

Events Committee Report to Council on Calendar and Format

October 2025

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Executive Summary

The Events Committee puts forward to Council four recommendations related to *Calendar of Olympic Class racing* and a progress report regarding *Format*. Please note that each of the recommendations is individually put forward for vote unless Council decides to have an en bloc vote for groupings or all of them.

Calendar of Olympic Class Racing Recommendations

The recommendations are broken down into three areas:

- Calendar Structure and Predictability
- Scheduling Efficiency and Athlete Welfare
- Year four (4) Class Championships

The sailing community should have clear regatta categorization and long-term planning windows to minimize calendar conflicts and improve global alignment. A predictable and stable structure enables athletes, MNAs, and organizers to plan effectively across multiple seasons, supporting both performance and commercial development.

Recommendation 1: Establish Clear Regatta Categories and Planning Windows

It is recommended to adopt four defined regatta categories of Olympic Class racing with clear, published policy planning windows assigned to each category. The goal is to minimize scheduling conflicts, provide long-term visibility, reduce campaign costs and support strategic regatta development globally.

The annual sailing schedule is split into four categories of regattas:

- Cat 1: World Sailing Regattas: World Sailing Championships, Olympic Test Events, the Last Chance Regatta, the World Cup Series and World Cup Final.
- Cat 2 Olympic Class championships: World Championships and Continentals (Europeans, etc.)
- Cat 3 Perpetual Multiclass Regattas and Regional Games: Sailing Grand Slam, Panam Games, Asian Games, and future Perpetual Multiclass Regattas outside of Europe.
- Cat 4 All other major regattas: Continental domestic regattas, regionally managed domestic circuits (including Nationals of Olympic classes), regional multiclass regattas, etc.

Recommendation 2: Develop and Publish an Eight-Year Rolling Calendar

It is recommended that World Sailing shall maintain and publish an eight-year calendar, updated annually. This approach will give athletes, MNAs, Olympic class associations, and commercial partners clarity and stability to plan effectively for up to two Olympic cycles in advance.

Historical calendar congestion, particularly around Olympic cycles, has led to logistical challenges and scheduling overload for the MNAs, coaches and the athletes. Beyond emphasizing clustering regattas geographically and avoiding peak congestion periods, the third recommendation relates to time windows for World Sailing Championships.

Recommendation 3: World Sailing Championships with two time-windows

It is recommended to have two time-windows:

Window 1 – eight-month window

July two years before the Games to end of February one year before the Games except for the period one week before until one week after the Games window;

Window 2 – two-month window

July one year before the Games to end of September one year before the Games except for the period one week before until one week after the Games window

Scheduling Olympic Class World Championships in the fourth year of the Olympic cycle early in that year increases logistical demands. Creating specific periods in year four of the quadrennial for Olympic Class Championships would help maintain balance, improve logistics and support fair participation.

Recommendation 4: Year four (4) Olympic Class Championships Scheduling

It is recommended that any dedicated scheduling window before July for Olympic Class World Championships be limited exclusively to year four (4) of the quadrennial. This approach will help reduce travel congestion and ensure a balanced, sustainable competition calendar during the peak European circuit period.

Vote in the Events Committee: These recommendations are based on a unanimous vote (13 votes Yes, en bloc) for all recommendations.

Final Format Progress Report

Sailing's value to the Olympic Movement has been declining for some time. With decreasing audience numbers and viewing hours, sailing needs to make transformational change to bring broadcasters back to the sport so audiences can see the brilliance of sailing's athletes.

The Events Committee entrusted a Working Group with the task of recommending a format addressing this issue. The goal was simple and demanding at the same time: to increase viewership and engagement with sailing at the Olympic Games. The Working Group conducted extensive analyses and discussions in 14 sessions over the period of more than 6 months, supported and guided by two Vice Presidents and several senior staff, the Events Committee Chair and Vice Chair, the majority of whom have been involved in direct discussions with the IOC and its Olympic Broadcast Service.

A report on Final format (Appendix 1), also published on the World Sailing webpage ([Format WG Report - 7 October 2025](#)), was discussed in the Events Committee meeting on October 15, 2025, together with 9 proposals from Olympic Classes, the Athletes' Committee document on reflections on format and roll out (Appendix 2), and the impressions from the AC townhall on the day before. This meeting testified to two major truths. First, the Final format decision requires carefully weighed trade-offs. It is embedded in a 'magical polygon', its corners representing highly desirable goals that cannot be achieved simultaneously and partially are mutually incompatible or even contradictory. Second, further conversations are needed. The Final format decision is a political decision in the best sense of the word. It is long-term, conveys and is informed by basic principles, and is linked to overt and tacit

interests at the personal, class, and national level. Such decisions cannot be solved by ‘facts and figures’ alone but require intensive deliberations, especially on the broader picture. This makes further conversations necessary.

Both facts led the Events Committee to decide to pursue further consultations before and during the Annual Conference. On this basis, a report with recommendations regarding the Final format will be sent to Council following the Annual Conference with a view Council and the General Assembly to decide in a special meeting in December 2025.

Vote in the Events Committee: Approved per acclamation.

1 Contextualization¹

The topics in this report remind us of two things important to consider when making sound decisions: the political dimension of decisions and the significance of framing. Regarding the former, when it comes to decisions that have long-term effects, constitute or modify basic principles of action, and affect core interests of important stakeholders, facts and figures regarding the concrete decision topic only help to a certain extent. It is more important to broaden the picture beyond the concrete topic. This enables the decision-making body to consider the overall effects of the intended outcome and also reflect on the overt and tacit interests of those involved in the decision.

In terms of framing, it seems important to challenge seemingly taken-for-granted frames to see what they ‘really’ mean and with what intentions they are used. A good example is ‘fairness’, often – and rightly so – occurring in the conversation on format as a basic frame. One can assume broad agreement that ‘fairness’ constitutes an indispensable benchmark of any (format) decision in the sailing community. Yet, a closer look quickly reveals that it is by no means clear what we actually mean by that: procedural fairness, distributive fairness, compensatory fairness, communicative fairness, etc.? And considering the various forms of fairness, one can ask a number of questions when it comes to Olympic racing and its format. How ‘fair’ is it that a smaller group of countries have the economic means to invest heavily into sailing, becomes a sport that increasingly dependent on (costly) technology? How ‘fair’ is it that some countries have much better natural conditions to do sailing all around the year than others? How ‘fair’ is it that a small group of countries has access to America’s Cup and Sail GP knowledge not available to the vast majority of countries? And vice versa, how ‘unfair’ is it if one adds elements in the format that to a small degree level the playing field by partially interrupting the self-reinforcing cycle of success breeding success at the individual and country level? How ‘unfair’ is it to require an additional competence not being already mastered by those who dominate the scene, thus allowing a greater number of athletes to reach the podium because of broadening the required set of competences? How ‘unfair’ is it to introduce new elements to the requirements for receiving diploma and medals at the Olympic Sailing Competition, thus enlarging the circle of countries that can reach these levels and/or reshuffle the established hierarchy of countries with top places in the medal ranking?

For decision makers and those who are involved in the conversations it might therefore be revealing to take a closer look at arguments that are framed in a specific way, here, e.g., claiming that something is ‘fair’ or ‘unfair’. This could show what type of fairness is (not) meant, whether ‘fairness’ or tacit/overt interests (however legitimate they might be) clothed in the fairness frame are the issue, or whether something entirely else matters.

¹ These remarks constitute the view of the Events Committee Chair and are not necessarily shared by other members of the Events Committee. They have been partially shared but not discussed in the Events Committee meeting.

2 World Sailing Calendar Olympic Class Racing

The Events Committee (EC) has been tasked with advising and reporting to Council on policies concerning the World Sailing Calendar in line with the World Sailing Strategy and related frameworks. This part of the report has been prepared by the Events Committee's Calendar and Ranking Working Group #5 in accordance with the World Sailing Strategy 2025-2029 and related frameworks. The recommendations have been discussed in two consecutive meetings of the Events Committee and address the 10 events selected for the 2028 Olympic Games.

2.1 Recommendations

The following recommendations are broken down into three areas:

- Calendar Structure and Predictability
- Scheduling Efficiency and Athlete Welfare
- Year four (4) Class Championships

2.1.1 Calendar Structure and Predictability

The sailing community as a whole should have clear regatta categorization and long-term planning windows to minimize calendar conflicts and improve global alignment. A predictable and stable structure enables athletes, MNAs, and organizers to plan effectively across multiple seasons, supporting both performance and commercial development.

Recommendation 1: Establish Clear Regatta Categories and Planning Windows

It is recommended to adopt four defined regatta categories of Olympic Class racing with clear, published policy planning windows assigned to each category. The goal is to minimize scheduling conflicts, provide long-term visibility, reduce campaign costs and support strategic regatta development globally.

The annual sailing schedule is split into four categories of regattas:

- Cat 1: World Sailing Regattas: World Sailing Championships, Olympic Test Events, the Last Chance Regatta, the World Cup Series and World Cup Final.
- Cat 2 Olympic Class championships: World Championships and Continentals (Europeans, etc.)
- Cat 3 Perpetual Multiclass Regattas and Regional Games: Sailing Grand Slam, Panam Games, Asian Games, and future Perpetual Multiclass Regattas outside of Europe.
- Cat 4 All other major regattas: Continental domestic regattas, regionally managed domestic circuits (including Nationals of Olympic classes), regional multiclass regattas, etc.

Calendar Priority Planning based on the above categories:

Using the four categories above as the starting point, and applying priority windows throughout the year by category and by quadrennial year, we arrive at this proposal:

Olympic year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
General overview	Perpetual Annual Multiclass regattas (PMR)						Olympic Class Championships& Regional Games*					
	Domestic Continentals...						Domestic Continentals and regional multiclass events (continued into January & February)					
Year 1	Select window for Olympic Class	European Perpetual Multiclass Regattas (PMR) and select windows for Olympic Class Championships						World Sailing Championships**, Olympic Class Championships, Regional Games, and potential window for future Perpetual Multiclass Regattas outside of Europe in November and December				
Year 2	Championships and potential window for future Perpetual						Olympic training					
Year 3	Multiclass Regattas						Test Event					
Year 4	outside of Europe						Olympics					
NB *: the window for Olympic Class Regattas extends into January and February provided these early year regattas are held in the Southern Hemisphere												
NB **: World Sailing Championships windows extend beyond this 5 month window. See below for more detail												

In the event of a conflict of a major Olympic class regatta submitted for approval to World Sailing through the online regatta application procedure, World Sailing shall request the advice of the Events Committee Calendar Working Group before presenting the conflict to the World Sailing Board for resolution.

A Perpetual Multiclass Olympic Regatta (PMR) outside of Europe is considered in this proposed Calendar Priority Planning during the months of November, December, January and February. With the next Olympic quadrennial in the Southern Hemisphere, supporting the development of a PMR outside of Europe during these four months is a priority of this proposal.

Recommendation 2: Develop and Publish an Eight-Year Rolling Calendar

It is recommended that World Sailing shall maintain and publish an eight-year calendar, updated annually. This approach will give athletes, MNAs, Olympic class associations, and commercial partners clarity and stability to plan effectively for up to two Olympic cycles in advance.

Below is an illustration of this eight-year rolling calendar illustration with the 2029-2032 quadrennial as the target.

Calendar Planning 2025 – 2028

2025	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Category 1	No Category 1 regattas in first years after the Olympics											
Category 2					Olympic Class Regattas (OCR)					Olympic Class Regattas (OCR)		
Category 3				PMR Regattas		PMR Regattas			PMR Final Test			
Category 4	Domestic Continentals...							Domestic Continentals and regional multiclass events (continued into January & February)				
2026	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Category 1	WSC Test Fortaleza						WSC Test Gdynia					
Category 2					OCR exception			Olympic Class Regattas (OCR) *				
Category 3				PMR Regattas		PMR Regattas	PMR Regattas		Asian Games			
2027	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Category 1	WSC Fortaleza						WSC Gdynia	Test Event				
Category 2									Olympic Class Regattas (OCR) *			
Category 3				PMR Regattas		PMR Regattas	PanAm Games					
2028	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Category 1		Last Chance Regatta					Olympics					
Category 2	Year 4 OCR				Year 4 OCR				Olympic Class Regattas (OCR)*			
Category 3				PMR Regattas		PMR Regattas					PMR Regattas	

NB *: the window for Olympic Class Regattas extends into January and February provided these early year regattas are held in the Southern Hemisphere

In 2026, there are certain Olympic Class World Championships (OCR) in May because of the World Sailing Championships for single handed boats being moved to 2027 and the limited windows available in the autumn because of the Asian Games in 2026.

The dates for the Continental qualification regattas that are not already taken into account in the above categories (3 regattas all held in December 2023 for Paris 20024) shall be determined in coordination with the Olympic Class regattas which have that period of the year reserved for their regattas.

The Dutch Water Week has been moved permanently to three weeks before Kieler Woche to allow two full weeks of rest between the end of Dutch Water Week and the start of Kieler Woche. These two events also with Palma and Hyères are identified in the calendar as PMR Events.

The 4th year of the quadrennial allows for certain Olympic Class Championships to occur early in the year (January and February) or in May.

Finally, the Category 4 regattas remain the same in each year of the quadrennial. For simplicity, they are not repeated each year in this presentation.

Calendar Planning 2029 – 2032

2029	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Category 1	No Category 1 regattas in first years after the Olympics											
Category 2					Selective OCR			Olympic Class Regattas (OCR)*				
Category 3	PMR Regattas			PMR Regattas		PMR Regattas					PMR Regattas	
Category 4	Domestic Continentals...							Domestic Continentals and regional multiclass events (continued into January & February)				
2030	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Category 1							WS Championships Window 1					
Category 2								Olympic Class Regattas (OCR)*				
Category 3	PMR Regattas			PMR Regattas		PMR Regattas					Asian Games	PMR Regattas
2031	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Category 1	WS Championships Window 1						WS Championships Window 2					
Category 2									Olympic Class Regattas (OCR)*			
Category 3	PMR Regattas			PMR Regattas		PMR Regattas		Test Event			PMR Regattas	
2032	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Category 1		Last Chance Regatta						Olympics				
Category 2	Year 4 OCR				Year 4 OCR				Olympic Class Regattas (OCR)*			
Category 3	PMR Regattas			PMR Regattas		PMR Regattas					PMR Regattas	
NB *: the window for Olympic Class Regattas extends into January and February provided these early year regattas are held in the Southern Hemisphere												

The Last Chance Regatta (LCR) proposal in this 2029-2032 quadrennial could be as late as May 2032 in the Southern Hemisphere provided there is supplied equipment at the Olympics for the double handed boats. In this proposal, we've left the LCR in the February/March period until the decision is made for supplied equipment at the 2032 Games.

Finally, in order to promote the development of a Perpetual Multiclass Olympic Regatta (PMR) outside of Europe, we have proposed two slots for these potential regattas during the November to February period.

2.1.2 Scheduling Efficiency and Athlete Welfare

Historical calendar congestion, particularly around Olympic cycles, has led to logistical challenges and scheduling overload for the MNAs, coaches and the athletes. This report emphasizes clustering regattas geographically and avoiding peak congestion periods in order to safeguard athlete welfare, control costs, and maintain high participation rates at the major Olympic regattas. In addition, this report aims to minimize the need for multiple boats for teams in different geographic locations. In particular, this report presents in the 2029-2032 quadrennial an absence of regattas during the Olympic month period with the exception of the Olympic Test Event.

The World Sailing Championships (WSC) and their related Test Event windows need to be flexible over a long period of time to offer a greater diversity of candidates. The following

recommendation provides more clarity on the windows available for these regattas as well as the eventual Test Events for these WSC.

Recommendation 3: World Sailing Championships with two time-windows:

Window 1 – eight-month window

July two years before the Games to end of February one year before the Games except for the period one week before until one week after the Games window;

Window 2 – two-month window

July one year before the Games to end of September one year before the Games except for the period one week before until one week after the Games window

Whilst the IOC permits qualification up to two years before the Games and these windows reflect this, hosting the World Sailing Championships two years before the Games is early in the quadrennial. The Events Committee recommends that hosting the World Sailing Championships two years before the Games be used in exceptional cases when other more favorable windows are not available.

2.1.3 Year four (4) Olympic Class Championships

Feedback from past cycles suggests that scheduling Year four (4) Olympic Class World Championships early in the year increase logistical demands during the first six months of the year. Creating specific periods in Year four (4) of the quadrennial for Olympic Class Championships would help maintain balance, improve logistics and support fair participation.

Recommendation 4: Year four (4) Olympic Class Championships Scheduling

It is recommended that any dedicated scheduling window before July for Olympic Class World Championships be limited exclusively to Year four (4) of the quadrennial. This approach will help reduce travel congestion and ensure a balanced, sustainable competition calendar during the peak European circuit period.

2.2 Future Steps

As part of the next phase, the Events Committee will ask the respective Working Group to engage the Olympic Classes Sub-Committee, World Sailing Executive Office, and regatta organizers in structured consultations to gather feedback on the proposed calendar principles and assess operational considerations. In parallel, the Events Committee through its Working Group will explore options for a live, interactive digital calendar platform to enhance transparency and simplify planning for all stakeholders. Finally, to ensure the framework remains relevant and effective, a formal review of the calendar remit will be scheduled after the first full quadrennial cycle, with any necessary refinements to be implemented ahead of the 2032 period.

3 Final Format

3.1 Point of departure

Sailing's value to the Olympic Movement has been declining for some time as evidenced by the regular reduction in athlete quota since the 2000 Olympic Games. Whilst sailing does well for universality and heritage, its media and spectator metrics are poor, and it is complex and costly to deliver. Athlete quotas for every sport will come under renewed pressure after the LA28 Olympic Games so action is required now to reduce the risk to sailing in the future.

With declining audience numbers and viewing hours, sailing needs to make transformational change to bring broadcasters back to the sport so audiences can see the brilliance of sailing's athletes. Broadcasters make their scheduling decisions more than a year ahead of the Games, before most athletes have qualified, and they are selecting from 50 disciplines. From the strong guidance by the broadcasters, three issues are essential:

- **Time predictability:** Sailing must start and finish on time, so broadcasters will consider showing the sport and audiences know when to watch it.
- **Greatest possible number of countries with chance for a medal:** The more competitors and the NOCs they represent, who have a realistic chance to make the finals or win a medal, the more broadcasters and audiences will engage with our sport.
- **Excitement and simplicity:** Each race must be understandable and compelling to watch so when broadcasters and audiences are deciding what to engage with, they select sailing.

The Events Committee entrusted the task of recommending a format that guides us into the future to a respective Working Group consisting of experts from within Events Committee and from the athletes and team leaders that was confirmed by both Board and Council. The goal was simple and demanding at the same time: to increase viewership and engagement with sailing at the Olympic Games. The Working Group conducted extensive analyses and discussions in 14 sessions over the period of more than 6 months, supported and guided by two Vice Presidents and several senior staff, the Events Committee Chair and Vice Chair, the majority of whom have been involved in direct discussions with the IOC and its Olympic Broadcast Service. The result was a report (Appendix 1) published on the World Sailing webpage ([Format WG Report - 7 October 2025](#)).

This report was discussed in the Events Committee meeting on October 15, 2025, together with 9 proposals from Olympic Classes coming either via the proposal portal (in time and after the deadline) or directly to Events Committee, the Athletes' Committee document on reflections on format and testing (Appendix 2), and the impressions from the Athlete Committee townhall on the day before. Together with 12 recommendations from earlier this year already approved by Council, these recommendations form a complete package that balances the principles of sporting credibility and consistency with the need for simplicity, clarity, and global appeal, thus addressing the key format issues of our sport at the Olympic Sailing Competition (OSC).

In the discussion two things emerged that overtly and tacitly were already part of the extensive Events Committee efforts in preparing the report. First, *the decision requires carefully weighed trade-offs*. It is embedded in a 'magical polygon', its corners representing highly desirable goals that cannot be achieved simultaneously and partially are mutually

incompatible or even contradictory ('the more of A, the less of B'). Examples for such major goals in this polygon are, in no particular order, faithfulness to tradition of Olympic sailing, rewarding athletes' continuous performance over a whole regatta, rewarding athletes' focused performance in critical phases of a regatta, simple to understand for viewers, maximum uptake of national broadcasters, or feasibility and cost of event delivery. In this polygon, trade-offs are inevitable. They require a careful weighing of different options to achieve an overall configuration that members of the sailing community— although to a different degree – see as the preferred route for the upcoming final stages of the format decisions about the Olympic Sailing Competition.

Second, *further conversations are needed*. This need does not arise primarily because of a deficit in terms of arguments and angles. Virtually everything communicated in the run-up to the Events Committee through various channels² had already been part of the conversation in the Working Group where voices from very different segments of the sailing community were present. In particular, athletes and Olympic Classes in a constructive way made sure that their voices were heard through their representatives. The decision at hand is, at its core, not a decision where coefficients and weighted criteria are decisive – it is a political decision in the best sense of the word: it is long-term, formulates and shapes basic principles, and is influenced by and affects overt and tacit interests at the personal, class, and national level. Good decisions of this kind require intensive conversations especially on the broader picture, mutual understanding, wrestling with trade-offs and their side-effects, and trust.

3.2 Next steps

Against this backdrop, the Events Committee decided that additional process steps have to be taken beyond what has already been done:

- Liaise with various stakeholders, in particular athletes and Olympic classes, to be able to add a small number of additional persons to the Working Group and to further gather input by people outside the current group(s) involved.
- Provide a structured set of criteria in terms of broadcast appeal that can serve as part of the benchmarks for the proposal(s) to be developed.
- Before and during the Annual Conference conduct additional
 - consultations with various individual and collective stakeholders and
 - session(s) of the Working Group.
- Develop revised proposal(s) to be submitted to Events Committee and Council.

² It goes beyond the scope of this report to reflect on whether the channel, timing, and tone of these communications were compatible with the spirit of trusting collaboration, confidence in the constitutions with its procedures and safeguards, and the persons entrusted with this process. Therefore, this report remains silent on this issue.

4 Appendix 1: Format Working Group Report (7 October 2025)

Working Group Members

- Piotr Oleksiak (Working Group Leader)
- Geoffrey Woolley (Working Group Co-Leader)
- Anna Holmdahl White
- Markus Schwendtner (Olympic Classes Subcommittee)
- Guillaume Chiellino (Team Leaders & Coaches Commission)
- Lisa Darmanin (Athletes Committee)
- Mark Robinson (Team Leaders & Coaches Commission)

The Working Group has been supported and guided in their 14 meetings by two Vice Presidents and several senior staff, the Events Committee Chair and Vice Chair, the majority of whom have been involved in direct discussions with the IOC and its Olympic Broadcast Service.

4.1 Introduction

This document represents the final step in a series of recommendations developed by the Working Group and already supported by Council (see Supplement 1 at the end of this report) to define the competition format for the Olympic Sailing Competition (OSC). Taken together, these recommendations form a complete package that balances the principles of sporting credibility and consistency with the need for simplicity, clarity, and global appeal. The proposals build on extensive analysis and discussion and are intended to provide a coherent framework that can be applied across all events at the Games. By bringing the work to a conclusion in this paper, the Working Group presents a coherent concept that addresses the key format issues of our sport at the Olympic Sailing Competition (OSC).

The Working Group acknowledges that many factors influencing the successful delivery of the Olympic Sailing Competition fall outside its remit. These areas – in particular storytelling, visual and broadcast presentation, and venue reliability – have already been noted in other papers.

4.2 Context

Sailing's value to the Olympic Movement has been declining for some time as evidenced by the regular reduction in athlete quota since the 2000 Olympic Games. Whilst sailing does well for universality and heritage, its media and spectator metrics are poor, and it is complex and costly to deliver. Athlete quotas for every sport will come under renewed pressure after the LA28 Olympic Games so action is required now to reduce the risk to sailing in the future.

This Working Group has already presented recommendations where it can within its remit, all of which have been approved by Council, to address the cost of delivery and make the competitors more visually identifiable to audiences.

With declining audience numbers and viewing hours, sailing needs to make transformational change to bring broadcasters back to the sport so audiences can see the brilliance of sailing's

athletes. Broadcasters make their scheduling decisions more than a year ahead of the Games, before most athletes have qualified, and they are selecting from 50 disciplines. From the strong guidance by the broadcasters, three issues are essential:

- **Time predictability:** Sailing must start and finish on time, so broadcasters will consider showing the sport and audiences know when to watch it.
- **Greatest possible number of countries with chance for a medal:** The more competitors and the NOCs they represent, who have a realistic chance to make the finals or win a medal, the more broadcasters and audiences will engage with our sport.
- **Excitement and simplicity:** Each race must be understandable and compelling to watch so when broadcasters and audiences are deciding what to engage with, they select sailing.

4.3 Strengthening the Value of Olympic Sailing

Format is a part of a comprehensive program, and the Format Working Group acknowledges that format changes alone are not enough. With sailing and its athlete quota under so much pressure to add value to the Olympic Movement, the other priority areas that this WG believes need urgent attention to compliment the recommended format are:

- Athlete Promotion – A plan to raise the profile of sailing and its athletes between Games.
- Broadcast Presentation – Work to support the Olympic Broadcast Service and national broadcasters to present the racing in the simplest, most exciting way.
- Scheduling – Minimising recalls and race restarts to make sailing a more reliable for broadcasters.
- Competition Management – Deliver racing to the highest standards, leveraging technology effectively and selecting the right people for the right roles.

Although beyond the scope of this WG's remit, the group strongly urge the Events Committee and the other bodies of World Sailing prioritise all the aspects identified to improve the value the Olympic Sailing Competition offers the Olympic Movement.

4.4 Considerations

When discussion the following set of recommendations, the Working Group was facing a 'magical polygon' whose corners represent highly desirable goals that cannot be achieved simultaneously and partially are mutually incompatible or even contradictory ('the more of A, the less of B'). Major goals in this polygon are (in no particular order in this following listing):

- Faithfulness to tradition of Olympic sailing
- Rewarding athletes' continuous performance over a whole regatta
- Rewarding athletes' focused performance in critical phases of a regatta
- Adherence to conditions of IOC and strong guidance by broadcasters
- Feasible for Race Officials
- Appealing to sailing audience
- Appealing to non-sport audience
- Allowing to create interesting narratives about the athletes and our sport
- Simple to understand by viewers
- Maximising the uptake of national broadcasters
- Feasibility and cost of event delivery

The Working Group developed a set of recommendations that overall acknowledges these goals through various trade-offs in order to achieve an overall configuration that the members of the Working Group – although to a different degree – see as the preferred route for the upcoming final stages of the Olympic Sailing Competition.

4.5 Recommendations

4.5.1 Recommendation 1: Number of final formats

The Working Group recommends having one (1) final format for all Events.

At the Olympic Games it is essential that formats are simple, consistent, and easy to understand. Using one common structure across all sailing events ensures clarity for audiences and media, reduces complexity for organisers, and guarantees that every discipline follows the same pathway from opening races to a decisive final. This unified approach strengthens the identity of Olympic sailing, makes the sport more accessible, and provides a clear and recognisable narrative that can be shared across all events.

Within this single format, small variations may eventuate based on testing to accommodate the different requirements and specifications of each event.

4.5.2 Recommendation 2: Final Format

To help the sailing community clearly understand the proposed structure, the Working Group has used provisional names for the competition stages. These terms are tentative and will likely evolve into simpler and more widely understandable expressions as the format matures.

The Working Group recommends that the Olympic Sailing Competition comprises two stages:

- *Opening Series with Event-specific number of maximum races over three days*
- *Medal Series on one medal day with*
 - *Elimination Final (ten competitors, one race), followed by*
 - *Final (four competitors, one race).*

The Working Group further recommends that

- *the top 6 competitors from the Opening Series are rewarded with bonus points according to their overall rank in this series (see figure 1 below ‘Opening Series reward model’) to give them an advantage in the Elimination Final;*
- *the top 4 competitors after the Elimination Final advance to the Final;*
- *the overall results 1-4 in the Final equal the finishing order in this race (‘first-across-the-line’).*

The Working Group also recommends testing these cornerstones as well as the suggested parameters and, if needed, adapting within the limits of the recommendations above (i.e., opening series progressing to elimination final progressing to a final with the finish order being the overall result). The parameters are the number of competitors, the amount and kind of reward for opening series performance, and the duration of each race.

The Working Group likewise recommends the following boundary conditions: The chosen format after testing shall not

- *encourage 'negative tactics' such as sailing someone out of the next stage due to an overly protected own position, and*
- *have the medals predetermined before the final.*

4.5.2.1 Background

The Olympic Games demand competition formats that are credible, fair, and capable of delivering a clear and engaging sporting narrative. The adoption of an elimination-based structure, culminating in a four-athlete, first-across-the-line final, meets these requirements and offers several significant benefits:

1. Clarity and Accessibility

The structure provides a straightforward progression from an initial series of races into a decisive final phase. This creates a narrative that is simple to communicate and easy for spectators, broadcasters, and media to follow, enhancing the accessibility of the sport.

2. A Compelling Sporting Conclusion

The format ensures that the Olympic sailing competition concludes with a focused, high-stakes contest. The four-boat final, in particular, delivers a definitive head-to-head moment: a single race in which the finish order determines the Olympic medallists. This outcome is simple, dramatic, and universally understood, aligning the sport with broader audience expectations.

3. Recognition of Consistent Performance

Competitors who demonstrate consistency and excellence across the opening series are rewarded with tangible advantages in the elimination final. This ensures that the pathway to the final reflects overall performance, while still allowing for competition and movement within the fleet.

4. Recognition of Performance When It Matters Most

The Final with its emphasis on focused performance against the top athletes of the OSC complements the recognition of competitors' consistent performance. It showcases that Olympic medallists excel both in consistent performance over several races and in focused performance when it matters most. This demonstrates their comprehensive set of competencies.

5. Retention of Broad Participation

The structure enables a greater number of competitors and nations to remain in contention for longer, maintaining competitive relevance and engagement throughout the event. This reflects the principle of universality central to the Olympic movement and encourages a larger number of broadcasters to present the event to their audience.

6. Operational Efficiency

With a defined number of races and predictable scheduling, the structure provides certainty for race management, media operations, and spectators. This reduces complexity and increases reliability in the delivery of the competition addressing the main complaint from the media.

7. Enhanced Spectacle of the Final

The four-boat, winner-take-all final concentrates attention on a small, elite group of athletes.

The direct, first-across-the-line format not only demonstrates a specific set of competencies, removes ambiguity in the awarding of medals, and guarantees that the ultimate Olympic moment is both decisive and highly visible. It is also the most understandable outcome for a global audience: the competitor who finishes first wins gold, the second wins silver, and the third wins bronze. This straightforward structure is universally recognisable, requires no explanation, and strengthens sailing's ability to connect with audiences on the biggest stage.

4.5.2.2 The Elimination Final

The Elimination Final consists in a single race. Points from the race will be added to the position (score) brought from the opening series (1 to 7 points) and ties will be broken by the race result in the Elimination Final. The top four advance to the final.

In recommending the Elimination Final element, the Working Group has prioritised strong reward for athletes who achieve top positions in the opening series. If using a low-point scoring system, the first six athletes are assigned the points of their respective place in the opening series while those athletes ranked 7-10 are assigned 7 points.

Calculations using around 150,000 permutations of possible race outcomes demonstrated that this format best rewards consistent performance, ensuring that leading competitors retain a high probability of advancing to the final, while still offering a more than 20% probability to those ranked 7th to 10th to progress. An additional benefit is that top athletes can remain active on the water rather than being sidelined, keeping them engaged in competition, understanding the weather conditions and visible to audiences at the most important moments of the Olympic Games.

To reach this conclusion, the Group examined and compared different reward models and scoring variations, with the results supporting the adoption of the following structural element rewarding the top 6 athletes after the opening series (Figure 1).

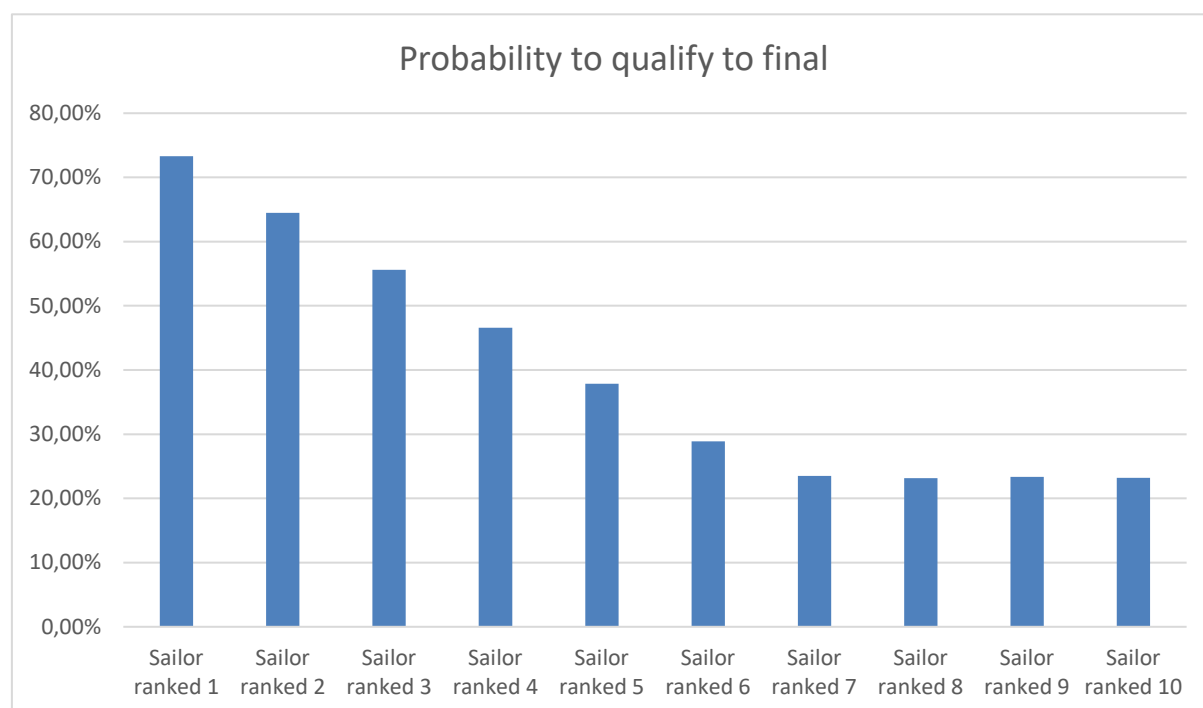


Figure 1: Opening Series reward model

While the elimination final has been identified as the preferred structure, the Working Group recognises that there are potential issues which must be thoroughly tested. These include, e.g., the relative distance between the rewards for competitors between their ranking or the number of competitors to whom the reward is granted. It is essential that any challenges are addressed through controlled trials and, where necessary, refinements or variations to the format are introduced.

One key area requiring particular attention in testing is the effective umpiring of events with fast equipment. The elimination final is designed as a high-stakes and decisive stage, and it is critical that rules are applied consistently, transparently, and in a way that supports the integrity of the competition. Testing will be needed to determine whether current umpiring practices are sufficient for this format, or whether modifications and additional procedures are required.

4.5.2.3 The Final

The four-boats, first-across-the-line final provides the Olympic sailing competition with a decisive and universally understandable conclusion. Competitors who reach this stage retain a high probability of winning a medal, ensuring that qualification into the final represents both meaningful reward and genuine opportunity. At the same time, the structure keeps the contest open and undecided until the very last race, allowing the athletes to show their ability for focused performance when the stakes are high and maintaining tension for audience engagement.

The simplicity of the format is one of its greatest strengths: first across the line takes gold, second takes silver, and third takes bronze. This outcome is instantly clear to a global audience, requires no detailed explanation, aligns sailing with the presentation standards of other sports, and audience expectations. The format also guarantees that the medals are contested directly on the water in a single, high-stakes race, maximising visibility for athletes and providing a compelling broadcast product.

4.5.3 Recommendation 3: Target Times

The Working Group recommends testing the following target times for the finals (Table 1).

Event	Elimination Final	Final
Men's Windsurfing (iQFOiL)	4 - 6	4 - 6
Women's Windsurfing (iQFOiL)	4 - 6	4 - 6
Men's Kite (Formula Kite)	4 - 6	4 - 6
Women's Kite (Formula Kite)	4 - 6	4 - 6
Men's Dinghy (ILCA 7)	12 – 18	7 -15
Women's Dinghy (ILCA 6)	12 – 18	7 -15
Men's Skiff (49er)	12 – 18	7 -15
Women's Skiff (49erFX)	12 – 18	7 -15

Event	Elimination Final	Final
Mixed Dinghy (470)	12 – 18	7 -15
Mixed Multihull (Nacra 17)	12 – 18	7 -15

Table 1: Target times for finals at the Olympic Sailing Competition (OSC)

The target times will need to meet several conditions, in particular meaningfulness and feasibility for the various events, suitability for broadcasting with special reference to broadcasting requirements such as time windows (e.g., 26/52 minutes broadcast slots), and equipment performance whilst avoiding the risk of a procession.

4.5.4 Further consideration: Course Layout Options and Grandstand Finish Zones

The Working Group references one of the previously approved recommendations that also applies to the Elimination Final and Final. It recommends that Race Officials and Olympic Classes:

- 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; and
- develop diagrams and layout plans for
 - o stadium-style courses, with start/finish variations based on wind direction and
 - o the Belmont venue area, taking into account the pier, beach access, and slalom racing options.

4.5.5 Recommendations 4a-c: Testing and Reporting

(a) The Working Group recommends that between now and the end of April 2026 as many Olympic class and multiclass regattas as possible conduct structured trials of the recommended format. Testing should cover the complete set of recommendations made by the Format Working Group, including those previously endorsed by the Events Committee and Council, so that the full package can be validated in practice.

Within this broader programme, particular emphasis should be placed on the final format, i.e., elimination final and the final, ensuring that these decisive stages deliver as intended in a broad range of circumstances. To achieve this, classes and regatta organisers are asked to retain the recommended format philosophy and fixed cornerstones and focus their testing on the following parameters :

- the number of competitors;
- the scale and type of reward for opening series performance (including whether rewarding the top 6 competitors is sufficient); and
- the appropriate duration of each race in the medal series.

The fixed cornerstones comprise having...

- an opening series with a varying number of races depending on the event,
- a one-day final stage with elimination final and final,
- carry-over points from opening series to the elimination final,
- the winner not being fixed before the final

(b) The Working Group further recommends that World Sailing staff provide quarterly progress reports on the implementation of these recommendations to ensure accountability and transparency, with the first report delivered during the 2025 Annual Conference.

(c) The Working Group finally recommends that the Events Committee be delegated the authority to adjust the parameters listed above, based on the information received from testing and feedback from stakeholders, so that the final format for the Olympic Sailing Competition is determined no later than 31 May 2026.

4.6 Supplement 1: Format Recommendations already approved by Events Committee and Council

- Recommendation 1: Visual clues for male and female athletes
- Recommendation 2: Prominent national identifiers
- Recommendation 3: Development of standardised and audience-friendly terminology
- Recommendation 4: Race Officials preparation for Olympic Sailing Competition
- Recommendation 5: Integration of race officials into audio-visual presentation during broadcast
- Recommendation 6: Opening series scheduled over no more than three days
- Recommendation 7: Competing in a wide range of conditions
- Recommendation 8: Starting and finishing on time
- Recommendation 9: Not running Windsurfing Marathon Race
- Recommendation 10: Maximum Number of Opening Series Races and Target Durations
- Recommendation 11: Variable Leg Lengths
- Recommendation 12: Course Layout Options and Grandstand Finish Zones

Full text of the approved recommendations can be found on the World Sailing website (<https://www.sailing.org/inside-world-sailing/organisation/governance/commissions-committees-edl/world-sailing-council/>)

5 Appendix 2: Athletes' Committee Format Proposal & Roll Out Recommendations (15 Oct 2025)

5.1 Introduction

1. As athlete representatives, we want to acknowledge the difficulty we faced in achieving broad athlete buy-in during the early discussions. While many athletes understood that change was coming, it is only now becoming clear to the wider sailing community that these changes are indeed moving forward. This has led to increased discussion and concern, with more athletes now speaking up openly.
2. The goal of changing the Olympic format is simple: to increase viewership and engagement with sailing at the Olympic Games.
3. It is clear that the wider athlete community does not want to change from the current Olympic format. Athletes would prefer to solve the challenges of engaging viewership by creating better presentation and broadcast packages, enhancing storytelling and bringing along viewers to the unique and interesting nature of sailing.
4. Athletes already feel that significant changes have been made to the Olympic format, including fewer races, shorter target times, and reduced racing days. These adjustments have created a tighter scorecard and limited the range of conditions compared to traditional racing.
5. Throughout this process, we have been proposing ideas to address challenges presented from an IOC and OBS perspective. From what we understand, there are no hard *requirements* from IOC/OBS—rather, there have been *suggestions*, which at times may have been pitched as requirements.

The key issues we are trying to solve can be summarised as follows:

- a. Racing must start on time, and broadcasters must know the time slot when medals will be raced / decided

[As the Athlete's Committee ("AC"), we can get behind this.]

- b. It must be immediately clear who has won gold (this has been pitched as "winner across the line wins gold")

[The AC questions if first across the line is necessary to achieve this]

- c. As many nations as possible should remain in contention to win a medal

[As the AC we can get behind this, so long as skewed protection to those with a strong qualifying]

- d. The format must be easy to explain and easy to understand

[As the AC we can get behind this]

6. We also recognise that presentation plays a key role in solving many of these issues, and the chosen format should support effective storytelling. Strong graphics and predictive trackers can clearly show how current positions translate to overall standings—making it simple for both viewers and commentators to follow.
7. At the same time, our consistent position has been that we cannot know how a format will truly play out until it is raced in real competition and properly reviewed.

5.2 Proposal to Move Forward

While the wider athlete community is opposed to any change to the Olympic format, the Athlete Committee recognises that such change is now both inevitable and mandatory. We therefore request that the following considerations be taken into account.

1. Upon reflection of the format being considered, the AC recommends that the following is taken into consideration

- a. A final elimination race can be between 8 to 10 boats/boards

[The AC is recommending 8 as it aligns with other Olympic sports and with the Olympic diploma]

- b. A 4-boat medal race is achievable; however, we need to better define the mathematical characteristics.

[The AC recognise there is wide and significant concern with a point reset of the medal race]

2. This concept delivers several advantages based on the requirements set out in section 4:

- a. Keeps as many countries as possible engaged, with athletes staying in contention for medals.
- b. Ensures every athlete on the final day has a chance to win a medal.

[The AC understands that we don't want people to enter the final day without a chance to win a medal, but we want to see appropriate protection for those who have proved through qualifying that they deserve to be racing for medal.]

- c. Is easy to explain: “The top 8 sailors race, four progress to the medal round, and then the medals are decided.”
- d. Creates two clear storytelling moments: the race to qualify for the medal round, and the race for the medals.
- e. Guarantees certainty of timing for when medals will be decided, supporting broadcasters and spectators.
- f. Everyone races the race course and gets a fair chance to learn the course, no athletes are sitting out.

[However, if an athlete advances directly to a Medal Round, there must be increased

protection as they enter the medal race]

5.3 Format Variations to Test

1. We believe it is essential to test three variations of each format between now and the end of Hyères 2026.

Elimination Final Variations*

- a. Variation 1: Series points carry over
- b. Variation 2: Series position converted to points
- c. Variation 3: Format Working Group proposal (1 to 6 with series position and 7 – 10 on 7 points)

[The AC recommends testing both 8 and 10 boats/boards for different variations to determine what is the most appropriate]

4-Boat Medal Race Variations

- a. Variation 1: 4-point scoring system
- b. Variation 2: Overall series position carry over (1 to 4)
- c. Variation 3: Current iQFOiL and Kite Format

[The AC recommends the 4 boat variation as proposed by the Format Working Group should be removed from consideration as it is not supported by the wider athlete community.]

**We need to test how this is impacted by umpiring, especially in boards/kites and make changes, and if needed to split up into two fleets that the seeding and allocated points is reviewed to ensure appropriate protection and opportunity. Or if there is adequate protection in the 4-boat race, a quarter final, semi-final structure would be appropriate.*

2. If points are going to be reset for the “finals day” then the Athlete Committee requests that the number of qualifying races is reviewed to increase where appropriate.

5.4 Testing Plan

1. We strongly recommend these variations be tested thoroughly. We see opportunities to test at multiple events over the next four months. However, it is critical that Palma and Hyères are used for robust testing, as they offer high-level competition with high stakes for athletes.
2. To maximise learnings, we propose grouping the Classes into three categories:
 - Boards (iQFOiL, Formula Kite)
 - Dinghies (ILCAs, 470s)
 - Fast boats (49er, 49erFX, Nacra 17)
3. Each category would test three format variations in Palma. Based on findings, formats can then be refined and updated, then rotated across classes for further testing in

Hyères.

5.5 Evaluation Criteria

1. Testing should be reviewed against the following outcomes.
 - a. Objective statistics: how did athletes enter the final day vs. how they finished (progression/regression)?
 - b. Yes/No: Based on the format they raced under, did athletes have a genuine chance to deliver their best performance?
 - c. Yes/No: Based on the format they raced under, do those who raced feel the format allowed the best sailor to win?
 - d. Yes/No: Did the average informed person find the format easy to understand?
 - e. Yes/No: From a presentation/broadcast perspective, was it clear to audiences/commentators who was in which position and who won the gold medal?
 - f. Yes/No: From an engagement perspective, were more people interested in the final race?

5.6 Conclusion

1. This pathway allows us to commit to progress while ensuring changes are evidence-based, athlete-driven, and tested under real racing conditions before any final decisions are locked in.
2. We want to reiterate that the Olympics are once every four years, that athletes put many years of their life for the passion of chasing greatness, and that the difference between being a gold medallist, bronze medallist or not winning a medal at all can be life changing.
3. We must protect the essence of what makes sailing unique: it is a sport shaped by nature and ever-changing conditions and sometimes uncontrollable and unpredictable scenarios that lend reason to why sailing to this point carries through cumulative points.
4. We do not want a format that rewards specialists in one narrow scenario, but one that honours the full breadth of skills required to become Olympic champion.
5. Fundamentally, we want the sailing community to feel that the format was indeed fair for those who raced. The sailing community includes athletes, coaches, team leaders, spectators, online viewers and beyond.