quantity of paperwork generated by approximately 100 local area directors and handicappers we are extremely proud of this heritage.

Members representing individual clubs voluntarily serve as handicappers who determine PHRF-NW ratings. These Handicappers collectively serve on the Handicappers Council and report to the Chief Handicapper.

A boat's rating is a handicap expressed in seconds per mile that reflects the speed potential of the boat. Speed potential considers the level of performance expected of a well sailed boat in excellent racing condition, with new sails and experienced crew.

A club handicapper, using comparative data for similar boats, input from the owner, other handicappers, competitors and other available sources, initially establishes temporary or "T" Ratings for new boat types.

A "T" Rating is flexible and may be adjusted by a club handicapper based on observed performance.

As experience with new boat types increases, "T" Ratings are often changed by the Handicapper's Council to "Standard" Ratings and are applied to all other boats of the same type from that point forward. This assures consistency for members throughout the region.

PHRF-NW maintains a large database of boat types with corresponding base "T" or "Standard" Ratings. A Base Rating represents a boat with standard equipment as defined by PHRF-NW. These ratings may be reviewed and adjusted as necessary during the scheduled meetings of the Handicapper's Council.

A Base Rating is adjusted by the handicapper to reflect non-standard changes in equipment and sails. The result is an "As Sailed" Rating. For example, a boat with larger than standard sails would be rated faster while a boat with a fixed 3-blade propeller would be rated slower than a boat with a folding propeller.

### What racing can do for you ...

If you are a competitive sailor, you already know what well-organized racing is all about.

If you are new to racing, you will learn more about every detail of your boat and how to sail it well under all kinds of conditions. Racing improves your navigational skills while teaching you to sail in adverse current, heavy weather and light air.

You can choose events that are relatively easy and as your skills improve, move on to more

competitive racing. You will meet lots of new friends.

Just one year of sailboat racing will expand your knowledge and confidence level far more than what you could learn cruising for several years.

PHRF in action ...

Yacht Clubs and other organizations sponsor many sailboat races over the course of a year. Most of these events feature PHRF-NW handicapping where boats are grouped by rating into classes. Each class starts together, sails the same course, and competes for awards within their class based on corrected time after application of each boat's handicap.

If you want to race, you can find an event almost every weekend. There are also many weeknight events during the spring, summer and fall.

Racing events fall into two broad categories: Distance Racing and Buoy Racing. Distance Races vary from 5 to over 100 nautical miles in length and typically take from an hour to several days to complete. Buoy Races are typically short and very intense. Often several Buoy Races are held on the same day with points awarded to the boats finishing best in all series races.

There is something for everyone. Racing venues range from easy-going fun events to very demanding and highly competitive racing and everything in-between.

Membership has its advantages ...

Your dues support PHRF-NW and the vital service they perform in providing a competitive racing environment for all!

With PHRF membership, you receive the following benefits:

- You will be assigned a handicapper who can work directly with you to get your initial rating established, answer questions about PHRF and assist in rating appeals.
- You will receive an annual PHRF-NW Roster with a list of all officers, directors, handicappers, and current PHRF-NW members including boat data and a technical explanation of how ratings are established and changed.
- You will receive an annual a Rating Certificate with your current boat measurement data.
- You become eligible to participate in PHRF handicapped racing events.

How to join ...

New members may obtain an Application and Rating Form (AR Form) available online at [www.phrf-nw.org](http://www.phrf-nw.org), PHRF-NW Business Office.

If you don't belong to a yacht club, contact the PHRF-NW Business Office at (253) 857-8858, or [phrfnw@gmail.com](mailto:phrfnw@gmail.com), they will send you the AR form and assign you a Handicapper you can work with.

Complete the form and submit it to your Handicapper with a check for Annual PHRF-NW Dues, or you can pay online. Currently Annual Membership Dues is \$45.00. When your Handicapper has completed your AR Form and

forwarded to PHRF-NW with your check for membership dues, you are ready to race!



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