

## Olympic Sailing Competition

### Core Events

A submission from the International 470 Class Association

#### Purpose or Objective

To establish the Two-Person Dinghy (Spinnaker) as core events for the Olympic Sailing Competition and the 470 class as equipment for these core events.

#### Proposal

In line with Regulations 23.1.6 and 23.1.9 to select the following events/equipment as core events:

| Event                         | Equipment |       |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-------|
|                               | Men       | Women |
| Two-Person Dinghy (Spinnaker) | 470       | 470   |

#### Current Position

See Regulations 23.1.6 and 23.1.9 - there are currently no core events determined for the Olympic Sailing Competition.

#### Reasons

The Olympic Commission Report identified the benefit of determining Core Events for the Olympic Sailing Competition and “adopting a process that sees Equipment chosen for longer timeframes, providing certainty and allowing nations and athletes to plan programmes and campaigns”.

The Olympic Commission went onto highlight that “ISAF should build more consistency and continuity to our Olympic decisions, giving MNAs better return on their Olympic investment, and providing sailors a clear pathway for sailors from junior to youth to Olympic. For young athletes, and the MNAs that support them, there must be predictability of Events, so that they can be sure their Olympic pathway will not close in front of them. Certainty is required that the Event to which they aspire will remain in the Olympic Sailing Competition.”

The Olympic Commission Report identified four specific criteria for Core Events, which are listed below followed by the reasons why the Two-Person Dinghy (Spinnaker) should be selected as a Core Event using the 470 as the equipment.

**Criteria 1 - they are commonly practised around the world, not necessarily as single gender events but by men and women, sailing separately or together**

#### **Reasons:**

- The 470 is the most popular Olympic Class, along with the Laser and RSX in terms of participation and worldwide spread.
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- 109 men's and 62 women's teams from 39 nations and 6 continents competed in the 2010 470 World Championships. Competition in the 470 is intense with no one nation dominating.
- The 470 has 307 Men's teams from 46 nations and 137 Women's teams from 33 nations on the ISAF World Rankings (as at 9 February 2011). More nations compete, but do not secure rankings points.
- The 470 is established worldwide within over 60 National Class Associations.
- At Continental and Regional Games the 470 is the most preferred multi-person boat.
- For many nations, the 470 is the only multi-person boat sailed at the Olympics simply because it is for them the most realistic option.
- The 470 requires a skill set that can readily be obtained by sailors in developing sailing nations.
- Two-person symmetric spinnaker sailing represents a massive population of dinghy sailing around the world and the 470 class is the most globally spread boat in this discipline.
- The nineteen different nations achieving Olympic medals since 1976 is evidence enough of the depth of talent and spread of nations around the world. Nations have significant investments in their 470 fleets which in turn have created an impetus for the grass roots development of sailing.

**Criteria 2 - they match events sailed at the ISAF World Youth Sailing Championship, reflecting the emphasis on youth and the one step pathway from Youth to Olympic competition**

**Reasons:**

- The 420 class used at the ISAF Youth Worlds provides a perfect stepping stone into the 470.
- At the 2010 ISAF Youth Sailing World Championships there were 36 boys' 420 teams and 28 girls' 420 teams representing 38 nations.
- The 420 and 470 classes hold joint 420 and 470 Junior European Championships, making the transition from Youth to Olympic Competition easy and non-intimidating for youth.
- The 420 and 470 classes hold joint 420/470 coaching clinics - the most recent were held in October 2010 in South America (Argentina) and Africa (Angola) with over 140 participants.
- The 470 is accessible to youth sailors and there are regularly young sailors who compete at both the 470 Junior and Senior Championships.

**Criteria 3 - they can collectively, depending of the Equipment chosen, offer diversity in terms of weight, size and the skills tested**

**Reasons:**

- The 470 is the only dinghy that caters for lightweight men. A high percentage of young men worldwide are naturally 60 to 75kg. This is especially so in Asian countries and is another reason why the 470 has such worldwide appeal. The helms are usually around 60 to 67kg, and the crew around 67 to 75kg, typically ranging in height from 163-187cm.
  - Women 470 sailors can be lightweight - 55 to 65kg, through to heavy weight - 70 to 75kg, with typical height ranges of 150-174cm. At the 2008 Olympic Games, the Women's Gold Medal was won by the lightest team and the heaviest team won silver.
  - Symmetric spinnaker sailing requires a wide skill set that must incorporate both apparent wind techniques and running techniques. Being able to best utilise either technique depending on the specific wave conditions and wind strengths is fundamental.
  - The 470 requires the crew to be accomplished in all aspects of sailing including tuning for speed, tactics, strategy, technique and boat handling. Sailing a 470 provides a sailor with skills which can be transferred to many other forms of sailing and enhance the opportunities for a professional sailing career for those that choose this path. As an example, many 470 sailors can be found in the America's Cup, Volvo Ocean Race and World Match Racing Tour.
  - The range of sail and rig controls on the 470 allows the boat to be tuned to obtain optimum performance in a wide range of conditions; a skill that is fundamental to sailing in the widest
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context. The result is that the 470 can be raced in winds in excess of 30 knots or as little as 3 knots.

- The 470 requires a skill set that can readily be obtained by sailors in developing nations hence the popularity of the class in these nations.
- Like any Olympic class, the 470 places a strong emphasis on physical fitness. In light air, the boat rewards agility, flexibility, quickness, and aerobic fitness. As the winds increase sailors also need pure strength. A 65kg guy must have optimum weight to strength fitness to helm a 470 with the mainsheet loads and repeated adjustment necessary.

#### **Criteria 4 - they enable Equipment evolution to keep equipment up-to-date and economical, and to minimise the cost of Olympic participation to MNAs and athletes**

##### **Reasons:**

- The cost of 470 equipment and the cost to campaign a 470 is low compared to most other Olympic classes. Purchase of a complete ready to sail 470 from leading suppliers is EUR12,445 ex tax. Divide the purchase and campaign costs between the crew of two and the costs can be amongst the lowest of any Olympic equipment.
  - On-going maintenance and campaign costs are very reasonable compared to other Olympic campaigns. Transport costs can be minimised by sailing a 470, as up to 10 boats can be shipped in a 40ft container. Economy on the road is commonly obtained with 2 boats and a coach boat on one trailer with 2 teams and 1 coach in the vehicle.
  - Uniquely across the Olympic events/equipment, the configuration of the 470 is identical for both men and women. This offers significant benefit to smaller sailing nations with less funding, who for example can share one coach. Not only from the obvious cost advantage of sharing equipment and logistics, but also in the development of the specialised skills required to race the boat, and access to the technical know-how, often from imported coaches.
  - Men's and women's regattas are always held at the same time at the same venue, thus containing costs for the Organizing Committee and MNAs, and increasing the size and popularity of the event which in turn make it more attractive to the public and to sponsors.
  - The 470 balances the criteria for "up to date" equipment and "economical" equipment. For example the 470 has explored the option of a carbon fibre mast; but at 3 times the price of the aluminium equivalent, and with no apparent gain in longevity, the expected increase in performance was simply not warranted in a one-design class. Significant changes in equipment may make existing equipment "out of use".
  - As a proven class, the 470 has a distinct advantage that it is not trying to re-invent itself every few years. The 470 does not suffer from the teething and prototype problems of "new" equipment introduced into the Olympics which incur increased costs for sailors.
  - Hull, rig, sails and appendages are built using materials which are cheaply available around the world. The 470 can be built worldwide by any ISAF licensed builder.
  - A well-controlled one-design class like the 470, with excellent technical rules and building specification, creates as level a playing field as any class while offering the sailors the opportunity to shop around for their equipment thus keeping the cost down. The Class Rules and Building Specification do not permit "special or custom made" boats.
  - The class has evolved to the point where there are no significant breakthroughs to be made within the rules and equipment is therefore very much one-design. There is no arms race in the 470. We are all aware that some manufacturers' controlled one-designs have variances in build and sailors will buy several hulls and spars to find those that they believe best suit them.
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