



Int. Class Association

GC32 Int. Class Association

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Andy Hunt, CEO,
World Sailing,
20 Eastbourne Terrace,
Paddington,
London W2 6LG
GREAT BRITAIN

Zug, 28 September 2017

World Sailing Class application by the GC32 Int. Class Association

Dear Andy,

The GC32 Int. Class Association wishes to apply to become a World Sailing Class Association in accordance with World Sailing Regulation 10.

Introduction

First launched in 2013, the GC32 is a one design foiling catamaran designed by Dr Martin Fischer, built by Premier Composites in Dubai and marketed by Great Cup BV in Holland.

Uniquely, the concept of the GC32 is to bridge the gap between the most cutting edge, but highly complex foiling catamarans, as featured in the last two America's Cups, and conventional non-foiling racing yachts. It achieves this by combining ultra-high speed performance with affordability and practicality. With this objective the GC32 features:

- a softsail rig, instead of a wing
- ropes/winches for sail and foil control and no hydraulics or grinders
- easily demountable and transportable on a road trailer
- launching without a crane

While the GC32 is a one design, since foiling catamaran technology remains so new, the Class' intention is for the boat to evolve gradually, thereby maximising its life span. For example the platform is able to accept new foil designs with minimal modification. Any upgrades introduced, requiring modification to the GC32 rule, will be implemented by the GC32 Int. Class Association, in accordance with its constitution.



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Circuits

Since the first GC32 was launched in 2013, it has been adopted by two international race circuits:

- GC32 Racing Tour
- Extreme Sailing Series

The **GC32 Racing Tour** typically holds five events per year in southern Europe. It is aimed at owner-drivers and professional teams. In terms of its venue selection and race format, it is designed firstly for its competitors.

The **Extreme Sailing Series**, which already holds World Sailing 'Special Event' status, is a global circuit that in 2017 visits eight venues. It adopted the GC32 to replace the Extreme 40 in 2016. It is run on a commercial model and promotes 'stadium sailing', optimised for shore-based spectators and corporate guests.

In February 2017 the two circuits united for the first time at the GC32 Championship held in Muscat, Oman. The desire of the GC32 Int. Class wishes to become a World Sailing Class Association so it can call future editions of this event, the 'GC32 World Championship'.

Usage

Across its two circuits, the GC32 foiling catamaran has been successful in attracting owner-driver, professional and youth teams. Private owners include two time America's Cup winner Ernesto Bertarelli and double Melges 32 World Champion Jason Carroll. Professional teams include those backed by Red Bull and SAP. Most competitors in the 2017 Red Bull Youth America's Cup used the GC32 for training.

Thanks to it having been around for four years and used by two leading circuits, the GC32 is by far the most popular foiling class above 20ft LOA. Becoming a World Sailing Class Association would recognise this unique position.

To date 26 GC32s have been built with owners from 12 nations (including Japan, Argentina and Australia) on five continents, actively racing. At present five boats have owners in France and there are four in both Britain and Switzerland. This ownership distribution does not yet comply with World Sailing Regulation 10.2.1 (d), but it comes close. The GC32 Int. Class anticipates it becoming compliant in the near future.

In the meantime the GC32 Int. Class Association is seeking to become a World Sailing Class Association under World Sailing Regulation 10.2.1 (e); seen by the Equipment Committee as a class that 'serves a unique aspect of sailing'.



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Reasons to permit this:

With the America's Cup moving to monohulls, the GC32 is now the sailing world's most dominant foiling catamaran class.

Thanks to Sir Russell Coutts and Larry Ellison, the foiling catamaran racing of the 34th and 35th America's Cups served to advance yacht design by decades: Never before had we seen yachts racing upwind at 30+ knots and at almost 50 downwind.

While unfamiliarity with the new flying machines, and the techniques required to race them, received criticism from America's Cup traditionalists, the AC50 racing was very successful in captivating younger sailors and also non-sailors. This was galvanised by the video images of the boats flying, defying gravity, around most of the course.

Today, for more performance-orientated youth sailors, there is only one way to go sailing - on foils. This is one reason why we see giant fleets in the foiling Moth and A-Class Catamaran classes (218 and 125 competitors respectively in 2017), despite being costly, technically complex boats.

While the America's Cup is currently moving in a different direction, foiling catamaran racing has had enough exposure over these last years and has now been around long enough to have established itself as another avenue in sailing in its own right.

While the AC50s and AC45s are no longer in use, the fastest round the cans yachts currently being raced are the GC32s. It is significantly different from the M32 catamaran used on the World Match Racing Tour, which doesn't foil. Post Bermuda, the GC32 is now the premier foiling catamaran, at 'boat' rather than 'dinghy' size, and by far the most popular both in terms of its fleet size and international reach. Being recognised by World Sailing would galvanise this position.

Given that there is a growing genre of sailor, be they enthusiastic amateurs or pros, who will always seek out the fastest, the GC32 has a solid future, regardless of the America's Cup returning to monohulls. The GC32 is part of the 'foiling family' and one of the boats that will help to attract sailors of that post-university age, when they frequently drop out of our sport, a reason to stay in. Also having the 'wow factor' of being a foiler, means the GC32 potentially has a wider fan base than just the sailing community. At worst this means sailing gets some additional followers; at best it attracts newcomers who wish to take up our sport.

The GC32 also represents a solid forward step for aspiring professional sailors. There have been many examples of sailors from the Extreme Sailing Series (and



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more recently the GC32 Racing Tour), using these circuits to progress their professional careers. Notably Chris Draper, winner of the Extreme Sailing Series in 2009, became helmsman on Luna Rossa in the 2013 America's Cup, while Paul Campbell-James, who won the Extreme Sailing Series in 2010 and 2011, went on to become wing trimmer for Land Rover BAR this year.

Similarly most of the Red Bull Youth America's Cup teams, including the winner, Land Rover BAR, used competition aboard the GC32 in either the GC32 Racing Tour or the Extreme Sailing Series as training.

Spreading the word

Both the Extreme Sailing Series and GC32 Racing Tour have dedicated media teams that deliver huge amounts of content, both for conventional outlets and social media, across all platforms – words, photos and video. Both work with leading international television productions companies – Red Handed TV and Icarus Sports respectively, with video content ending up on both broadcast channels and online.

Both circuits offer 'on board sailing experiences', through which press or corporate or team guests can sail on board a GC32 and experience the thrill of sailing not just on one of the world's fastest sailing boats, but one that flies - a very exclusive treat.

All of this helps to promote sailing, to grow the fan base and attract new participants.

Helping to develop the sport

Foil-born racing represents the current cutting edge of our sport. As boats get ever faster and the way they are sailed evolves, so its regulation must adapt to keep up. So the last two foiling catamaran America's Cups have resulted in World Sailing creating the RRS Fast Boats Edition. The GC32 Int. Class Association played a major part in creating these rules and continues to push their on-going development.

Safety is also a primary concern with fast foil-born boats that can potentially capsize. The GC32 Int Class Association has adopted many of the safety measures teams developed for the 35th America's Cup, but also created many of its own. For example, the GC32 Racing Tour uses its own hexagonal-shaped race course which is vigorously policed to prevent unwary third parties accidentally straying into it.

Both the GC32 Racing Tour and Extreme Sailing Series employ their own professional safety officers and have divers and medics out on the water during racing, ready to deal with any emergencies that may occur. Both circuits have stringent policies and best practice plans to cover emergencies. For added security, some teams on these circuits have their own equivalent safety personnel.



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World Sailing compliance

How the GC32 Int. Class Association complies with the specific qualification criteria to become a World Sailing Class Association (World Sailing Regulation 10.2 and 10.3) are as follows:

10.2.1 a)

The GC32 Int. Class Association is the active class association for owners of GC32 foiling catamarans. The class was founded on September 2014 in Marseille and has its office in Zug, Switzerland (www.gc32.org and www.gc32racing.com). It has regular meetings as stated in its constitution.

10.2.1 b)

The constitution of the GC32 Int. Class Association is available in German and English language (attached). The GC32 Int. Class Association is constituted under Swiss Association law. Flavio Marazzi (SUI) is its President, Pierre Casiraghi (MON) and Harry Spedding (GBR) are board members. The constitution includes all five points 10.2.1 b) i)-v)

10.2.1 c)

The GC32 Int. Class Association has a set of closed Class Rules in the World Sailing standard Class Rules format, and has adopted the Equipment Rules of Sailing (Class Rules attached).

10.2.1 d)

The GC32 Int. Class Association is close to complying with the requirements for the 9-12m length band. It does not have six boats yet racing in each of three MNAs, but does have five in France, four in Britain and four in Switzerland. However the total GC32 fleet of 26 boats are owned by nations from 12 countries on five continents (three more than required, emphasising how international the class already is).

10.2.1e)

The GC32 is

- the most popular and most international foiling class above 20ft
- ultra-high performance, yet practical and relatively affordable
- a boat that makes advanced America's Cup technology accessible to a wider range of professional sailors, owner-drivers and youth teams worldwide on two highly respected race circuits

We hope this demonstrates to the Equipment Committee that the GC32 is 'a class which serves a unique aspect of sailing.'



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10.2.1.f)

The GC32 is in receipt of an invoice for the application fee of £1000. This amount has been paid.

10.2.1 g) TBC

10.3

The GC32 Int. Class Association looks forward to reaching an agreement with World Sailing Ltd. to meet the requirements of 10.3.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions and concerns.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ch. Scherrer'.

Christian Scherrer
GC32 Int. Class Manager