



Philosophy and Policies of AMSS Handicapping

The principal goal of AMSS handicapping is to foster full participation and friendly competition in the classic sailboat regattas including the Yesteryear Regatta, Kettenburg Regatta, Guinea Cup series and other San Diego races. In recognition that each AMSS vessel is unique and generally not a production boat amenable to a PHRF (Performance Handicap Racing Fleet) type handicap, we attempt to generate handicaps that reflect the individual performance of each yacht. The actual performance of each vessel is evaluated as it is currently sailed with existing crew and equipment, not its potential performance predicted by some arbitrary formula. A change of crew or skipper with greatly different skills or a modification in equipment that results in changes in the boat's performance warrants a change in handicap. Obvious changes to the original design that are meant to improve performance are monitored with great skepticism by the handicap committee.

Flag vessels that are new to AMSS or have changed ownership are assigned a provisional (P) handicap that may be changed each time the yacht is raced, leading to a handicap in keeping with the rest of the fleet for the Yesteryear Regatta. The handicap is no longer provisional when the handicap committee is confident that a consistent handicap is found. The exception to this individual performance handicapping system are groups of yachts that have requested to race "head to head" with the same handicap such as Kettenburg PC's and Luder's 16's. In contrast to this we have Kettenburg 50's and Calkins 50's with substantially different ratings, as required to keep the individual yachts competitive.

The Handicaps are set with the Yesteryear Regatta course in mind with the goal that in years with average conditions all participants should arrive at the finish line simultaneously since the race is a reverse handicap race. We consider average conditions to be a SW to W wind of 8-14 knots with minimal tidal differences between the first and last starting vessels. Under these conditions the Yesteryear Regatta is roughly 1/2 reaching and 1/4 beating and 1/4 running. Thus, the handicaps that apply for this mixed course will not always apply as well to a random course with all reaching or all upwind type of sailing that may occur in a given Guinea Cup or Half Pint of Rum race. Variations in performance with course type are particularly obvious in the heavier gaff rigged and split rig yachts which tend to reach well but do not go as well to weather. Each year the Yesteryear results are closely studied before and after the event so the insight can be used for the next year's handicap meeting. Of most interest is the group of yachts finishing outside the typically tightly clustered top places group.

Historically, the Handicapping Committee has met just prior to the Yesteryear Regatta to review the performance of those vessels entered in the Regatta. With our Guinea Cup series spanning the entire year we changed the timing and scope of our handicap review. We met in January and reviewed the performance of all vessels that have raced in the recent past and set the handicaps for the calendar year 2014. With the exception of provisional handicaps, which are continuously reviewed, it is our hope not to need to make further adjustments. Attached below, and published online, are the current handicaps for 2014. If you have any questions about handicaps please contact the handicap committee in writing.

Handicapping for the purpose of keeping all boats competitive is an ongoing process that is being continually updated. If for any reason, the skipper feels that he has been unfairly rated, they may submit a request in writing with rationale and race results etc. to the handicapping committee where, without prejudice, it will be given full and impartial consideration. AMSS Handicap Committee, PO Box 6484, San Diego, CA 92166, mailcall@amss.us

2014 AMSS Handicap Committee,

Jerry Newton
Greg Stewart
Johnny Smullen
Brad Smith
John Driscoll
John Buser