



WORLD COUNCIL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

6 OCTOBER 2007 – PARIS, FRANCE

MINUTES OF MEETING

Present

Henri Samuel – IMCA Chairman
Günter Tzeschlock – IMCA Secretary & GER
Martin Finell – IMCA Exec Member Europe
Tomi Hakola – FIN & EST, NOR & SWE
Peter Göckel – GER Observer & Technical Committee
Denis Infante – FRA
Franco Maria Rao – ITA
Luca Balbini – ITA Observer
Harry Melges – Melges Performance Sailboats & USA
John Clinton – Southern Spars
Fiona Brown – IMCA Admin & Press Officer
David Chivers – IMCA Technical Advisor

Apologies

Scott Gregory – IMCA Vice Chairman North America
Riccardo Simmoneschi – IMCA Vice Chairman Europe
Travis Weisleder – IMCA Exec Member North America
Heath Walters – AUS
Nils Hauff – NOR & SWE
Tomas Musil – CZE
Sergey Chernej - UKR

Chairman's Introduction

Henri Samuel welcomed the delegates to the meeting and thanked them for giving up their time to attend. He particularly thanks John Clinton and Harry Melges for travelling from New Zealand and the USA respectively.

Henri reported that although some elements of the class are very healthy, other areas are not so strong. In particular Britain and France have lost momentum and numbers have reduced considerably in both countries. He advised the meeting that the class needs to be careful to avoid this becoming the start of a trend. He felt that a key problem area is the lack of marketing and promotional activity by the builders at local and national level with insufficient national dealers to support the class.

Henri raised the issue of the pricing of the boat which has not increased for some years. As a result the class is now relatively inexpensive, but sadly it also means that the profit margin is lower than ever and therefore the amount of money available to spend on marketing and sales is very limited. Franco Maria Rao supported Henri on this point and felt that the lack of a presence from

Devoti at events and the lack of helpful support from the company is a major issue. He is often contacted by sailors who have been unable to get the help they need from Devoti and end up having to come to him for advice instead.

Henri commented that he felt much greater effort needs to be made to promote the club and family fun sailing aspects of the boat. The class is already strong at grand prix level but for longevity it must also appeal to club and local sailors. Harry Melges commented that in the US the local sailing has seen a significant revival in recent years and this has played a big part in keeping the class at the forefront and in ensuring that new and second hand boat sales are active.

Henri asked the National Class representatives present to update the meeting on their class's situations at the current time.

National Class Reports

Italy

Franco Maria Rao reported that the situation in Italy remains very strong with a lot of new boats being purchased and second hand boats staying in Italy. They anticipate a 120+ fleet at the 2008 Worlds in Sardinia. The only potential problem for this is that the TP52 class has organised a leg of their circuit in Sardinia at the same time which will mean some owners and crews have to make a choice about which event to take part in.

The Volvo Cup series continues to be a huge success with 50+ boats at each event. In total 77 boats took part in the 2005 Volvo Cup, there were 86 total in 2006 and the fleet has grown to 100 in 2007. The only problem they have with the Volvo Cup is finding venues that can handle the numbers as it is like organising a European Championship each time. The marinas in Italy are largely private making finding 50-80 berths very difficult. They have a very strong team coordinating their regattas, class admin and media which is key to the success of their activities.

This year they tried moving some of the Volvo races to the south of Italy. It meant a drop in attendance numbers for those events but has paid off as now there is an 8 boat fleet in Bari as a result. In 2008 they have included Trapani in Sicily with a view to introducing the class there too.

They have agreement with Volvo for five events in 2008, concentrated in the centre of Italy and timed to coordinate with the Worlds. The class currently has an excellent reputation in Italy. In 2007 there have been 75 Italian boats and they anticipate this rising to 80 for 2008. They are uncertain what will happen after the Worlds. The history of other boats is that the fleet tends to see a big drop in numbers and the class is working to ensure that this doesn't happen,

Henri Samuel asked for an update on the problems experienced previously in Italy where the Jury and the Race Committee was formed from the same people. Luca Balbini confirmed that this problem has now been resolved and all juries and race committees have been properly formed in 2007.

Germany

Günter Tzeschlock reported that the north/south divide still exists in the German fleet but that the class continues to grow steadily. There is a good development in the Baltic Sea Area due to the Europeans 2007 – the Class Organisation will support this by sailing the German Open 2008 in Flensburg. In Germany the class achieves good publicity on the internet but struggles for publicity in the yachting magazines as their editorial coverage is dependent on advertising which the class cannot afford. The German Class encompasses the sailors from Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands and Switzerland at the current time and the German ranking circuit now reflects this with a Swiss Open Championship being introduced for the first time this year. For Switzerland will be set up a

class association for 01.01.2008 similar to the Finnish/Estonian solution – there are already 10 active boats. In Germany Melges 24s competes regularly and very successfully in handicap racing which adds to its appeal as a club boat.

The German Class attended the Munich Boat Show in February 2007 for the second time – the exhibition was run by Peter Göckel throughout the week, over the weekend the stand was supported by the Class Association. The Class will not be there for 2008 but is planning to organise some test-sailing in clubs.

USA

On behalf of the US Class Harry Melges provided an informal report and advised that the US class remains healthy with new owners, increasingly strong local fleets and a high level of Corinthian participation. The best attended events remain Key West and those on the East Coast although interest on the West Coast and in the Midwest remains strong. The class organisation has improved in recent years and work continues to ensure that continuity is ensured. The class still needs to improve its Technical administration as this has been weak for some time and as a result the quality of rule observance is not as strong as it could be. David Chivers asked Harry to raise this matter with the US Class and ask them to put greater effort into identifying individuals who can drive and oversee technical issues effectively.

France

Denis Infante reported that during 2007 the French Class administration had suffered a crisis. Denis had stood down as Chairman in 2006 but unfortunately his replacement, Philip Ligot, and several other new officers appointed at that AGM, had subsequently left the class and as a result the administration and organisation had fallen apart during the 2007 season. Denis has now agreed to return as Chairman and identified his key targets as:

1. To establish/re-establish some key local fleets
2. To create a small but really strong set of events to attract travellers
3. To orient class PR to achieve better media coverage.
4. To appoint a class Press Officer who can achieve coverage in both national and yachting media

They have been discussing keeping the location and timing of the French Nationals location static for a period to set it in the minds of the sailors as a regular must do event. They will also select the venue to encourage maximum participation by British crews.

Denis feels that the organisation of the international calendar needs to be reviewed to encourage greater participation and avoid confusion. Peter Göckel agreed with Denis that although it is excellent to see new national championships being added it is creating problems for sailors trying to decide which events to do.

Finland

Tomi Hakola reported that there are now 21 members of the Finnish Class including 3 Estonian boats. 3 new teams joined the fleet in 2007 with other boats changing hands but staying in Finland. 19 boats took part in the 7 race Finnish/Estonian Ranking with an average of 10 boats at each event. Two events were held in Estonia, one in Tallin and one in Parnu. The second official Nordic Championship was held in Malmo with 18 boats competing of which 6 were from Finland.

For 2008 they hope to see 2-3 new teams each in Finland and Estonia. The class will take part in the 2008 Hensinki boat show - the 7th consecutive year they've attended. Tomi noted that despite

numerous requests to Devoti for help with marketing materials and other support for the boat show they have received no support at all and cannot even get sales brochures.

Norway & Sweden

Tomi was also representing the Norwegian & Swedish fleet and reported that they have nearly 40 boats in the class who mainly club race and prefer not to travel to international regattas.

The Nordic Ranking Series, which incorporates the Swedish, Finnish, Estonian and Norwegian Championships, is in its second year and this year 39 boats took part, 8 more than in the first year. More than 40 boats are expected to participate in 2008.

Overall the situation in the Baltic countries is positive with former X99, H Boat and offshore teams looking to move into the class. The class will take part in the 2008 Oslo boat show and would also appreciate support from Devoti in this but have not so far had any commitment.

Special Discussion on Commercial Marketing

Henri Samuel and Luca Balbini had both raised the issue of using the boat as a club owned boat for match racing and training and other national classes had reported problems in obtaining marketing support from Devoti sailing. This led to a discussion about the overall marketing policy and where efforts need to be focused to ensure continued growth.

Luca felt that the price and nature of the boat means it is not ideally suited for use as a club owned boat. Other nations noted that aside from France and Italy very few countries have clubs that own fleets of boats so this is not relevant in their countries. There was considerable discussion about the position of the Melges 24 in the market and the need to play to the class's strengths and have a clear understanding of who the potential customers are.

It was agreed that greater efforts should be focused on promoting the boat to private club sailors. Grand prix level sailors are already well aware of the boat and recognise it as one of the most important classes to sail in if you want truly world class competition, however, the boat is also great fun and easy to sail with family and friends and performs well in handicap racing and we must promote these aspects to encourage a wider base to our ownership pyramid. Both the USA and Germany have had good success in growing club level membership and they felt that including good social events in the programme and coaching sessions at events were important factors.

It was agreed that whilst the class has a great roll to play in this area the builders are ultimately responsible for marketing the boats and must increase their marketing and support efforts if success is to be achieved. During the class reports various people had noted that it is difficult to get support from Devoti for marketing activities. Tomi said that he cannot even get sales brochures from them for the boat shows and Günter & Peter confirmed that they'd had similar problems with their German boat shows – due to the fact that Peter Göckel is the official dealer this could be solved costs on this were paid by the class.

Denis, whose company markets some of the best known yachting brands in France, noted that whilst Devoti is capable of producing excellent boats it does not have matching marketing skills. He feels that this is a major problem and ways must be sought to help Devoti overcome this problem. Henri Samuel supported this view and the meeting asked the Executive Committee to arrange a suitable brain storming session with Devoti and with input from Harry Melges and MPS.

Financial Reports

No accounts and budgets had been submitted to the meeting and Treasurer Simon Henning was not in attendance so this matter could not be discussed. The meeting requested Gunter Tzeschlock to obtain the formal accounts from Simon at the earliest opportunity and to review the geographic location of the bank accounts to identify whether it is most financially efficient for the accounts to remain in sterling or transfer to dollars or euros.

In addition the meeting gave the Executive Committee the power to review the possible requirement for professional support in maintaining the class accounts and if necessary to appoint a professional accountant to work under the supervision of the Treasurer and Executive.

Administration & Marketing Report

Fiona Brown presented the written administration and marketing report (see Appendix 1).

The issues raised in her report led to discussion about the potential sponsor conflicts of the 2008 Worlds at Porto Cervo. The club has Rolex as a long standing sponsor and the event sponsor is Volvo. Both organisations have very strong marketing support and it is important that the class ensures is clear in its communications with the club and sponsor and remains in overall control of the event's communication to avoid potential problems.

Fiona advised the meeting that Joy Dunigan is now working on the 2008 edition of M24 magazine and asked for input. The following comments were made:

1. Overall people felt that the 2007 edition of M24 had been a success and the meeting confirmed that Joy Dunigan should continue to manage this project.
2. Some people felt that the font is a bit too small.
3. There was concern that the mix of pictures and text was becoming a bit "hectic" which made reading the text more difficult, particularly when English is not your first language.
4. We need to make sure that M24 has a clear visual identity that separates it from M24 USA as there was some concern that the style of the two publications is very similar.
5. The meeting had agreed that we need to focus on building local and national fleets and therefore asked that the content of M24 reflect this alongside its coverage of the grand prix activities. They approved the concept for an article about women of the Melges 24 fleet which had been submitted by Joy.
6. The meeting agreed that it wants to see wider distribution. Fiona confirmed that it is down to the national classes to distribute to their clubs, journalists, boat shows, potential owners, etc, and that they must review the number of copies they request to allow for this.
7. The meeting felt that the current Advertising/Editorial mix is about right.
8. Of the two potential cover ideas submitted by Joy the meeting preferred the version with a yellow spinnaker.

The question of putting video footage onto the web site was discussed and Fiona will investigate the options for adding a video gallery and links to external video resources such as YouTube, etc.

The quality of the national web sites was discussed and it was agreed that whilst some are excellent some, including the French and British sites, are badly out of date and must be updated or taken down. Fiona is to review the national sites and contact the relevant national officers as necessary. Denis confirmed that he will be taking urgent action to update the French web site.

Technical Report

David Chivers presented the technical report. He advised that 2007 had generally been a quiet year on the technical front.

There have been some specific problems in the USA which have been exacerbated by the lack of an active Technical Rep in the US. Harry was asked to discuss this matter with the US Class and ask for their help to improve the situation. In particular there are insufficient measurement and class rule checks at local and national regattas and this situation must be rectified if we are to avoid major problems in the future.

David advised the meeting that he is currently in discussion with the new Australian builder and class to identify suitable measurers in Australia. He reminded the meeting that during the development of classes on new continents it is very easy for the new class, operating in isolation, to digress from the standard class rules through ignorance and lack of control. Other classes have experienced serious problems at such times and we must be diligent to ensure that class rules are enforced from the outset and that Australasia is rapidly brought into the class administration fold.

Aside from the specific class rule changes listed below David reported that the Class Rules now need overall reformatting to bring them back into line with the ISAF guidelines which have been revised in recent years. This is purely an administrative issue and will not affect the actual class rule content but as one of the leading ISAF International Classes it is important we keep our class administration and documents within the ISAF norm.

David is building a class measurers database and looking to increase the number of measurers to ensure it is easy for class members to contact a suitable measurer in their area. This is particularly important as the class expands into new continents and countries.

The question of templates was raised and David was reminded that we need to create two new sets of templates which will be held by the European and North American international measurers. Additional templates will also be required for Australasia.

David updated the meeting on his plans to reduce his IMCA role, first advised at the 2006 AGM. Gunter confirmed that David will continue to work on technical and rule administration issues but that he is gradually reducing his work on regatta management and that the Executive Committee will be reviewing the appointment of additional personnel to take on this role.

Class Rule Changes (effective 1st January 2008 once approved by ISAF)

CURRENT RULE D.2.4

All boats shall carry an official serial number moulded into or securely fixed to the starboard side, aft face of the transom. This number shall be issued as part of a National Requirement such as European Standard ISO 10087: 1996 for those relevant countries. Where the builder does not have to conform to a National requirement, the number shall be from a series formulated by Melges Boatworks Inc. No boat shall be deemed legal without this number.

NEW RULE D.2.4

All boats shall carry an official serial number which shall include the sail number/ ISAF plaque number, moulded into or securely fixed to the starboard side, aft face of the transom. This number shall be either; part of a national requirement such as European Standard ISO 10087: 1996 for those relevant countries, or, where the builder does not have to conform to a national requirement, or does not intend for his boats to be imported into Europe, the number shall be from a series formulated by Melges Performance Sailboats. The sail number shall be clearly identifiable on the transom.

REASON

We need to ensure that we have the number of the boat in a way that is easily identified and permanent. Unfortunately Devoti have used a system which does not give an easy identification without their code books. This is of no use at a regatta. It is not a problem while the ISAF plaque is there, but as we all know these can be destroyed in cleaning the boat. This rule also makes it clear

that hull numbers are a legal part of the requirements in Europe. The Melges company name is also updated.

CURRENT RULE C.3.16

Additional foot chocks may be fitted to the cockpit floor, including moulded foot chocks and engine hatch cover. The shape is optional. They shall not exceed 50mm in height above the surface to which they are fitted.

NEW RULE C.3.16

Additional foot chocks may be fitted to the cockpit floor, including moulded foot chocks on the engine hatch cover. The shape is optional. They shall not exceed 100mm in height above the horizontal surface of the cockpit floor.

REASON

This clarifies the rule and allows the current practice as used by the class. It is not common, but there are some people who are helped by the addition of an extra foot chock.

NEW RULE C.8.2 Hull (v)

The Melges 24 logo affixed to the cabin sides by the builder as part of the approved building specification shall not be removed nor obscured.

REASON

The boat has carried the Melges 24 logo on the cabin sides since the very first boats as part of the builder's specification. It is a class identity and ensures that the boat is recognised without the sails up. The class wishes to maintain this identity and ensure that the logo is not removed or covered with advertising.

NEW RULE C.6.1.6

The mast shall be fitted with a securely fixed licensed builders sail track stop, fitted to prevent the head point of the mainsail being above the upper point.

NEW RULE C.6.2.5

The boom shall be fitted with a securely fixed licensed builders sail track stop, fitted to prevent the clew point of the mainsail being beyond the outer point.

REASON

There has been an ongoing problem with sails being pulled above the mast black band. Although most of them will be tensioned down, damage has already been done to the mast crane. This damage to mast cranes is serious and by limiting the sail in the track we can prevent the damage. The head of the sail will come up against the stop, but the luff will still be able to be tensioned with the purchase systems we have.

It will be sensible to apply the same system to the boom and then we will not have the ever present problem of people pulling sails past measurement marks. This will reduce problems at regattas. The fittings are very easy to fit and available. This is a retrospective change and all boats will be expected to comply.

CURRENT RULE C.4.6

The shrouds may be attached and adjusted turnbuckles/bottlescrews of optional design except that only one thread is permitted per turnbuckle. Lock plates may be fitted to maintain the rig setting.

They may be adjusted whilst racing, but at the chainplates only. Remote adjustment of any type is prohibited.

NEW RULE C.4.6

The shrouds and forestay may be attached and adjusted using turnbuckles/bottlescrews of optional design. Lock plates may be fitted to maintain the rig setting. They may be adjusted whilst racing, but at the chainplates only. Remote adjustment of any type is prohibited.

REASON

The rig on the Melges 24 is under constant adjustment. This new rule allows both single and double thread turnbuckles thus giving the crews choice. Double thread turnbuckles are longer and therefore easy to retro fit. They are also smoother and will reduce the snags on spinnakers.

CURRENT RULE G.1.4

Sails shall carry the official certification mark near the tack point. The mark shall be signed and dated by the measurer. The certification mark shall be the individually numbered class stamp issued to each official measurer.

NEW RULE G.1.4

Sails shall carry the official certification mark near the tack point. The mark shall be signed and dated by the measurer. The certification mark shall be the individually numbered class stamp issued to each official measurer or the marking system approved by ISAF for In House Certification (IHC) which may require a signature and date.

REASON

This allows lofts which have signed up to IHC to use their official marking without being expected to use the class stamp as well.

NEW RULE C.6.2.6

The boom may be fitted with a security line including fittings, to prevent the boom slider parting with the boom in the event the outhaul breaks.

REASON

There have been some outhaul breakages which results in a difficult situation. This gives crews the choice to fit a safety line.

CURRENT RULE C.3.12

Padding may be fitted to the hiking lines to enhance crew comfort. The line may be either a continuous line with padding or two lines linked by a webbing section between the two stanchions used for hiking. The method of joining the hiking line and the webbing is optional. The webbing shall be a minimum of 50mm wide.

NEW RULE C.3.12

Padding may be fitted to the hiking lines. The line may be either a continuous line with added padding or lines (with or without padding) linked by webbing sections. The method of joining the hiking line and the webbing is optional. The webbing shall be a minimum of 50mm wide.

REASON

It has been found that webbing behind the helmsman greatly increases the comfort. This rule change allows crews to use what ever combination of webbing or padding they require.

CURRENT RULE C.3.9

The rear gate line across the transom shall be closed whilst racing

NEW RULE C.3.9

The rear gate line across the transom shall be closed whilst racing. It shall be in one continuous piece, fixed using shackles of optional design. It shall be taut subject to there being no more than 75mm deflection at the centre when measured from a straight line across the attachment points.

REASON

This rule change was started earlier in the year but not concluded at ISAF. There was some discussion about how much slack should be allowed for the fixing of the hook etc. This will allow enough slack for general use but prevent the excessive hiking methods that started the concern initially.

CURRENT RULE C.4.7

Except as in C.6.3.4, the use of shockcord is un-restricted.

NEW RULE C.4.7

Except as in C.6.3.4 and its prohibited use on the rear gate line C.3.9, the use of shockcord is un-restricted.

REASON

As above.

NEW RULE G.3.1.7

For mainsails manufactured after the 1st December 2007, the weight of the complete sail shall comply with the weight listed in class rule G.3.2.

- a) The sail shall be weighed with fixed fittings but excluding battens and tensioners.
- b) The mainsail shall not include any special devices, which are designed to, or might perform the task of corrector weights.
- c) Fittings shall be the normal size fittings for a sail of this size and available from standard suppliers.
- d) If in the opinion of the measurer, fittings or construction are designed in any way to circumvent this rule, measurement shall be refused.

Add to G.3.2.

Weight of complete sail

Min. ...kg

We are currently working with the sail makers to determine the figure to be used.

REASON

We have seen the construction of some Cuban Fibre sails this year, which are light and very fast. However, they also have a very short competitive life. We cannot ban Cuban Fibre itself because it is a process not a material. However, the class does not wish to see lightweight sails with a short lifespan and believe this is a way of controlling this.

CURRENT RULE C.6.3.5

To assist in catching the spinnaker sheets, the bowsprit may be fitted with a batten or similar device at the outer end. This shall not extend more than 150mm from the outer end of the bowsprit

NEW RULE C.6.3.5

The bowsprit may be fitted with a batten or similar device at the outer end. This shall not extend more than 300mm from the outer end of the bowsprit

REASON

The extra length is an advantage in the stronger winds. It has no cost implication.

CURRENT RULE F.7.2

The jib halyard shall be either secured to the tail of the high field lever system, or where a zip luff jib is used; the halyard may run internally in the zip luff and be secured by a locking system of optional design. In the latter system, the jib luff wire (G.4.2) shall be used as a forestay and secured in the normal way on the high field lever. A swivel may be inserted between the jib halyard and the jib luff wire.

NEW RULE F.7.2

The jib shall be hoisted by either:

(a) The s/s wire jib halyard connected to the jib wire, through the existing jib sheave and which shall be secured to the high field lever.

OR

(b) An HMPE or similar (e.g. Spectra) halyard, running inside the zip luff and secured at the jib tack. The design of the system is optional.

An existing mast may be retro fitted with the fixed forestay using the official parts available from the licensed builders.

CURRENT RULE G.6.6

The jib wire shall be enclosed in a pocket. A zip luff may be fitted; it shall not be used to alter the shape of the sail in any way.

NEW RULE: TO BECOME G 4.1.9

From the 1st December 2007, the jib shall be fitted with a zip luff designed to enclose the forestay, jib halyard and any purchase system used. The zip shall not be used as a device to alter the sail shape.

NEW RULE F.5.3.2

From the 1st January 2008, the mast shall be constructed with a fixed forestay system as per the builder's specification. An existing mast may be retro fitted with the fixed forestay using the official parts available from the licensed builders.

NEW: ADD TO F.5.4

Forestay diameter

min 4.7mm

max 5.1mm

Forestay length

minmm

maxmm

NEW: ADD TO F .6.3

Jib halyard wire:.....

Jib halyard HMPE

min 2.5mm

Dimensions which are highlighted are being confirmed.

REASON

The mast has had many problems with the loadings on the jib sheave and it is not secure during hoisting. This new system will allow a secure rig without the structural problems we have had. It is possible to retro fit the system and does not disadvantage any boats.

Builder Reports

Harry Melges advised the meeting that sales in the US had been very good over the past two years with sales of around 25 boats per year, however, the economic downturn in the US has had some effect on sales and they anticipate producing 10 boats this year. They have not had any technical problems with the boats and customers seem very happy with the products. Harry had attended the previous day's IMCA Technical Meeting and will be following up on a number of items discussed there.

There was no Devoti representative at the AGM, however, Luca Devoti had attended the IMCA Technical Meeting held the previous day. Recent concerns about quality control and availability of new boats were discussed and Luca acknowledged that there had been problems and that he is working to address these. Production is due to move to a new facility this winter and this will enable an increase in production to up to approx 50 boats per year (twice the current number possible).

Election of Officers

Having already served a special additional year in office Henri Samuel had now reached his maximum term of office and confirmed his intention to stand down as Chairman of the Class.

Henri supported Günter Tzeschlock as candidate to the post of IMCA Chairman and Franco Maria Rao seconded his proposal which was universally agreed by the meeting.

The position of IMCA Secretary was now empty and Günter proposed Tomi Hakola as the new IMCA Secretary. His proposal was seconded by Henri Samuel and the meeting agreed the appointment universally.

Günter paid tribute to Henri and the outstanding work he has done for the class over the past five years and he thanked him for his extremely generous personal contribution in helping to ensure the class remains the most highly regarded sportsboat in the world.

He confirmed that the marketing and promotion of the class to widen the base of the ownership pyramid would be a priority of his tenure as chairman.

Future Events

Franco Maria Rao updated the meeting on plans for the 2008 Worlds in Porto Cervo. A web site is due to launch next month and plans are progressing with the club. The issue of the race officer and jury members were discussed and Luca Balbini and David Chivers arranged to meet separately to discuss these issues in detail. It was also agreed that Günter and Fiona will undertake a site visit to Porto Cervo in the near future. Franco confirmed that Federico Michetti is the best contact for logistical assistance, particularly for those travelling from the USA. Fiona will confirm the list of IMCA personnel expected to attend the event to Luca Balbini.

The event logo for the 2008 Worlds was discussed. Volvo requires that its standard format for event logos is used and based on our current practise this is acceptable. The meeting reviewed

the artwork for other recent major event logos and asked the Executive to prepare new brand guidelines to ensure that the Melges 24 logo is only used in its correct font and colours (or black and white) and to create guidelines on the positioning and priority of the Melges 24 device in event logos.

The issue of event budgets and the desire to see a financial income to the class from events was discussed. It was agreed that the question of revising the event regulations to require a payment back to the class from each event will be discussed by the Executive.

The meeting also discussed the issue of how to ensure a chosen venue meets our requirements and Henri Samuel suggested that we prepare a questionnaire covering all the key items which can be presented to a host club at the time a venue is being finalised. Once a venue has been agreed in principle the club will be asked to complete the questionnaire to clearly demonstrate it is happy to meet our requirements. The meeting asked the Executive Committee to prepare this questionnaire for all future events.

Final proposals to host the 2009 European Championship had been received from Hyeres, France (appendix 2); Malaga, Spain (appendix 3); and Trapani, Italy. Each proposal was reviewed and discussed by the meeting and after careful consideration the meeting agreed that Hyeres would host the event. The Executive Committee was asked to continue work on the event to agree the exact date (to be late August/very early September) and to clarify some final logistical issues.

The meeting thanked the Spanish and Italian classes for their submissions and felt that although they had not been successful on this occasion they would like to consider events in these locations again in the near future. In particular the meeting felt that Trapani has the potential to be a great venue.

Fiona Brown gave the meeting a brief update on planning for the 2008 North Americans and 2009 Worlds which will both take place in Annapolis. Plans for these events are moving forward well and David will contact the organisers in the coming days to follow up on race management and jury issues. Bill Carleton is the local class coordinator and is being very proactive with good communications already in place. The 2007 US North East Champs will be held in Annapolis in mid October and this will provide a first opportunity to review the facilities. A site visit by the IMCA team will be organised asap.

Proposals for the 2010 World Championship were presented by Tallin, Estonia (appendix 4) and St Petersburg, Russia (appendix 5). Although the proposal from St Petersburg was felt to be very interesting there are considerable logistical problems with this venue including a sail to the race area of between 7 and 15 miles depending on the chosen venue and various current local administration and facilities problems. In comparison Tallin is already a well established yachting centre with racing a short distance from shore and excellent facilities. The meeting therefore confirmed Tallin as the venue and asked the Executive Committee to follow up to confirm dates in July/August and other details.

The meeting was advised that a formal request has been received from the new Australian Class to host a World Championships in the Australasia/Asia region in 2012. The meeting agreed that it would like to receive a formal proposal from the Australian Class for such an event and David Chivers was asked to revise the IMCA Constitution and Regatta Regulations to allow for Australasia and Asia to be included in the international event programme.

The question of fixing the dates for the World and Continental Championship was discussed. It was accepted that certain locations could only be used at particular times of year but that where possible future northern hemisphere World and Continental Championships should be held during August or September.

Event	Location	Dates
World Championship 2008	Porto Cervo, Sardinia, Italy	28 May–7 June 2008
North American Champs 2008	Annapolis, MD, USA	20-26 October 2008
World Championship 2009	Annapolis, MD USA	20 October–1 November 2008
European Championship 2009	Hyeres, France	TBC August/September
World Championship 2010	Tallin, Estonia	TBC July/August
North American Champs 2010	TBC	TBC

Any Other Business

Melges 24 Trademark

Melges Performance Sailboats hold and maintain the Melges 24 trademark. The meeting was reminded that all requests to use the Melges 24 device in commercial applications must be directed to Harry Melges.

Corinthian/ISAF Classifications

Henri advised the meeting that during 2007 the Corinthian/Category 1 status of a Melges 24 competitor had been challenged. This specific matter has been addressed by ISAF but the incident raised the overall question of the efficacy of the classification system. Henri has been in correspondence with the Chairman of the ISAF Classification Working Party and has arranged to meet him in person during the November ISAF meetings to discuss some of the problems that the system creates. Henri will keep the Executive informed of his progress.

IMCA Representative At ISAF November Meetings

Henri Samuel will represent the IMCA at the forthcoming ISAF meetings.

Next Meeting

The US Class had submitted a request to host the 2008 IMCA AGM in Annapolis in association with the North American Championships. Following discussion it was agreed that the business of the AGM was now sufficiently demanding that it was extremely difficult to hold the meeting in association with an event because of the time constraints it places on delegates who are also trying to concentrate on racing. Therefore it was agreed that the AGMs must continue to be held as stand alone events. It was also agreed that the stand alone AGM format made it easier to incorporate a full Technical Meeting into the schedule as had happened for the first time at this AGM. It was agreed that the work of the Technical Committee requires that the members meet regularly and that the two day joint meeting format would be continued for the future.

The meeting discussed holding a stand alone AGM in the USA as the lack of US representation at IMCA AGMs has been an ongoing major problem and all present felt that to have almost half the world's Melges 24 owners insufficiently represented is not acceptable. The breakdown of the classes means that the majority of individuals required to attend the AGM are based in Europe and it therefore makes financial and logistical sense to hold the meetings in Europe. In recognition of the fact that the USA and Australasian representatives will therefore be forced to travel to Europe the meeting agreed that the IMCA should meet the basic travel and accommodation costs for one class representative each from the USA and Australasia to attend. The Executive Committee was asked to follow up this matter in preparation for the 2008 AGM.

The 2008 IMCA AGM will take place in Munich, Germany during October 2008. A confirmed date and location will be published in due course.

Appendix 1

IMCA AGM – 6 October 2007

Marketing & Communications Report – Fiona Brown

The PR highlights of the year to date have been the Santa Cruz Worlds in May and the Neustadt Europeans in August. Both events received good coverage and the Worlds was particularly beneficial for the class.

Key to the success of the Worlds coverage was the assistance of Rich Roberts, who was appointed as local press officer by the Santa Cruz Yacht Club and sponsor Fullpower, and Paul Todd, who acted as official IMCA photographer. The addition of these individuals to the team enabled us to achieve one of the highest levels of coverage from a Melges 24 event to date. In particular Paul Todd did an excellent job of placing images with magazines (this was aided by the stunning photography conditions) which resulted in a very high number of front covers and feature spreads. Provision of press boats was excellent with additional boats being found through the club membership at the last minute when interest in the event was even higher than expected and the press office facilities were basic but more than adequate.

Although press coverage for the Europeans was also good the relationship with the local team was not as harmonious. Press for the event was managed by the Rolex press officer and in advance we had been promised that coverage for the Melges 24 would be given priority and that a good selection of high resolution images would be made available to us by the Rolex photographer. For this reason we did not appoint our own event photographer, however, ultimately Rolex were reluctant to release images to us and to date we have only received the images that were made available to the press in general all of which must be Rolex branded. The Rolex press officer was not willing to work with the IMCA press officer and because his main interest lay in promoting the Rolex Farr 40 Class, even after they had completed their races and the only racing to report was from the Melges 24 course. As a result releases were sometimes incorrect or misleading and all led with news about the Farr 40 even though the M24 event was higher ranking. Even once the Farr 40 event was complete each release was still headlined with Farr 40 news and the opening paragraph was about the Farr 40 class. The original intention had been to issue just one release daily but ultimately it was necessary for the IMCA to issue its own releases. Despite being promised a dedicated IMCA press boat this failed to materialise and there was one day (the windy day) when it was not possible for the IMCA press officer to get afloat at all. Even on those days she did get afloat the drivers were very mediocre and the boats not ideal for the job making photography opportunities more limited. The press office facilities were excellent.

For the future I recommend that the IMCA always appoint its own photographer for World and Continental Championships. The two recent occasions when we have been promised a good local photographer (Hyerès and Neustadt) have both resulted in significant problems and a lack of good images makes getting good press coverage significantly harder. We must also pay very great attention to agreements to work with local press officers. Whilst a good local press officer such as Rich Roberts is of huge benefits our experiences in Ocean Reef and Neustadt have clearly demonstrated that a bad or uncooperative local press officer can actually be detrimental to coverage.

We also need to look more closely at the web sites provided by local organisers for our world and continental championships. In general our event web sites have been effective, however, the Rolex Baltic Week site did not really work for the class and as a result the German Class had to provide a separate stand alone site to provide the information required. Ideally there should be just one source of information for our events and we need to work more closely with host clubs to ensure sites meet our needs.

The new format for M24 magazine has proved popular and feedback from the meeting would be appreciated both in regard to the 2007 edition and ideas for the 2008 edition. Joy Dunigan has already prepared a draft content list for the 2008 edition and sample covers and a sample layout are presented to the meeting. The only issue of some concern is the cost of distributing the magazine now that it is being printed in the USA and this matter will be discussed with the Treasurer.

Other internal communications have continued to be focused through www.melges24.com and the IMCA E-newsletter. No major changes are currently planned to either of these portals during the coming year, however, we would appreciate input from the meeting in this regard.

Although some national classes have continued to provide regular race reports from their events others have been less efficient (in particular Italy and France) and we would ask all classes to make every effort to get event news, results, etc, to the IMCA as promptly as possible. In particular we would like to receive more photographs, particularly high resolution photographs, from events.

The development of the Australasia and the Asia Pacific Rim is providing new opportunities for promotion and the IMCA Press Officer is working with the emerging classes to assist them in promoting their events and developing good administration for their new classes. In Europe there have also been interesting new developments with a new class launched in the Czech Republic and growing interest in Eastern Europe. Sadly these regions/countries are also relatively new to competitive yachting in general and therefore have few yachting magazines and web sites making external communications more difficult. Again we are working with local contacts where ever possible. We have recently heard from Trinidad where owners are working to form a new class and we hope to have more news from there soon.