

## Fireball International

### Notes from the Open Forum at Worlds in Pointe Claire, Montreal (Canada), 29 Aug 2019

#### Present:

- **Members of the Executive:** Debbie Kirkby (NA), Christina Härdi (commodore), David Laing (Africa), Tom Egli (technical committee), Guy Newson (treasurer), Mianne Erne (minutes)
- **Representatives** from AUS, BEL, CAN, CZE, FRA, GBR, IRL, RSA, USA, SUI

#### No fixed agenda

- **carbon pole**

Some different poles on display (there have been problems with the supply of certain poles, some of them aren't produced any more). Tom Egli and Joe Jospe tried carbon pole for 5 years, have not encountered any problems. Costs have come down a lot, difference to fibre glass are a minimal amount. Many carbon manufacturers in different countries and continents, carbon is often easier to come by than aluminium poles.

Rob Thompson: fragility should be addressed. S-class were also delicate, carbon is light material so sheathing can be added to make it less breakable, carbon is stiffer than all the others. A rule change would not force anyone to change anything. Costs: tapered pole about CAN 300, end fittings about £50, so overall about £210.

Should we have a rule about minimum weight? Tom: quality and weight don't necessarily coincide. Richard Wagstaff – weight isn't a problem, stiffness is the more important argument.

We'll put together a rule change proposal with as much information as is available, send it to NCAs, vote among NCAs.

Allowing carbon poles mustn't lead to a slow progress of allowing carbon masts. This is the reason why there is one vote against the rule change proposal.

- **carbon tiller**

Tom Egli: Carbon tillers have been asked for. Cost and fragility issues, which have become less pressing (as seen in many other classes). Weight rules make it impossible to go much lighter. Richard Wagstaff: there is no advantage to it unless there is a weight rule change.

There were some misunderstandings as to what was under discussions – tillers or tiller extensions or rudder stocks. The general understanding was that there is not enough interest in carbon tillers to pursue the issue at this point.

Carbon in boats: There is a possibility of carbon becoming more economic than what we have now. Carbon is more brittle than Kevlar, more damageable. Boats would not last longer, you could make them a bit stiffer, or lighter with more stiffness.

Basic feeling of open forum – don't go that way at this time, but in view of future changes materials should be tested.

- carbon boom. Here we have to consider the points Tom Egli made when the proposal was sent: "If we want to keep the costs reasonable, i.e. by avoiding having a track, we would have to go with a loose-footed main. This would mean a fair number of changes to our sail measurement rules. I don't think we should go down this road unless we have done some trials. FI could grant the UKFA permission to undertake such trialing."

The advantage: being hit in the head with a carbon boom would hurt a lot less. Disadvantage as stated above (with bolt-rope: twice the price of aluminium; with loose-footed sail still a bit more expensive). Richard: Merlin class are going back to bolt-roped foot. We would have to have two different types of sails, measurement rules and production will become messy.

- **sail batten changes**

Trials by Dave Hall have shown no advantage to a change in sail batten rules.

## **AOB**

Measurement for Worlds wasn't necessary for North Americans, you could have sailed the NAs with boats that weren't event-measured – this wasn't clear.

Robert Thompson: Hull shape – there have been requests for plans. Tom Egli: adapting old plans means you're building it inefficiently. Real plans for wide bow boats cost too much for the pay-back in racing boats. If we just 3D scan the boat, we could give out correct panel shapes. If we find an inexpensive solution to get plans, we'll do it.

Derian Scott: Is there an option to have National websites hosted by the FI websites? It is possible – some NCAs already make use of it, but there are clear limitations to design and layout. Instructions can be found on the website itself, every NCA has their access password. If the password was lost, contact Ben.

Richard Wagstaff: is there a possibility of having alternating Europeans and Worlds. Tom Egli: We should have at least one major event in Europe per year. There are World Sailing rules about frequency of major events.

Worlds are more or less fixed as far as 2022:

- Howth, Ireland: 2020
- Geelong, Australia: 2022

Europeans:

- 2020 no EC (Worlds in Howth, Ireland)
- 2021 Big European championship hopefully in Italy
- 2022 preliminary bid from Nice is being evaluated

Montreal, 30 August 2019

Mianne Erne