

**2004 Report from the Women's International Match Racing Association**

The Women's International Match Race Association (WIMRA) was formed nearly a decade ago to support the development of women's match racing and promote communication among its members. WIMRA is a legal entity with tax exempt status. WIMRA asked ISAF for status as an affiliated organization. ISAF denied that request.

WIMRA has met each year at the ISAF Women's Match Race World Championship. This year, members of WIMRA agreed to change the form of governance to a Council where a member from each country with a woman match racer would be entitled to representation on that Council. There are women match racers in many countries where there are no ranked women match racers. Women are on crews at ISAF graded events, and match racing is held in countries where events are not graded. None of these women appear on the ISAF ranking list, but all of them are welcome in WIMRA.

WIMRA asked women at the competition about the future of women's match racing at the Olympic Games. One skipper thought that the women's keelboat event at the Olympic Games should remain fleet racing. Two others prefer a mixed fleet/match event. The other 13 voted to ask ISAF to change the women's keelboat event from fleet racing to match racing with provided boats. The Bermuda Yachting Association has made that submission to ISAF. They pointed out that preparing for an Olympic campaign where they had only to provide transportation for themselves and their crews was much less expensive than having to buy boats and transport both themselves and the boats to different venues around the world.

The women favor having a Grade 1 women's match racing circuit that provides different kinds of one-design keelboats. They recognize that match racing is a discipline, not a boat. They prefer events that provide accommodation and no-to-low fees rather than prize money. Women match racers are not professional sailors but are amateur athletes.

WIMRA expressed disappointment that ISAF has failed to support redevelopment of the Nations Cup after Council voted to reinstate it as an ISAF event two years ago. They strongly support the Nations Cup because it is a vehicle to teach sailors and race officials in other nations about their sport. ISAF can play a strong role in the development of match racing if it fulfills its commitment made by Council to the Nations Cup.

WIMRA recognizes that match racing is a discipline within the sport of sailing. They prefer match racing in a keelboat with a crew of four and an average crew weight of 68 kilograms, but they can match race in a keelboat with a spinnaker and a crew of three.

WIMRA is eager to assist ISAF in the redevelopment of the Nations Cup. WIMRA strongly urges ISAF to support the submission to change the format of the women's keelboat event at the Olympic Games from fleet racing to match racing.

Respectfully submitted,  
Barbara Farquhar, ISAF Match Racing Committee

