

# **Notes of Open Forum discussions following close of formal AGM business at Durban, 22 November 2000**

## **1 Courses**

Howard Hamlin raised the desirability of altering our courses if the new spinnaker is approved. Krister Bergstrom felt that there was a case for being much more radical than just making the reaches broader. He advocated having a windward leeward course for the first and third lap and a triangle on the second lap. This would keep the fleet together for longer and make racing more tactical. On the reaching lap one reach could be set for two sails. This would give variety and more tactical options on the three sail reach. He also suggested that we could experiment with a course with gates at the windward and leeward end of the course, with competitors having a choice of two marks to round! It was agreed to ask the IEC to consider different course configurations for future International Championships.

## **2 Race Program**

Mike Martin asked whether we could make championships shorter, and have more than one race programmed a day. This received more support than in the past but a majority of those present still preferred the one long race a day format for World Championships.

Chris Thorne advised that in Portugal we would be simply having a two day pre worlds, one measurement day and then the Championship proper.

## **3 Scoring**

Mike Martin questioned whether we should continue using the Bonus Point system at International Championships. He felt that many people preferred the simplicity of the Low Point System. After some discussion, a show of hands showed an even split between supporters of the two systems.

## **4 Constitution**

Bruce Edwards complained at the length of time it would have taken to change the spinnaker rule - assuming this gets through the ballot. Was there anyway in which the process for changing rules could be speeded up? Pip Pearson replied that he was nervous of AGM's being given more power as rules could end up changing one year and back the next. It was better to have considered change. However after discussion it was agreed that the IEC would look at clarifying the status of the Championship rules and consider those where greater flexibility could be allowed. These Rules affected mainly those sailors attending the worlds and therefore it was logical that they should have the greatest say in changing them.

It was also agreed that we would look at improving our web site to allow for web based voting.

## **5 Carbon Masts**

A number of people raised the question of revisiting the ban on Carbon Masts. Howard Hamlin was against this on grounds that the specification and variables with carbon could send the cost of masts sky high. Mike Martin referred to the example of Finn masts, which were notoriously expensive. Ali Meller and Vernon Ralston both argued that carbon should be no more expensive than aluminium. Indeed with the market for dinghy spars dominated by manufacturers in the UK and Australia, the cost of importing an aluminium mast into many countries was now more than having a carbon mast built locally. Pip Pearson reported on discussions with the FD's at this event who had been experimenting with carbon masts in order to consider whether a rule change should be made. They had found that the costs in the UK were about 50% more than a locally manufactured aluminium mast. However, they found performance and handling enhanced. They were using a plain tube with an external track, which contained costs. Another bonus was that the masts floated and therefore the boat was less likely to turn turtle in a capsize. Ian Barker made the point that carbon masts would lessen any problems caused by the new spinnakers. Others felt that if a ban on masts was continued on cost grounds, then it should be lifted for spinnaker poles and booms. It was agreed that the IEC should investigate and then publicise some criteria for experimentation.

C G Thorne  
International Secretary