

Weighing the Santana 20 - A New Chapter

You are all to be commended in participating in, and being supportive of, the Class's data-building efforts in determining just how much our boats actually weigh, and how this will impact the our measuring procedures in changing from the outdated float-testing, to the infinitely more accurate digital weighing. At times in our 33-year history, some of our boats have been weighed, but never have we had such a large sampling that is truly representative of our entire Class. We did this because before we started using a weighing procedure that used a scale, we needed to know if the 1350 pounds was still a viable class minimum weight. Having proved this, things now get a lot easier. Also, by not including the sails in the weighing, we are freeing up our sail makers to use increasingly lighter materials and building techniques that will keep the performance of our boat at a level that will continue to attract new owners/sailors. In short, these efforts will ensure the continued viability and attractiveness of our Class for years to come.

Our choices are simple:

1. Do nothing. Leave everything the way it is. (Not recommended.)
2. Leave the weight at 1350 pounds, but add in the requirement and procedures that the boat be digitally weighed, in lieu of float-testing. (Easiest to implement.)
3. Change the official weight to something higher than 1350 pounds. (Requires discussion of several possible options.)

A couple of points the Board would like to make as we open up this discussion:

1. There are risks to this undertaking: we are all loath to change – especially if it could directly impact our individual boat. However, remaining a OD class that has no viable way of accurately measuring the weight of our boat does not bode well for us long-term. Incorporating the digital weighing procedures is the main goal of all of this, but the Board felt it was necessary to publish the results, and to see if the membership wanted to do anything further with the data (i.e. a change to the official weight). At a minimum, we will all know how well we have been doing in keeping our boats as light as possible.
2. Happily, there is no guarantee between a lighter boat and better racing results. For instance, “Disaster Area”, at 1384 pounds, won the recent Memorial Day Regatta up in Eugene – but “H2O Boa”, at 1510 pounds, finished second out of over 20 boats. It is still all about sail-handling, tactics, good sails, and boat preparation.
3. We have no requirements for crew weight. A light boat with a crew weight of 600 pounds displaces the same amount of water as a heavy boat with a crew weight of 450 pounds. We have no plans to ever enforce crew weights.
4. Finally, we must have maturity and civility in this discussion. This will require us to set aside how a possible weight change might affect our boat, and to think about how it might affect our Class as a whole. The Golden Rule applies and is one of the hallmarks of our great Class.

To help in our discussion, we have come up with some options of our possible choices, and the their relative advantages/disadvantages. Although the Board has given these great thought, these are just the

beginning - to get us “off the dock” so to speak. Your thoughts and ideas will only further these along and help us to arrive at the best possible plan for the future of our Class.

Leave it at the current 1350 pounds

- Advantages
 1. Nobody has to add weight, nor does it look like anyone will have to closely watch the weight of their boat for measuring purposes.
 2. Allows for future/lighter materials to be used by all (i.e. carbon spin poles, rigging, etc.).
 3. Lighter boats whose owners have worked hard in keeping their boats light won't be penalized (if the weight is raised) and therefore frustrated. BTW, they happen to be our better sailors.
 4. Only requires a wording change for the Bylaws to allow boats to be now digitally weighed, rather than float-tested.
 5. New build boats will have no issue in meeting this existing weight, and can allow for future/lighter materials to be incorporated into the build of a new boat.
- Disadvantages
 1. 103 pounds off the current Class weight average.
 2. Could be frustrating for owners who have heavier boats, in feeling that it will difficult for them to have a “competitive” boat.
 3. Will require a greater amount of work for an owner of a heavier boat to get closer to the minimum weight.

Change it to 1375 pounds

- Advantages
 1. Only one boat would have to add weight (4 pounds)
 2. 25 pounds closer to Class average
 3. Still allows for future/lighter materials to be used by most boat owners
 4. Probably closest to what a new-build boat actually is (according to Tom Schock), but it will require effort on the builder's part to ensure the boat meets this weight standard.
- Disadvantages
 1. Still 78 pounds away from Class average.
 2. Doesn't allow for future weight savings for boats close to 1375 pounds.
 3. Doesn't allow for future materials/weight savings in a new build boat.

Change it to 1400 pounds

- Advantages
 1. Closer to Class average (within 1 standard deviation)
 2. Only four boats will have to add weight
- Disadvantages
 1. Four owners will have to add weight, may cause some to leave the Class
 2. Will be difficult for WD Schock to build a new Santana 20 to that specific weight. May involve a price increase due to increased material costs.

Change it to 1425 pounds

- Advantages
 1. Within 28 pounds of class average.

- Disadvantages
 1. At least 8 boats will have to add weight, some as much as 50 pounds, with the frustration that those owners may feel. Will probably cause some owners to leave the Class.
 2. Will be even more difficult for Schock to build a boat to that weight. Will involve a probable price increase to build in the added weight. Added weight may be fiberglass, which will allow for a stiffer boat, and therefore violate the One-Design spirit.

Change it to 1450 pounds

- Advantages
 1. Within 3 pounds of Class average.
- Disadvantages
 1. Half of the Class will have to add weight to their boat.
 2. Builder will be unable to build to this weight without changing the basic OD characteristics of the boat.
 3. Will most likely cause a great deal of owners to leave the Class.

Looking Up the Course

As stated when we announced this program, we will be going very slowly with this. This will ensure max participation and a good percolation of ideas. The s20.org website forum will be our main venue for discussion. When it seems like the discussion has run its course, the Board will formulate what it feels is the best combination of the will of the Membership, and the good of the Class (which will hopefully be one and the same). It will then be presented to the Membership for further comment and evaluation. Changes will be made as necessary. Finally, the proposed changes to our Bylaws will be presented to the Membership for a yes/no e-vote, hopefully before the end of the calendar year. These new procedures will then be in place before the 2011 Nationals in Oklahoma City.

Thank you all for making our Class the great sailing family that it is!!!

