

Format 2008 Olympic Sailing Competition

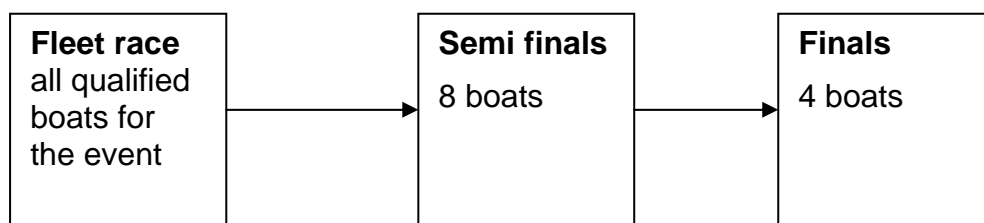
New format for the selected Olympic Events / Classes at the Olympic Sailing Competition with Fleet, Semi and Finals

A submission from the Chairman of the Events Committee

Proposal:

ISAF shall introduce new formats for selected Olympic Events/Classes in the Olympic Regatta 2008 in order to optimise the possibility to develop the TV coverage in our sport as well as to meet public expectations as viewers and/or spectators.

Fleet-racing will stay the format for racing at the Olympic Regatta, but will be used as qualification to choose the top eight for final races - the following format shall be introduced in 2-4 of the Olympic Events/Classes:



General criteria for format:

- Racing shall start with standard Fleet Racing format in order to determine the top 8 sailors who will then participate in a series of semi and final series of races to determine the Medal winners.
- Race formats for the semi and finals shall be short (max. 15-20 min. target), concise and simple to communicate and understand
- An event format/ build-up with finals
- Semi-finals/Finals
- Format must have the winner of the last race being the winner
- Races/semi-finals/finals must be held close to shore and close to spectators
- There will be an increased emphasis on media coverage and photography of the racing and competitors via a closer cooperation between sailors and media. This will entail a more focussed “Race Village” concept where personalities and the racing will be showcased live and on video (for TV and Internet) feed.
- There will be a Race Village on the site where people can watch the sailing as it happens from a multitude of perspectives.

Fleet race

- Number of races in fleet race (to be decided)

- Drop races in fleet race (to be decided) - (Separate Submission)
- The top 8 in the overall fleet race will enter the Semi-finals
- The rest of the fleet are scored as they finished for the Olympic Regatta and do not race anymore. (The submitters feel that at Graded events they could be allowed to continue to race if the resources are available but that at the Olympics they are finished after the fleet portion. However the situation at the Olympics should be investigated further).

Semi-finals & finals

- Top 2 boats in the fleet race gets respectively 2 and 1 “dots” (“extra life”) – this means the boat will “survive”, if it is placed last in a race in the semi-finals
- In the semi-finals the last boat over the finishing line is knocked out, unless having a “dot” (which they lose), until there are 3-4 boats left
- If a dot is used then no one is dropped out and a new race is held
- The semi-finals will have from 4 to 7 short races depending on if the “dots” are used
- As people are dropped from the semi-finals they are given their final position in the regatta based on that position. i.e. the first boat dropped from the semi-finals will be either 8th or 6th in the Olympic results, the next 7th or 5th as appropriate.
- In the finals (4 boats) the Gold Medal winner will be the boat first to win two races - simple scoring of the final results criteria to decide the Silver and Bronze medals, as for the rest – if points are even, the boats with the best position in the last race are ranked highest
- On the water umpiring in semi-finals and finals

Proposed events/classes which shall use the new format in 2008:

- Skiff (49er)
- Multihull (Tornado)
- 470 (M/F)
- Men's Windsurfer (Niel Pryde RS:X)
- Women's Windsurfer (Niel Pryde RS:X)
- Other Classes decided by ISAF Events Committee and Council

Proposed process:

- Decision on principle format and events/classes in November 2005
- The current working party to develop and finalise the description of the format (Short deadline). This working party will also look at methods to deal with races being postponed, dealing with protests, minimum wind requirements for the semi and finals keeping in mind the fact that if Semi or Final series races are unable to be held then the fall back scoring will be based on the Fleet results. i.e. if the final races are unable to be raced because of extreme weather conditions (low or high) then of those left to compete they shall be given final positions based on their relative fleet results when all the boats were sailing together
- To implement the new format at all grade one regattas for 470, Skiff and Multihull in 2006

- To ask the windsurfers to carry out further tests in 2006 for final approval in November 2006, and implementation at all graded regattas in 2007 (Separate Submission)
- To adopt a working party which together with the organisers of grade 1 events develop a race village format (Separate Submission)
- To adopt a working party to work specifically with the technical aspects of developing camera and GPS standards for compulsory mounting in the Olympic Classes (Ongoing with ISAF)

Current Position:

Format used in the Athens Olympic Regatta.

Reason:

New formats in selected Olympic events/classes will:

- Secure greater excitement until the last race in the event – the boat crossing the finishing line first in the last race will be the gold medal winner
- Make sailing more action packed as well as simple to understand for non-sailors, among those TV viewers and spectators
- Make sailing more attractive to the media, especially TV-coverage
- Promote sailing better and thereby the attraction of our sport to non sailors worldwide
- Secure funding for our sports future development through improved media coverage with more focus on the highlights in the events

The documented facts on TV-coverage shows that Sailing has to develop the formats; At the same time ISAF, the MNA's, the Classes and the sailors must focus on developing a more close relationship and cooperation with the media on a daily basis as well as during the regattas in order to promote the sport and the sailing heroes. ISAF should provide the MNA's with guidance in order to develop this area and support the MNA's.

The proposal is in line with the objectives of Format Working Party as supported by the Events Committee and Council, as well as the reflections in the minutes of the ISAF Council meeting in May 2005 in Stockholm concerning the "Future Olympic Programme", which summarised the IOC requirements for an Olympic Sport.