

2024 Olympic Sailing Competition

Olympic Events & Equipment

A submission from the Romanian Sailing Federation

Purpose or Objective

To select the remaining five events for the 2024 Olympic Programme which comply with the requirements for the Olympic events and equipment as set out in World Sailing Regulation 23.1.2.

Proposal

Current Event & Equipment	2024 Event Proposal	2024 Equipment Proposal
Men's One Person Dinghy – Laser *	Retained	Retained *
Women's One Person Dinghy - Laser Radial *	Retained	Retained *
Men's Skiff - 49er	Retained	Retained
Women's Skiff – 49erFX	Retained	Retained
Mixed Two Person Multihull – Nacra 17	Retained	Retained
Men's Windsurfer – RS:X *	Retain	New Equipment
Women's Windsurfer – RS:X *	Retain	New Equipment
Heavyweight Men's One Person Dinghy – Finn	New Event - Mixed Keelboat	New Equipment
Men's Two Person Dinghy – 470	New Event - Mixed Two Person Dinghy	Retain
Women's Two Person Dinghy – 470	New Event – Mixed Kite	New Equipment

* Note the equipment for this event is under antitrust review

Windsurfer Men and Windsurfer Women / New Equipment - to evaluate if there are equipment alternatives which would offer a “beach” style event in order to connect and attract a new audience – as participant and fanbase.

Mixed Keelboat / New Equipment – to select equipment which shall suit a crew of two, one man and one woman, with equipment to be supplied at the Olympic Games at no cost to competitors. Outside of the Olympic Games itself, careful consideration needs to be given as to how to manage the procurement of equipment to ensure an accessible event for as many nations as possible. The equipment selected should be suitable for inshore, coastal and offshore racing. The equipment shall not be performance sensitive to crew weight, so as not to restrict the physiques of crew or offer a performance advantage to lighter or heavier crews. The equipment should enable athletes of different physiques to compete on an equal basis and be particularly able to accommodate heavyweight physiques, so as to embrace sailors who would have previously sailed the one-person dinghy men heavyweight event. The equipment should not require particular physiques to fulfil specific roles on board.

Mixed Kite / New Equipment - to select equipment which would suit both men and women, in line with recommendation 4 of the IOC Gender Equality Review Project, which sets out that:

“As much as possible, the sport-specific equipment apparatus for men and women should be the same.”

See IOC Gender Equality Review Project:

<https://www.olympic.org/~media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/News/2018/03/IOC-Gender-Equality-Review-Project-Recommendations-Overview-March-2018.pdf>

<https://www.olympic.org/news/ioc-launches-bold-initiative-on-gender-equality>

<https://www.olympic.org/news/the-ioc-takes-historic-step-forward-to-advance-gender-equality-following-executive-board-approval-of-bold-recommendations>

The equipment, whether one-design or registered manufacturers (complying to “box rule” concept) should be widely available, durable and provide an accessible and affordable (both initial cost and ongoing cost) route to campaign for and compete at the Olympic Games, easily transportable and with minimal measurement requirements on Organizers or specialist venue requirements. The equipment should be able to be sailed in winds up to at least 25 knots and the associated sea conditions for such wind speed.

Current Position

As above.

Reasons

1. Having already selected five events and equipment for the 2024 Olympic Programme, this submission supports World Sailing’s strategic move towards gender equality, matched pairs of events, clear event and equipment pathways, youth engagement, innovation and media appeal.

These remaining five events proposed for the 2024 Olympic Games offer attainable opportunities for nations to compete at the Olympic Games, are part of an established youth pathway, have worldwide spread, and reflect a broad range of sailing styles. These events also:

- (a) offer diversity in terms of weight and size of athlete, enabling a broad range of physiques and weights to compete;

- (b) Represent the diversity of styles and skills required in sailing which are participated in around the world, and cover all areas of the sport. The equipment can readily be sailed by sailors in developing nations, while at Olympic level the sailors represent excellence in a wide range of sailing skills;
- (c) Note the growth of non-technical high-performance sailing, yet reflect the importance of preserving a technical dinghy within the Olympic events for both men and women;
- (d) Achieve a balance between ensuring continuity in existing events/equipment, adding the Mixed Two-Person Dinghy Men, Windsurfer Men and Windsurfer Women to the list of retained events, whilst encouraging evolution with the Mixed Keelboat and Mixed Kite.
- (e) The ten Olympic sailing events allow a range of size, weight and skill sets to be taken into account. By maximising the range of sailor skills and physiques catered for in the ten events, this also maximises the number of sailors and nations that can aspire to going to the Olympic Games;
- (f) Increase the diversity in our sport at the Olympics allowing for a wide range of different race formats: slalom, match, fleet, marathon, short course racing, off the beach, freestyle/trick, etc;
- (g) Use proven equipment for four of the matched events and one mixed event, protects a nation's investment for the majority of events (9 of the 10 events, with 1 new mixed event) which is critical for the success of Olympic Sailing and sailing at the broad base;
- (h) Deliver the pathway between youth events, Youth Olympic Games, World Youth Sailing Championships, Regional Games and the Olympic Games, as highlighted by the Olympic Commission (see Olympic Commission Executive Summary at: [http://www.sailing.org/tools/documents/Item6OlympicCommissionReport-\[9505\].pdf](http://www.sailing.org/tools/documents/Item6OlympicCommissionReport-[9505].pdf) which was approved by Council in November 2010. Full report available from World Sailing Executive Office). This report required that events and equipment selected are appealing and accessible to youth and deliver a single-step pathway from youth to Olympic competition;
- (i) Recognize that sailing is strong in some regions, but much weaker in emerging areas and developing nations, and this submission reflects the events and equipment which are already spread most around the world, and which are also easily accessible to developing and emerging MNAs. This submission also reflects the events and equipment which have high global participation and a diverse and broad range of nations currently participating;
- (j) Note that cost is not just the cost of buying new equipment, but the cost of the current investment already made in equipment around the world, and the cost of campaigning. This events and equipment submission enables equipment evolution, and yet will also contain the cost of Olympic participation to MNAs and athletes;
- (k) Reflect how sailing is widely practiced during the 206 weeks outside of the Olympic Games, which is a balance of one-person and two-person events;
- (l) Offer the best combination of events and equipment for guaranteed media appeal;
- (m) Recognize windsurfing and kite as two distinctive sailing disciplines and by including both broadens the base of the Olympic sailing programme; and

(n) Meet World Sailing's own policy requirements as set out in Regulation 23.1.2.

Approving this submission will deliver 8 matched events from the 10 event programme, which will use the same (all 8 matched events use the same hull equipment, with just the 470 having the same spars and sails too) or similar equipment, and 2 mixed events. This combination of events and equipment offers clarity to the sport and significant benefit to smaller sailing nations with less funding. Not only from the obvious cost advantage of sharing equipment and logistics, but also in the development of the specific skills required to race the boat and access to the technical know-how, such as coaches.

2. **Retain Windsurfing Men and Women** – Windsurfing is a long-established event on the Olympic programme since 1984 which has always offered equivalent events for men and women. The windsurfer men and windsurfer women enables many nations around the world to compete at the Olympic Games, and *behind the Laser is the second most spread class with more than 70 different nations actively competing*. Olympic Windsurfing has grown impressively since the introduction of the RS:X Class.

(a) The current Olympic Windsurfing equipment is a very successful as:

- (i) It delivers attractive sailing, different from 'standard' boat sailing, to the Olympics
- (ii) From 4-30 knots of wind speed, the RS:X Windsurfing guarantees exhilarating racing in any wind and wave conditions where some of the other Olympic classes are not suitable to race.
- (iii) The RS:X Equipment offers the least expensive route into the Olympic Sailing Competition for small and emerging nations, both in terms of equipment and campaign costs.
- (iv) The new racing format with reaching starts and finishes in Medal Races offers much more excitement and clearness for spectators.

(b) The Windsurfing Events fulfil all the goals and requirements the IOC requests for the Olympic Sailing Competition. It is the cheapest form of Olympic sailing, has great universality, high numbers of women competing, it is low risk, it is visual and has large numbers of Youth competing. The WS Regulation 23.1.2 is clear that the Olympic Sailing Competition Event shall be attractive and accessible to young athletes from all continents, which is perfectly done by Windsurfing.

(c) The Windsurfing youth development pathway with the Techno 293, as the feeder class for the RS:X, is booming with record entry numbers with over 400 young sailors competing at its Worlds (see Regulation 23.1.2)

(d) The Windsurfing Events are the most colourful in the Olympic Sailing family and most dynamic of all Olympic Sailing disciplines with athletes being some of the fittest at the Olympic Sailing Competition. It is both physically and tactically demanding with the emphasis being on the athlete's ability not his/her ability to buy the latest gear.

(e) Windsurfing deserves its place in the Olympic sailing program so to maintain high level competition and protect the investment in windsurfing development programmes made by MNAs

3. **New Mixed Two Person Dinghy Event / Retain 470** – the Two Person Dinghy Men and Women events are well proven as gender matched events bringing mainstream 3-sail small boat sailing to the Olympic Games. However, if there is not the possibility within the Olympic

programme to retain these events as separate events, then it is recognized that a mixed event is an option.

- (a)**Affordable** - the 470 is the most affordable two-person event at the Olympic Games, and particularly affordable for emerging nations which is critical for the ongoing development of sailing and aspiration to the Olympic Games. A ready to sail campaign –level 470 starts from €13,000. The average ready-to-race 470 price is 25% to 30% lower than the price of the other two-person Olympic classes, and about 2½ times the price of the current one-person dinghy men and women class
- (b)**Mainstream** - the 470 represents universal and mainstream sailing at the Olympic Games and is the proven flag-bearer for two-person dinghy sailing at the Olympics. As the only technical boat with symmetric spinnaker, the 470 challenges sailors to be fully accomplished in all aspects of sailing: tuning, tactics, strategy, technique, boat handling, agility and teamwork
- (c)**Universal** - the 470 has worldwide popularity and offers a consistent and proven pathway from youth to Olympic.
- (d)**Accessible** - whether newcomer or elite, the 470 offers widespread participation and racing opportunities, and is flexible to different racing environments and formats, whilst offering a level field of tactical racing and high performance from 5-35 knots.
- (e)**Level Field** - The 470 is a well-controlled one-design class, with excellent rules and building specification, delivering a level playing field, with equipment provided by manufactures around the world. The 470 has been refined and upgraded through the years to become a modern, mature and proven racing machine.
- (f)**Media Appeal** – the 470 lends itself to multiple race format options, which can better present the style of sailing than the limitations of the current Olympic format. Better use of on board cameras, headcams and audio will better convey the intensity of racing, precision of team work and the range of skills needed to sail a 470.

Please note the presentation at: <http://www.470in2024.org> and a more detailed presentation will be circulated to Member National Authorities, Council, Events and Equipment Committee members prior to the 2018 World Sailing Mid-Year Meeting.

4. **New Mixed Keelboat Event** – keelboat sailing is participated in around the world, and reflects the most highly populated discipline of “mixed sailing” already in existence, rather than “creating” or “forcing” a mixed event which may have limited appeal.

The proposed new event is described as “Keelboat Mixed” rather than “Offshore Mixed” as there is concern that “Offshore” may be prescriptive in terms of race options possible within a regulated Olympic field of play. By defining the event as “Keelboat Mixed” at this stage, it is felt that there is more flexibility for the event format too, and it is noted that event names can be changed at a later date.

A Keelboat Mixed event offers flexible race format options, enabling normal fleet racing, match racing, endurance/offshore, multi-format etc.

Keelboat sailing attracts many of the world’s big names – from Star sailors to TP52, Volvo Ocean Race to ORC – and will enable more established, high-profile and well-known sailors who regularly “front sailing to the global media” to have access to the Olympic Games. The media appeal in offshore sailing is high, and if this appeal can be replicated in a Mixed Keelboat Event the profile for Olympic Sailing will be heightened.

With no weight advantage for light or heavy crews, the event will ensure the broadest possible appeal to a wide range of physiques.

One of the factors that worked against keeping keelboats after the 2012 Olympic Games was the perceived high cost of purchasing and campaigning. The proposal recommended by the WS Board last year proposed using manufacturer-provided boats, which will reduce costs at the Olympics. Therefore, a procurement plan should also be implemented to provide affordable boats/equipment to nations.

Another reason stated for removing keelboats from the Olympic Games was the need for special facilities, such as cranes, escalates the cost. But most venue facilities will require crane(s) facilities as part of their legacy provision, and in anticipation of Sailing returning to the 2024 Paralympics, the cranes will be required for this event.

5. **New Mixed Kite Event** – as a new Olympic event there is confidence that a Mixed Kite event format will deliver a natural fit to optimize the development of men and women kiteboarding athletes around the world. A Mixed Kite event will require one male and one female athlete to campaign as a “team”. Each nation will be required to nominate an athlete of each gender to make up the “team” for the Olympic Games. In its first inclusion as an Olympic event and based on current competition numbers, see Note 1 below, there is doubt that separate Kite Men and Kite Women events would meet IOC recommendation 1 of the IOC Gender Equality Review Project that:

“For all individual events, the number of female and male participants should be equal per event and/or per discipline.”

If separate men and women events were introduced to the 2024 Olympic Games, there is no guarantee that there will be an equal number of female and male athletes selected to compete by their MNAs/National Olympic Committees. The introduction of a “mixed” event, will guarantee an equal number of male and female athletes.

Compared to other events, it is a realistic option to have a Mixed Kite event, as it will not discriminate any nations on cultural, religious and social grounds, particularly as the two athletes are competing on their own craft. As a new event there is no heritage which would impact on the legacy of how teams have previously competed. A Kite Mixed event is a natural fit for this new discipline and meets the IOC objectives to include more mixed gender events.

The “Mixed Kite Event Format” would require a nation to select a team of one man and one woman to represent the nation who shall be the “team”. Each athlete’s score from each race shall be combined with the other athlete’s to create a “combined” score. The options for the men and women to race could be:

- (i) Men and Women racing in the same fleet for each race and combining scores. This would create huge race strategy, as teams seek to put together the optimal combined score whilst covering their opponents, guaranteeing intrigue and excitement, and the virtual scoring will reflect both individual scores and the team’s combined score and lead board standing.
- (ii) Men and Women racing in separate “gender” fleets with separate starts – this option would mean each fleet would likely experience different racing conditions, but the principle of combined scores would be the same. There would be greater media appeal and value to option 1.

In terms of racing format, there are many exciting permutations to introduce a multi-format race series, combining different styles of racing and length of race, for example: slalom, course, relay, trick/freestyle and these opportunities will need further consideration. The importance of the optimum combined results, would introduce an element of team racing to the event.

As a young sport, Mixed Kite should be seen as a chance for emerging nations to get up to international level fairly easily and have a serious chance of top ten or podium finishes, on an accelerated pathway compared to achieving such results in other long-established classes. Fast-forwarding the kites to separate men's and women's events for the 2024 Olympic Games will not achieve as positive an outcome as a "mixed" event, which will force nations to develop women's kiteboarding on as equal a basis as men's kiteboarding.

A "mixed team" event, particularly using format option (i) above creates additional race strategy, excitement and compelling media appeal. The mixed format will escalate the rivalries between nations and give teams a chance to exploit their opponents' strengths and weaknesses across different weather conditions.

The "Mixed Kite" event has everything going for it to achieve the same explosion of interest which has seen swimming's mixed relay event dubbed "*one of the most exciting races in swimming*" by the Fédération Internationale de Natation (FINA) - www.fina.org – since its inclusion on the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games programme. Mixed Kite will bring something totally new, exciting and entertaining to sailing at the Olympic Games.

***Note 1:**

	Entries (who competed)	Nations	Continent
2017 Formula Kite World Championship (raced as separate men and women fleets)			
<i>Men</i>	51	22	6
<i>Women</i>	6	5	3
2017 Formula Kite European Championship (raced as separate men and women fleets)			
<i>Men</i>	34	19	5
<i>Women</i>	5	4	2
2017 Kite Foil Gold Cup Final (raced as an open fleet)			
<i>Men</i>	36	15	3
<i>Women</i>	3	3	1

Source: <http://formulakite.com/results> and <http://kitefoilgoldcup.com/results>