

SYRA Meeting  
YCCS, Porto Cervo, IT  
Wednesday, June 5, 2013

PURPOSE OF MEETING: Pursuing Accurate Displacement for Superyacht Handicapping

ATTENDING:

Barry Houghton	Excom Co-Chair	Kate Branagh	Excom Co-Chair
Bill Tripp	Excom / Yacht Designer	Michael Benakis	Yacht Designer (Dubois)
Ruurt Muelemans	Yacht Designer (Hoek)	Vittorio Blengini	Perini Navi
Rodney Martin	Builder (Fitzroy)	Cameron Appleton	Tactician/Racing Rules Cte
Jim Teeters	International Super Yacht Rule	Quinten Houry	Doyle Sails
Peter Craig	SYRA Executive		

A number of emails had been circulated among Fair Sailing Committee members over the past couple of weeks regarding displacement issues in handicapping. All present at the 5 June meeting in Porto Cervo were in agreement that displacement is a major factor in superyacht rating and handicapping – for determining speed potential and nimbleness. Nobody questioned the fact that the displacement numbers boat captains are providing Rule Authorities are in many cases inaccurate and in some instances wildly off base. Whether this is a result of ignorance, laziness, or outright cheating was not dwelled upon – the time was spent attempting to come up with a short term solution that would eliminate the major inaccuracies.

- A fair amount of time was spent discussing ‘freeboards’. While this may ultimately be a long term solution, it does not appear to represent the next logical step in eliminating the major discrepancies with displacement. There are measurers, costs involved, and some complicated issues with reference points (plimsoll marks) being provided by designers and/or builders, along with the challenge of determining the deck reference points.
- It was quickly ascertained that there are two issues at hand – getting reasonable displacement numbers for true ‘superyachts’ and then the same for the so called ‘race boats’.
- To achieve our goal, I believe we will need to establish a 3-person SYRA sub-committee to act or rule on any issues that come up after we implement any new policy (Tripp, Benakis, Muelemans, Claughton?).
- For superyachts there appears to be a logical, relatively easy series of steps that can be taken to ensure more accurate displacement numbers for Rule Authorities which will hopefully eliminate those displacement numbers that are way out of line.
  - Designers and builders present claimed that the majority of superyachts have an “MCA Stability Booklet”. The Rule Authority would now require the “Arrival” displacement number from the yacht’s Stability Booklet in their handicap application (and ask those yachts that already have established handicaps or ratings for that number). Perhaps they should be required to scan and forward that particular page of the stability booklet.
  - The three loading conditions that can be found in a Stability Booklet are:
    - Lightship. This is what most race yacht rating rules aim for. A superyacht would only be in this condition once in its life, just before it is launched.
    - Departure condition (also known as the 100% or full load condition). In this condition she will float at the Plimsoll marks. Typically this would be 100% fluid in the fuel, water and lube oil tanks and 100% provisions. Grey/Black tanks and dirty oil tanks would be at 10%.
    - Arrival condition (also known as the 10% condition). Typically this would be 10% fluid in the fuel, water and lube oil tanks and 10% provisions. Grey/Black tanks and dirty oil tanks would be at 100%. The main principle being that tanks and associated systems are never completely drained hence 10% is considered the minimum for each.
  - For those superyachts that do *not* have an MCA Stability Booklet, the yacht designer (not the Captain) would be required to provide a ‘Designer Declaration’ to the Rule Authority directly with the yacht’s “Lightship” number, plus the tankage.
  - The Rule Authority would add 10% to the Lightship displacement number (which is the ‘Arrival’ fuel and water level).

- We will have some issues in weight with owner gear onboard (often not aboard a yacht when new and inclined for MCA). Different design offices may have different approaches to this.
  - Hence the possible range of displacements is between the 100% and 10% conditions. Attendees felt that a superyacht should be able to race fairly in any displacement between these two conditions. For example, yachts will tend to be lighter in Porto Cervo than when in St Barths, but it would be desirable to be able to cope with exceptions. Some yachts race with full or nearly full fuel tanks and provisions due to the fact that they have a charter starting shortly after a regatta.
  - The Rule Authority would need to know how much fuel and water is onboard during the regatta to establish an acceptable displacement number. The ISYR authority claims they can issue "revised certificates" for each upcoming regatta.
  - The process we appeared to agree on was that each superyacht would declare its 100% and 10% loadcases as per the Stability Booklet. Then on a specified date before each event (10 days prior to racing?) they would commit to a loading condition (anywhere between the two extremes). They would be handicapped for this displacement and this would be checked/confirmed by the OA.
  - The OA would state in their NOR and/or SI that they can conduct random inspections to check on fuel and water status. Looking at the Plimsoll marks (port and stbd), it should be pretty apparent in which loading condition a yacht is. In addition the OA should be able to get a good snap-shot of the state of fill of the tanks from the yacht's monitoring systems.
- For race boats.... The first course of action for the Fair Racing Committee, would be to establish the criteria for defining a 'race boat' (or non-superyacht). Any bubble boats could be sorted out by the SYRA sub committee. It was agreed that all race boats participating in a superyacht regatta featuring the ISYR must provide the Rule Authority with a current (IRC or ORCi) rating certificate. If an IRC certificate, the yacht designer must provide a 'Designer Declaration' with the VCG number directly to the Rule Authority (who will share it with the sub committee for review).
  - For these policies to be effective, all of the OA's using the ISYR would have to be willing to make the applicable adjustments to their NOR and help enforce the new policies.

This is my take on the meeting from what I can decipher from my notes and some help from a few attendees. I would appreciate feedback from others in attendance if I have any of this wrong or if there are additional issues to discuss.

I would very much like to hear back from the Fair Racing/Handicapping Committee members to get your take on the proposed next step. When we are in agreement, Kate Branagh or I can present to the regatta organizers to get their thoughts and to determine their willingness to act as one on this important issue.

I look forward to hearing back from you.

Peter