

3. How can World Sailing develop the programme of Olympic Events and Equipment to best meet the needs of the sailing community and the IOC, whilst making the sport as attractive as possible to the viewing public?

Duriye Özlem Akdurak (TUR)

First of all, under the global economic challenges, we need to find new methods to welcome more countries into the Olympic era so that sailing will be practiced on a wider scale of the globe. Due to the sharp increases in Olympic budget items, more nations are losing their chance to get in the Olympic journey. The new WS board would open a new era in sailing world if they can manage to ease MNA's access to the events and equipment.

New high-tech generation equipment is an inevitable part of sailing future. Since such equipment cannot be used for a long time, MNA's need to make more investment. So, WS should respect to balance between the core spirit of sailing with classical boats and to open the door for new designs.

Sailing sport will benefit to enlarge its audience and to get all any sport fans' involvement.

This requires making changes on the race formats and to set up sailing sport less complicated for everyone.

Philip Baum (RSA)

Subject to the IOC's year end confirmation the 2024 slate has been agreed and is what many Olympic nations and sailors are already investing time, energy and money in.

Beyond 2024 a blend of universality and innovation is necessary for the sport to remain relevant and attractive to the youth, the growth of the sport and the IOC-importantly in that order.

Critical principles, for me, are:-

- gender equality*
- affordability*

AND building an event on established class structures, history and participation on all six continents.

William Canfield (ISV)

A complex issue that will take far more than 300 words but my thoughts include the following suggestions. Our current program is far from perfect and is further complicated by Covid driven delays and pending approval from the IOC. I guess the best way to attack this is with a totally clean slate which will immediately cause controversy but is necessary.

Unlike other sports, (skiing,, golf and tennis) we are not using our sailing icons to promote the sport. In sailing, Olympic medals launch careers not further them. We need highly successful and visible Sailors at the Olympics in at least one discipline to stt rack spectators and sponsors.

Sailing is complicated to most viewers and the medal race has further confused who “wins” gold. It has not worked, not popular with the athletes and should be discontinued. I love the format of the Star Sailors League where the first place boat in the final race is the overall winner and he performs highly visible to spectators. One easy fix here is to reestablish Match Racing in the Olympics. It worked well in the past and was driven out by politics that superseded it’s popularity.

Kites are great and should be at the Winter and Summer Games performing on mountains, snow and water. It is a growing sport and large to be included with Sailing. We do an injustice to kites with our contrived relay race and the need for yet another venue is crippling to sailing. Remember clean slate and open mind thinking. I’m not suggesting we drop Kites just predicting their Olympic destiny

Our high performance classes are great for gymnastic young sailors but do not appeal to large numbers of sailors due I believe mostly to access and expense. Somehow we must make an Olympic campaign

Tomasz Chamera (POL)

- *increase participation on the way to Olympics;*
- *establish strategy related to IOC needs and Members abilities;*
- *clearly define our products and increase stakeholders’ interest;*
- *set-up ‘sailing life cycle’ to present what is sailing about, what skills and abilities sailors would achieve and how educated the sailors are.*

Jan Dawson (NZL)

This is a question that has been asked for as long as I have been participating in World Sailing meetings and I don’t have the answer. Over the past quad a significant amount of money was invested in broadcasting and tracking of the Sailing World Cup and other regattas to increase the audiences. While this was successful to a degree and also increased sponsorship, it is not sustainable without being smarter with technology and social media. The strategy to promote the “heroes” of the sport should be developed as people watch people vs boats.

I think we need to think about the global trends on sport (pre Covid) - shorter and sharper competitions – closer to the audience. Rugby 7s, Cricket 20/20,

rowing and cycling sprints in an urban location, 2 on 2 basketball are all evolutions to cater to the time poor consumer.

Luca Devoti (ITA)

It is essential to learn from the successful events and formats like Stars Sailors League, Ocean Race, America's Cup, and of International Classes which develop outstanding personalities that characterize our sailors and our Community. We have two unbeatable winning elements that attract people to sailing, either as competitors or as public: The Sea and The Wind. This is why all the various disciplines and equipment have very similar appeal and all sailors around the world deserve equal respect even if they are at times sailing incredibly different boats, some extraordinarily modern and some with an aura of myth and history. They are only the technical support to go to sea and not the primary focus of our sport. Sailors respect our environment using the renewable energy of the Wind and sail on the Sea without leaving any scars.

Jørgen Stang Heffermehl (NOR)

Agree a long term program with IOC

Pick events and equipment to show the public the utmost in equipment and advanced sailing, while also keeping in touch with grassroots sailing

Split Council in Olympic and Development council to secure attention and development in both areas

Use modern digital means (inter alia drones) to showcase most advanced sailing

Sarah Kenny (AUS)

We must find the right balance between stability, cost, universality and youth and media appeal. As a sport we need to be clear about what we need from our Olympic Sailing Program for Sailing to remain a strong Olympic sport in the future. The timeline for implementing changes should be reviewed. There may be an argument not to have the same review process for all 10 events. We should analyse the pattern of country participation in Olympic qualification by event and identify realistic growth potential to maximise the opportunity of competing at the Games in the relevant events. The development of guiding principles can be very useful if this can be done well in advance of discussions about specific events/ equipment changes to ensure the discussion is robust and objective. Discussion and decision making would be much improved by the establishment of a comprehensive sport database to collect key facts and data

on an ongoing basis to better monitor issues like growth, participation, universality, gender impacts etc

Yann Rocherieux (FRA)

It is maybe one area where, despite many criticisms good progress have been made.

I am fully aware of the IOC guidelines, agenda 2020 and the influence on some decision we have made together.

If we make the right decisions which pleased the majority of our community, help to attract younger sailors, develop sailing in some countries, then we grow participation.

We have been working on gender equity which is not only an IOC “guideline” but a strong and logical push in a more and more important part of our society. Who wants to see our sailing community becoming smaller, older and even more gender unbalanced?

We need to make our sport more appealing to the women athletes and to the younger audience. No youth no future!

Sailing is a large family with different kind of sailing and equipment.

More diversity in equipment type can also be seen as bigger opportunities to have more countries involved in an Olympic program.

Then it is important to find the balance between developing too much and too often which may lead to no consistent outcome in the end.

On public attractiveness, 2 key points

- Telling stories, building heroes, developing the Ambassador program*
- Technologies improvement is helping us daily to find better ways to showcase our sport which will definitely raise public curiosity.*

And there is still plenty of room for improvement.

Cory Sertl (USA)

- Sailing stands apart from other Olympic sports with the diversity of equipment and formats. The IOC has shifted to an event based focus and we need do everything reasonably possible to make each event a success.*
- We need to embrace the decisions already made and get to work leading the sport with a practical event calendar that enables classes and event organizers to plan ahead to run the best events possible to showcase each unique aspect of the Olympic program.*
- Focus on promoting athlete stories and the unique aspects of our sport.*
- With a successful approach to the 2024 program of events we will be able to retain 10 events on the Olympic program. Many changes have*

been made from 2020 to 2024. We need to balance keeping the events the same and helping to strengthen the equipment classes with an acceptable amount of innovation.

Malav Shroff (IND)

Sailing has tremendous potential to become one of the top Olympic sports. On the technical side, equipment can be upgraded, but unfortunately this is also an extremely expensive exercise for smaller countries to undertake.

Our sport is unique and multi-dimensional and we need to tell this story to the world through new affordable media models instead of concentrating primarily on changes in equipment and rules.

My goal is to help drive the adoption of advanced technology in broadcasting and relay of results, and deliver exciting and compelling race stories that truly showcase human potential through our sport.

As an Olympian and having led the Olympic classes and organized many regattas/continental championships, my experiences would be helpful to enhance the experiences of live TV and digital viewers and sponsors

The story of Sailing needs to be told in a very simple and exciting way with heroes and ambassadors created from high-profile sailors. We need many more stories showcased across global media and not just in Sailing media. This has to be undertaken in a very strategic manner for Sailing to get its true and fair share of the spotlight.

We need to engage with Sailing journalists and online media much more in order to reach target audiences globally and increase the popularity of Sailing amongst non-sailing audiences to attract them to the sport.

At present, the media impact is very low and a stronger more robust department is needed for media activities.

A suggestion would be for World Sailing to take help from other professional Sailing events being showcased on global media as they have greater budgets and can share professional expertise to aid and help World Sailing in this regard.

Riccardo Simoneschi (ITA)

To make a successful program we must first share the final intent and the priorities. we never realistically did it in the past, acting time by time under

different pressures. It is of relevant importance to make the sport program accessible in term of finance, controlling the cost "to campaign" of which boats are just a part of it. We are obviously linked to tech developments along the years but this shouldn't be the first priority. The larger we made our sport the better will be either for our sailing community and for the IOC. we have to reconnect the fan base to the Olympic sport of sailing starting from down to the top. we already have a variety of Olympic boats that fits to this goal we have to work hard on it making the sport more accessible assuring the necessary stability to have the time to develop. We have to focus on more modern media approach in presenting our sport and champions. My past successful experiences with the IOC (that you can read on my web page mentioned above) teach me a lot in term of IOC intent and guidance. We will have to respect this guidance in general term and strategies but it is up to us, the sailors, to present in the best way is possible the beauty of our sport to the audience.

Marcus Spillane (IRL)

We need to accept that we are a very diverse sport with many different disciplines. As such we should incorporate that diversity into our Olympic program, particularly where it showcases everything that is good about our sport in a modern and exciting format. I fully understand the conservative elements within our sport and our long history and traditions. After all I am a proud member of the oldest yacht club in the world, the Royal Cork Yacht Club in Ireland.

But as a relatively young person I also understand that if we do not appeal to the youth of today, or if we do need heed the messages we are getting from the IOC in terms of what they are looking for, then our status as a core Olympic sport is threatened. In 2018 we made some very difficult decisions, but I believe we have a good slate for 2024. Importantly we have also codified a regular evaluation of our Olympic events and the equipment selected for those events which will ensure we remain current, exciting and deliver the best of our sport to the IOC.

Yui Shing Tong (HKG)

We have to stabilise the constant changing of classes and stop changing so many classes for each Games. For example, for the Olympic Games 2024, I think there is an immediate need to confirm the equipment for this competition as we should have it confirmed four years before the event like before. No other sport makes so many radical changes as sailing. For the Olympic Games beyond 2024, we should try to strive for more than ten events and an increasing number of athletes for our sport in the Olympic Games.

We must give stabilization to athletes and give them a long time to know of changes. In the past, ISAF/ World Sailing has added classes that were prototypes. We have added events that are not currently raced. All these changes add costs to the MNA equipment and training budgets. Also this constant changing to our athletes makes them confused and hard to plan ahead. Yes, we need to change, but we must do this giving a longer timeframe for our stability.

In terms of making the sport popular and attractive towards the general public, it is of paramount importance to develop sailing for World Sailing to further enhance and streamline its operations internationally. World Sailing shall actively promote inter-regional sailing exchanges and cooperation, which may include sharing of superior resources, talent interaction or knowledge transfer, as well as contribute to the development of regional (intercontinental) sailing. Active promotion of cooperation and cross-fertilization of ideas among regions would hopefully unite the enterprises and organizations in the marine sports and marine tourism industry.