

## **World Cup Series & Olympic Class World Championships**

### Integrated Calendar

A submission from the US Sailing

#### Purpose or Objective

To provide a practical and sustainable annual and quadrennial calendar that sailors and MNAs will embrace.

To reorganize the model of the Sailing World Cup to increase its relevance to the sailors and MNAs while increasing its commercial value for World Sailing and the host MNAs.

To recognize that the World Championships of Olympic Equipment should be the pinnacle event for that equipment on an annual basis, while the Olympic Games is the over-arching pinnacle event every four years.

To provide commercial offerings that are marketable, will work for the sailors and the MNAs and will result in a revenue stream for both an Olympic Equipment Class and World Sailing that permits both to thrive.

#### Proposal

In order to achieve the above Purpose and Objective, the following items should be adopted, although any or all may be adopted.

1. Discontinue the Sailing World Cup Final after 2020.
2. Recognize the Olympic Equipment Class World Championships as the annual pinnacle event beginning in 2021.
3. Adopt the calendar template (see below) from 2021 onwards.
4. Use the Rankings and Sailing World Cup (SWC) events as qualifiers for the annual World Championships for each Olympic Equipment Class.

#### Current Position

1. Sailing World Cup is failing.
2. The competition calendar is chaotic for all stakeholders.
3. World Sailing is struggling to obtain commercial partners.

#### Reasons

##### **1. Sailing World Cup**

The Sailing World Cup competitions, and in particular the Sailing World Cup Finals, are struggling and are acting as a financial drain on World Sailing. Athletes, coaches and team leaders do not consider the Sailing World Cup platform to be compelling. Commercial sponsors are equally unenthused and are not investing in the offering.

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World Sailing has experimented for ten years with the number of events, quotas, calendar, qualification, scoring and rankings, and has even attempted to increase its value by adding a final. However, none of these adjustments has made a significant difference.

The problem with the Sailing World Cup Final is, that despite World Sailing's best efforts, the athletes consider their Olympic Equipment World Class Championships to be the pinnacle event of their annual schedule, and the sponsors agree.

World Sailing has set up the Sailing World Cup Finals to compete for the status of pinnacle event against the Olympic Equipment Classes World Championships; and failed in successfully commercializing those finals. This result should be expected, as World Sailing has already been told by both the Sports Consultancy and the Olympic Commission the importance of a SINGLE Annual Pinnacle event for each of the Olympic Equipment Classes.

Finally, the ever increasingly complicated annual schedule for each of the Olympic Equipment Classes is further impacting the success of the Sailing World Cup Finals. The current annual schedules have the SWC Finals, the Olympic Class World Championships and now need to incorporate the IOC mandated continental qualifiers for the games. It is impossible to schedule a SWC Final event at a time slot that does not conflict with a World Championship, continental championship, SWC event, a Regional Games or a continental qualifier.

### **Recognize the Olympic Equipment Classes World Championships as the Pinnacle Event**

As noted above, World Sailing has been told by eminent external experts that the sport can only afford a single pinnacle event in each Olympic Equipment Class. The athletes and sponsors have made it clear that this event is the class World Championships. We need to embrace this and stop competing against ourselves. In fact, World Sailing needs to help grow each of these world championships as envisioned in regulation 25.2.7, and as a partner in growing these events share in the revenue streams they create.

### **2. Adopt the Calendar Template (see below)**

Regulation 25.2.7 permits World Sailing to organize and control the calendar of events for the Olympic Equipment Classes. It is time that World Sailing does so as partners with the Olympic Equipment Classes and organizing authorities. This will create a system for both preventing and resolving conflicts in an open, cooperative and comprehensive manner.

By doing this, we protect those events that are important to both World Sailing and to the Olympic Equipment Classes. Organizers and sponsors would be more willing to invest in their events if they were assured that there would be no conflicting events. Control of the calendar is the only way to ensure that the Sailing World Cup Series of events will succeed.

Additionally, the IOC has provided us with an unprecedented opportunity by naming the host for the next two Summer Olympic Games, which allows us to create an optimum calendar through 2028 and develop a template for the years beyond.

These dates are known:

10-25 September	2022 Asian Games	Hangzhou, China
	2022 Olympic Test Event 1	Paris, France
6-22 October	2023 Pan Am Games	Santiago, Chile
	2023 Olympic Test Event 2	Paris, France
26 July- 11 Aug	2024 Olympic Games	Paris, France
18 Sept- 3 Oct	2026 Asian Games	Japan
	2027 Pan Am Games	

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21 July – 6 Aug

2028 Olympic Games

Los Angeles, USA

The following discussion assumes that the SWC Final is discontinued. If this assumption is not the case, then the other conflicts discussed herein are multiplied and magnified.

In developing this proposal, the following have been our guiding concepts:

- Simplicity
- Pinnacle events- one pinnacle event per year – namely the World Championships
- Including the two largest Regional Games as well as the European Olympic Equipment Class Championships
- Including Continental qualification events
- Caring about spacing/balance of events- realities of shipping and athlete schedule (balance of training and competition)

### **Issue- Sailing World Championships (World Sailing Combined Worlds)**

The Olympic Commission recommendations received by Council in 2010 recommended moving the World Sailing Combined Worlds to Year 2 of the Quad. This has placed it in probable conflict with the Asian Games and Olympic Test Event 1.

The Asian Games are the largest Regional Games and extremely important to the growth of Olympic Sailing in Asia.

Our recommendation is to move the WS Combined Worlds to Year 3, to reduce the conflicts and enable Class World Championships outside of Europe, including the option of southern hemisphere, in year 2. Moving the WS Combined Worlds to year 3 will also have the effect of opening up the year-end time slot in Year 3 for the Continental Qualifiers for the Olympic Games.

Finally we recommend that Olympic Qualification should be approximately 20% year 2, 50% year 3 and 30% continental qualification. Focusing the bulk of qualification in Year 3 is especially important when we introduce new equipment or format.

The proposed calendar includes the following assumptions:

- The SWC Final is DISCONTINUED after 2020.
  - The World Sailing Combined Championships are moved to year 3, and the 2022 Championships are requested to be moved to 2023 at The Hague.
  - The Rankings and participation in the SWC Series in the regular season events are the qualifiers for entry into the Olympic equipment annual World Championships.
  - In year 4 of a quad, the European and World Championships are not BOTH Stand-alone events on the calendar, using one of the following strategies:
    - European Championships are not awarded in year 4
    - European Championship titles are awarded at the SWC Europe Events
    - European and World Championships are awarded at the same event
    - World Championship titles are awarded at the Olympics in year 4
    - World Championship Titles are NOT awarded in year 4.
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**Proposed Calendar**

Month	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4
			WSC Asia/Oceania (previous Dec.)	
January	WSC Americas	WSC Americas		WSC Americas
February			WSC Americas	
March				
April	WSC Europe	WSC Europe	WSC Europe	WSC Europe
May	WSC Europe	WSC Europe	WSC Europe	WSC Europe
June				Worlds or Euros
July	Europeans WSC Asia/Oceania	Europeans	Combined Worlds	Worlds or Euros
August		Oly Test Event 1	Oly Test Event 2	Olympic Games
September	Worlds	Asian Games	Europeans	
October	Worlds	Worlds	Pan Am Games	
November	Worlds	Worlds	Continental Quals	
December		Worlds		

**Geography Matters in planning the Calendar**

As the Olympic Commission reported, World Sailing needs to ensure that we are increasing the geographical footprint of sailing. This is a critical issue in the eyes of the IOC.

In order to engage all of the 6 continents in Sailing we could create pairs of Continents to alternatively host a Sailing World Cup event. As an example:

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4
Americas	North America	South America	North America	South America
Asia / Oceania	Oceania	Asia	Oceania	Asia
Europe / Africa	Europe	Africa	Europe	Africa

- Americas could stay with the traditional January dates regardless of continent.

- Oceania and Asia could utilize a November date in the prior year or the summer of the current year.
- Europe and Africa could be paired with dates of spring to summer.
- Hosting a full SWC event outside of Europe will be a challenge for the foreseeable future. Only SWC Miami has succeeded on a consistent basis outside of Europe. However, it is conceivable for venues outside of Europe to host a "fly-in" (no shipping) event with Laser, Laser Radial, Windsurfers and Kites, while a simultaneous event in Europe hosts the 49er, FX, Nacra, Mixed Single and Mixed Double classes.
- This same concept could also be accomplished with Olympic Equipment Class World Championships, creating mini-combined World Championships, potentially increasing the commercial opportunities.

The above Calendar permits all of these ideas to happen, as they are able to materialize.

### **Strengthen SWC and World Championships**

- Utilizing the Sailing World Cup to provide qualification for the Olympic Equipment Class World Championships will provide the opportunity for both to thrive. SWC series participation will become nearly mandatory in order to qualify for the World Championships.
- When the Sailing World Cup AND the Olympic Equipment Class World Championships are healthy, both World Sailing and the Olympic Equipment Class Associations will succeed, as the two are co-dependant.
- Just as importantly, when the Athletes and Team Leaders have an annual calendar that is not over-full and provides a reasonable opportunity for the athletes to participate without crazy travel requirements, then the entire system of events will be successful.

### **Quotas and Qualifications**

No discussion of this sort can take place without thinking about how quotas and qualification will work for both the SWC and for the World Championships. Rather than mandating details, this submission will suggest goals and parameters.

The over-arching goal should be to maintain some level of universal entry as well as a strong incentive to attend SWC events, while also ensuring a highly competitive fleet at the World Championships.

As an example, consider the following quotas for the WC;

Laser, Radial	100
49er, FX, Nacra	60
Windsurf m&w	60
Mixed single, double and kite	TBD

Consider the following rules for entry into the WC:

1. Must be ranked within the top 75% of the quota AND have attended at least two (three?) SWC events or two qualifiers for SWC events in the current year.
  2. Regardless of rankings, every MNA is entitled to enter one men's, one women's and one mixed class of their choice, IF they attend at least two SWC events or two qualifiers for SWC events in those classes during the current year.
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3. Five percent of the quota places reserved for “Last Chance” qualification at the last SWC event of the season.
4. Five percent of the quota places reserved for wild card entries to elite athletes not meeting above requirements due to illness, injury, professional event conflicts, change of teammate, etc.
5. No MNA may have more than 4 (5?, 6?) entries in a given class regardless of the above.
6. If rules 1-5 fail to reach the quota, additional places from the Rankings are awarded
7. Final Quotas adjusted upwards as needed if rules 1-5 result in a number greater than the original quota.

Probably at least 80% of the field would be confident at the beginning of the season that they would qualify for the WC if they sailed in the SWC events, and those athletes and national teams could make advance plans accordingly. The remainder would be motivated to work hard to gain entry. The calendar would still permit time for the last 20% to make plans, move boats, and get to the WC.

Each SWC event would have similar entry rules and would include a “last chance” qualifier. In the end, it is critical that the “last chance” qualifier events held near each SWC event be maintained, so the system is open and prevents a self-reinforcing feedback loop. One interesting idea to consider would be to make one of the European SWC Events an elite event, with a quota equal to the Olympic Regatta and no more than one entry per MNA, while the Americas and Oceania/Asia rounds might be open entry without quota in some classes. The best athletes in the world would attend the elite European SWC event – making it a huge media and commercially viable event for World Sailing. The newer athletes would have more incentive to attend the SWC events in the Americas and Oceania/Asia to earn entry into the World Championships that year and potentially to the elite European SWC event the following year.

### **Rankings**

Currently the World Sailing Rankings are not highly regarded by the athletes and national teams, but this is simply a symptom of the failure of the SWC Series and Finals. The simple reality is that the athletes and national teams do not care about the SWC. The problem is not the method of calculation. By fixing the SWC as outlined earlier, the Rankings will become legitimate and important, because the athletes will be participating fully.

### **3. Commercial**

Throughout this submission, we have highlighted how the changes we are suggesting will result in a more commercially viable set of events that will strengthen World Sailing, the Olympic Equipment Classes and organizing authorities. The Board of World Sailing is already empowered to negotiate with the Olympic Classes for commercial rights to the World Championships.

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