

Match Racing Committee

Preliminary Recommendations and Proposals

For Women's Match Racing in the 2012 Olympic Games

1. Format:

- a. 12 teams at the Olympics (could be 11 teams if ISAF limits the number of women participants in keelboats to 44)
- b. 4 person teams – this comports with the current format of women's teams on the match racing circuit and best demonstrates the teamwork, athleticism and skills of the teams. It also allows the teams to compete on the circuit without having to eliminate one member from the team when they go to the Olympics. A 4 member team should also place less emphasis on body types.
- c. At the Olympics:
 - Double Round Robin (each team sails against every other team twice)
 - Knockout Series (first to score 3 points):
 - Quarter Final (top 8 teams - #1 vs. #8; #2 vs. # 7; etc.)
 - Semi Final (4 winners from the Quarter Finals – top ranked team from the round robins vs. fourth highest ranked team; second highest ranked team vs. third highest ranked team)
 - Petit Final – Losers of the Semi Final race each other; winner receives the Bronze Medal
 - Grand Final – Winners of the Semi Final race each other; winner receives the Gold Medal; loser received the Silver Medal.

2. Equipment

- a. Design and build new boats for use at the Olympics. Boats will be owned by ISAF.
Prior to the Olympics, the new boats will not be available to any competitors and will be securely stored in a warehouse or in containers at a secure location.
After the Olympics, the boats will be securely stored again for the 2016 Olympics.
- b. The cost of designing and building the boats will be borne entirely by a charitable foundation under the direction of Mr. Terry Kohler, in conjunction with contributions of equipment (spars, poles, booms, hardware, etc. from Harken and Southern Spars and sails will be donated by North Sails).
- c. The Match Racing Committee has appointed a 6 person Working Party for the purpose of determining the criteria for the boat, selecting designers and builders. The members of that Working Party have extensive experience in match race organization, design, boat construction and match racing competition. They have several consultants available to them with specific expertise in boat design and boat building. Through the auspices of the Women's International Match Racing Association (WIMRA), many of the top women competitors in the world today

have been consulted and surveyed concerning the preferred criteria for an exciting, practical and appropriate match racing boat for a crew of 4 women.

- d. Some of the initial criteria we have received are that the boats should be in the range of 6.5 to 7.5 meters in length, that they can be fit into commercial containers, that they have lifting or easily removed keels, that they have enough sail area to be exciting and a real test of skill in a breeze, but not overpowered, that they plane and surf relatively easily downwind and that they are simple and easy to rig, but sturdy and strong. We also want to design the boat so that weight of the crew is not a critical issue.
- e. Spinnakers and jibs will be emblazoned with readily recognizable graphics of the flags of the competing MNAs and will be taken with them by the teams when they exchange boats during the regatta. Mainsails will stay with the boats.
- f. 2 spare boats will be built for use during the regatta if needed. The builder will provide personnel to set up the boats to keep them equalised. As in all match racing where the boats are supplied, competitors are not permitted to adjust or change the standing rigging.
- g. The Working Party will complete their preliminary work before November, 2008.
- h. When the full criterion for the boat is clearly established, the final choice of the designer will be made, as well as the choice of the builder.
- i. When the design is completed and accepted, the general specifications will be announced to the public (sail area, LOA, LWL, beam, draft, keel type, rudder type, use of winches or not, traveler or not, type of rig, sail controls, etc.) so that teams can practice in boats of similar design and proportions.
- j. The Working Party has already begun their work.

3. Qualifiers

- a. We propose that the Women's World Championships for 2011 and the ISAF Nations Cup of 2010/2011 be used for the Qualification for the Olympics of 2012.
- b. Assuming that there will be 12 teams and that 1 of those teams will come from the host nation, 11 other teams will be selected. 6 will come from the 2011 Women's World Championships and 5 will come from the 2010/2011 Nations Cup.
- c. The selections from the Women's World Championships will come first in order to guarantee that all 5 ISAF Regions are represented in the Olympics (see below).
- d. The Women's World Championships will be expanded to accommodate at least 24 teams and the participants will be invited from the Women's Match Racing Ranking List, as is the current practice. The Match Racing Committee believes that 4 years is ample time for a new team to rise through the ISAF rankings. Only two teams from any MNA would be represented at the 2011 Women's World Championships. The top 6 MNAs at that championship will qualify for match racing in the 2012 Olympic Games.
- e. At the end of the Nations Cup Grand Final in 2011, the top 5 MNAs that have not already been qualified will qualify for the 2012 Olympics, *except that* if that procedure does not qualify teams from each of the 5 ISAF regions, then the top

team from regions that have not yet qualified will be chosen using the results from the Nations Cup Grand Final, and the Regional Finals if necessary.

4. Match Racing Circuit

- a. There are approximately 50 graded women's match racing regattas held annually around the world. More may come on line with women's match racing having been selected for the Olympics in 2012. That number of regattas provides excellent opportunities for any team in the world that wants to maximize its training. Many of those regattas have match racing clinics associated with them, mostly provided through WIMRA, but some through ISAF.
- b. The Match Racing Committee is encouraging those regattas on the circuit to expand their number of competitors wherever possible and to use 4 person boats (the norm at most of them) if available.
- c. We have a small and very experienced Working Party that has been established and that has devised a number of formats that will work with larger groups of competitors and will maximize the number of races each competitor will sail during the regatta. That Working Party is available to any match racing regatta and they will customize a format for any event that feels the need.

5. Olympic Classes Regattas

- a. The Match Racing Committee encourages the Olympic Classes Regattas (OCRs) to include women's match racing in their events. To the best of our knowledge, Kiel Week and Miami OCR already have plans to include women's match racing in their next events.
- b. We recommend the use of a 4 person boat. A keelboat is preferable, but not essential. Lightnings and other centerboard boats can be used if the centerboards are secured in the 'down' position.
- c. We specifically and strongly discourage any regatta from allowing competitors to bring their own boats to sail in any match race event in these regattas. Part of match racing is having the competitors use as many of the boats that are provided as possible, so there are frequent exchanges of boats during each day. That levels the playing field for everyone and prevents an 'arms race' among the competitors. It is a system that has worked extremely well for many years on the Open and Women's match racing circuits.
- d. We are offering our services to all OCRs to assist them in adding match racing to their events, if they want the assistance. We believe we can find appropriate fleets of boats that may be donated or chartered, as well as umpire boats and RC boats. We can help find Race Officers with experience in match racing, as well as umpires, equipment, etc.
- e. The same WP that has developed formats for larger numbers of teams in match racing is also available to the OCRs and they will be happy to work with them to customize formats or to suggest the use of standard ones already developed. *(for example: in a 40 boat fleet with 10 boats, the competitors could be divided in 4 groups of 10. Each group would sail a single round robin, meaning each competitor would sail at least 9 races. The remainder of the racing will be knockout series – first to score 2, 3 or 4 points, depending on time and conditions. The top 2 in each group would move on to the quarter-finals. The*

winner's move on to the semi-finals and the winners of that move on to the finals, the losers going to the petit-finals. If time permits, there would be knockout series to determine positions 5 through 8.)

6. WIMRA

- a. WIMRA has been very active and working hard in opening lines of communications with all competitors, umpires, race officials and organisers. Their website is linked through the ISAF website and is available to all.
- b. All the women's regattas are listed on their website.
- c. They will assist in finding crew for teams that need them at specific regattas.
- d. They have been successfully running clinics all around the world, so even very basic training is available to any MNA or team that wants to increase their level of competency.
- e. They are in constant touch with anyone involved at all in women's match racing and have a base of hundreds of members upon whom they can call for expert advice from any corner of the world. Their Board of Directors reads like a Who's Who of the top women racers in the world.