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Introduction

This report builds on the earlier recommendations of the Format Working Group, which were approved by both the Events Committee and the World Sailing Council. These initial recommendations focused on aligning Olympic sailing with the expectations of the International Olympic Committee and Olympic broadcasters - aiming to reduce complexity, improve clarity, and enhance the sport's overall appeal to a global audience.

While progress has been made through the recommendations already approved, several important format-related areas remain to be addressed. These include:

1. Shortening the Opening Series by removing at least 20% of races in all events.
2. Retaining one dedicated final/medal day per event.
3. Shortening the duration of dinghy races.
4. Limiting the number of formats in the “final/medal series” to a minimum (initial recommendation: a maximum of two);
5. Ensuring medal decisions are made in the final race.

This report presents recommendations covering points 1 to 3. Points 4 and 5—regarding the final race structure and ensuring that medal outcomes remain undecided until that race—will be the subject of a future report.

Considerations

In response to IOC conditions and broadcaster's strong guidance, a revised Opening Series structure is proposed for LA28.

This recommendation is guided by several key considerations:

- The IOC's requirement to deliver the Opening Series within a three-day racing window;
- the need to ensure medal outcomes are not determined before the final race;

- the importance of predictable and concise race durations to support broadcast planning; and
- the goal of enhancing audience engagement while maintaining sporting integrity.

The proposed structure is based on a 6-hour broadcast/racing window, reflecting prevailing wind patterns at the 2028 Olympic venue. Racing should occur when scheduled as it will not be possible to extend the broadcast window due to sunset.

A range of factors were carefully considered for each class, including:

- Fleet size
- Course configuration
- Fleet spread
- Finishing time variability

The discussion focused on optimising these elements to support both fairness and event delivery efficiency. Additionally, the Working Group recommends reviewing and refining finish time windows for each class, depending on conditions, to minimise downtime and improve broadcast reliability.

The following structure is proposed as a consistent framework for LA28. It represents a tested hypothesis and will require further validation through structured testing.

Recommendation 1: Maximum Number of Opening Series Races and Target Durations

The following is intended to support reliable event delivery, enhance storytelling and audience comprehension, and improve the competitiveness of the final stages of competition. The intention is to schedule as many races as possible within the three-day Opening Series window; however, the Working Group acknowledges that catching up on lost races may not be feasible due to time and broadcast constraints. It was also noted that the Race Committee would not be expected to catch up on missed races at the expense of another scheduled event. Therefore, the Working Group comes to the following conclusion:

It is recommended that ...

- for the respective Events the maximum number of races in the opening series and the target time for each race is in accordance with Table 1 (see below);
- the World Sailing Race Management Policies for the Olympic Sailing Competition are updated to reflect that the race committee is not expected to catch up any missed races at the expense of another event;
- further technical and practical testing is conducted to confirm the viability of this structure across all Olympic sailing events.

Table 1: Maximum number of opening series races and target time

Event	Equipment	Maximum Number of Opening Series Races	Target Time
Men's Windsurfing	iQFOiL	12	7–12 minutes
Women's Windsurfing	iQFOiL	12	7–12 minutes
Men's Kite	IKA Formula Kite	12	≤12 minutes
Women's Kite	IKA Formula Kite	12	≤12 minutes
Men's Dinghy	ILCA 7	8	30–35 minutes
Women's Dinghy	ILCA 6	8	30–35 minutes
Men's Skiff	49er	9	25 minutes
Women's Skiff	49erFX	9	25 minutes
Mixed Dinghy	470	8	30–32 minutes
Mixed Multihull	Nacra 17	9	25 minutes

Recommendation 2: Variable Leg Lengths

It is important to be potentially flexible regarding variable leg lengths to help meet target time for race durations without compromising the tactical integrity of the race.

Therefore, the Working Group comes to the following conclusion:

- It is recommended that...
 - the first upwind leg should remain sufficiently long relative to fleet size to preserve the core strategic and tactical value of the start and first beat;
 - the length of the second upwind leg may be shortened to help reduce overall race time while maintaining fair and meaningful competition; and
 - this approach should be tested and refined by Race Officials with the respective Olympic class, to support consistent delivery.

Recommendation 3: Course Layout Options and Grandstand Finish Zones

Several important factors contribute to improve both race management and the spectator experience. Therefore, the Working Group comes to the following conclusion:

It is recommended that World Sailing Race Officials, with the respective Olympic Classes should...

- explore both upwind and reaching finishes across all course configurations;
- study the feasibility of implementing a grandstand finish zone that works across a range of wind conditions;
- develop diagrams and layout plans for
 - stadium-style courses, with start/finish variations based on wind direction;

- the Belmont venue area, taking into account the pier, beach access, and slalom racing options.
- progress these refinements in 2025 in preparation for detailed venue planning and broadcast coordination.

Next steps

The Format Working Group is actively working on a proposal for the final race formats across all Olympic sailing events. A key objective is to ensure that medal decisions are made in the final race, maintaining competitive tension and maximising audience engagement. This work is ongoing and will take into account class-specific characteristics, different facets of fairness, and broadcast considerations. The final format proposal will be presented in a subsequent report.