

**ISAF Sailing World Cup and 2014 ISAF World Championships**

Retain Windsurfing/RS:X as Events/Equipment

A submission from the RS:X Class Association

Purpose or Objective

To retain windsurfing/RS:X as events/equipment for men and women at the 2014 ISAF World Championships and in the ISAF Sailing World Cup between 2013 and 2016 even if they are not part of the Olympic programme.

Proposal

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Current Position

As above.

Reasons

**To maintain high level competition and ensure continuing investment in windsurfing development programmes made by MNAs, it is essential that windsurfing/RS:X remain as core events in the ISAF Youth World Championships.**

1. **Attracts Emerging Nations – Reg #23.1.2[e]:** 54 countries took part in the 2012 Olympic Qualification series. Countries like Colombia, Cuba, Egypt, Guatemala, Iran, Jamaica, Oman, Peru and the Philippines now have windsurfing development programs.  
*\*\*\*At the 2011 ISAF Sailing World Championships, 45 Member National Sailing Authorities entered the RS:X men's fleet and only 42 entered the Laser Standard.*
  2. **Women's Participation– Reg #23.1.2[g]:** The RS:X women's fleet is strong with participants coming from 5 continents and 40 countries. 80 women took part in the 2012 RS:X World Championships from 37 nations
  3. **Safety:** From beginner to elite athlete windsurfing is a safe sport to practice. Hulls float so it is possible to self-rescue in onshore winds. Windsurfing does not pose a threat to other beach or water users or spectators.
  4. **Consistent Pathway with Youth Appeal – Reg #23.1.2[d]:** youth and junior competitors only have to change equipment once from starting to race on the Bic Techno 293 to
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competing in the Olympic fleet on the RS:X.

Windsurfing is a beach lifestyle sport, which appeals to the 'Facebook' generation not the 'Flinstones' generation. Windsurfing's junior development pathway – The Techno 293 – is booming with record entry numbers, the future looks bright

5. **Economical – Reg #23.1.2[h]:** The RS:X offers the least expensive route into the Olympic Regatta for small and emerging sailing nations both in terms equipment and campaign costs.
    - Starting with the Techno 293 which costs less than an Optimist
    - And continuing with the RS:X which costs less than a Laser but with more hi-tech value plus lower shipping costs
  6. **Sports presentation – Reg #23.1.2[f]:** The RS:X class is the most colourful in the Olympic sailing family both upwind and down. The Men's sails are made with a gold coloured luff tube and gold vinyl whereas the women's are red and red. The 2012 Olympic fleet stood out on the water with custom colouring developed by LOCOG
  7. **Emphasis on Athletic Skill – Reg #23.1.2[b]:** Windsurfing is the most dynamic of all Olympic sailing disciplines with athletes being some of the fittest at the Olympic games. It is both physically and tactically demanding with the emphasis being on the athlete's ability not his ability to buy the latest gear.
  8. **Level Playing Field – Reg #23.1.2[b]:** The RS:X is tightly controlled one design equipment produced by Neil Pryde Windsurfing that appeals to emerging nations because they have the confidence to invest knowing that the best athlete will win not the one with the most money.
 

*\*\*\*In the last 7 Olympiads, athletes from 5 continents [ Oceania, Asia, Europe, North America and South America have won medals in the Olympic Regatta proving that MNAs from all countries have the opportunity to compete at the highest level.*
  9. **Olympic windsurfing has a strong following** in Asia and the emerging nations especially in China who won a gold medal at the 2008 Olympic Regattas and Hong Kong who won gold in 1996 in Atlanta.
  10. **Worldwide Distribution:** The RS:X is readily available with worldwide distribution channels and the least expensive of the current Olympic events both to buy and campaign
  11. **Media Friendly – Reg #23.1.2[f]:** The 2012 RS:X World Championships attracted 94,457 unique visitors to its event website. To put this in context. Skandia Sail For Gold, an ISAF Sailing World Cup event achieves a very similar number of visitors with a bigger budget and more diverse group of sailing fans
  12. **Broadcast TV Audience – Reg #23.1.2[f]:** The RS:X has a broadcast TV audience in more than 150 countries, and an internet audience in 169 countries
  13. **Speed:** RS:X Equipment is high-performance over a wide wind range ~ 4 to 30 knots ~ During the 2012 RS:X World Championship men and women in the gold fleets were racing in gusts exceeding 30 knots and during an impromptu speed session, peak speeds of over 30 knots were recorded for the men and 26 knots for the women
  14. **Ease of Travel:** Equipment can travel with teams on planes making it viable for small teams to compete internationally at low cost.
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15. **Infrastructure:** Windsurfing requires minimal event infrastructure. The RS:X can be safely launched off a crowded beach and does not require expensive marina or club facilities further reducing costs for developing nations. Fleets can also be launched into crowded harbours in minimal winds without a problem.  
*\*\*\* Windsurfing is integrated into MNA 'learn to sail' programmes worldwide. The VDWS has 542 international schools and estimates that 47, 872 new participants learned to windsurf in 2011*
16. **Format:** The RS:X class has already put forward a concept for a 4 day event allowing for a rotation of fleets from the outside course to the inner course including a semi-final and final to attract the maximum amount of media coverage as well as allowing large and small fleet to race for a full 4 days
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