

HalSail FAQ

How does HalSail implement the American PHRF handicap scheme?

PHRF (Performance Handicap Racing Fleet) is a scheme of handicapping used mainly in North America. It has both time-on-distance and time-on-time formats, but HalSail implements only the time-on-time version.

Like all the other handicapping schemes in HalSail, except the Danish DH system, it boils down to a time correction coefficient (TCF). Corrected times are worked out by multiplying the elapsed time by the TCF.

In many schemes, such as IRC, the handicap is expressed directly as a TCF (eg IRC handicap of 0.981 means a TCF of 0.981). But in some schemes, such as the RYA's Portsmouth Yardstick scheme, the TCF is produced from a formula. In the case of PHRF the formula is:

$$\text{TCF} = A / (B + \text{PHRF})$$

In the HalSail implementation the constant A is 650 and B is 550. So a PHRF of 100 gives a TCF of 1.0, meaning that the corrected time is the same as the elapsed time. The smaller the PHRF the faster the boat.

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