

NOTES FROM YOUR MEASURER.....

----- Last season Sidewinder owners were requested to wiegh thier boats. The response to the request was minimal with Fleet #7 topping the list of responders.... wieghts varied within a range of only eleven pounds the lightest 280lb and the heaviest 291lb..... It seems that concern with boat wieght may be unnecessary.....

----- A typical Sidewinder Regatta consists of near equal parts of sailing, pulling pop-tops and discussing the Sidewinder boat and how to make it perform.(or how we didn't make it perform.) Some discussion of item three now might leave more time for numbers one and two at regattas.

----- Anyone who has been around to the various Sidewinder regattas will have observed that most Sidewinder owners have "personalized" thier boats to some extent..... Personalization is limited to changes of hardware and rigging. Class rules expressly prohibit alteration or substitution of hull, spars, sails, centerboard or rudder. These items must be furnished by MFG and not altered.

----- Your measurer has studied the class rules as amended to date with the objective of defining the intent of the rules as relating to the "one design" character of the boat, and the historical desires of the class sailors as shown from the various amendments which have been approved or disapproved by the association membership.....

My interpretation of the present status of our class could be simplified to the following points:

1. The "one design" character of the Sidewinder sailboat applies to hull, spars, sails, centerboard and rudder; these items may NOT be altered from design criteria.
2. Within certain limitations and subject to some prohibitions, replacement or alterations to hardware or rigging is permissable as follows:
  - a. Sheeting and cleating devices may be changed to allow personnal choice in control of sail shape and trim. Prohibited are wire halyards and mainsheet travelers.
  - b. Changes may be made to make sailing the boat easier, safer, or more comfortable.

----- An analysis of these points might lead to the following capsule definition:

"The U.S.Sidewinder association rules are intended to allow personalization of the boat, with controls to prevent achievement of competitive advantage by exotic or expensive alteration of the boat."

This definition is greatly over simplified, but will serve as a basis for determinations by the measurer until the bylaws are changed or a more definitive statement is established by the association.... When considering hardware changes or addition of "gadgets", use of common sense will prevent a rejection by your measurer..... The first common sense factor is to consult the by-laws for express prohibitions: second is to avoid anything that might endanger another boat or crew.....

----- The following items seem to be the most preferred additions made by skippers: (not necessarily in desired order)

1. adjustable outhaul
2. boom vang
3. adjustable jib sheet fairleads
4. if flying a spinnaker, a launching tube

These four items are all permissible, but are no substitute for tactics, intuitive playing on the wind-shifts, or most important, just plain seamanship including avoidance of line fouling, knots, pinched fingers, capsizes and the like..... All of the acceptable mods put together will not win a race: in fact many a position has been given up while attempting to use gadgets when we need to be paying attention to the race..... Towards this objective there are many available inexpensive widgets that can be used to help keep lines from fouling and make using them easier or more convenient. I know of NO prohibitions or objections to the use of those valuable little "widgets"!!!!!!!

----- Enough said for now (POP-FIZZ), hopefully any suggested bylaws changes will be ready for introduction at the nationals meeting in Erie this August. End of discussion!! Back to sailing and pop-tops.

john harvey