

CALCULATING HANDICAPS

(Handy Pull-Out Sheet)

The SISA Handicap Committee met in early April to set scoring policy for the 2009 racing season. The committee is headed up by SISA Scorekeeper Jim Monroe, and includes Race Chairman Jim Gilmore and Rules Chairman Keith Sander. The committee's purpose is to establish scoring ground rules, post the handicaps for all SISA boats at the beginning of the season, and deal with any disputes or questions during the season.

The first item of business was to review how we currently use the Portsmouth Yardstick handicapping system (there are several different options), and the decision was made to continue our use of just the basic wind-corrected handicaps, which is the method recommended in the Portsmouth manual. This means that we won't normally be applying generic corrections for crew complement or sail configurations that differ from the basic setup in the tables for each boat type. The only exceptions will be a San Juan 21 jib-only allowance for 135% genoa (since the basic SJ-21 handicap is only for 'all sails' configuration) and the self-imposed corrections that have been taken by the SISA Mac 26 fleet for the past few years in the interest of fairness. As always, we will assess a penalty when appropriate for spinnaker use in a non-spinnaker fleet. This system has served us well and we will continue to use it this season. If questions of fairness arise, we will address them individually as they come up.

The handicap table posted on the reverse of this page allows SISA sailors to know their Portsmouth numbers and compare their handicaps and performance potential to other boats. We recommend that you save this table and perhaps laminate it to keep with you at regattas. By using this information and a simple calculation you can determine how much time that another boat owes you (or vice versa) for a given wind speed. You'll notice in the tables that all the handicaps are expressed as percentages such as 99.7 or 101.4. Say for example those numbers are the handicaps respectively for your boat and a rival boat in the 2nd column of the table (wind speed between 4 and 10 knots). The boat with the smaller number is rated as faster and owes the other boat time, but the question is how much?

Here's how to convert these numbers to seconds per hour of racing: Just subtract the smaller from the larger (101.4 - 99.7 = 1.7%) and multiply times 36 (1.7 x 36 = 61.2) to get seconds per hour. Since your boat has the smaller handicap number in this case, your boat is rated faster than the other boat in the 4 to 10 knot wind range and you owe him approximately one minute in an hour race, or about 30 seconds in a half-hour race, etc. So there you go! With a little practice (and maybe a handy calculator) you'll quickly be able to figure out where you stand compared with another sailor on a different type boat!

Remember:

**HCP #1 - HCP #2 X 36 = number
of seconds per one-hour race!**

