

Wingfoil Collaboration Proposal

Stability for Wingfoil World Titles



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Introduction

World Sailing is the world governing body for the sport of sailing, officially recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

World Sailing is responsible for:

- the promotion of the sport internationally;
- managing sailing at the Olympic and Paralympic Games;
- developing the Racing Rules of Sailing and regulations for all sailing competitions;
- the training of judges, umpires and other administrators;
- the development of the sport around the world; and
- representing the sailors in all matters concerning the sport.

The principal members of World Sailing are the 'Member National Authorities' (MNAs) and the 'Class Associations'.

We have a clear and ambitious vision

A world in which millions more people fall in love with sailing; inspired by the unique relationship between sport, technology and the forces of nature, we all work to protect the waters of the world.

Our mission

To make sailing more exciting and accessible for everyone to participate or watch, and use our reach and influence to create a sustainable future for our sport and the waters of the world.

Our journey

With the objective to organise the structure of the pinnacle events of this exciting discipline, World Sailing is inviting the GWA and the IWSA to come together under a united structure for the benefit of wingfoiling and the wider sport of sailing.

World Sailing made itself available and hosted a meeting with the GWA and the IWSA in London, January 2022.

This proposal is intended to promote this exciting new form of sailing, providing stability for growth providing the best platform for sailors from all nations of the world.

We look forward to working with both organisations to serve the wingfoiling community, supporting the growth and development of this exciting and dynamic part of our sport.

Background

Event organisers have a responsibility to the integrity of the sport and World Sailing strives to ensure that the regulations, the Racing Rules of Sailing, the appointment of Race Officials and all rules governing sailing events are recognised and endorsed.

World Sailing approval is required for any event that is described as a World Tour, World Championship, World Cup or any event perceived to be a World Championship.

This approval is granted to Classes which have been recognised as World Sailing Class Associations, and this recognition is reserved for Classes which offer a high standard of international competitive sailing and satisfy the criteria set out in the regulations.

The right to hold World titles for World Sailing Class Associations is subject to compliance with an executed agreement between the Classes and World Sailing and compliance with all relevant regulations which aim to ensure the integrity of the sport.

Alternatively, World Sailing recognises events and award rights to hold World Titles to 'Special Events'.

[World Sailing regulation 25.1:

World Sailing approval is required for any event that is described as a World Championship, uses the word "World" in the title of the event, or any of the promoters, organizers or any other organization officially connected with the event, represents or holds out in any way that the event is a World Championship or does the foregoing in such a way that the event is reasonably perceived to be a World Championship.]

The IWSA has put forward an application for recognition of World Sailing Class status for the International Wingfoil Class. A class encouraging the development of equipment, permitting the use of any and all equipment.

- ➔ *World Sailing recognised the early development stages of the discipline and considered that deferring the decision will allow the Class to implement required changes to the class rules and to prove their validity.*

The GWA has put forward an application for recognition of World Sailing Class status for the GWA Wingfoil Race Class. A class requiring the use of registered equipment from their affiliated brands.

- ➔ *Similarly, World Sailing decided to defer the application noting that the required changes to the class rules and that these rules had not been used at the track record of events disputing the requirement to being a class offering a high standard of international competitive sailing. Further, the Constitution Committee review of the class constitution noted a deviation from what is expected from traditional class associations noting brands and not sailors formed the membership of the class.*

The opportunity

There is the recognised risk among the parties of having multiple, potentially unlimited, 'World titles' with little clarity for sailors, event organisers and sponsors, eventually deflating the value of each World title.

There is an opportunity to provide a platform for brands, recognising their interests and efforts in the development of the sport. However, there is a risk in limiting the eligible equipment given the recognised pursue for fastest and best performing equipment. There is therefore an opportunity to develop a platform that considers and differentiates both.

The early stages of this sailing discipline will most likely see development in unforeseen areas, there is an opportunity to benefit from collaboration with World Sailing providing clarity and protection around calendars, recognised disciplines, development of rules, and promoting best practices, safety standards and sustainability targets.

The proposal

There is currently no recognised class or endorsed event by World Sailing and the parties have the opportunity to collaborate towards establishing the best structure for this discipline of the sport.

At the meeting facilitated by World Sailing both parties welcomed and supported the proposal to establish a structure distinguishing between Expression and Racing disciplines.

World Sailing is suggesting that the pinnacle of the sport is framed within the structure of a "Wingfoil World Tour" composing of an independent Expression World Tour which would include the Surf freestyle and Surf wave disciplines and an independent Racing World Tour which would include a class promoting the development of equipment enabling the use of any and all equipment and a class promoting the use of controlled equipment with focus on protecting the interests of brands and manufacturers, requiring athletes to use registered equipment "off the shelf" from affiliated brands.

Expression Tour

An Expression Tour with exclusivity to award World Titles for the Surf Slalom and Surf Freestyle disciplines and to hold a World Championship or a World Tour for these disciplines.

Through a Special Event agreement World Sailing would award these rights and sanction the events. Other details include:

- Tour name, event names and titles agreed between partner and WS,
- Requirement to submit event calendar to WS,
- Sanction fees per event, refundable if cancellations due to force majeure events,
- Requirement to comply with applicable WS regulations and RRS,
- Other applicable rules to be approved by WS,
- Anti-Doping administered and controlled by WS,

- Collaboration to identify appropriate race officials,
- The organiser would have ownership, control and exclusive right to exploit media and commercial rights in respect of Tour and events,
- Promotion of tour and events on WS owned channels,

Racing Tour

A Racing Tour with exclusivity to award World Titles for two racing classes:

- 1) A class requiring the use of registered equipment from approved brands with World Sailing controlling the class rules and the approval process of brands and equipment. World Sailing will consult with representatives of brands before approving changes to the class rules or the approval process of brands and equipment. World Sailing focus to ensure that production of equipment satisfies requirements to ensure all equipment is made available to all athletes in equalised conditions.
- 2) A class permitting the use of any and all equipment, providing a platform for the use of new designs and customised equipment. Allowing the development of a class focused on the interests of the athletes within a single structure governing racing.

Other details include:

- Any applicable fees for registration of brands and equipment to be controlled by World Sailing and to be spent only on the promotion of Wingfoil disciplines (both expression and racing)
- Tour name, event names and titles agreed between partner and WS,
- Sanction fees per event, refundable if cancellations due to force majeure events,
- Requirement to submit event calendar to WS,
- Requirement to comply with applicable WS regulations and RRS,
- Other applicable rules to be approved by WS,
- Anti-Doping administered and controlled by WS,
- Collaboration to identify appropriate race officials,
- The organiser would have ownership, control and exclusive right to exploit media and commercial rights in respect of Tour and events,
- Promotion of tour and events on WS owned channels,

Potential Partnerships

Having met with the GWA and the IWSA and having received class applications from both groups, World Sailing is proposing to sanction the following events through Special Event agreements, with a proposed term until 2028;

The GWA would deliver the “expression tour” with exclusivity to award World Titles for the Surf Freestyle and Surf Slalom which includes elements of racing.

The IWSA would deliver the “racing tour” with all “GWA affiliated brands” automatically approved by World Sailing with no applicable fees until 2024.

Further, the agreements would require representatives to meet with World Sailing and brand representatives, providing a platform for the industry to further develop the sport and work towards common goals which would include recognition of new disciplines, sustainability targets, safety and quality standards, and training and development.

With World Sailing providing a supervisory role, the proposal forms a powerful platform to accelerate the interest and growth of wingfoil among the sailing community.

An alternative

World Sailing can consider alternatives to the proposal which could include:

- Opportunity to sanction a World Tour for expression with or without exclusivity to specific disciplines,
- Opportunity to sanction a World Tour for racing which may or may not include the requirement for equipment to be from affiliated brands,
- Opportunity to promoting the development of multiple classes to obtain designation of World Sailing Class Status, potentially recognising different classes for different disciplines.

Timeline

World Sailing asks the GWA and the IWSA to provide feedback to this draft proposal within two weeks, by the 23rd of May. Draft Special Event agreements have been shared with each party and include further details of the proposal.

World Sailing invites other representatives of the wingfoil industry to share their comments directly to: jaime.navarro@sailing.org

End.