

International iQFOiL Class
Association Executive Committee
Meeting

MINUTES

Date and time: 27th July 2023 – 8h30 CET

Place: Online via the Zoom conferencing system

In attendance:

Executive Committee

Ronnie Meir (ISR) - President, Hélène Noesmoen (FRA), Barrie Edgington (GBR), Lorand Utassy (HUN), Adrien Gaillard (MEX), Ewa Jodłowska (POL), Nicolas GOYARD (FRA)

Class' Manager Gonzalo Costa Hoevel

Class' Executive Secretary Valérie Boutet-Massonneau

Excused:

Peina CHEN (CHN), Piotr Myszka (POL)

ALLOCATION OF EQUIPMENT FOR THE OLYMPIC GAMES

Following the last EGM, Gonzalo Costa Hoevel, the manager of the Class, met with World Sailing's Technical Team and the relevant people within the Paris 2024 Organisation several times at the Test Event in order to review the way in which the equipment that will be used during the Olympic events will be distributed.

For World Sailing and Paris 2024 Organising Committee, the system voted for at the last EGM of the Class raises a number of concerns:

- Limited EU Days for Non-EU Countries: One significant issue is that non-EU countries have a restricted number of days they can be in the EU. Under the current system, teams may need to collect their equipment in two separate waves. This arrangement could potentially put these teams in a critical position, as they might not have enough days available to be in the EU during the first half of the year. Given that important events like Worlds in January and Palma/Hyeres are likely to be crucial for teams' preparation, the limited time in the EU might hinder their training and competition schedules.
- Impact on Visa Limitations: The proposed test period for the event in France may inadvertently lead to visa limitations for athletes from non-EU countries. If the teams are constrained in the number of days they can spend in the EU, their athletes may face difficulties staying in France throughout the test period. This could have adverse effects on their ability to participate fully and compete at their best during the crucial preparatory phase.
- It is also stressed that countries outside the European area will not necessarily have the means to come to Europe twice to honour the two proposed delivery dates and will be faced with high costs if they wish to repatriate this equipment to their respective countries.
- Allowing athletes to take the iQFOiL equipment with them to their respective countries two to three months before the Games creates a potential risk of cheating. During this extended period, athletes might be tempted to modify the equipment without the knowledge of official bodies, gaining an unfair advantage during the actual competition.
- As well if the equipment gets stolen when with the sailors, what would happen? Teams could be declaring that bad tested equipment got stolen and request for some more. Hard to police.

To maintain the integrity of the Games, World Sailing and Paris 2024 Organising Committee proposes that the

equipment should be allocated 5 weeks prior to the Event (i.e week 26), strictly monitored and not be allowed to leave the official storage at the Olympic Venue in Marseille until the start of the event.

It was discussed that further meetings will happen at The Hague to go more in depth on all rules that will apply under their proposal.

The Executive Committee takes note of this proposal and is aware that there is little room for negotiation. Some members agree on the philosophy of this approach and acknowledge the troubles none EU countries will encounter, some point out that 5 weeks is way too short a timeframe given the weather conditions they are likely to encounter in Marseille at this time of year: days or weeks with no wind at all, strong Mistral wind blowing etc...

Some key points to be discussed during the meetings in The Hague:

- Will training partners be allowed on site?
- Will athletes be able to bring their reference gear to the venue to cross-check their impressions with the new equipment?
- When Olympic venue will open? seems that right after Hyeres.
- When Olympic venue closes prior to the Games? one week?
- Etc...

SWITCHING FROM M6 TO M8 BOLT

Starboard is considering equipping the foils to be delivered for the Olympics with M8 bolts for the connection to the board. A bigger slot on the base of the foil will be needed.

Boards boxes would have to be compatible for that as well, they will need a slightly wider slot for the M8 bolt to go through.

The M8 bolts connecting the foil to the board would be giving a stronger and more reliable connection than the current M6 ones.

Starboard proposed swell and immediate action on the new batch of foils. If that immediate action takes place then the Class would have to authorise riders to make these modifications themselves to the existing foils and boards which might generate some possible failures and chaos.

The majority of the Executive Committee did not wish to open up this possibility, as it would mean a difference in treatment between the teams with the greatest resources and the others.

What's more, changing to an M8 diameter implies other changes to the equipment to accommodate this modification and potentially other breakages: new tests have to be carried out asap to understand better if it is a good change or not.

The ExCom suggests to have some samples by SB foils with M8 and test the outcome first. Having a thinner wall on the base of the foil to allow the M8 screw might weaken the strength of the base and trigger a bigger problem/issue.

An alternative solution exists which seems to be proving its worth with sailors who have used it and does not involve heavy work:

Use M6 titanium screws/bolts that are not machined along the entire length of the rod.

And use as well M6 titanium screws for the fuse and wing connections.

These screws are available at www.titaniumshop.nl and can therefore be used from the World Championship in The Hague.

HOW TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT BFD'S ON MEDAL RACES

After what happened in the Test Event, where the 3 Men finalists went over early, it is be important to discuss the rules that will apply in the case of BFDs in the finals so that the conclusion of the Event meets the expectations of the sailors and the media.

The following solutions were considered at the Executive Committee meeting:

1. The example of Sailing GP

The over early sailor(s) must slow down and come up behind the others.

The issue with this is how fast can the RC review the BFD info and how fast can we communicate to the sailors. The main concern is a sailor that was BFD disturbing another sailor that was not BFD.

The use of advanced technology to warn over-early sailors in real-time is an appealing solution: The Olympic Games have a contract with Omega: does this company have the technology to do this? Could Vakaros be a solution? And if so, how can it be tested and accepted by Paris 2024 Organisation and World Sailing?

Another solution might be to have three coloured flags on sticks: yellow, blue and red and to hoist them at mark 1 at the latest. But ensuring almost instantaneous communication from the Race Committee is vital for the success of this method.

2. A combination of Sail GP + iQ BFDs rule

If one or more sailors are over early, the Race Committee will issue a general recall as it currently happens. At the next start, the over-early sailor(s) will start 5-second later. If the sailor/s start earlier than the 5 seconds he/they will be instantly out and will be informed at the first mark.

The downside is that we can't be sure of encountering this situation again before a high-stakes event. We need to be able to test this rule and see to what extent juries are able to enforce it correctly. It is planned to organise a working meeting on this subject with World Sailing as soon as possible, at the latest during the World Championship in The Hague.

We can try that system at our events.

3. Rabbit Start for Medal Races

Authorise the rabbit start, which until now had been reserved for the marathon, in the final of the medal races.

This solution removes any possibility of BFD, which is ideal.

However, it also removes any strategy at the start between the sailors who want to take the risk of pushing at the start and pushing their opponent up, and those who adopt a more cautious tactic to ensure the rest of the race.

As the starting line is also very short, you have to be sure that the rabbit boat doesn't make a wave so as not to disturb the flow in the foils.

Finally, we need to find the person who is capable of driving the rabbit boat properly and it is not certain that World Sailing will accept the intervention of the Class in this type of race management.

Addressing the over-early issue requires a thorough evaluation of the alternatives and a collaborative effort between the Paris 2024 Organizing Committee, World Sailing, and the iQFOiL Class. Real-world testing and discussions among stakeholders will be vital in making informed decisions that prioritize fairness, competitive integrity, and the success of the iQFOiL events at the 2024 Olympic Games. Finding the right balance between effective penalty systems, technological advancements, and strategic racing approaches will be key to ensuring an exciting and fair Olympic Sailing competition in 2024.

The Class has already reach out to WS on this matter.

The Executive Committee Meeting ended at 11h03