

Recommendation Not Based on Submission

Mixed Two Person Keelboat Offshore Event for the 2024 Olympic Sailing Competition

The Oceanic and Offshore Committee recommends that World Sailing recognize the following clarification regarding the Mixed Two Person Offshore Event and communicates this new information to the IOC.

Off the coast of France during the Mediterranean summer, near-coastal areas provide a better test of sailing skill than do areas farther offshore. Along the coast there are often daily transitions of wind from night-time drainage breeze to late morning thermals, including frequent incursions of the synoptic wind. Competition in this challenging environment is ideal for a Mixed Two Person Offshore Event.

We have concluded that the entire field of play is best kept within a square area, 20 miles on each side (i.e., 400 square miles), that is adjacent to the coastline. The course should comprise multiple laps around marks within that box with the ability to change future legs on which no competitor is yet sailing to meet the desired finish time. This will result in the best competition given the characteristics of the wind in the Mediterranean in the summer as described above. The technology to enforce the defined race area with electronic course boundaries already exists with zero risk. Such boundary systems have been used for decades in ocean races like the Volvo Ocean Race, Vendee Globe, TransAtlantics, and even in inshore races like the America's Cup. This adds essentially no cost or complexity and makes it easy for competitors to stay within the pre-determined boundaries.

A fortunate by-product of this new field-of-play is that it will be entirely within the coverage area of French cellular data networks, particularly with LTE antennas mounted at the masthead of the race boats, which avoids blockage problems of humans and sails. This square area, 20 miles on a side, comprising 400 square miles, is substantially less than the area over which the IOC has based its current estimates of size and complexity for security and media coverage.

We expect other summertime events to similarly be held in coastal areas for better competition, taking advantage of the challenging daily wind transitions. The fact that the field of play ends up within cellular data network coverage will reduce the cost of tracking, weather telemetry, and safety monitoring for all race/regatta organisers including for worlds, qualifying regattas, and future Olympic events.

We recommend that World Sailing communicate this new information to the IOC with respect to World Sailing's first choice for the tenth event and ask the IOC to review their conclusions on the cost and complexity of the Mixed Two Person Keelboat Offshore Event for the 2024 Olympic Sailing Competition based on this new information.

Respectfully submitted by:

Oceanic and Offshore Chairman Matt Allen
Oceanic and Offshore Vice Chairman Corinne Migraine

MNA's:

- Japan
- France
- USA
- Australia
- Thailand
- Philippines
- Fiji

International Rating Systems:

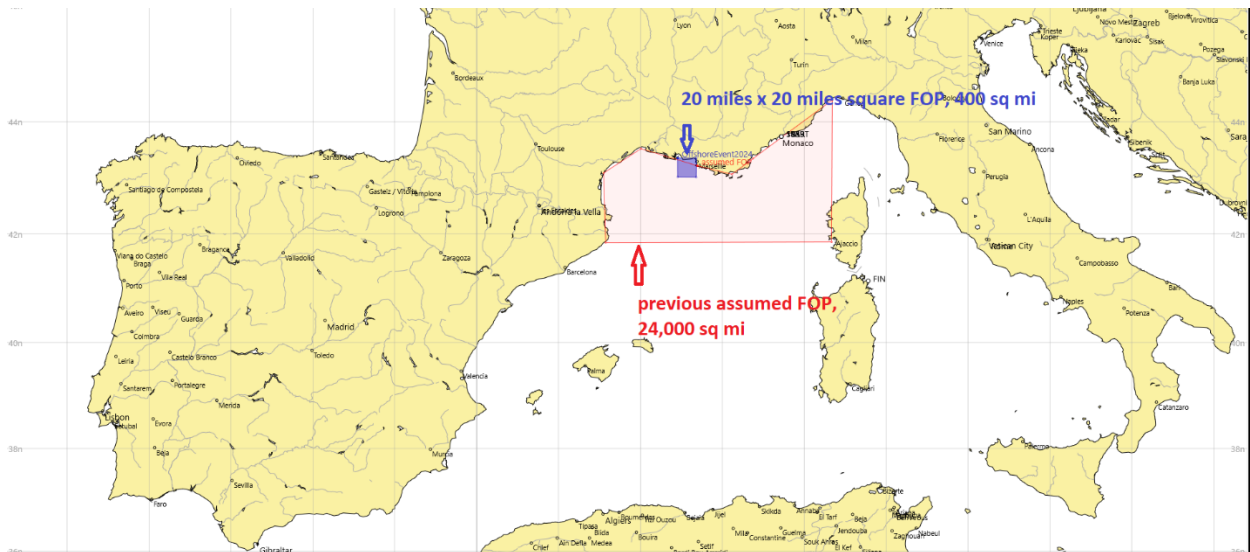
- IRC
- ORC

Classes:

- TP52 class
- International Maxi Association
- International Farr 40 Class
- IMOCA
- International Dragon Association
- International Fareast 28R Class
- International Yngling Association
- Melges 24 Class

Sailing Clubs:

- Royal Ocean Racing Club (RORC)
- Cruising Yacht Club of Australia (CYCA)



The image above shows a square, 20 nautical miles on each side, on a chart of the Mediterranean, for reference.

Addendum with background justification for the Mixed Two Person Keelboat Offshore Event for 2024

The information below is well-known to World Sailing and we hope to the IOC but is repeated here for reference:

- **Relevance to the youth.** Like most equipment for sailing, the double handed keelboat discipline is one of the least crew type-forming on age, weight, build and gender. Of all equipment types in sailing, it can be argued that this discipline allows the widest spread of weight and build, but of course favors youth, energy, and fitness in addition to intelligence, skill, and experience.
- **Universality.** Any equipment sport struggles with universality. In addition to equipment, sailing also requires wind, water, and temperatures above zero Celsius. Nevertheless, it is a hugely popular participation sport worldwide. Cost of equipment is a worry in any type of sailing, but there is no requirement that equipment be owned by the sailor and typically the more expensive the boat the less this is the case. Hundreds of high-level sailors succeed without ever owning a boat themselves. The set-up of the Offshore Doubles class is very much in line with the original Olympic idea of prioritizing participation over winning. Once engaged, winning becomes a goal of its own. Offshore Doubles is the fastest growing discipline within sailing. Acknowledging this discipline in the 2024 Olympics in France, the epicenter of shorthanded offshore racing in the world, is a tip-of-the-hat to the host nation for the 2024 Olympics.
- **Participation of the best athletes.** This event, once confirmed, will attract the biggest names as well as the best in sailing. These are not necessarily the same: surprise combinations and new heroes will emerge. A wider skill set than in other double handed disciplines is required since helming as well as most, if not all, other functions will be shared. Further, the format proposed is a true marathon of sailing: it will test pacing efforts and sleep deprivation and require sophisticated tactics.
- **Keelboats meeting the criteria are widespread around the world, which will provide wide access to appropriate boats and fleets for use in training and qualifying.** The fleet used at the Olympics will be provided by a manufacturer at no charge. A task to be jointly accomplished with the manufacturers will be to equalize all supplied equipment to a very high standard. Additionally, when later handing over the equipment to the sailors, there must be a high level of rules describing permitted equipment use as well as dealing with equipment imperfections, etc.
- **This recommendation for the field of play to be within a square within 20 miles of shore allows future consideration to change the equipment criteria to include boats meeting OSR Category 3.** This would further reduce the cost to athletes and countries. The change to include OSR Cat 3 is not part of this recommendation but we note it here for future consideration by the Equipment Committee considering the coastal field of play.

- The complexity of running the race is one that is dealt with by yacht clubs and officials all over the world and as such brings no extra complications for race officials, umpires, measurers, safety officers, etc. The equipment needed to run the race does not vary from what is required for other sailing events. Having only a single start allows the start to use official boats and personnel that are available for other dinghy events. Only in the case of official boats following the entire event on the water will the equipment need to be suitable to follow the competitors for longer periods and overnight. For this, it is reasonable to expect that leading offshore classes, their members and/or yacht clubs/organizers of offshore events will respond favorably to requests for offshore specific equipment for officials.
- The Mixed Two Person Keelboat Offshore Event will provide terrific media opportunity with three days of continuous tracking and video/audio from each boat. In addition, it will showcase the Olympic movement as forward looking with respect to promoting female participation and mixed gender sports developing within sailing. The long duration of the event will allow eSports participation as it did with the Vendee Globe which holds the world record in ANY sport for 1.1 million unique participants in a single event. The Mixed Two Person Keelboat Offshore Event would make a significant contribution to the Olympic Virtual Series just announced by the IOC given the fact that offshore sailing is the most successful sport of all in virtual sport.
- The Mixed Two Person Keelboat Offshore Event represents the sailing that most sailors do around the world.
- The Olympic movement and World Sailing will be applauded for introducing this event at the 2024 Olympics in France, not only because France is the epicenter of offshore sailing, but also for the shared history of France, the Olympics, sailing and mixed gender participation. The 1900 Paris Olympics was the first time Olympic sailing took place with keelboats racing both on the Seine at Meulan and on the sea at Le Havre. The first woman to compete and win a medal in the Olympics was in sailing at that event. Countess Hélène de Pourtalès of Switzerland (American born in New York as Helen Barbey) raced with her husband and his nephew on their boat Lérina, competing in the 9 boat 1 - 2 ton start. From today's perspective it was the first mixed gender performance as well.