## Issues Update. RL24 Owners Association A drawing of a person  Description automatically generated

6 October 2020, Wayne Hill President

G’day

While there has not been much sailing in Victoria there has been quite a lot of behind the scenes work and discussion amongst the RL24 Owners Association Exec, a group of Co-opted members and State Reps.

Please consider joining the Association if you are not already a member.

This is a rundown on the current thinking around some key issues facing the RL24 Owners Association.

**Issue 1: Planning for the 48TH National Championships**

* There’s been some great publicity and preliminary work with Colac Y.C.
* Water levels on Lake Colac are looking a little behind forecasted.
* The plan was to make a call re water levels and confirming a venue at the start of October.
* Unfortunately, water levels at Lake Colac have forced Colac YC to withdraw as hosts for the upcoming Nationals.
* Lake Wellington YC under the leadership of Darryn Dyer is standing by as the alternate Venue.
* **An announcement will be made on 1st November 2020 as to whether the 2020-2021 48th Nationals will happen.**

**BUT**

* The Covid 19 Pandemic continues to be a worldwide health threat with some counties experiencing a ‘second  wave’ following easing of travel restrictions.
* Broader population treatments and vaccines may arrive as early as the end of the year but that is still too late for gathering of 25 to 60 people to safely attend a well-planned regatta.
* State restrictions are severely limiting travel particularly to and from Victoria. These arrangements are likely to continue into the new year. If Victoria, and NSW effectively manage their hotspots some easing of restrictions on travel and gatherings might occur late in this year. Nearly all our competitors live in these 3 states. Returning to another state from Victoria could remain complex int the new year.
* A fair proportion of our competitors are probably in the higher risk categories in regard to the virus.

***Approach at this stage***
It is becoming unlikely we will be able to run the 48th National Championships
We will postpone the call on Nationals in early January, until the end of October. We will circulate the outcome broadly, start of November 2020.
For now we will continue organising the 48thNational Championships if the balance of probabilities suggest we will be able to sail.
To proceed we would need

* reasonable Colac water levels or a shift to Lake Wellington, Gippsland
* a strong indication that Vic, QLD and NSW are *all* likely to ease travel restrictions.
* A general direction/agreement between Yachting Australia  and the host club that the event was supported.
* Gatherings of up to 50-75 outdoors and use of some amenities allowed as part of restrictions for summer.

**Issue 2: Deciding and communicating a cancelled/postponed 48TH National Championships**

* Cancelling means there would be no 48th National Titles. Postponing within the year is difficult as most clubs including Colac and Gippsland (if allowed to be up and running) will hold Easter Regattas,
* Interstate competitors generally need a run of holidays to travel times outside the Christmas & Easter breaks are probably more difficult to attract competitors to.
* We need to stay on track for the 50th National Championships in Queensland, January 2023. Hopefully (touch wood) the pandemic is over by then!
* We can cancel the event if we have to, but it is possible to pause the NSW, VIC, NSW, Qld NSW sequence of National Championships hosting.
* Colac has been an RL24 stronghold and it would be good to give a group of long-term participants an opportunity to compete at a Nationals without interstate travel.
* It would not be a National Championship if one or more of the active states could not attend due to any state or federal restrictions

***Approach at this stage***

If we cannot attend Colac (or Lake Wellington) in early January,   we cancel the  48th National Championships and pause the rotation between states.
We commence negotiations to run the 49th National Championships in 2022 at Colac with Lake Wellington as a backup.
Undertake the 2021 AGM via an internet conference and minutes posted on the website. Review these issues and document the AGM response. The above should satisfy the Consumer Affairs Vic. requirements for our Association.

**Issue 3: Outcomes of the new CBH system provided by  Nicolas Degorce from Australian Sailing**

* New CBH handicaps have been posted:  [https://www.sailingresources.org.au/cbh-rating/?fbclid=IwAR253SG4iDy00Iu8St1rd-suT\_Kbl2gRqfLFKjYClFUp5Jq5hTlLJdtj4R4](https://eur04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.sailingresources.org.au%2Fcbh-rating%2F%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR253SG4iDy00Iu8St1rd-suT_Kbl2gRqfLFKjYClFUp5Jq5hTlLJdtj4R4&data=02%7C01%7C%7C849743b4ebf64e2c1f4b08d84ba28402%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637342508661758390&sdata=QTOynvUqdt0dfv4GpTytienS6erVLC5QVuNQKjbjFwA%3D&reserved=0" \t "_blank)
 The new CBH rating system comes into effect on the 1st of August 2020.
Yachting Australia was straightforward and efficient to deal with and the Association was pleased with a transparent dialogue focused on increasing participation.
* The CBH rating formula is not published to prevent the optimisation of a boat to “beat” the rating. The aim of the CBH is to be a simple rating system, cheap and easy to use.
The aim of this rating is not to encourage boat modification outside of Class Rules. (same as our Association). A performance factor has not been included.
* Most classes have had an increase. The CBH is derived from measuring set values and applying a formula…. (No longer adding a sometimes questionable and subjective ‘performance’ factor following amassing many winning results)
* **It’s important to remember we have been recognised as a *development class****.* ***This is a major step forward***. If a boat complies with our RL24 Class Rules it’s deemed to be within the SK, DK or H handicap. DKs rated at 0.769. SKs have had a substantial increase to  0.762. RL24 H has been introduced for officially weighed heavier boats – 0.751.
There is little difference between a Drop and Swing Keel these days:  No slot behind the Keel to drag and the ability to use a better keel foil shape, within class rules.
It’s not surprising that there is less between the top boats on paper …or on the water.
* We provided measurements for Place Getters from recent National Championships:  **Two S**wing Keels and **two** Drop keels, emphasising that the sail shape was not a deciding factor.
Re reading AS emails we understand sail values were an ‘average’ of regular top and square top key measurements. Some measurements (possibly jib dimensions) were intentionally left undetermined to allow for reasonable variations under RL24 Class Rules.
All the sails measured were fully battened. There has not been a competitive partially battened sail for decades and it’s unlikely anyone would run one for long in local or class competition.
The handicaps computed are for regular and square top sails starting 1st August 2020 - given both shapes are proving to be effective without either having a clear advantage.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Forestay HeightI | Base of Fore triangleJ | Mainsail LuffP | Mainsail FootE |
| DK | 5.63 | 2.24 | 7.52 | 2.36 |
| H | 5.63 | 2.24 | 7.52 | 2.36 |
| SK | 5.52 | 2.37 | 7.32 | 2.58 |

* It appears that the published rating has differing values for SK and DK ail dimensions.

The SK and DK handicaps should be constructed on the premise that any RL24 could be running any rig and sail combo and that it’s just as likely that a rig and sail is either copied or got 2nd hand from the other division (50-50 chance any-way). It is not in the interest of the RL24 Class to have different handicaps for different sail configurations. The configurations are not in our Class Rules. We are not likely to change our durable RL24  Class Rules to incorporate different styles of sails that will continue to evolve. The existing rule does this.

The sail calcs should be the same for both divisions in principle particularly when viewed by other classes and clubs. We have written to Australian Sailing to clarify :

* Is it possible to use values are use in SK, H and DK without altering the new CBHs.

***Approach at this stage***
A letter and formally correspond with Australian Sailing regarding the New CBHs starting 1 Aug 2020.
Main Points:

* 1. (Re)confirm that RL24 Owners Association is acknowledges the three CBHs SK, DK, and H. ( for all sail styles/shapes within class rules)
	2. Note that there is an inconsistency between SK and DK sail measurements and suggest they be the same.
	3. Confirm that bulbs on keels are confined to a few boats and not a usual feature -although allowed in DKs in Class Rules
	4. Seek Clarification of Boat Type
	RL24 is Boat Type 5… Will this definition be used in creating Trailable Yacht Divisions for larger Mixed fleet Racing? (Generally, Noelex 25s, Timpenny 770s, and Castle 650s have enjoyed racing in the same division). .
	5. Ask how and when will AS review the move to the New CBHs? Will results be reviewed to see if the straight forward calculations reflect a relatively even racecourse on the water?

**Issue 4: Impact of the new CBH on future National Championships**

* In the past, we haven’t used CBH’s at Nationals for any  SK or DK results.
* The new Handicap trophy is based on a personal handicap developed from the invitation races results and subsequent placings so it’s not likely to be affected.
* CBH are used for States to form a fleet for that trophy. The old CBH is  finished/gone, the new and current and only CBH should be used to determine state teams racing.
We may learn something to assist AS too.
* Any variation from  simply racing  a SK and DK division at the National Titles should be put to an AGM.
* The focus of getting a RL24 H division handicap was to enable local cruised boats to compete more competitively in mixed fleet racing.
* We usually enjoy good numbers at the National Titles. Depending on the conditions and the skill in the competition  heavier or lighter boats  can be at an advantage.
* We have tried to introduce a cruising class but never have managed to attract 3 competing boats ( which come from SK or DK).

***Approach at this stage***

The Executive may wish to trial recognising the new RL24 H  CBH by  providing an additional trophy  for the fastest of heavier (weighed) boats over the series.
The RL24 H  CBH recognition may or might not attract new  participants to the National Championships, we can discuss this at the AGM.

**Issue 5: We are nearly out of RL24 Class stickers.**
 There are probably about 100 about still. Thanks to our secretary hard work we now know where more RL24s are.

* The stickers are a tangible reward for joining the association
* There are quite a few boats being restored …more will follow.
* The stickers are useful at the presentation nights
* They are good for cars, trailers, prizes and of course boats!

***Approach at this stage***

* We have the 50th  Nationals coming up. Remaining stickers bear Robs signature. We should consider an additional commemorative 50th National Championships Sticker. Continue to distribute the remaining stickers for new members, refurbishments etc..
Aim for a special new design for 50th Anniversary set of stickers.

**Issue 6: Not being the Organising Authority for National Titles , in Conjunction with a Host Club.**
Agreeing to be the organising authority in conjunction with others needs to be reasoned and weighed against the benefits and risks.

The Racing Rules of Sailing under rule 89.1(d) allows an affiliated organisation such as a class association to be the organising authority in conjunction with a club.
The rules allow this to be done without any approval from the national authority. Often seen on race documents expressed as:

"The organising authority is Sailing Club in conjunction with Class Association."

Clubs are constituted to be organising authorities. The clubs’ strategic plans reflect this. Their operations, volunteers, committees and if they have them, staff are all geared to running races and regattas. They are trained, skilled and experienced. The clubs have the equipment, they have safety systems and risk management plans, and they have insurances.

Class associations might be best described as ‘owners associations’, groups of like-minded people with a common interest in a particular design or type of boat.

Class associations need to be conscious of what the commitment is when being part of the when an event like the National Championships is programmed .

***Approach at this stage***

Confine the role of organising authority to the host clubs (as we have done in the past), but more formally define the Associations responsibility and boundaries as:

* The purchaser of the club’s services- For organising and running the National Championships
* Providing NOR, Sailing Instructions etc in Draft for the organising Club for them to review modify and publish under their banner- as the organising authority
* Providing a standard overview of the program, number of races, general format, cancellations to assist clubs formulate their offer
* Advising the organising authority on Class Rules
* Providing information to the organising authority regarding vessel measurement compliance
* Assisting regarding vessel safety compliance- this really a Club accountably to check and document
* Providing input into a handicap system and the awarding of places, trophies and prizes.
* Providing advice ( but not a decision on) race arrangements such as rescheduling, cancellation postponement etc.
* Providing clear direction on the cost per boat for racing, and how this is shared between host club and the association; and that Association membership fees go completely to the Association.

 **Issue Number 7: Keeping in contact with the broader RL24 community and maintaining a history f development and ownership**

Our secretary, ably advised by ‘the rain man of RL24s’ and some very experienced long term owners has been working away at improving our knowledge of RL24 history, boat modifications, boat name changes and ownership.
There has been some great work sleuthing of details behind legendary boats, events, clever improvements and disturbing tales of write-offs! The passing of Rob Legg and the wonderful memories people have shared before and after that day really brought home how much Australian boating history is in our class . An up to date inventory of the boats and ownership will support increased participation and make for an even better 50th National Championships.

***Approach at this stage***

Continue filling the gaps as much as possible. Start to consider whether self-publishing a history book of great photos, recollections and lists for the 50th National Championships might be a reasonable use of Association funds and a potential fund raiser.

**Issue Number 8: Fundraisers for 50th National Championships**In the absence of a 48th National Championships or a reduced gathering RL24 Owners Association funds are less likely to be as replenished in preparation for the 50th  National Championships

The Association has additional buying power being able to market items to members and other RL24 Owners. Benefits of a RL24 or RL based merchandise program might include:

* Providing access to cheaper personal gear and equipment for RL sailors
* Raising awareness of the 50th well before the event
* Improving the financial standing of the Association

Publishing a short run, possibly pre sold book on the class could have wide appeal.
Some merchandise and marketing companies have the capacity to produce very low volumes of items like T shirts, caps, stubby holders, etc. Items are ordered on the net. Personal details like boat names, crew names can be included with a class logo etc. There is the possibility of profit sharing between the manufacturer and the Association.

Other classes have undertaken a boat or class themed dozen bottles wine issue in partnership with a supplier.
Direct sponsorship form chandleries sail makers can result in auctioned items or supplier discounts being offered.

***Approach at this stage***
President, and secretary, advised by treasurer, to investigate low volume fundraising options. Any potentials solutions to be first agreed on by Exec prior to trialling the approach.

**Issue Number 9: Supporting other Rob Legg designs in the Australian Sailing CBH process.**

Classes not represented by an Association will not receive a CBH and the more extensive list of old CBHs will not be used before long . This has implications for those who race trailerable RL28s, Status Slipstream (full cabin) open Status boats.
After August 2021 owners can apply for an individual handicap however there is a $50 cost.

Why could the RL24 Owners association consider assisting owners to attain a CBH?

* Honour / value Rob’s legacy
* Increased participation in sailing
* The web page has a list of owners
* Might encourage current owners to become involved in the 50th ( in something like the Rob Legg birthday sail past.
* A larger sample of vessels coordinated by the Association would lead to a more accurate handicap
* Might rely on owners becoming and Associate member of the RL24 Owners Association

***Approach at this stage***
Discuss at AGM – this would leave approximately 6 months to pursue this idea.