



HYC position statement on ORC for Club Sailing 2026

Cruiser racers will be aware of the advent of the ORC rating and results system over the last 12 months. Those promoting it point to its benefits, versus IRC in particular, for club and open event racing but its merits remain to be confirmed. Early assessments of 2025 ORC use in HYC have indicated virtually no difference between results achieved under IRC and ORC systems. The potential adoption of ORC was discussed at a recent meeting convened by HYC Commodore Kevin Monks and attended by Flag Officers and results personnel from various other clubs. Irish Sailing personnel were also present.

The position of Howth Yacht Club for the 2026 racing season is outlined below

1. IRC & HPH are the two cruiser handicap systems being offered by HYC for 2026. IRC is based on the design characteristics of a boat and its expected optimum performance. HPH reflects a boat's likely race results - primarily assessed on how that boat and crew have performed in previous Club races.
2. ORC, as a potential alternative to IRC, will be trialed in the background during 2026 for any HYC Class that requests it. Only boats with certificates listed in the ORC database on the date that a Club racing series commences will be scored. No ORC prizes will be awarded and ORC results will be made available intermittently. This trial is dependent on the ORC users providing a person to undertake the processing of ORC results.
3. The basis that ORC will operate during the trial period - single factor or three factor system / time on time or time on distance - remains to be decided.
4. For the 2027 season, each Class will be asked to choose a single, design-based rating system - either IRC or ORC. DBSC intends to adopt a similar process.
5. ORC 'Club' certs, the type predominantly held by HYC based boats in 2025, are not suitable for use at Open Events / Regattas. During 2026, ORC will accordingly not be used in HYC organised regattas. If a sufficient number of HYC boats upgrade to ORC 'International' certs for 2027 this can be revisited.
6. The results software used in HYC (Sailwave) and DBSC (HalSail) does not currently support the more complex handicapping options (see para 3 above) offered by the ORC system. Over the course of 2026 it is hoped that both Sailwave and HalSail will be adapted to allow all the current handicap systems (IRC, ORC, YTC, ECHO, HPH, PY) to be scored on a single software platform. Until that happens, the ORC managed software is being used to calculate ORC results, which requires the duplication of the results inputting process.
7. Irish Sailing have recently started to offer the YTC rating system, a simplified design-based system that is an alternative to IRC and ORC. YTC results will not be processed by HYC in 2026.

The Sailing Committee in Howth Yacht Club looks forward to assessing the outcome of the ORC trial and consulting about which system the Club sailors wish to use in the future. **However, racing will continue to be based on a single boat rating system based on boat design and single system based on crew/boat performance. In 2026 IRC and HPH will be used for the award of results and prizes.**