



The Future of Small Boat Sailing and Youth Training in Ireland

Recommendations of the ISA Board

12th April 2013

Background

Following the motion proposed for discussion by Norman Lee and Bryan Armstrong at the ISA AGM held on 2nd March, a meeting was called to discuss the future of Small Boat Sailing and Youth training in Ireland. This meeting was held in the National Yacht Club on 23rd March.

The meeting was chaired by Paddy Maguire, and 106 members (including 14 ISA Board and staff members) were present, representative mainly from the Dublin area from a wide range of Small Boat Sailing interests - clubs, training centres & classes. Although we know from experience that we attract significantly more people to open meetings that are held in Dublin (as opposed to a more central location geographically), we received much feedback from members living outside Dublin that they would have liked to contribute, but were unable to attend on the day. It is essential we give everyone the opportunity to input into the process.

The Objectives

It is important to be clear as to the objectives we are setting out to achieve within this forum. When you step back from the detail of the debate, the underlying objectives include:

1. Increasing the number of dinghy sailors engaged in club and class activity
2. Developing a club scheme (separate to the performance pathway) for transitioning from junior sailors to senior classes
3. Retaining these as 'lifelong members'

The Issues

A large number of views relating to the issues that are believed to be restricting the achievement of the objectives have been raised by those contributing to the debate thus far. These ranged enormously from high level strategic issues to local initiatives, in some cases with very credible arguments being presented on opposing views. The main focus of the debate has been on the ISA's administration, its policies and the support provided for clubs, classes and members, however it is acknowledged that the Clubs and Classes also have a major role to play in the solutions.

Recommendations

Based on the feedback received, there are a number of short term and longer term actions that may be implemented in order to address the issues raised and help to achieve the objectives. This process is not about writing reports, it is about taking action, however the Board acknowledge that wider consultation and input from members, and those with relevant expertise and experience will be needed in order to achieve the aims.

The objectives will only be achieved with cooperation between the ISA, the Clubs, the Classes and Training Centres. A key element of establishing these partnerships will be the introduction of voluntary groups reporting to the ISA Board and working within clear terms of reference.



Short Term Actions

Ref	Area	Action	Responsibility
1.	Wider Consultation	Invite ISA members to review the minutes of the forum and recommendations of the Board and re-engage on the topic through on-line discussion	Comms Dept
2.	Class Coaching	Establish a scheme to 'ring fence' the affiliation fees of the classes to be put directly into a coaching fund to grant aid non-pathway classes.	Racing Dept
3.	Enforce Logbook Requirements	Training centre inspectors will ensure the requirement for logging the club and class events required for completion of the Go Racing 1 and Go Racing 2 courses is being adhered to.	Training Dept/ ISA Clubs & Trg Centres
4.	Joe Soap Sheets	Training centre inspectors will ensure the requirement for using Joe Soap Sheets on the Small Boat Sailing Scheme is being adhered to.	Training Dept/ ISA Clubs & Trg Centres
5.	Training of Adult Instructors to deliver the SBSS	Explore options for local funding to facilitate the training of adult instructors within the club environment	RDO's
6.	Promotion of Cara Na Mara	Support clubs & training centres with the development and implementation of the Cara Na Mara training programme	Training Department /RDO's/ ISA Clubs & Trg Centres
7.	Instructor Training Costs	Work with clubs to reduce the costs of Instructor & pre-requisite training.	RDO's/ ISA Clubs
8.	Make It Fun	"Remember MAKE IT FUN" Poster & Logo to be included on the front of all ISA Instructor & Coaching manuals & workbooks	Training Department
9.	Communicate Interaction with Clubs & Classes	Develop a management system where key ISA interactions with clubs, training centres, associations, etc...) are recorded and be used to create an annual report which may be published.	CEO
10.	Second Hand Boat Market	Develop a 'boats for sale' section on the ISA website as a free service to members.	Comms Dept
11.	Statistics	Collate and record Statistics for Class Regional & National Championships	Racing Dept/ ISA Classes



12.	Contact Details	Publish a list of key contacts related to dinghy sailing within clubs/classes. Also a list of ISA qualified racing coaches.	Comms Dept
13.	Club & Class Liaison Officers	Review the ISA Liaison Officer status within each club, and introduce the system within the Classes.	RDO's/ ISA Clubs & Classes
14.	Dinghy Racing Development	Establish a Dinghy Racing Advisory Group with Clear TOR's to help with the development of dinghy racing, and the organisation of an annual class's forum to facilitate calendar planning, participation, transition from youth to senior classes, access to coaching etc.	Racing Dept/ Advisory Group
15.	Communications	Establish a Communications Advisory Group with clear TOR's to support the development of communication links between clubs, classes and the ISA, and the development of the ISA website.	Comms Dept/ Advisory Group
16.	Training Development	Establish a Training Advisory Group with clear TOR's to support the development and implementation of the ISA Training Programmes	Training Dept/ Advisory Group

Longer Term Actions

17.	Small Boat Sailing Scheme	Review the format and content of the Small Boat Sailing Scheme with the aim of providing a structure for 2014 that meets the needs of the clubs and the commercial training centres.	Training Dept /Working Groups
18.	Certification	As part of the SBSS Review, explore options for a more 'customer friendly' system to benchmark progression through the Small Boat Sailing Scheme.	Training Dept /Working Groups
19.	Schools Curriculum	Lobby Department to introduce Cara na Mara as a module within the school curriculum	CEO/Training Department
20.	Instructor Training Consistency	Review the ISA's Instructor Trainers & training system with a view to assuring the ISA Instructor & Coach training courses are being run to a consistent & high standard.	Training Dept/ Advisory Panel
21.	Strategic Plan	Review of the 2020 Vision document identifying what (if any) strategies need to be revised.	CEO/Board/ Working Groups



22.	Club Scheme	Engage further with the membership, clubs and classes in order to review the Key Club Scheme and establish a clear progression for junior club and class sailors transitioning into the senior classes.	CEO/Racing Dept/ RDO's /Working Group
23.	Performance Pathway	Facilitate a link with the pathway classes within the Key Club Scheme to identify initiatives to feed the non-Olympic sailors into the domestic senior classes.	CEO/Racing Dept/RDO's /Working Group

Conclusion

Whilst there are a number of action items that may help in the short term, there is no simple solution, and the implementation of changes to the strategies and structure of an organisation such as the ISA will evolve in time, and only with the help and support of our Clubs, Classes & Training Centres.

The move to establish a number of voluntary groups has been considered by the ISA Board. The organisation made a deliberate move away from this structure in 1998, however it is very apparent that this strategy has been a contributory factor of the perceived disengagement of the membership from the operations of the ISA.

Call for Volunteers

The ISA Board are encouraged by the levels of engagement on this issue to date, and would like to invite volunteers with relevant skills and experience to put themselves forward for the various advisory and/or working groups we are intending to set up in order to help us make the strategic objectives a reality. If you would like to contribute to any of the following advisory groups please email harry@sailing.ie with a short summary of the relevant skills and experience you feel you have that will contribute to positive outcomes:

1. Dinghy Racing Advisory Group
2. Communications Advisory Group
3. Training Advisory Group
4. Club Scheme Working Group
5. 2020 Vision Working Group
6. Small Boat Sailing Scheme Working Group
7. Instructor Training Advisory Panel

We appreciate we may not be able to accommodate everyone on the various working groups, however we anticipate all groups will seek input from a wider audience during their term, which will provide an opportunity for everyone to contribute. We look forward to working together to grow and develop the future of Dinghy Sailing in Ireland.

Niamh McCutcheon
ISA President