

Reporting Committee – Events

Other Committee – Windsurfing, Women's Sailing, Sailing

Olympic Regatta, Selection of Windsurfing Equipment

A submission from the International Mistral Class Association

PROPOSAL:

That the criteria defined in the following proposal forms the basis for a design brief to be developed so that the windsurfing industry can be invited to put forward boards for evaluation at a test event to be staged in 2003 from which the windsurfing equipment to be used at the 2008 Olympic Regatta be selected.

The aim of this report is to

- a) define the IWA member classes' recommendations on the selection of Olympic windsurfing equipment to be used at the Olympic Regattas of 2008 & 2012
- b) to ensure that windsurfing retaining its Olympic status for both men and women;
- c) and that the IWA member puts the most appropriate equipment forward classes for selection by the MNAs. This report therefore aims to set out criteria and a design brief so that an additional development path is considered in parallel with the current IMCO and FW formats. The development path herewith proposed would allow the ISAF to consider a wider choice of alternatives in the light of the critical factors highlighted in the background section.

It is recommended that the selection of windsurfing equipment be based on the following criteria:

- 1. Racing is possible at the same time as other Olympic Sailing Classes
- 2. The likely conditions to be expected in Qingdao 2008
- 3. It is a strictly controlled restricted class
- 4. The decision on the actual equipment is made at the 2004 ISAF November Conference
- 1. General Design Brief for New Olympic Equipment:
 - 1. The equipment definitions for both men and women shall be the same where possible
 - 2. The equipment shall conform with the criteria specified above and...
 - (a) be supported by a global distribution network or networks
 - (b) be accompanied by clearly defined measurement rules & tight tolerances
 - (c) be restricted to 1 board, 2 fins, 1 centreboard & 2 rigs per competitor.
 - 3. The method of construction employed shall be durable and of a consistently uniform high quality whilst offering the best trade off between weight > performance > price.
 - 4. The ideal weight band for men should be 70>82 Kg and for women should be 55>70 Kg;
 - 5. Safety shall be considered so that
 - (a) competitors will be able to sail home unassisted in sub-racing or quickly increasing winds wind speeds

(b) boards are designed to perform in large waves and chop in a "well-behaved" way

(c) each rig is as durable & as light as possible whilst being easy to rig/de-rig at sea

(d) The fin shall be easily demountable without the aid of tools

6. Attention should be paid to the possibility of using the same hull(s) combined with smaller rigs so that a global junior racing programme can be established at minimal cost.

2. Design brief for the Hull:

1. Easily transportable by normal scheduled airline as passenger's excess baggage
2. Max Weight bare hull weight 12 kg/ minimum bare hull weight 9kgs
3. Retractable centreboard allowed;
4. 2 production fins, easily removable without tools;
5. Strong Durable Construction; Positive flotation in case the board is holed;
6. Easily repairable on a regatta site;
7. Construction method and materials to be identical around the world.
8. Price around USD 1200 retail

3. Design brief rig(s):

1. Two rigs for women, each of a different defined size
2. Men to use the same two rigs sizes if possible;
3. If not, men shall use two rigs, each of a different defined size
4. Same carbon mast for all rigs (commonality of components);
5. Same Carbon boom for all rigs (commonality of components);
6. Each rig to have the maximum flexibility in terms of wind range (trim systems);
7. The largest women's rig (max. size) to be easily manageable by someone of 55 kg;
8. Sails to be made " as visible as possible " to the naked eye from a great distance;

4. Design and Test Event

Option A

That the ISAF invite key manufacturers/brands to participate in a design competition leading to a test event in order to select one board prototype with two matching rig sizes around which tight tolerances can be defined so that new equipment can be selected for use at the 2008 and 2012 Olympic Games that meets the above criteria. Manufacturers/Brands who participate in this development will have the right to build/market the Olympic equipment.

Option B

That the ISAF make an "open invitation" to any board shapers (whether they be involved with a current "known" production board brand or not) to put forward one prototype each at its "intended production weight". All such boards are then evaluated

at an ISAF test event in order to select one board prototype with two matching rig sizes around all of which tight tolerances can be defined so that new equipment can be selected for use at the 2008 and 2012 Olympic regattas that meets the above criteria.

Conditions:

- i) The winning board/rigs will be made in established factories licensed by ISAF; Said factories will be subject to a regular manufacturing audit to ensure that the building specification is being tightly adhered to;
- ii) To stimulate the custom board shaping community, the IWA should establish a sizeable prize fund for the best-proposed board in the opinion of the ISAF evaluation working party put forward by a custom shaper not already associated with a board brand with a registered production board on the ISAF list
- iii) Any board that later becomes a “production board” registered on the ISAF List shall pay the associated fee; Registration regulations for all such boards will be strengthened;
- iv) Brands who wish to market the selected board/rigs may do so by paying a sponsorship fee per unit sponsored to the IWA for their logo to be put on the Olympic board. This will allow
 - (a) Sponsored riders to compete on equipment branded with their sponsor’s logos in all regattas except the Olympic regattas where the board shall be “white” (no logos)
 - (b) Sponsors from the wider world of commerce and industry to participate.

NB - The selected option should be initiated as quickly as possible

The prize fund suggested under “Option B” would be established by drawing down funds from the balances accrued by the classes managing the Olympic equipment over the last 20 years.

CURRENT POSITION:

Windsurfing has been an “event” within the Olympic sailing regatta for almost 20 years. There are currently two sets of medals, one for men and one for women. It is currently the least expensive Olympic sailing discipline; therefore, apart from being a potentially spectacular to watch its inclusion ensures that a lot of developing nations can take part (60% of the entry in 1996).

Here are some background facts that help the reader to understand more fully the reasoning behind the conclusions of this report:

- a) The ISAF President has already stated that he believes that the class selected should be Formula Windsurfing but that the equipment to be used at the Games should be One Design
- b) There is little enthusiasm amongst the FW racers for a One Design format as evidenced by the low number of registrations for the so-called “One Design Formula” event at the 2002 ISAF World Sailing Games.
- c) The Spanish Sailing Federation (RFEV) made a submission last year stating that both the equipment and the class should be changed for 2008. Since then, The President of the RFEV has since written to the ISAF saying that he now does not support the Formula concept but does support a change in the equipment.
- d) The historic data for wind speeds in Qingdao for July & September may not support a proposal to move the Olympic regatta to a date in September.

- e) It is believed that in certain areas, the waters in Qingdao have quite strong currents and that the historic data for wind speeds in July show a low average wind speed.

The existing criteria established by the ISAF Events Committee in November 1999 being:

- a) Must allow athletes around the world, of different size and weight, male and female, to participate;
- b) Must achieve the IOC objective of a minimum of 30% participation for women;
- c) Must give the best sailors in each country the opportunity to participate in readily accessible equipment;
- d) Must combine both traditional and modern events and classes, to reflect, display and promote competitive sailing.

REASON:

It is very important that the majority of MNAs agree that windsurfing is included in the Olympic Regatta and supports the ISAF Windsurfing Committee's recommendations on the most appropriate Olympic windsurfing equipment to select:

1. In many major Olympic Class Regattas worldwide, the Olympic windsurfing class has to compete at the same time and in the same conditions as the other sailing classes
2. Not to do so would be impractical
3.
 - (a) This goes a long way towards supporting the position of the ISAF President, whilst permitting differences between items of equipment within very tight tolerances
 - (b) This will be more interesting to manufacturers than a "One Design" concept
 - (c) The Olympics should be a test of talent not technology
 - (d) To maximize commonality between men's & women's equipment (KISS);
 - (e) To strictly limit the cost of participation;
 - (f) Production licences to be controlled and issued by the ISAF:
4.
 - (a) To allow racers and MNAs to build up a long term experience of the chosen format;
 - (b) To allow MNAs to invest in new equipment with confidence;
 - (c) To allow MNAs to plan long term development programmes with confidence
5.
 - (a) to enable women to reach high levels of performance by training and possibly racing with men on equal terms;
 - (b) to maximize development opportunities;
 - (c) To reduce the number of equipment components required establishing a viable Olympic programme and thus reducing the overall cost of such a programme.