

International iQFOiL Class Association Executive Committee Meeting

MINUTES

Date and time: 13th of June 2024 – 09h00 CET

Place: Online via the Zoom conferencing system

In attendance:

List of Attendees

Ronnie Meir (ISR) - President, Lorand Utassy (HUN), Ewa Jodlowska (POL), Piotr Myska (POL).

Class' Manager Gonzalo Costa Hoevel

Class' Executive Secretary Valérie Boutet-Massonneau

List of Absentees

Peina Chen (CHN), Mariana AGUILAR (MEX), Nicolas Goyard (FRA), Adrien Gaillard (MEX), Barrie Edgington (GBR)

1. ORGANISATION OF THE IQFOIL EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP 2024

Discussion Points:

- Event Details:

The next iQFOiL European Championship is scheduled to take place in Cagliari from 4 to 11 October 2024.

- Equipment Consideration:

The question was raised whether to include the equipment that will be used in the next Olympiad, pending approval by the World Sailing Equipment Working Party.

- Alternative Option:

An option to open a series on the new equipment alongside the official equipment was considered, allowing athletes to transition early if they wish.

Decision:

The Executive Committee has decided to leave the rules governing the 2024 European Championships unchanged for the following reasons:

1. Equipment Availability:

Although 7.3m² sails will be in production for U19s, there is no guarantee of sufficient delivery to all member countries by the Championship date.

2. Event Integrity:

Introducing additional classes could dilute the Championship's significance. The Executive Committee believes the Championship will be well-attended by European nations given its status and position in the calendar for non-games sailors.

3. Funding Implications:

Multiple sail sizes could reduce the event's status and impact funding levels for federations.

2. REPORT ON THE FORMAT OF THE MEDAL RACES SERIES

Discussion Points:

- Request from World Sailing:

The World Sailing Format Party has requested each Olympic Class to submit a report on the Medal Races Series format by 1 July 2024.

- Timing Concerns:

The deadline is tight, not allowing for a post-Olympic debrief. This urgency is due to the 2024 election year at World Sailing and the focus of the Annual Meeting on elections. The World Sailing Format Party therefore need to work on this important subject well in advance so that we can present a final proposal that has been discussed and thought through.

The Executive Committee acknowledges that broader member consultation would have been ideal for this matter. However, with fewer than 50 days until the Olympic Games, such an initiative might cause anxiety among athletes and fail to engage the MNAs adequately. Consequently, this consultation is planned for the second phase of discussions.

- Current Format Alignment:

the current iQFOiL format is not the one that World Sailing is currently questioning, as it is the one that best aligns with World Sailing's aspirations, which objectives have been to simplify the understanding of the sport and enhance the media friendliness of sailing.

- Athlete Concerns:

Despite agreeing to adapt to the 3-person Grand Final, athletes feel that the format conflicts with the core values of the sport: They believe it does not adequately honor the sustained effort and skill demonstrated throughout the competition.

Decision:

The Executive Committee decided to maintain its current format of Medal Series Races, guaranteeing a 3-person Grand Final. This format is in line with World Sailing's aspirations and has been conditionally accepted by athletes.

3. APPOINTMENT OF iQFOiL CLASS COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Presentation:

- Presenters:

Gonzalo and Valérie presented the results of the interviews for the position.

- Successful Candidate:

Rachele Vitello (ITA)

Candidate Strengths:

- Experience:

Multilingual international PR specialist, TV/broadcast producer, and published journalist with 20 years of experience, specializing in sailing.

- Global Campaigns:

Extensive experience in global sports campaigns and involvement with the Star Class.

- Vision:

Strong ideas for the iQFOiL Class and potential to bridge the gap with traditional sailing within World Sailing.

- Networking:

Her network could attract potential sponsors.

- Professional Traits:

Autonomous, charismatic, and commands respect in media circles.

Decision:

Rachele Vitello has been appointed as the iQFOiL Class Communications Manager.

LA 2028 Olympic Games Format WP report

v. April 26th 2024.

1. Introduction

The World Sailing Olympic Vision for the 2032 Olympic Games serves as a guiding force in influencing the formats for the 2028 Olympic Games. The Format Working Party understands the importance of implementing evolutionary changes for the LA Olympic Games as a transitional period, nestled between the upcoming 2024 Games and the anticipated 2032 Games.

2. Technology friendly formats

The formats chosen for the Olympic Games should allow for effective use of technology, such as instant replays, graphics, and statistics, which can enhance the viewer experience. Clear visual aids can help explain critical moments and decisions. This can be especially beneficial in sailing, where technology can bring the action directly to the sailors, given the field of play may be some distance away.

The formats should also enable and take full advantage of possibilities of using digital officiating.

3. Consistency in formats

The WP recommends using two formats across the Olympic Slate:

1) High Engagement

This format should have straightforward and easily understandable rules. Viewers should be able to grasp the basic objectives and how points or victories are scored.

The format concept should draw from common sports to assist non-sailors in understanding the sport of sailing. The format should avoid excessive complexity in rules or scoring systems as simplicity helps viewers engage more readily with the sport.

2) Traditional

This format is to mimic what is done in local clubs in order to allow the grass roots of the sport to be able to directly identify what they see and do with what is happening at the Olympic Games.

For both High Engagement and Traditional formats leaders and winners should be easy to identify.

4. Opening series

The Format Working Party proposes that the Opening Series is reduced to 4 days for all events. Reducing the number of days can offer numerous benefits, addressing various stakeholders' concerns while enhancing the overall experience.

1. **Saves Venue Requirements and Workforce:** Shortening the duration of the event reduces the need for extensive venue infrastructure and workforce. Fewer days mean less time and resources spent on setting up and maintaining facilities, thereby lowering operational costs and logistical complexities.
2. **Saves Resources:** A shorter event duration translates to reduced resource consumption across the board. From fuel for support boats to materials for signage and equipment, every aspect of resource usage is minimized. This conservation effort not only contributes to cost savings but also aligns with broader sustainability goals by minimizing the event's ecological footprint.
3. **Environmental Impact and Sustainability:** By condensing the event schedule, organizers can significantly mitigate the environmental impact associated with hosting a sailing competition. Reduced energy consumption, waste generation, and carbon emissions are some of the direct benefits of shorter event durations.
4. **Potentially more fair and exciting finals:** Shortening the event duration may level the playing field by minimizing the differences in the number of points before the final.

5. Evolution of the finals

The WP has considered different formats for the finals and initially would like to suggest the following option for testing:

Opening series

– no major change in how racing is conducted.

Top 3 advance to the final (instead of top 10)

Semi-final / Repechage. Places 4 – 8 (TBD) from the opening series race for an additional spot in the final

Final – 4 boats compete for the podium places.

Other options will be evaluated following consultation with Olympic Classes.

6. Shared equipment / supplied equipment

The Working Party recognises that implementing supplied equipment for all Events will require extensive work to ensure sailors and MNAs are prepared for any changes in this respect. The WP is of the opinion that to ensure alignment with the Olympic Vision for 2032, work should start now.

The Working Party recognizes there is a disconnect between the Olympic Vision and the Olympic Contracts and recommends that all contracts are revised to enable and encourage supplied equipment (mandatory to use) and charter equipment (option to use).

7. Collaborating with Olympic Classes

The Working Party is encouraged to see Olympic Classes investigating possible formats for the 2028 Olympic Games and encourage them to make proposals to the WP. These proposals must follow the Olympic Vision principals and resulting format criteria.

The WP is asking all interested Olympic Classes to **send their proposals by July 1st 2024.**

The WP will evaluate formats presented by Olympic Classes considering how they align with the Olympic Vision and principles outlined in this document.

The WP will publish a report and proposals for closed consultation in September 2024.

Following consultation a recommendation for WS Events Committee will be presented.



World Sailing Format Working Party
401, 3 Shortlands Drive
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Thursday, June 13th 2024

REPORT ON THE FORMAT OF THE MEDAL RACES SERIES IN iQFOiL

INTRODUCTION

Over the past four years of the Paris 2024 Olympiad, the iQFOiL Class has diligently worked on refining the finals formats to align with World Sailing's aspirations. The objectives have been to simplify the understanding of the sport and enhance the media friendliness of sailing, all while respecting the athletes' efforts and the substantial commitment demonstrated during the Opening Series Races. This report outlines the evolution and rationale behind the current Medal Race Series format and advocates for its continuation into the Los Angeles 2028 Olympics.

HISTORY OF THE iQFOiL MEDAL RACES SERIES

At the beginning of the Paris 2024 Olympiad, the iQFOiL Class implemented a straightforward format: the top 12 athletes from the Opening Series competed in a 12-person Quarter Final, with the bottom 4 finishers eliminated. The competition then proceeded to an 8-person Semi-Final, from which the top 4 advanced to a 4-person Final. This format did not offer protection to any of the top 3 athletes from the Opening Series, allowing any of the top 12 competitors to potentially win the championship.

Despite its simplicity and accessibility for spectators, this format proved highly challenging for athletes. It induced significant anxiety and disregarded performances from the prior five days of racing. Furthermore, it contradicted the fundamental sailing philosophy, which values consistent adaptation to weather and external conditions over multiple days.

In response to these issues, the iQFOiL Class transitioned to a three-phase Medal Race system:

- Quarter-Final: Featured 6 athletes ranked between 5th and 10th place.

- Semi-Final: Included 4 athletes, with the 3rd and 4th overall rankings protected.
- Final: Consisted of the top 2 overall rankings and the two winners from the Semi-Final.

However, athletes felt this four-stage final still didn't adequately respect the overall leader's efforts, risking the leader finishing without a medal. Consequently, the format evolved to the current three-way Grand Final system:

- Quarter-Final: 7 athletes ranked between 4th and 10th.
- Semi-Final: 4 athletes, with the 2nd and 3rd overall rankings protected.
- Final: 3 athletes, with the overall leader protected, plus the two winners from the Semi-Final.

WHY THE iQFOiL Class ADVOCATES FOR THE CURRENT MEDAL RACES SERIES FORMAT FOR LOS ANGELES 2028

Winner Takes All Format

The current iQFOiL final format is unique in the Olympic sailing community due to its "winner takes all" approach. In this format, the gold medal is awarded solely to the sailor who secures victory in the final race. This distinctive format places immense pressure on our athletes, demanding their very best performance in the highest-stakes situation. A majority of the Athletes did not want this format when it was suggested to the iQFOiL Class some years ago, but still they managed to accept it and adapted to it in good faith for a more media friendly approach on the agreement if only 3 would be in the final, to protect the leader of the series.

Recognition for Consistency

This format honors athletes who have shown consistent excellence throughout the competition. It maintains the significance of the Opening Series by ensuring sustained performance is rewarded. Altering the format could diminish the motivation to excel in earlier rounds, reducing the importance of the preceding races.

Media Appeal and Excitement

The current format's unpredictability and dramatic final race capture the audience's imagination, generating significant media interest and excitement. Preserving this format maintains the unique appeal that has attracted both fans and media attention.

This format also ensures that the finals can be scheduled within a time frame that is optimal for both television broadcasting and favorable weather conditions. By structuring the finals in a concise and streamlined manner, we can accommodate the needs of broadcasters who seek predictable and manageable time slots for live coverage. This scheduling flexibility enhances the sport's accessibility and appeal to a broader audience and promotes a more reliable and viewer-friendly experience, which is crucial for increasing the sport's visibility and popularity.

CONCLUSION

The current format of the iQFOiL Medal Race Series effectively addresses the critical aspects of simplicity, media friendliness, and respect for athletes' efforts. Its straightforward structure ensures viewers can easily understand the objectives and scoring, akin to other high-profile sports. This simplicity fosters greater viewer engagement and facilitates the effective use of technology, such as instant replays and graphics, enhancing the viewing experience. Additionally, it supports the full utilization of digital refereeing.

The iQFOiL Class strongly recommends maintaining the current Medal Race Series format for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympics to continue advancing the sport's accessibility and media appeal while honoring the dedication and performance of the athletes.



Gonzalo Costa Hoevel
iQFOiL Class Manager
The International iQFOiL Class Association



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