

IFDS Technical Committee

I am flying home from Judging the I -14 Worlds in Toronto while there, I had the opportunity to discuss IFDS Paralympic classes with IFDS Executive Committee Member, Brian Todd and the Chairman of the ISAF Class Rule Sub Committee, Bill Abbott.

I have also watched the emails flying back and forth on the SKUD18 class seating problems and the dialogue they contain. Re: the perennial seating controversy.

Along with the efforts by many to straighten out the open 2.4mR class into a Paralympic one design class.

SKUD18

The situation is very clear that the SKUD18 class rules are constructed by the SKUD18 Class but as soon as you want to be a Paralympic class the situation changes.

As Bill Abbott explained to me that the rules have to be clear, not be ambiguous and state what is permitted and what is forbidden. The rules must be locked down in a way that if it does not say you CAN then you CAN'T. That is if you wish the class to be a Paralympic class it must complement and be acceptable to the ISAF measurement team.

One of the best ways to illustrate this point is to read the Soling class rules which have this premise. My suggestion is for the SKUD18 class rules team to rethink their latest rule changes and make it very clear what they are trying to achieve.

The new revised SKUD18 class rules July 2013 are an improvement but you can still read parts of them two ways. This must be cleared up before the November conference if you wish to have them accepted by the Excom and ISAF. My suggestion would be to research this urgently. You only have to fly on nearly any plane on our planet for the hostess to ask you to please tighten your seat belt and she requires the belt to be firm around your body.

So as Chris Mitchell says this should be done immediately, if the crew can't reach the controls while seated with belt fixed and firm in the seat position then bring the controls to the seated crew and stop this nonsense of being able to slide half a metre forward. Frustrating I hear you say well we have discussed this issue for too long now.

The jury will protest if needed to, because there will be no standing as done at present. Tim Dempsey has proposed amendments to C3.3b and C3.3e.

The proposed changes:

'C.3.3 b) Every seat shall have restraints which shall secure the crew within [the seating surface of their seat \(as defined in C.3.3 c\)](#) at all times during *racing*. Every restraint shall have a quick release mechanism which shall be clearly visible for fast assistance on the water.' This is very easy to police for the jury and other competitors because basically if you are not sitting on the side or back of the seat or the floor of the boat you are within the rules.

We also need to make a slight amendment to C.3.3 e) '.....Sitting on the legrest, backrest or sides in order to project weight to windward is not permitted.....' This should read '...sitting on the legrest, backrest or sides is not permitted at all times during racing.' we don't want people sitting on the sides or back rest for any reason at all.

I think these two small amendments will clear up any grey areas around the use of seat restraints. Rules are 'technical stuff'. In emails to the 'Group', you have asked for comments, if people do not agree speak up after all we do not want to disadvantage teams with less able crews. In general, your views have been supported, albeit from only those contributing to the forum.

As the rules now read, there is serious doubt if Mk1 rudders, fins and keels are legal. Mk1 mast spreader gap are not defined (C.9.7), there is no prohibition on adjusting the mainsheet bridle.

Juries can deal only with clear rules, not with the spirit or intention of the rules.

I offer the following wording as a suggestion:

"No part of the crew's body shall be on or over the decks of the SKUD18 while racing at any time. If there is insufficient upper body control or strength to ensure this, then a suitable seat and safety restraints/seat belts shall be used." The second sentence removes the defence of '*I lost my balance for a moment and needed to push myself back*'. This ensures that the less disabled do not have any advantage in weight distribution compared to the paraplegic.

2.4 mR

The same premise goes for the 2.4 mR unless it says in the rules it is permitted it is not, put away the dictionary and make it simple and fair to all.

In conclusion the Technical committee is trying assist both SKUD18 and 2.4 mR classes by encouraging sailors from around the world to be able to purchase a boat and know that is all they need, not have to modify your new boat from day one.

The Technical Committee only wants to make the rules fair for all sailors and a lot of fun sailing these great boats.

Ralph Roberts

Chair, IFDS Technical Committee