

Explanation and view of IEMA Class Measurer Guy-Roland Perrin

8m or 8.07m, that is the question!

The analysis below is taking into account only Sira and Neptune boats, excluding modern boats. Out of 19 Canadian boats (as in the 2007 register) 3 are modern (Gefion, Sarissa and Yquem), and 3 Sira are measured at 8.07 (Venture, Quest and Raven). From the database of the Sira boats I measured or checked (11), 6 have a certificate for 8.00 and 8.07. Two boats with Canadian sail nos. are in Europe for restoration and probably will be rated at 8.07 (as before!) : Conewago and Vision. So the 12 boats measuring 8.00 in Canada is a maximum number. Outside of Canada Froya SUI9, and Svanevit GER13 are measuring 8.00, 44 boats have been measured at 8.07.

More than the statistic one should look at the evolution of the meter boat fleets. The 8.07m concept was developed in different places with different perspectives. In Europe it was decided in the 60 that "pre-Intrepid" boat, could benefit of little supplement in sail area in order to be more competitive with the modern boats. The 8m Class was in a dying mode and major effort have been done to re-activate the series and to give to every owner , for old and modern boats the fun of racing in regatta where there were one start with yachts almost similar in performances ... at least in light air. That successful concept has been also adopted for the 12m class for which the pre-Intrepid boats were allowed to rate up to 12.1m. Later formula has been changed and a factor <1 is applied to the rated sail area in function of the boat age (a more aggressive approach than for the eight). The 5.5m series also allows the yacht rated before Jan 1970 to rate 5.52m and even allow a weight increase (2.5%) with no penalty on rating, freeboard and draft. The idea behind that concept is to get more people in regatta with boats closer in performance despite their age.

Other place other idea: in early 1900, when the international meter rule was defined, some major yachting clubs were located on fresh water. So the original rule was defining the rating for salt water (1.025 kg/dm³) and for fresh water (1kg/dm³). A 6m measured in fresh water can rate 6.03m, and similarly an 8m can measure up to 8.07m on a lake.

Today with the measurement technique the correction is made when the boat is floated and the measurement marks on boat are always as in salt water.. Many rules have age allowances in recognition of the naval architecture and boat construction evolution. This approach allows maintaining regatta with a decent participation. The impact of changing the rule may be quite

dramatic: reduced participation in regatta, and/or division of the fleet... and in that case, modern boats probably will feel a little lonely!

I think that when evaluating the pros and cons of such an approach it is needed to look with a wide perspective, I mean to the entire fleet, not just to a club... or worse its own boat.

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