



RLYC & LTSC to Adopt Modified NHC System for Club Handicap Keelboat Racing - Lymington Adjusted Handicap (LAH)



In a joint arrangement the RLYC and LTSC, are adopting a modified version of the RYA's National Handicap for Cruisers (NHC) system for Club handicap keelboat racing in 2015. There is no change planned to IRC racing.

Many will know about the NHC system from LTSC and the Royal Solent events over the last couple of years: but the key feature is that, after each race, the handicaps are adjusted slightly for the next race depending on performance. One difference the clubs will be introducing is that the starting handicaps will not be the NHC Base List as suggested by the RYA but tried-and-tested Lymington Handicaps.

We have been 'ghosting' the 2014 events to test what would have happened if we had used the NHC system. This suggested that the NHC Base List is not appropriate for our boats in our waters. However, using NHC software adjustments from a Lymington Handicap base, the final series results were not dramatically changed; the points spread at the end of a series was much narrower and there would have been more weekly 'podium winners'. Giving boats a better chance of a prize while not penalising the best too much is a key objective of the NHC system to encourage more cruisers to race.

When a handicap has been adjusted by the NHC system it becomes that boat's new Lymington Adjusted Handicap (LAH) for the next race or series. However, during the season we often have various club handicap events running in tandem. Therefore, it has been decided to split them into either Mainstream or Side events.

The Mainstream events are the Spring Series, Thursday Night racing, Early and Late, and the LTSC Solent Circuit. Boats will go into their first race in one of these events carrying their traditional Lymington Base Handicap (LBH). After that race they are awarded an LAH, depending on performance, which they carry into their next race so their LAH is continually being adjusted. At the end of the Spring Series an outgoing LAH becomes the input into the Thursday Night racing and from there into the Solent Circuit as shown on the attached chart. The outgoing LAH from the Solent Circuit then becomes the ingoing LAH for next year's Spring Series and so on. Any time a boat doesn't race she carries over her last LAH to the next race she does sail in.

The Side events are such things as both clubs' Cruiser Series or one-off races such as the Needles Relief. Here a boat would start with whatever LAH she had achieved on the Mainstream just prior to the start of that event. Handicaps would be adjusted from this starting position after every race using the NHC software during that Side event but a boat's final handicap from that series would be discarded. It is hoped to have a short presentation about the new system at event briefings early in 2015. Meanwhile, for more information about NHC please visit the RYA website - <http://www.rya.org.uk/racing/Pages/NHC.aspx>

