

2011 IMCA World Council AGM – 19 November 2011 – Salzburg, Austria

Rule Change Proposals – Decisions Taken At Annual General Meeting

The current working practice of bringing Class Rule changes into effect from 1 January was discussed. It was felt that this was a difficult time as it is in the middle of the Australasian Season and the US Winter Circuit. The USMCA proposed that the standard date for Class Rule changes be revised to 15 March, this was seconded by the Chairman and approved.

Switzerland

Rule C.5

The Technical Committee had reviewed the proposed rule changes to Rule C.5 from the Swedish Class and found that all the suggested changes are in fact already covered by the ISAF Racing Rules of Sailing so do not need to be reiterated in the Class Rules. The changes were rejected.

Switzerland & USA

Rules F3.2 (c) and G.4.2 (i)

Proposals from both the Swiss and US Classes had been received to review the rules governing the mandatory use of the fixed forestay system and the jib zip luff system. For expediency and simplicity the meeting agreed to review the two sets of proposals simultaneously.

Following extensive discussion it was identified that the take up of the new fixed forestay system had been poor, and the general consensus of the classes was that the fixed forestay system resulted in reduced performance and was more difficult to set up. It was recognized, however, that that the option of a fixed forestay was of benefit to those who used swinging moorings where the fixed forestay had safety advantages.

The US priority was to ensure the one-design status of the class was fully preserved. It was felt that take up of the fixed forestay was reasonably high in the US. The Swiss felt that in Europe very few sailors had chosen to move to the fixed system and certainly virtually none of the teams regularly racing at international level had gone this route. They also raised concerns about the possible safety issues surrounding the failure of the luff zip, several incidents of which had already been reported.

The Swiss Class proposed that Rule G.4.2 (i) be revised to read

“The jib **may 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.”

This was seconded by the Technical Committee and the meeting accepted it with a formal note that while the World Council felt that the proposed change was in the interest of the vast majority of our sailors, the group wished to reaffirm that this change was exceptional and that every effort should be made in future to ensure the primacy of the Class' one-design principle.:-

Norway

Rules C.7.2 and 8 – controlling the rear gate system and permissible deflection.

The meeting was in agreement that the current wording for these rules was proving extremely difficult to apply in practice. The currently permissible deflection of 75mm is very difficult to achieve as the slack necessary to enable the shackle or karabiner clip to be fastened frequently results in the line being too slack once in place. There was concern that the proposal from Norway to make the deflection 200mm may be too large.

It was proposed by Chris Farkas, seconded by Norway and agreed that the meeting wished to change the rule, but that further research was needed to formulate a correct wording, and that the Technical Committee be asked to study this and recommend a fixed length with lashing and carabiner and appropriate deflection to avoid extreme hiking for approval by e-mail by the World Council delegates in time for the Rule Change to be approved by ISAF and in force for 15 March 2012

Norway & USA

Rules C.7.2 (a)(5) Hiking Line Deflection and C.11.3 and C.11.6 Boat Handling

Proposals were submitted by both Norway and the USA to review the hiking position rules and the hiking line deflection rule. For expediency and simplicity the meeting agreed to review the two sets of proposals simultaneously.

The two sets of proposals were discussed at length. The feeling of the meeting was that the class does wish to move away from the extreme hiking methods encouraged by the current large deflection permissible in the lines. It was felt that this extreme hiking discourages the Corinthian sailors, is largely unpopular with the grand prix level crews and is potentially detrimental to health and safety.

It was acknowledge that tightening the hiking lines fully is not acceptable as this results in making it very hard to remain on the rail with potential safety consequences if crews fall back into the cockpit when heavily heeled.

The issue of how the line deflection is measured must also be considered to ensure uniformity and to take into consideration the options for teams to fit padding and webbing straps.

The exact optimum deflection for the lines was discussed and various

suggestions discussed. Ultimately it was felt that before a rule change was made further research should be done to identify the optimum deflection measurement, a system for measuring the deflection and what changes might be necessary to the notes to juries on hiking as a result of any deflection changes.

The basic principle of the USMCA's proposal for the rule change as follows:

“The hiking line deflection at the centre when measured from a straight line between the two centre stanchions shall not be less than *300 mm* (precise number to be determined by the Technical Committee) above deck.”

Was agreed and the USA proposed, Peter Goeckel seconded, and the meeting agreed that the technical committee be asked to confirm the optimum deflection measurement, a system for measuring the deflection, and what changes might be necessary to the notes for juries to eliminate extreme hiking. It will be asked to report its findings with final draft rule change wording proposals for circulation to the World Council Delegates by e-mail in time for the Rule Change to be approved by ISAF and in force for 15 March 2012.

USA

Rule C.2.2 – Crew Weights

The USMCA put forward a number of proposals concerning crew weight. Their desire was to encourage fair sailing, to encourage Corinthian sailors and to discourage extreme weight “dipping” (undergoing a crash weight loss to lose several kilos in the short term immediately prior to regatta weigh in) prior to regattas – a practice which has potential health and safety risks.

The meeting recognized that because the current rule leads to “dipping” it also results in crews sailing significantly over weight once they have rehydrated and eaten properly.

It was also acknowledged that weight management is generally more of an issue for the Corinthian teams than the professionals. Pro sailors are used to constantly monitoring their weight and for them it is just part of their job. Corinthian sailors generally have less need to be weight aware during their normal lives and are less experienced at “dipping”.

The concerns that introducing random weight checks during regattas might result in Corinthian teams feeling that they could not enjoy the social aspects of the event were discussed.

Chris Farkas highlighted that the USMCA proposal aimed to make the “maximum weight” not a starting point, but truly the maximum weight, leveling the playing field and providing the basis for fair one-design competition whilst discouraging unhealthy practices. Their proposed 5 kg weight increase would effectively “grandfather” teams currently on the edge and create a reasonable buffer from

day one that would allow teams to enjoy the social aspect of regattas, whilst at the same time recognizing that this is a competitive sport.

The point was made by Michael Good that provided the system for selection of teams to weigh and the penalties for being overweight at random weigh in were carefully set it would not detract from the enjoyment. Those teams wishing to race very seriously would naturally take care to manage their weight, whilst those whose priority is to have fun would enjoy themselves and if called for random weigh in and penalized a few points for being overweight would be happy to accept this as the price to pay for the fun they were having.

The need to make an upward increase in the total crew weight to allow the existing crews to continue sailing was also discussed as it is believed that many teams are currently set up to be effectively 7-10kg overweight and could only make 360 kg with a major dip.

Peter Goeckel noted that the average weight of people was increasing generally in both Europe and the USA. It was also noted that increasing the weight would have impact on the small number of all girl crews, as this would now mean six woman crews to make the weight. $365 / 6 = 60.8\text{kg}$ and $370 / 6 = 61.6\text{kg}$.

Federico Micchetti felt that increasing by only 5kg would not be sufficient to enable existing crews to compete within the new weight limit, as it was only possible for many of them to meet the limit by "dipping". A straw pole around the table indicated that the majority of the Corinthian teams represented at the meeting already sailed at around 360 kg average weight or slightly under. Federico confirmed that he felt many of the professional crews would be 7+ kg over at their average weight and that only an additional 10 kg on the weight limit would enable them to continue sailing with the same crew.

Having discussed the options extensively the proposals were voted on.

The USMCA's proposal that "The helmsman shall be allocated a weight of 100 kg; the helmsman may choose to weigh in." was seconded by Jens Wathne but rejected by the meeting.

The USMCA's proposal that "Weighing before the event is required. Weighing during or after the event is optional at the discretion of the Organizing Authority as posted in the Notice of Race." was seconded by Jens Wathne but rejected by the meeting.

The motion that rule C.2.2 be revised to read:-

"The maximum total weight of the crew dressed in underwear shall be 370 kg. Crews shall be weighed during the registration period prior to racing. At IMCA World Ranking Events, crews selected at random shall be reweighed on the same scale and the same place, available every day. They shall reweigh within one (1) hour of their return to the dock. Should a team be found to exceed the above maximum weight, one point for each race that day shall be added to the team's

total score for the regatta for every kilogram they are found to be over at each and any reweighing.”

Was proposed by Chris Farkas, seconded by Jens Wathne and approved by the meeting.

The meeting also agreed that the question of the total crew weight should be assessed during the coming season reviewed and if necessary adjusted again at the 2012 AGM.

The Championship Coordinator will be asked to revise the Regatta Regulations and standard forms as necessary to encompass this change.

A.8 - Class Rules Interpretation

The USMCA withdrew its proposal for an addition to this section of the Class Rules as the matter was covered by

New Rule – Bow Numbers

The USMCA’s motion to introduce permanent bow numbers incorporating the Melges 24 logo was discussed.

The Chairman noted that the question of whether including the Melges 24 logo in the bow number was permissible under the Advertising Code or not would need investigation before this could be agreed.

There were also concerns about the potential cost to the class, the problems of needing to remove the stickers for non-IMCA events and then replace them, what to do if stickers were damaged mid regatta and you ran out of spares, etc.

After discussion the USMCA’s motion was proposed by Chris Farkas and seconded by Peter Goeckel but rejected by the meeting.

C.10.d(d) -

The USMCA proposal to revise the wording of C.10.2(d) was identified as already being covered by a combination of the Class and ISAF rules and the Regatta Regulations and so no change was necessary.

New Rule – Sail Limitation

Chris Farkas introduced the USMCA’s proposal for new rules to introduce a Sail Limitation System. He explained that the proposed system is based on that already in use in other classes. They felt that this would help reduce costs for Corinthian sailors and have potential income benefits for the Class.

There was considerable discussion about the pros and cons of such systems and the technical issues and costs of enforcing them. It was felt that further

investigation needed to be made into both the technical and financial implications of this change before an informed decision could be made.

Peter Goeckel proposed that this matter be deferred for discussion at the next AGM. This proposal was seconded by Frank Heine and approved by the meeting. The Technical Committee will be asked to study this matter and bring recommendation to the 2012 AGM.

IMCA Executive Committee

To bring the Class Rules in line with the ISAF Advertising Code the Chairman proposed the following Rule Change:-

C.4.1 Limitations

Advertising shall only be displayed in accordance the ISAF Advertising Code. (See ISAF Regulation 20). Subject to the limitations of Regulation 20, advertising chosen by the person in charge may be displayed.

The Chairman explained that this was essentially a “House Keeping” change to bring us inline with the revised ISAF Advertising Code already in force.

The proposal was seconded by Chris Farkas and approved by the meeting.