



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Annapolis to Newport Race PHRF Rating Requirements Announced Prospective entrants can receive a rating specialized for this offshore classic**

*Annapolis, MD (November 29, 2016)* — A distance race that combines inshore and offshore components is a far different animal than windward-leeward buoy racing on the Chesapeake Bay.

Organizers of the 2017 Annapolis to Newport Race recognized that fact and determined the PHRF handicap system used should reflect those differences. In 2015, for the first time, all boats racing under PHRF received a rating created specifically for the Annapolis to Newport Race. Compiled by a special consortium of experienced handicappers, the ratings took into account the various elements of the A2N course along with the unique characteristics of each boat.

Bruce Bingman, a key member of the Annapolis to Newport Race committee and former chief handicapper for PHRF of the Chesapeake, said the inaugural effort went smoothly. “It seemed like it worked out very well. The lead boats in each class were pretty tight on corrected time, which was very encouraging,” Bingman said.

For previous editions of the biennial race, organizers simply used the standard PHRF of the Chesapeake rating that was assigned to competing boats. Those were not ideal for a point-to-point distance race since they were compiled for competition primarily around drop marks on the Chesapeake Bay.

In order to create more accurate ratings for the Annapolis to Newport Race, organizers worked with the US Sailing offshore office using a Velocity Prediction Program to determine ratings that were customized based off the historical average wind strength and course content for the event. This particular race has been starting off Annapolis and finishing off Newport since 1957, meaning there is plenty of empirical data to determine certain base standards.

Bingman said the VPP specific to A2N placed the average wind speed at 12 to 14 knots and included a mixture of windward, leeward, and reaching components. A J/120, which tends to perform well on all points of sail, was selected as the base boat off which to build all other ratings.

“Obviously, the whole idea is to provide each boat with the fairest rating possible,” Bingman said. “We feel this process is the best way to do that.”

Creating a PHRF rating specific to A2N proved particularly beneficial for the Performance Cruising classes that were introduced in 2015. Many of those designs did not have an established PHRF certificate since most owners were not active racers.

*Testing Life*, a Tartan 46 owned by Brian Mulhall, proved that a performance cruiser could do quite well in the 475-nautical mile race by taking home a dinghy full of trophies. A J/37, Dehler 36, Tartan 4100, Baltic 38, and Beneteau 373 were among the other types of designs that competed in the two Performance Cruising classes last time around.

Many of those boats, which were designed and outfitted for cruising, have various characteristics that are typically not accounted for in a standard PHRF rating. Roller furling, shoal draft, anchor chain, and a generator set are the type of design features or onboard items that can impact the rating.

“It is very important that owners fill out the PHRF application properly and thoroughly,” Bingman said. “There are a lot of different factors that can lead to a credit of a few seconds per mile so it is imperative that applicants are careful to not overlook any detail.”

Bingman suggested that any owners with questions about the application process should consult their yacht broker or sailmaker to obtain the necessary information.

Scott Ward, owner of a Beneteau First 50 named *Crocodile* that is entered in the 2017 edition of Annapolis to Newport, likes the idea of receiving a PHRF rating that is tailored to the race. “I’m really excited about what the Annapolis to Newport consortium is doing. Their goal is to provide equal ratings across the board and that is what every sailor wants,” said Ward, a resident of Dowell, Maryland. “I think this is a great evolution of the rating system. Boats perform much differently when reaching for 200 miles out in the ocean as opposed to sailing a windward-leeward course on the bay.”

Entries are currently being accepted for the 36<sup>th</sup> biennial Annapolis to Newport Race, which starts June 2- 3 on the Chesapeake Bay. The A2N PHRF Certificate Application has been posted and can be found at [http://www.yachtscoring.com/event\\_documents.cfm](http://www.yachtscoring.com/event_documents.cfm).

Bingman said the A2N PHRF Consortium will be comprised of a Chief Handicapper and at least two additional members from different PHRF regions. Bingman, who is serving as principal race officer for the start of the 2017 Annapolis to Newport Race, will act as moderator of the panel.

There is no charge for owners to receive an Annapolis to Newport Race rating. Bingman expects ratings to be issued in March or April, if not earlier in some cases.

Jim Praley, chairman of the 2017 Annapolis to Newport Race, said the creation of PHRF ratings specific to the event is yet another example of event organizers thinking outside the box. “Our committee wants to do everything possible to make the Annapolis to Newport Race as user-friendly as possible,” Praley said. “Issuing ratings that are tailored to this particular distance race makes sense and goes a long way to assuring fair competition across the board.”

An early entry discount for the Annapolis to Newport Race will continue through January 15, 2017. Interested skippers can find the Notice of Race and entry forms at the following link: <http://www.yachtscoring.com/emenu.cfm?eid=2982>

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