

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2020
Saturday, 07 November 2020

Technical Committee Summary of 2020 Rule Change Submissions:

Technical Committee Chair's comments:

Historically, the Technical Committee would meet the day before the AGM to review and present comments on any new rule submissions. This year, we introduced the idea of having the traditional Technical Committee meeting(s) earlier to review submissions well in advance of the AGM. The idea was to encourage an open discussion of the submissions and present an opportunity and time for the submission to be revised, if needed. There were two underlying goals. The first goal was to determine if the proposals are in the best interest of the class; and second, to then discuss the submission in an open forum to allow for any additional ideas that might improve the submissions to make them as effective as possible. Unlike past years, we wanted this discussion to occur before the final submissions were presented to the class for a vote. While opinions and positions were encouraged, the idea was to try and identify any unforeseen consequence of these proposals and give each of these submissions the best chance of being successful if they are later ratified by the class.

Each submission was reviewed starting with the easiest ones first.

Note: This year the technical committee took a hard look at the wording of Section C.11 BOAT HANDLING RULES. Our goal was to review the rules and try and make them easier to understand. To do this we looked at the original intent so we could correctly interpret the rule and then to observe the rule through the eyes of an International Jury regarding their enforceability.

The following is a brief summary of the meeting:

- Tech Comm – CR A.6 – This proposal is simply housekeeping and meet with no objections or questions. We strongly recommend this submission be approved. Overview: Our class rules are developed using a World Sailing template which includes the nomenclature and ordering of sections and subsections etc. World Sailing made a revision to the A.6 Section last year and since this is applicable to our class rules, we also have to make that revision as well.
- CAN – C11.7 – Review began with a brief discussion on the reasons behind this proposal which was to clarify crew being allowed forward of the mast. Many are not aware of the misconceptions some of our newer class members have interpreting the current rule. Since our class rules are “CLOSED CLASS RULES”, this means if it is not in the rules then technically it is not allowed and the wording of the current C11.7 leaves some debate as to if it is permitted to be forward of the mast in any other position other than to “stand”. After a brief explanation of the origins and intent of this rule, which was to prohibit rocking of the boat downwind, there were no objections and the submission stands as written.
- Tech Comm – C11.1 – After a brief explanation everyone agreed that this new wording is much simpler and is easier to understand. The submission stands without revision.
- Tech Comm – C11.2 – After a very brief discussion and because this is predicated by C11.1, everyone agreed the new wording is much simpler and easier to understand. The submission stands.

- Tech Comm – C11.3 – The genesis of this submission was to account for all types and sizes of helm persons. Technically, a very tall helm person can project their body while sitting completely normally outside what is permitted in the rule. A discussion ensued with clarification on helm person positions while sailing and what is and isn't considered hiking was discussed. Clarification was also discussed on where hiking is permitted relative to the spinnaker block and aft deck. With no further comment or objection all agree to let the submission stand.
- Tech Comm - C11.6 – A healthy discussion ensued on the genesis of this clarification with particular attention to the wording "thigh/buttock". Comments were made by IMCA Chief Measurer Branko Parunov on the intent of this rule. Comments were also made by International Juror Arto Kiiski about the "on the water" administration of this rule. Discussion concluded that this proposal is simply a better clarification of the existing C11.6 and with no objections, the submission stands as written.
- Tech Comm – H2 Boom – After a brief explanation, there were no objections. This proposal is just housekeeping as the use of this equipment is common and is included by the manufacturer. It was agreed that the submission stands as written.
- CAN – C11.8 – This proposal is designed to eliminate having crew positioned below to enhance performance. A healthy discussion ensued first on the need for this rule which then expanded into its implementation and unintended consequences. Most agreed that it is not fun for the crew selected to go below and that this is a difference between paid team members and amateurs. There were also comments and questions regarding the original wording of the submission and of note whether or not the companionway area of the boat should be exempt. In the end, all agreed that the proposal should be revised to make being in the companionway defined as not down below and that better use of the word "momentary" would help enforcement. The majority concluded that the submission would be better if the suggested revisions were included and the submission was returned to the Canadian NCA with our recommendations for further consideration. It was subsequently resubmitted with all recommendations included.
- Tech Comm – C11.5 – An extended discussion started with the premise that the current rule C11.5, as written, is fundamentally untenable. After a brief overview, Arto spoke as to the contradiction we currently have within this modification of RRS 42.3 (c) and the opinions and concerns of the class' International Jurors. This is a particularly difficult and complicated issue.

Arto comments: *"The Current rule was changed two years ago despite the opposing opinions of three judges (published on webpage). Unfortunately, the wording and structure of new class rule created a contradiction with RRS 42.3 specifically with respect to the other sails (not the spinnaker). The current class rule includes the wordings: " **Except on a beat to windward, when surfing (...) or planing is possible, (...) to initiate surfing or planing.**" What this means is that there has to be surfing/planning conditions to execute (unlimited) pumping (of all sails). If the attempt is unsuccessful, continued pumping breaks the rule 42. If the boat is already planing then pumping is not allowed without breaking rule 42. (WS 42 Interpretations). This creates a contradictory situation which is impossible to control by judges as well as sailors. **"The Spinnaker may be pulled without restrictions in all conditions"** can remain as a modification to RRS 42.3 because this sail requires active trimming that cannot be differentiated from pumping... hence a required exemption. Arto goes on to say: "The previous edition of the class rules should be re-instated until the class can revisit the issue."*

Further discussion included the possibility of adapting the 505 class rule modification which allows for 3 pumps per wave or gust but many felt this would be too hard to enforce. As no immediate solution could be found, it was eventually agreed that the class should revert back to the previous wording of C11.5 as it was clear that the current 2020 class rule cannot

remain in effect. The group unanimously agreed the submission be sent back to the technical committee to be revised to restore the previous version. The submission has been revised and resubmitted.

- USA – C.2.2 – Initially this proposal was to delete the C.2.2 weight restriction entirely. This contentious issue was discussed at length. Once all opinions were stated and discussed in open dialog, the committee focused efforts on trying to come up with suggestions, compromises and/or revisions that may make the submission more workable if the class were to choose to head down this path. Of note, discussions identified potential safety related issues if the crew weight had no maximum upper limit as it was thought that eventually it would be too much for the boat and rig to withstand. Suggestions were made that perhaps an upper weight limit should be set close to 380 or 390kg to protect the boat. There was also a brief discussion on a potential lower limit of 200kg. The committee also noted potential issues with crew substitutions as per C2.1 and suggested possible amendments to C2.1(b) and C2.1(d) that might help. One possible compromise might be to consider keeping the weigh in during registration so that if a substitute crew is required it could be controlled to within 10% as example. Several members also expressed a concern that without a weight limit there would be fewer opportunities for women or youths to be involved in the class as those “lighter” people would not be needed as much to make the current weight restriction work. It was also expressed that a weight limit is in keeping with a one-design class (although not all one-design classes have one). The USMCA was represented by Gary Schwarting and Paul (Krak) Arntson and both were active in the discussion. Eventually the consensus was that the USMCA would consider further revisions. They subsequently revised the submission as a simple maximum crew weight increase which does satisfy some if not all of the technical committee’s concerns.

Personally, I believe the intent of this revised submission was (at least in part) to allow for a wider “bracket” either side of the maximum 375kg crew weight. Many already believe 375kg is the ideal crew weight for the Melges 24 in most conditions. Currently, teams can only get as close as they can to 375kg without being over. This submission seems to suggest you can get as close as you can by being either under or over. Further this submission has the potential to make dieting or fasting to make weight a thing of the past and might potentially encourage more participation with teams being able to consider more crew combinations. While we can agree or not when the class votes, this submission is at least now sound enough to be considered.

October 15, 2020