

Response from Chris Hughes

1.) Your overall opinion of the 2007 season.

The 2007 season brought a number of changes, all of which were designed to improve the racing program. Along with those changes came a few unforeseen "issues". Personally, I did not much enjoy the 2007 season - I was not competitive with the top boats in my fleet and did not have steady competition from other boats in the middle of the pack, but this was not the fault of the racing program. The tension surrounding the program was a distraction from the good work the Race Committee did throughout the year.

2.) What changes would you like to see? (for example, number of races, number of regattas, types of races,

I would enjoy seeing more regattas. I would like more opportunities to race head-to-head against the J boats. I would like to see the P-fleet numbers increased.

Dividing the calendar into two seasons has its appeal, although it is not without potential "fairness" problems.

In the past there was a "Pro-Am" challenge that could be fun. I'm supportive of competition, and any other activity that may raise the skill levels of skipper/crew will make the overall competition even tighter.

3.) Your overall opinion of the Committee Boat

This has been a great addition to the BLSA racing program. I know that for many years while I was on the Board there were members who lobbied for a Committee Boat but we didn't have a core group who would be willing to undertake the thousand tasks required to acquire, prepare, maintain, and organize the CB. Once the Three Musty Queens got it into their heads that they could do all this we were destined to have a boat.

The CB has made starts more organized and finishes more fair. There is now no question as to whether a boat is OCS (although I apparently had some trouble seeing if any had properly exonerated themselves). Having an official timer has showed how far off I may have been when keeping my own times at the finish.

I would ask that the Committee du Jour provide an audible signal (whistle preferred) when each boat crosses the finish line.

4.) Your opinion of the Committee Duty Selection Process.

I think this system was well thought out. It provided a way of getting as many boats as possible involved in racing each week, ensuring that top racers were the ones most likely to be setting courses, and allowing occasional racers to come out to the course without feeling an obligation to do Committee Duty.

The exceptional situation between the 1st and 2nd place boats in the J fleet could not have been foreseen and will not likely be repeated any time soon. Absent some brilliant new scheme I would like to see the same system used next season.

The DSQ scoring should be reconsidered.

5.) New Events you would like to see.

Additional regattas. Some ways to use the Committee Boat as a tool / resource for non-racers.

6.) Suggestions on how to fix what you are not happy with.

We need to re-energize the P-fleet. I don't really have any suggestions as to how to do this (partly because I'm feeling some of that lethargy). It may be that a split season will accomplish this - with boats out of the running part way through the year being given a second chance to get their transoms waxed by the speed boats in the group.

I know that a split season raises issues about how to assign / score Committee Duty. Would it be feasible to have only the P-fleeters serve as CD for one season and only J drivers for the other (still using the criteria you have established for selecting who will serve)?