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# 2024 Classic Yacht Racing Guidelines

Recommendations to Organizing Authorities and Principal Race Officers  
for racing under CRF

Produced by the CYOA Technical Committee

## PREFACE

One of the many attractive features of Classic Yacht Racing is the diversity of the various events. The Organizing Authorities (OAs) can have different philosophies and traditions, but they all share a common interest in fair racing and increasing participation. Sailing under rules and regulations that are consistent and clear is critical to achieving these common goals. Recognizing the need for consistency and clarity, but also the unique characteristics of the various events, the CYOA Technical Committee recommends that OAs consider the following guidelines when drafting race documents that best suit their event. To see these recommendations formatted for a Notice of Race, visit <https://www.classicyachts.org/ratings/racing-guidelines/>

## 1. GENERAL

- 1.1. The Racing Rules of Sailing (RRS) shall apply. However, except as changed, subject to the limitations in RRS 86, in the Notice of Race or Sailing Instructions.
- 1.2. All yachts competing in a race scored using CRF ratings must hold a current valid CRF Certificate.
- 1.3. Yachts may have only one valid CRF Certificate at a time and are allowed to make just one configuration change during a calendar year. Corrections or minor updates to declared data need not be considered a configuration change.
- 1.4. CRF ratings are applicable to monohulls only. CRF ratings are not applicable to yachts with features deemed exotic, including, but not limited to, dual rudders, canting keels, lifting foils, and wing masts.

## 2. DIVISIONS (updated in 2024)

- 2.1. Yachts shall be assigned to divisions based on definitions established by the CYOA. These are included in Appendix A below, and published on the website at: <https://www.classicyachts.org/ratings/divisions/>
- 2.2. When scoring and publishing results, yachts shall be grouped according to the Division assignment shown on the yacht's CRF certificate.

- 2.3. The resolution of uncertainties or disputes regarding the combination of divisions or classes shall be at the sole discretion of the OA, but it is strongly encouraged that OAs adhere to 3.2 when making assignments so like boats are competing against similar boats.
- 2.4. The resolution of uncertainties or disputes regarding a yacht's division assignment shall be at the sole discretion of the CYOA. Boats are reviewed and issued certificates with assigned divisions based on physical and rated attributes. The CYOA assigns divisions so like boats compete against similar boats with the intent of creating fair racing for each competitor.

### 3. DIVISIONS, CLASSES, and SCORING

- 3.1. When reasonable and practical, the minimum number of yachts in a scored division/class should be four. If the number of registered yachts in any division or class is less than four, the OA shall consider combining that division or class with another division or class as appropriate per 3.2
- 3.2. In making division or class assignments for scoring the OA shall make every effort to have yachts from the same division start on the same line and sail the same course. If this is not reasonable or practical, yachts should be grouped so they are scored against others in a similar Division as follows:
  - 3.2.1. Vintage against Vintage or Classic
  - 3.2.2. Classic against Vintage or Modern Classic
  - 3.2.3. Modern Classic against Classic or Spirit of Tradition (SoT)
  - 3.2.4. Spirit of Tradition (SoT) against Modern Classic or Contemporary
  - 3.2.5. Contemporary against SoT
- 3.3. If there is a sufficient number of competitors within a division or combined division to warrant an additional class, group yachts so they are scored against others of similar size and rating.
- 3.4. IF there is a sufficient number of competitors within a division or combined division to warrant an additional class, Group yachts so that they are scored against others of similar rig type, i.e. schooners with schooners, gaffs with gaffs, sloops with sloops, yawls and ketches with yawls and ketches.
- 3.5. Score yachts together in a single division only when they have sailed the same course. If not sailing the same course, break the division into distinct classes based on courses raced, awarding each class separately.
- 3.6. Score yachts rated with spinnakers separately from yachts rated without spinnakers when it is reasonable and practical to do so and when course content is likely to preclude their effective use.

- 3.7. All yachts shall declare whether they will race with either their 'spinnaker' or their 'non-spinnaker' rating well in advance of a regatta, and no yacht shall be permitted to change that declaration during that event.
- 3.8. The criteria for awarding overall event prizes versus divisional prizes are often complex, confusing, and controversial. If overall event prizes are to be awarded, they should go to either the Vintage or the Classic Division, or to both.

## 4. COURSE CONFIGURATION

- 4.1. The CRF formulae and factors have been developed to suit a course configuration that is approximately 1/3 VMG upwind, 1/3 reaching, and 1/3 VMG downwind, and that is scored with 60% multiplier applied to a 'Herreshoff' time allowance calculation. In order to offer fair racing across a range of yacht sizes and types, OAs shall make every effort to set courses that adhere closely to this intended configuration. This is especially critical if yachts racing with 'spinnaker' and 'non-spinnaker' ratings are scored together, and when there is a large difference in rating between the fastest and slowest boats scored.
- 4.2. If an OA chooses to set a course that diverges substantially from this strongly-recommended 1/3, 1/3, 1/3 configuration, it can, at its own discretion and sole responsibility, choose to use a different multiplier for the Time Allowance Table in scoring that race. The multiplier would be smaller than the standard 60% for a largely off wind course configuration, or larger for a largely upwind course configuration. The Technical Committee may provide guidance on alternative multipliers if requested by an OA in advance of a regatta.

## 5. WIND LIMITS

- 5.1. Races will not be started when the race committee deems that winds are consistently at or above 23 knots or gusting to 25 knots and above. If a race has been started and the wind increases to 25 knots and above, it remains at the discretion of the race committee whether to abandon the race. The Race Committee may use lower limits based on sea state.
- 5.2. Races will not be started unless winds are consistently above five (5) knots at the time of the start

## 6. RIGGING and EQUIPMENT

- 6.1. Rigging and Equipment details that are deemed to significantly affect performance potential may be addressed through CRF formulae and factors that will affect ratings. These details may include non-original spar and standing rigging materials, as well as structural materials or methods.
- 6.2. Under these guidelines, a stay is defined as a permanently secured and taut cable that supports a headsail. A removable stay shall be considered permanent if it is secured and kept in a taut condition for the duration of an event. This

definition includes luff-ropes that allow a sail to be rolled on the rope.

- 6.3. Forestays and headsail tacks, except those of spinnaker staysails when the boat is not close-hauled, shall be attached approximately on a boat's centerline, in accordance with RRS 54.
- 6.4. The length of a spinnaker pole when used to pole out a spinnaker must be no longer than the 'SPL' declared on the CRF Certificate. When in use, a spinnaker pole or whisker pole must be attached to the foremost mast in accordance with RRS 55.2.
- 6.5. Shifting ballast of any kind during a race, other than shifting crew weight, is not permitted. All ballast must be fixed in place against shifting. Other temporary means of augmenting stability are prohibited, including the use of trapezes. All crew must keep their torsos within the perimeter of the yacht except as allowed by RRS 49.
- 6.6. The use of stored-energy equipment, including powered winches and hydraulics, may be permitted in all Divisions aboard yachts whose declared displacement is greater than 50,000 lbs., at the discretion of the OA. This changes RRS 52, 'Manual Power'.

## 7. SAILS

- 7.1. Sail guidelines below are intended to encourage the use of sails that are cost efficient and that are aesthetically appropriate for Classic racing
- 7.2. Yachts in the Vintage and Classic Divisions shall race with sails fabricated from materials limited to Polyester (e.g. Dacron), Nylon, or Ultra-PE (e.g. Spectra, Dyneema, UHMWPE, etc.) Inclusion of carbon fiber in the materials used is specifically not allowed.
- 7.3. Yachts in the Vintage and Classic Divisions shall race with upwind sails (e.g. those that are attached to masts or stays) of classic light color. Resolution of uncertainties or disputes regarding upwind sail color shall be at the discretion of the OA.
- 7.4. Yachts in a Spirit of Tradition, Modern Classic, and Contemporary Divisions may race with upwind sails built with any fiber via any sailmaking technique. (Note: OA's may require classic light colored sails in SoT classes at their sole discretion).

## 8. SETTING AND SHEETING SAILS (Spinnaker and non-spinnaker)

- 8.1. Setting and Sheeting Sails guidelines below are intended to fit the way Classic boats are traditionally sailed with the Rigging, Equipment and Sails outlined in the above sections.

- 8.2. In accordance with RRS 55.4 and Equipment Rules of Sailing G.1.3(d) a headsail is defined as a sail whose width, measured between the midpoints of its luff and leech, is less than 75% of the length of its foot. A spinnaker is a sail whose width measured between the midpoints of its luff and leech is equal to or greater than 75%. A sail tacked down behind the foremost mast is not a headsail.
- 8.3. All headsails and staysails (except spinnaker staysails) shall be fully attached to stays, except while being set or struck. A sail is defined as “fully attached” to a stay when it is secured to the stay by at least four evenly-spaced hanks or other attachments, or is continuously secured to the stay by a luff-rope in a groove or other continuous attachment.
- 8.4. Only one headsail may be flown on each stay in the fore-triangle at a time. This requires that when sail changes are made, the sail to be replaced must be dropped to the deck before its replacement is set on the same stay. This changes RRS 55.1.
- 8.5. In accordance to RRS 55.3(a) A headsail may be sheeted or attached at its clew to a spinnaker pole or whisker pole, provided that a spinnaker is not set. When a pole is used to wing out a jib, its length can be up to 110% of ‘J’ without affecting CRF rating.
- 8.6. A yawl or ketch racing under a non-spinnaker rating shall not fly a mizzen spinnaker, but may fly a mizzen staysail. Any yacht that flies a mizzen spinnaker must race under a spinnaker rating. A mizzen staysail is an off wind sail hoisted from the mizzen mast whose mid-girth is less than 75% of its foot length. A mizzen spinnaker is an off wind sail hoisted from the mizzen mast whose mid-girth is equal to or greater than 75% of its foot length. On schooners, fisherman or gollywobbler type sails are permitted.
- 8.7. A yacht shall not fly any sail whose dimensions exceed those shown on her CRF Certificate, and no headsail may be flown that is larger than the limits defined by the ‘IG (P2), ‘J’, and LP% shown on that certificate.

## 9. CONTACT

Classic Yacht Owners Association [info@classicyachts.org](mailto:info@classicyachts.org)





# Appendix Divisions

*Sailboat racing is at its best when participating boats are divided into groups of similar size, age, and type. Toward this end, all boats racing under CRF are assigned to a Division before their CRF is issued. All Division assignments are made at the discretion of the CYOA Technical Committee based on the following Division criteria and intent definitions.*

## Vintage (V):

Yachts designed before January 1, 1950 that have been built, maintained or restored in all major elements of hull, deck, superstructure and rig with materials and methods consistent with the original design.

The intent of the Vintage Division is to recognize and encourage the authentic restoration and maintenance of yachts designed before 1950. Yachts that meet the Vintage design date requirements but that have upgraded or altered the hull, deck, superstructure or rig in ways that are not consistent with these conditions shall be assigned to the Classic Division.

## Classic (C):

Yachts that meet at least one of the following criteria:

- A. Yachts that are designed on or after January 1, 1950 and before January 1, 1980 that are built primarily of wood, aluminum or steel, that have been built, maintained or restored with materials and methods consistent with their original design, whose rudders are attached to the trailing edge of the keel with at least one pivot point on the sternpost, and that are rated by CRF with Keel Type 5 or 6. In the Classic Division, alterations and upgrades that are given a rating adjustment by CRF, such as spar and rigging materials, are allowed without a change in Division assignment.
- B. Yachts designed on or after January 1, 1980, whose hulls are constructed of wood using traditional plank-on-frame methods and materials, and whose rudders are attached to the trailing edge of the keel with at least one pivot point on the sternpost, and that are rated by CRF with Keel Type 5 or 6.
- C. Yachts that are members of a recognized class where the design dates of the various versions of the class fall on both sides of the qualifying date of January 1, 1950, and where the similarities between various versions of the class are significant enough to warrant grouping all members of the class in the same division. For example: Concordia Yawls.

- D. Yachts whose design and build dates place them in Vintage, but whose restoration, or maintenance materials or methods are not consistent with the Vintage Division definition.

## Modern Classic (MC):

Yachts that meet at least one of the following criteria:

- A. Yachts with design date on or after January 1, 1950 and prior to January 1, 1980, whose rudders are separated from the trailing edge of the keel, that are rated by CRF with Keel Types 2, 3, or 4
- B. Yachts that would otherwise qualify for the Classic Division but that employ construction materials and methods that are not consistent with their original design, or that are not primarily built of wood, aluminum, or steel. Yachts that would otherwise qualify for Classic Division, but whose hull, deck, or superstructure have been extensively modified from their original design.
- C. Yachts with design date on or after January 1, 1980, that are rated by CRF with Keel Types 4, 5 or 6, whose hulls are constructed in methods other than plank-on-frame wood.

## Spirit of Tradition (SoT):

Yachts that meet the following criteria:

- A. Yachts designed on or after January 1, 1980 that embody recognizable connections to classic yacht or traditional workboat elements in hull shape and deck and superstructure shape, style and features.
- B. Yachts whose rudders are separated from the trailing edge of the keel, that are rated by CRF with Keel Types 1, 2, or 3.

The intent of the SoT Division is the yacht must employ a classic or traditional design vernacular while advancing the style and performance of racing and cruising. The most important element in determining the SoT Division designation is that the hull shape embodies an inspiration traceable to a single vessel or a type of vessel from the classic or traditional eras. A SoT yacht need not be constrained by restrictions on construction methods and materials or rigging and equipment.

## Contemporary (CT):

Yachts designed on or after January 1, 1980, whose hulls are built of wood, that are rated by CRF with keel types 1, 2, or 3, and whose hull shape, or whose deck and superstructure shape, style and features, do not fit the SoT Division definition.