

As most of you are aware the UK 2.4mR association did not get involved with the initial discussions about the one design proposals but now the sub committee has published its findings would like the following to be considered by all parties as, if discussion is left until the AGM, there will not be time for all views to be aired. Firstly as it has been necessary to comment on the K appendix several time it must be clarified that in the UK the 2.4 fleet is totally inclusive of all sailors regardless of disability etc. Our own National Champion – Megan Pascoe - is one of the UK's two paralympic hopefuls who recently returned from Miami with the Silver medal.

Some of our sailors have taken great exception to the division of **One-design believers** and **Construction class conservatives**. They consider that designing and building new boats to fit the rules is far from the actions of a conservative group but rather that of an outgoing, progressive type. The wording used in the report to differentiate the two viewpoints is almost divisive.

Moving on to the main body of the report.

Firstly and most worryingly they have not had written comments from ISAF. The document is littered with such comments as “the ISAF will probably accept such development”. This is supposition, as although some ISAF members have spoken to the committee members it does not seem that there has ever been an official response. ISAF are the governing body for classes with International status and their official view is crucial. I realise that a formal view has been requested from ISAF but we needed to know the response before this document was written even if it meant delays. I believe it was their rejection of the One design idea that caused the matter to be dropped on a previous occasion. To then have 10 bullet points about ISAF opinion is I feel misleading, even if it does come under an **Unofficial Information** heading.

Secondly the IFDS position is quoted but we do not see the whole of the communication from them. The use of the 2.4 mR by disabled sailors and particularly the paralympic sailors is a bonus to the class, however it must be remembered that the great point has always been that due to the development status of the class disabled sailors have been able to adapt their boats to suit their disability. They can then sail within national and international fleets on an equal footing. The appendix K regulation is only for Paralympic boats and those sailed at IFDS events, it affects a very small number of sailors worldwide and as long as the IFDS has rules that mean even competition for these athletes their actions should not be a basis to make sweeping charges to the rest of the class. I personally was surprised to see the Appendix K accepted into our class rules rather than them just being rules for IFDS and Paralympic 2.4 sailors and published elsewhere. Scenario I is centred around the K appendix which as already stated affects very few of our sailors (I suspect less than 10%). So how come the class will ‘decline somewhat’ if the 2.4 was dropped as the paralympic class. Annual membership figures seem to vary by more than 10% anyway. We have no control over the committee that selects what craft will be used by the paralympic sailors if they chose to change the boats used; witness the recent selection of the SKUD, a totally new design over the existing Martin 16. Availability and neatly tied down rules counted for nothing when that selection was made. (The skud is still sailing to draft rules containing many contentious sections).

The really important part of Scenario one is the last paragraph where it is pointed out that if we are to continue as a development class the measuring of boats must be tightened up to see that all are adhering to the class rules. On this point I would bring your attention to a reply that I received after sending the document regarding the recent weight change and re-measuring request that was circulated.

[In accordance with the International 2.4m class rules, within the U.K. the RYA acts as the measurement and certification authority for the class. In this connection the RYA applies the class rules as published by the ISAF on it's website.](#)

On going to the ISAF web site the document asking for keel weight to be changed was not in evidence. Has it been ISAF approved! (Also has the new construction material been ISAF approved) There seems to have been little consideration for the plight of sailors who if they follow this directive will have to be re-measured so that their certificate is correct which in the UK costs £150 for the measurement plus £15 for the issue of a new certificate. Reproduced here is the wording from the front page of an RYA issued Int. 2.4 mR certificate:-

[I undertake to race this 2.4 metre only so long as I maintain it to conform with the International 2.4 Metre Class Rules. I also undertake that corrector weights \(if any\) will not be altered or removed except when carried out in conjunction with an official re-weighing undertaken by an RYA Approved Metre Class Measurer. At such times or upon a change in any of the details shown on this certificate I will return it to the RYA.](#)

There is also the point made by some of our sailors that altering the keel weight in the Norlin III non Norlin boats may be given an advantage.

Scenario 2a

Big assumption here that if it went one design the Int. 2.4 metre title would stay with one design. But very correct in exclusion of boats, producers and sailors who will suffer financially etc. Unrest etc. would put a black cloud over whatever emerged.

Scenario 2b

Again an assumption in that a new class would include the majority of NIII's. Not if they are measured properly to exclude those with wider bow sections, fairings around keels, extended keel lengths and modified rudders. Once again mention of IFDS requiring a new appendix K, if they want to change appendix K they will, it is not the classes remit.

Scenario 3

Perhaps this should start with "throw away all existing boats", as pointed out in the conclusions this would not be a popular idea.

Again centring around Paralympic boats that may have the same hull, weight etc., but are very different in their differing aids and rigging configurations to accommodate the sailor's disability.

Eg. boomed jibs and power winches on some boats. Also does show the problems of one design without tight enough rules and manufacturing processes. The lasers are only one part of the story that sees boats collected fresh from the moulds and then subject to distortion while they go through their final curing processes.

The comments on the construction class.

First paragraph spells out where the past mistakes lie, templating of boats needs to cease and real measurement to replace it. However the issuing of new weight expectations is not the way forward if those facts are not present in the current ISAF rules which should be used by all measurers when confronted with a new boat no matter what type of 2.4mR it may be. Tying down areas of non-clarity in the rules is great rather than retrospectively allowing a new construction material just because a builder has seen fit to use it. If a one off design was produced that did not conform to current rules the measurer would reject it.

Conclusions.

Again this is very contentious

Scenario 1

The idea that the paralympic class should control our fate is made a reason for not continuing as a development class. The paralympic committee is only using the 2.4 up until the next review (2012) it could then be changed for another boat regardless of what has happened within the class.

Scenario 3

As already mentioned would seem to need new boats for all with the builders really restricted about differing weights and requiring a very accurate building technique. So more expensive boats as well. Claiming limited interest is way short of the mark!

Scenario 2a

Again emotive use of 'conservative' but a realisation of the strong feeling of many class members. Paralympic considerations again being used in the argument.

Scenario 2b

Just seems impractical. How can you have OD that is "open" class but with closed type class rule. Then once again appendix K creeps in.

The final paragraph would seem to include a strange argument; if it ends with 2 classes NIII and Int. 2.4mR the comparison is then made with the 6mR and 5.5 mR where they have **ONE** Class association and 3 sections within it. It fails to mention that for many of their events they have only one start for all involved and the results are divided up after the finish into the classic, modern and development groups. At the moment we have only one start for all types of 2.4mR its just that we don't bother to separate out the results afterwards into Norlin III and other types of 2.4mR. Just the same as we don't separate out the disabled sailors within our ranks, all types of 2.4 and all types of sailor compete together.

In England we have the expression 'if it isn't broken don't try and fix it'.

Our present International 2.4 metre class isn't broken, it does however suffer from measurement issues that could be easily resolved within the present class format and would continue the inclusion of all 2.4mR sailors no matter the type of boat they sail or their level of fitness.

Much of the thinking behind the one design is to stop development and hence the possibility of a new super fast design which will make the Norlin III no longer the boat of choice for the competitive sailor. However in the other metre classes the only significant developments that have produced a marked speed advantage have been in keel design. The winged keel caused major battles within some classes but these keel developments are already banned under our rules. Other developments may have produced a boat with a slight edge in one type of conditions but nothing has challenged the overall ability of the Norlin III, in a variety of wind and wave conditions, for many years.

The floating of boats to find their true waterline, rather than marking on a waterline with templates and then getting them to float to those marks would be a move in the right direction. The tank test method is the only way to measure a new design so why should the Norlin III have been treated differently. The practise of weighing boats at world championships and then telling owners to adjust the amount of ballast should not be happening. The weighing of boats should be to check that they conform to their measurement certificates. Everyone agrees that it is very convenient to buy a new boat that comes with a measurement certificate but it is not essential to do it this way, as there are International metre boat measurers worldwide.

Let us also remember that the 2.4mR was both a development class and International class before it became a Paralympic Class (with additional rules) and it will continue as an International class even if it is no longer the selected boat for the paralympics.

The metre boat rule has served the sailing community well and this year sees it Centenary being celebrated at Cowes in the UK with an event including all metre boats hosted by the Royal Yacht Squadron. We have a rich heritage and should build upon it.