

IFDS Sailors Advisory Council

Tasks undertaken:

- Run the Sailors Forum at the 2012 IFDS World Championships;
- Create and run a survey for the sailors/coaches to voice their opinions regarding the 2012 IFDS World Championships;
- Act as a general point of contact for opinions;
- Run the IFDS Sailors Council page on Facebook, and the IFDS Sailors Twitter.

IFDS World Championship Survey

This year's survey came back pretty positive overall, with a good percentage of sailors/coaches completing it. In fact there were 46 more completions of the survey than last time.

Despite the last minute venue change, Port Charlotte handled the regatta very well, and there were minimal complaints about the venue.

Positive points:

- The racing was pretty well run;
- There was plenty of wheelchair accessible accommodation nearby.

Negative points:

- Measurement took too long, and the measurers didn't appear to be following the class rules;
- The racing area was a very long way from the sailing club, quite often over an hour and a half tow for the Sonars, this should be considered when selecting a venue;
- The docking area was too shallow for the SKUD18's to launch and to moor with their keels down, and therefore not appropriate to host the World Championship;
- The adaptation forms took ages to fill in, and then weren't published anywhere.

Problems for the council:

- Upcoming event schedule
 - There is no clear schedule at the moment, and we feel that the Executive committee should make it clear to the sailors at this point which regattas they intend to run as the World Cup. This will avoid confusion with the Eurocup events, and allow teams to plan in advance. Planning in advance might lead to better participation numbers, and will save IFDS the embarrassment of getting low entry numbers at events.
- Lack of communication between the Sailors Advisory Council members
 - Having sent a few emails to other members of the council, I have received no replies. It makes me wonder if people really are interested in their positions, or are they just there to make up the numbers.
- Communication strategy
 - Other than the bulletin, there is no clear way of getting important information out to the sailors. A lot of the sailors feel that the Exec are unwilling to share information, but in reality, it might be there is no way of communicating it?
- Lack of participation in the fleets (numbers down)

- One of the main problems for Teams at the moment, especially in the first year of the quad, is that new teams are forming, and there are likely to be classification issues. For the first year at least, making the events open for crew might increase the numbers. Maybe you could limit it to only the crew, not the helm to be disabled?
- Another issue in the SKUD18 class is the difficulties in putting Teams together. Having not only to find a female and then a 1 or 2 pointer makes this very hard. Have you considered lifting the 1 or 2 point rule to allow different disabilities to pair together? Keeping the seats in place will keep the boat a level playing field, and allow more boats to compete.

Moving Forward:

Issues for the Executive committee to consider:

- World/Eurocup status and getting the message to the sailors. Key events should already be highlighted to allow the sailors to plan calendars;
- Having a clearer strategy for communication with the sailors for getting key messages, such as scheduling out;
- Opening up the classes for at least the first year to get more boats on the water, and to allow new start-up teams to get going without worrying about classification;
- Sorting out the website, so key information has somewhere to go and doesn't take ages to find!
- Having things like the adaption forms online, would make it easier for the sailors to apply, and would mean that they didn't get lost.

Hannah Stodel

Chair, IFDS Sailors Advisory Council