

INTERNATIONAL FINN ASSOCIATION 2002 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

20th July 2002, Athens, Greece

Minutes

Present: Executive Committee: Philippe Rogge, President; Corinne Rolland-McKenzie (Executive Director); Richard Hart (Chairman Technical Committee); 25 National Association Representatives and approximately 40 other members of the class.

Apologies: Mark Hermann, Vice President Sailing, Martijn van Muyden, Treasurer and Rolf Lenhert, Vice-President Masters.

1. NATIONAL CLASS ASSOCIATIONS

Voting cards were distributed to the National Class Association representatives based on the 2002 IFA dues received.

2. MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the 2001 AGM were approved

3. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS

Verbal reports were received from the President on behalf of the Vice President Sailing and the Treasurer.

REPORT OF THE IFA TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Refer to Appendix A

COMPOSITION OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

In addition to the existing members, Rodney Cobb from Pata Willetts has been proposed by Richard Hart and approved by the Council.

4. ACCOUNTS

- (a) The IFA accounts of 2001 (previously circulated) were approved.

5. ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO IFA COMMITTEES

- (a) The members of the Executive Committee were unanimously approved as follows

President	Philippe Rogge
Vice President (Masters)	Rolf Lehnert
Chairman of Technical Committee	Richard Hart
Secretary	Corinne Rolland-McKenzie

Mark Hermann sent his resignation as Vice President Sailing. Ali Enver Adakan from Turkey was elected unanimously to the post.

Clifton Webb from New Zealand was elected unanimously to the position of Vice-President Development, left vacant by John Callahan.

The Executive Committee asked the council to include Robert Deaves in the Executive Committee for his outstanding work and commitments with the Finn class. His position in the Executive Committee is on an individual basis.

The council approved unanimously this decision.

- (b) The members of the technical Committee were unanimously approved as follows:

Richard Hart (chairman)
John Driscoll
Larry Lemieux
Andrzej Ostrowski
Miklos Nemeth
Jan van der Horst

Jan Björnberg
David Howlett
Walter Mai
Juri Saraskin
Tim Tavinor
Rodney Cobb.

- (c) The Marketing Committee were unanimously approved as follows:

Robert Deaves (Chairman)
Corinne Rolland-McKenzie
Gerardo Seeliger
Marc Blee

6. IFA CHAMPIONSHIPS

- (a) Update on preparations for the following IFA Championships:

- (i) 2003 European Championship, Maarstrand, Sweden: dates suggested are from the 5th to the 13th of June. These dates have been chosen to fit between the Spa regatta and the Scandinavian Championship.
- (ii) 2003 Finn Gold Cup, Cadiz, Spain: dates are between the 13th to the 24th of September. The executive Committee advised the Council that this is an ISAF event and that the Finn Major Championship rules may not be followed in their entirety. The Executive Committee received permission from Council to deal directly with the ISAF and the organisers in order to get a Championship as close as possible to the Finn class rules.
- (iii) 2004 Finn Gold Cup, Rio, Brazil: Mauricio Bueno, Brazilian Finn secretary gave a report on the regatta. The FGC will held in Rio de Janeiro early February, one week before Carnival. Organisers will provide special rate for container transportation and housing for some sailors.

- (b) Bids were received to host the following IFA Championships:

- (i) 2004 Europeans
Bids were received from La Rochelle, France and Balatonfüred, Hungary. The council voted 23 to 7 in favour of La Rochelle.

6. IFA RULES AND CONSTITUTION

7.

- (i) RRS 42: After extensive discussion, the Council voted to retain the existing rule allowing free pumping on the downwind legs over 15 knots. TC Chairman was given authority to make minor changes if necessary, in order to align our rules with possible changes made to RRS 42 at the ISAF November meeting.
- (ii) Mast weight. The Technical Committee and the Executive Committee recommended that no drastic change should be introduced before the start of the next Olympiad. The council approved and requested TC to make a comprehensive review of the mast rules over the next 2 years.
- (iii) Following recent changes in the RR of sailing, IFA would request that the requirement to carry a protest flag and fitting be deleted from IFA rules.
- (iv) Conflict of interest: The International Finn Association will apply in its Championship rule, the ISAF rule forbidding a Jury Chairman to be of same Nationality than the regatta organising country.
- (v) Ballot: The executive Committee asked for the right to refer to ballot vote in case of important or urgent issues. Authority was given by Council.

Appendix A

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2002

1. The Rule changes, which IFA Council asked for at the last AGM, were passed by the ISAF Committee in November 2001:
 - In-house measurement to be permitted at manufacturers' premises for masts, booms, sails and rudders;
 - Mast bearing play to be measured using the simple method developed by Jüri Saraskin;
 - Recommended standard dimensions provided for mast and boom bearings and connection (so new equipment fits automatically);

- Revised Mast Labels; and
- The new pumping rule (when you go downhill in strong winds, the Race Officer can let you get on with it).

Details are on the IFA Website, and in the March 2002 Finnfare.

We deliberately left the pumping flags in square brackets because we think that it is the prerogative of the Racing Rules Committee or Race Management Committee to coordinate flag use. They duly came back and said that they would like us to use a yellow (Q) flag as the pumping flag, but don't want to endorse a "Stop unrestricted pumping" flag, on the grounds of complication. It seems permissible to include a "Stop pumping" flag in the Sailing Instructions.

2. The racing rules were altered last year so that yachts of less than 6 metres in length need not display a protest flag. We can, if we wish, remove the requirement that we have a protest flag and fitting in the boat.

Approval needed to drop requirement to have a protest flag.

3. Peter Hinrichsen (who measured with Jüri Saraskin for the Seniors at Marblehead last year) has taken a keen interest in the Lamboley test over many years. At major championships we use the swing test apparatus that he constructed. He has made some useful recommendations to promote uniformity in taking these measurements.

Approval needed to insert requirements about test details.

4. Tim Tavinor has reported that a number of Devoti boat customers have asked whether Tacktick electronic compasses can be fitted. At present they are not allowed, and enquiries that I made last autumn suggested that Finn sailors (being Finn sailors...) would opt for the large model used in the Star class. At the moment, this equipment seems significantly more expensive than the present set-up of spherical magnetic compass plus electronic starting timer. (If and when this type of equipment is permitted, the "display heading only" version would be required, having no other functionality except as a clock).

Endorsement needed for no action at present.

5. At present, there does not seem to be wide support for changing to round booms. (They remain on my "wish list").

6. Discussions at ISAF last Monday (15/07/02) suggest that their Racing Rules Committee may be considering substantial changes to the standard pumping rule. Next year's Olympic Classes' World Championships will need Sailing Instructions that are standardised as much as possible, which may make it desirable for some rewriting of our own pumping rule (without changing the basic ideas laid down by IFA Council (AGM)).

Authority sought to make minor alterations, as required for consistency with ISAF work in November 2002.

7. **Masts.** Currently we have wing masts, which are expensive to build because of the very precise positioning required for the reinforcing fibres. They are also an engineering nightmare, because the wing shape is not good for resisting torsion.

At the AGM last year in Marblehead, the Technical Committee were instructed to look into the possibility of changing the rules to encourage cheaper masts. In particular, Tim Tavinor told AGM that he had been in touch with manufacturers who could sell circular section masts at about half the present price. Any action that we take must be fair to the sailors who currently own wing masts, and to the manufacturers who have spent money developing today's "best sellers".

There are three main options:

1. Do nothing.
2. Nominate a standard design from approved manufacturers.
3. Specify tighter restrictions on fore-and-aft dimensions, so that the masts would be somewhere near round. Review requirements for athwartship dimensions;

Option 1 leaves us committed to masts, which seem un-necessarily expensive.

Option 2 would be very difficult to control, and against the practice of the class developed over many years.

Option 3 could be worded something like "the fore and aft dimension of the mast shall not exceed its athwartship dimension by more than 25 mm at any point along its length". A way to implement this option would be to allow the new specification masts a small weight advantage, for example 7.5 kg. instead of 8 kg, and to allow the wing masts to continue, but not for the 2008 Olympics and major qualifying regattas from 2007 onward.

This year, I have yet again sought opinion on the whole matter, and my chief conclusion is that opinion is very varied. One potential supplier suggests that good cheap (round) Finn Masts could be made at 6.5 kg, but a major manufacturer with a track record of 400+ masts would like the current weight limit **increased** to 8.5 kg. Another major supplier (200+) states that his current (wing) masts weigh 7.0 – 7.5 kg before correction. Similarly a major supplier of hulls believes that the future of the class is being jeopardised by the high cost of wing masts, while a mast supplier writes "I was at the Paris boat show last December and the interest in the Finn was outstanding. I believe that is because we have a truly modern looking boat. When I watch people feeling the contours of the wing mast I realise that this is one of the facets of the modern Finn. Now that the class has accepted the cost of a wing mast I still see no reason to make a change; as they say 'if it ain't broke don't fix it'." My own conversations with club sailors suggest that they have **not** willingly "accepted the cost of a wing mast".

In the light of the diverse opinions expressed within TC and the class as a whole, I recommend that we make no change until after the next Olympics. I seek support for further investigation of the Option 3 outlined above.

Votes needed on submission. (Netherlands Finn Association).

The class officials and TC members are very anxious to consider the views of all members in major decisions of this nature: the AGM is held at the Finn Gold Cup because this is the best international forum for all countries' representatives, but there is concern that the opinions of "club sailors" or "recreational sailors" may receive disproportionately less weight than those of sponsored hot shots.

8. The ISAF has now developed a standard class rules (SCR) format, which can be seen on their website. They are anxious that Olympic Classes should adopt this format and the Technical Department very recently sent us a basic draft for our comments. Your Executive had queries about various matters, including the proposed timescale. I had a most positive meeting with Simon Forbes (Head of Technical Department) on 15/07/02 at which all our queries were satisfactorily dealt with.

This exercise is not intended to introduce rule changes that alter the Finn. However the thinking behind the ISAF standard class rules is that un-necessary rules should not be included. **We could, for example, consult with sailmakers and others about whether we actually need the rules concerning sail reinforcement.**

I am enthusiastic about this project and wish to receive IFA Council endorsement for its development (by TC working closely with ISAF). The proposed timescale would make a detailed draft available to the class next year, and a final draft presented for your approval in Summer 2004, ready for final submission to ISAF in November 2004, at the start of the next Olympiad.

Authority sought to progress as outlined.

9. A number of new ideas are being suggested by the sailors at the Europeans and FGC. Most are related to measurement procedures and race format. The proposed timescale for the rewrite should allow for good discussion and agreement about these ideas. One matter directly concerning all our boats is that a number of sailors (and Jüri Saraskin) would like us to have a stop at the top of the mast, to make it impossible to have the sail too high.
10. I would like to pay tribute to the work of our measurers during the last few years, and particularly to the work of regatta measurers such as the team at this regatta. Congratulations are due in particular to Jüri Saraskin, whose leadership in this field continues to give us the foundation for fair racing in a comparatively painless manner.

Richard Hart
TC Chairman