



IM24CA Technical Committee Meeting 2026 Summary

The Technical Committee convened its annual meeting on October 8, 2026.

The Zoom meeting was attended by:

Mike Gozzard - Technical Committee Chair (CAN)
Branko Parunov - Chief Measurer and Technical Committee member (SLO)
Arto Kiiski - International Juror and Technical Committee member (FIN)
Kolja Dumanic - Technical Committee member (CRO)
David Bartol - IRO and IM24CA Staff member (CRO)
Michael Tarabochia – IM24CA Executive Committee (GER)
Paolo Brescia – IM24CA Executive Committee (ITA)
Andrea Racchelli – Italian Melges 24 Class – boat owner (ITA)
Dan Berezin – Canadian Melges 24 Class President (CAN)
Marcello Caldonazzo Arvedi - Italian Melges 24 Class President (ITA)
Vemund Gransæther - Norwegian Melges 24 Class President (NOR)
Marianna Matteotti – Italian Melges 24 Class Secretary (ITA)
Joy Dunigan – US Melges 24 Class Association Administrator (USA)
Piret Salmistu – International Melges 24 Class Association Administrator (EST)

Summary

The main purpose of the meeting was to review five rule change proposals submitted for the upcoming IM24CA AGM in Milan, with the goal of editing them into proper format for discussion. The chair (Mike Gozzard) explained that the meeting would focus on reviewing the proposals, discussing future initiatives, and determining which items to present at the AGM, noting that some proposals might need to be withdrawn or edited before submission.

Backstay Diameter Requirements Discussion

The Technical Committee (TC) proposed a minimum diameter requirement for backstays, specifically discussing whether to use 3mm or 4mm Dyneema rope, citing concerns about wear and tear from chafing and UV damage. Branko explained that current rules already specify 3mm 1x19 stainless steel wire, which provides similar strength to 3mm Dyneema, while Vemund supported the proposal and suggested 3mm as an appropriate size. The discussion revealed that most failures at recent

championships were not caused by backstay issues but rather by older equipment, worn shackles, and fittings, leading the group to consider producing a white paper on backstay maintenance rather than implementing strict minimum diameter requirements. The group went on to discuss boat safety and racing conditions following mast damage incidents in Norway and Trieste. David explained that race management considers both weather conditions and the importance of the event when making decisions about sailing, noting that safety should be the primary concern for both boats and sailors. The team then agreed to withdraw the original proposal and instead create a technical discussion document (White Paper) about rigging components like blocks and shackles, and backstay management.

Rudder Measurement Control Points Discussion

The group discussed potential measurement control points for rudders, with Gozzard proposing to add new measurement locations to prevent boats from becoming illegal through optimization. They agreed to collect data at championship events in Europe and North America before making formal rule changes for the next cycle in 2027. It was agreed that discussions would continue between the TC Chair and the Chief Measurer to determine the best path forward.

Jib Halyard Chafe Cover Proposal

The group discussed a rule change proposal submitted by TC member Bora Gulari USA 874 to allow for a chafe cover on the 7x19 Jib Halyard. It was explained that he had been using an example of this for a year without failure. The submission suggests that a spectra cover, bonded to the 7x19 with a urethan adhesive, helps to prevent bird caging caused by furling under load which can lead to a failure mode in the halyard. While there was some skepticism about the exact mechanism of how this might work, it was acknowledged that potential benefits to the class including cost savings and safety concerns were in spirit with class goals. Branko and David supported the idea as an optional modification. The team agreed that submission should include photos or videos to help others understand the implementation. The TC agreed to review the submission but suggested it was good to submit as written.

Main Sheet System Proposal

The group discussed a proposal to allow a 6:1 mainsheet system submitted by Joy representing the US Melges 24 Class Association. The goal of this proposal was to allow an increase in purchase ratio to reduce loads, which would make it easier for smaller, less physical members to sail the boat competitively. Discussion concluded that this proposal was unlikely to create a performance advantage over the existing 5:1 system as it would include more sheet length to handle. It was agreed the proposal should be submitted as written.

Helmsmen Position Downwind Rule Proposal

Andrea Racchelli (ITA) explained his proposal to clarify the rule regarding helmsmen's position downwind, as he faced issues with judges interpreting his normal sailing position as hiking. The group discussed how to address this through either a rule change or clearer Q&A guidance, with Arto and the technical committee taking the lead to review the proposal from a judge's perspective. The conversation ended with plans to edit the proposal and send it back to the Italian class for review before resubmission.

Open Forum Discussions

With the proposal review complete, the group was then invited to share thoughts and concerns in an open forum. Kolja continued the 7x19 halyard discussions raising concerns about wire twisting issues in furling systems, explaining that mismatched braiding directions between forestay and jib halyard wires can cause failure, and offered to share photos demonstrating this problem. The group agreed to share this information with the fleet through the technical committee.

Mast Step Measurement Compliance Issues

The group discussed issues with mast step measurements and compliance at the World Championships, particularly focusing on boats 869 and 874. Bora Gulari raised concerns about differences in mast foot interfaces between new and old equipment, suggesting that there is a mast inversion issue with the new boats. The technical committee will investigate these concerns further, including examining the new mast base and OEM mast steps, though no immediate rule changes were proposed and the matter will be carried forward to 2027.

Melges 24 Sail Cost Discussion

The meeting focused on discussing concerns about the high cost of sails in the Melges 24 class. Vemund presented suggestions to reduce costs, including potentially limiting the number of spinnakers or standardizing sails, which will be further discussed at the upcoming AGM. Gozzard acknowledged the issue but noted challenges in finding viable solutions, such as the consolidation of major sail manufacturers and class rules limiting sail flexibility during regattas. The group agreed that broader discussion at the AGM would be necessary to explore potential solutions that balance costs with maintaining competitive and technological standards in the class.

World Championship Feedback

The meeting focused on reviewing feedback from the Worlds event and discussing updates to the technical manual. It was noted that the event was very well received. The after-action review noted there were comments about the use of cranes creating a two-class system and issues with satellite parking of fully rigged boats. The team agreed to turn the technical manual into a checklist for bidders and discussed updates to proposals, with a deadline set for October 23rd to republish edited proposals or drop those not being proposed.

Actionable Items

Regarding rudder measurements, Mike and Branko agreed to develop a data collection protocol to gather information on rudder positioning and height controls at upcoming championship events. The Gulari headstay cover proposal received support for moving forward, with the committee requesting additional photos and documentation from Bora Gulari. The US class's six6:1 purchase system proposal was approved without opposition. The Italian class's helmsman positioning proposal, submitted by Andrea, sparked discussion about clarifying rules for downwind sailing, with Arto tasked to draft appropriate wording for review. The conversation ended with a brief discussion about high sales costs in the class, though no immediate solutions were identified.