



# IRC Congress Meeting 2020

## Minutes

Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Zoom Video Conference Meeting

Michael Boyd (MB)	Congress Chairman
Carl Sabbe (CS)	Congress Vice Chairman
Mel Sharp (MS)	GBR IRC Committee
Olof Rytövaara (OR)	Finland IRC
Haruhiko Kaku (HK)	Japan Sailing Federation
Liz Hall (LH)	Irish Sailing Association
Mark Mills (MM)	Irish Owners
Richard Colwell (RC)	Irish Cruiser Racing Association
Eric van Vuuren (EVV)	Dutch IRC/ORC Class Assoc
Manolo Bunge (MB)	ABVO Brazil
Johan Tuvstedt (JT)	Swedish Offshore Association
Anne De Bagneaux (AB)	French Owners Association
Eric Baittinger (EB)	US Sailing
James Dadd (JJD)	International Maxi Association
James Neville (JN)	RORC Vice Commodore
Jean-Philippe Cau (JPC)	UNCL President
Philippe Serenon (PS)	UNCL Vice President
Jason Smithwick (JETS)	RORC Director of Rating
Ludovic Abollivier (LA)	UNCL Centre de Calcul Manager
Jeans Sans (JS)	IRC Technical Committee
Claude Charbonnier (CC)	IRC Technical Committee
Eddie Warden Owen (EWO)	RORC CEO
Niall Mcleod (NM)	Royal Yachting Association
Andrew Yates (AY)	RORC Technical Consultant
Jenny Howells (JH)	RORC Technical Manager
Emma Smith (ES)	RORC Technical Team/ Congress Secretariat

Congress documents are published online here: <https://ircrating.org/about/irc-congress/>

### **1 Introduction and welcome from Michael Boyd, Chairman of the IRC Congress.**

The Chairman welcomed delegates and thanked them for joining the online meeting, which was necessary this year due to Coronavirus restrictions. Delegates introduced themselves and their background.

### **2 Apologies for absence and proxy votes.**

Apologies were received from Gideon Mowser (HKG), Simon James (SEA), Godwin Zammit (MLT - busy starting the Rolex Middle Sea Race), Nicolas Degorce (AUS), Andrew McIrvine (IMA) and Steven Anderson (RORC Commodore).

### **3 Minutes of the meeting of the IRC Congress 2019.**

#### **3.1 To agree the minutes of the 2019 IRC Congress meeting.**

The 2019 Minutes were signed as an accurate record of the meeting.



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### 3.2 Matters Arising not covered on the agenda.

None.

## 4 IRC Organisation

### 4.1 To receive a presentation from IRC Board Chairman, Michael Boyd, regarding the new IRC Organisation for 2021 agreed between RORC and UNCL.

The Chairman reported on further progress with work on the governance of IRC. Since the 2019 IRC Congress, a number of meetings had been held between RORC and UNCL to give effect to changes aimed at greater integration of the Rating Offices, operational economies and enhanced service to IRC users. In May 2020, the parties signed a new agreement entitled IRC Rule Ownership and Operation - to come into effect on 1 January 2021. He thanked the respective Flag Officers of UNCL (Jean-Philippe Cau, Philippe Serenon) and RORC (Steven Anderson, James Neville) for their time and commitment as well as Jason and Ludo, who are tasked with giving effect to the changes.

JETS presented an organogram of the new arrangements. The Technical Rating Team is those who Rule Authorities deal with on a daily basis. A single online application portal is proposed but Rule Authorities will still deal with the same offices as currently. It was confirmed that there is a significant IT infrastructure behind IRC and a single server is used by both RORC & UNCL rating offices.

IRC marketing needs to emphasise IRC's simplicity and tell its own story; make IRC the rule everyone understands and wants to use.

## 5 To receive a report from the IRC Board and IRC Policy Steering Group (PSG)

As covered in item 4.

## 6 IRC Congress Chairman and Vice Chairman

### 6.1 To note that Malcolm Runnalls has stepped down as IRC International Owners' Representative and IRC Committee Vice Chairman.

Malcolm Runnalls has stepped down after 12 years of service. The Chairman acknowledged the great work that Malcolm has done and the delegates showed their appreciation with a round of applause.

### 6.2 To appoint Simon James (THA) as IRC International Owners' Representative and IRC Committee Vice Chairman.

The proposal was approved unanimously, Simon James is appointed as IRC International Owners' Representative, and an IRC Congress Vice Chairman alongside Carl Sabbe.

## 7 To receive the IRC Annual Report,

### 7.1 IRC distribution worldwide, IRC Events, IRC Technical Developments - Jason Smithwick and Ludovic Abollivier.

Report previously circulated and published online.

JETS & LA presented additional information:

The ORC/IRC World Championships had been cancelled, mainly due to Coronavirus and boats unable to travel to the event.

The Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup had been cancelled at the last minute due to local Covid-19 cases.

Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race will hopefully go ahead.

The Rolex Middle Sea Race has started successfully.



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In the UK many events were postponed or cancelled. Double handed and racing with reduced crew have been successful. Double handed racing is being treated as training for the Olympic mixed double handed offshore event (eg. Dee Caffari, Shirley Robertson).

There are a number of IRC box rule classes now racing in the UK including Fast 40+, Performance 40, HP30, RC35 and RC1000 and these have proved successful.

LA talked about events in France, most racing has been in the UNCL championships (Med, Channel and Atlantic). There had been calendar changes and these had worked well between UNCL and the relevant clubs. The future is looking positive.

### 2021

The next **IRC European Championship** will be held in Hyeres, France (Mediterranean) – 23-27 June organized by UNCL with COYCH, <http://www.coych.org/?lang=en>, and Yacht Club de Porquerolles, <https://yachtclubporquerolles.fr/>.

Rolex Fastnet Race: 8 August Cowes to Cherbourg en Cotentin (new finish). More entries will be allowed due to increased berthing space; there has also been more interest from IMOCA, Class 40, Figaro 3 and multihulls.

IRC Technical Committee comprises Ludovic Abollivier, Claude Charbonnier, Jean Sans, Jenny Howells, Jason Smithwick and Andrew Yates. There is a full agenda to develop and improve IRC.

The RORC Rating Office has been making use of the UK furlough scheme where salaries are part paid by the government. 3/5 staff have been on furlough and this has not been easy for anyone. This situation will remain until January when the 2021 IRC applications start. IRC numbers are 30% down from 2019 and it is understood that ORC have seen a similar drop – there is a general reduction in activity around the world. However there have been more applications than usual later in the year and there are still plenty of overseas applications coming in, particularly in ‘south’ countries.

UNCL: LA had held a successful IRC measurement seminar in Turkey with PS, hosted by the Turkish Offshore Racing Club. A new regional event is proposed between Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey and Greece; Coronavirus has caused a delay but the project is still planned, potentially July 2021. It will include ‘Three Seas races’ (Black, Marmaris, Aegean). A package will be offered for western European sailors to join boats and create a significant event mixing eastern and western Europe.

LA thanked all the rule authorities he has worked with during the year and particularly welcomed Manolo Bunge from Brazil.

JETS reported that a new IRC program has been developed for processing certificates and we hope to be able to use it in 2021. It includes additional tools to check data, such as a drawing of the boat and sailplan. A major strength of IRC is the data checking undertaken by the rating technical team - application inputs are not simply taken at face value. Data are checked against sisterships and established norms to ensure they are realistic, and this takes time.

JN asked about initiatives to encourage owners to apply next year. JETS responded:

- Rating of flying headsails
- Proposed regional online meetings to go through new rules
- IRC GO! Simplified system. Unfortunately there has been no opportunity to test it this year.
- Full marketing plan and finding the right person to help promote IRC worldwide.



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### 8 National Reports

#### 8.1 To receive contributions from attending National IRC Representatives (not including submissions for proposed rule changes).

The Chairman thanked those who had submitted reports (previously circulated and published online).

JETS said that in future we may ask for reports earlier as they include many useful and interesting points that could be included in the annual IRC Report. **ACTION R.O.**

International Maxi Association – JJD reported on the use of reduced crew numbers (which had been calculated for the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup). It is popular with maxi owners for reasons of cost and sailing enjoyment. Boats get a rating reduction for 70% crew and there was also a 50% option this year. The IMA has no knowledge of how the rating reduction is calculated, this is done by the Rating Office. The reduction is not as much as the performance reduction, so it is not used for rating optimisation but only as some compensation for the reduced crew. It was agreed that this is appropriate. The IMA will continue to offer the reduced crew option.

Responses to the question of whether a reduced crew TCC should be widened to the rest of IRC or other events:

- for smaller boats there are gains as well as losses from going double handed
- different boat designs respond very differently to changes in crew number; it does not suit classics
- it would cause increased fragmentation of fleets
- the challenge in taking it wider would be how clubs/events would control and manage it. Very few events have a crew limitation.

MM said Coronavirus has highlighted how important it is to accommodate lower crew numbers. From his experience the desire from owners to race with fewer crew is universal and it should be refined and made more widely available in future. JJD said it is not to be taken lightly and if done it should be kept as simple as possible. 80% of his correspondence before MYRC related to reduced crew number, and that was dealing with semi-pro teams.

Regarding the IRC crew rules, EWO said that introducing crew weight becomes a big issue for event organisers, particularly offshore races where the organisers do not see the crews.

JETS pointed out that IRC rules are very flexible regarding crew limitations. Race Management Guidelines have just been updated in respect of this.

See <https://ircrating.org/irc-racing/race-management/>

A copy of the new guidelines would be circulated to Congress members as well as Rule Authorities.

**ACTION R.O.**

JJD commented on the AUS report regarding Endorsed/Standard certificates, and suggested that the question should be asked outside the existing IRC fleet to find out whether the requirement for Endorsement is a reason that they are not racing IRC? It was agreed to relay this to Australian Sailing.

**ACTION R.O.**

RORC race programme 2021. Series starts with Rolex Middle Sea Race 2020 then RORC Transatlantic (Jan) and RORC Caribbean 600 (Feb). The domestic programme starts on 1<sup>st</sup> May. Rolex Fastnet Race on 8<sup>th</sup> August. Long day races and double handed races have been popular so there is a plan to run more of these.

UNCL racing plans 2021. The situation is good on the west coast with a trend for offshore and double handed/solo. 150+ boats are sailing regularly and many are training with coaches. UNCL are working to produce a ranking. In the Mediterranean, IRC racing is expanding west and east from Marseilles. UNCL are working with a new partner in Corsica.



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EVV confirmed that Breskens (Netherlands) is keen to organise the IRC European Championship in 2022 and will be submitting a bid. It would be a good location as it would also attract boats from Belgium.

JETS advised that there is a bid document available that lays out requirements for continental IRC championships. Please contact the RORC Rating Office if you would like a copy [info@rorcrating.com](mailto:info@rorcrating.com).

### Double Handed sailing

EWO advised that members of the WS Offshore & Oceanic Committee (Chairman Stan Honey, and Larry Rosenberg) have created a new class association for double handed Olympic Representation called Offshore Doubles <https://offshoredoubles.org/>. A decision is expected from the IOC end Nov/Dec about classes/events for the Olympics. There is a move to reduce costs and the number of athletes (-600), this puts pressure on sailing and minor sports. Sailors need to sign up to this association to add our voice and support the initiative. It was noted that the Offshore Doubles ranking system (performance indicator) was being removed and the association exists to promote all kinds of double handed sailing worldwide, not just mixed.

## 9 IRC 2020 Notices.

### 9.1 2020-01 - PRESCRIPTIONS relating to the USE of "FOILS" on IRC boats.

IRC's fundamental policy includes a limitation to 'ballasted monohull keel boats'. Development of foiling technology has meant we had to put a limit on where a displacement boat stops and a foiling boat starts. This notice does not require Congress approval but it has led to proposed rule changes (Appendix F) that are not ready to present to Congress yet.

IRC is a rule for Archimedean boats and cannot accept the fully foiling boats. However, these boats are very exciting and we should offer them an alternative solution, this Notice and rules do not preclude the Technical Committee from exploring rating fully foiling boats.

It was confirmed that all foiling boats currently rated in IRC would still be eligible for IRC rating. The limitations may preclude the new IMOCA designs and would preclude the AC 75s.

PS advised that a French yachting magazine had recently produced a special issue for Vendee Globe with interesting articles on foils and also autopilots. If delegates are interested in a copy please contact UNCL.

## 10 To receive, consider and decide proposals for IRC Rule and Rating changes for 2021.

### 10.1 From the IRC Technical Committee.

As previously circulated and published online.

1. Whisker pole ERS definition – **agreed**.
2. A5 headsail & spinnaker. The IRC definitions are still compatible with ERS definitions – **agreed**.
3. Crew position RRS definition – **agreed**.
4. Aft rigging ERS definition of 'connected' – **agreed**.
5. Series & age date ERS definition of 'modification' – **agreed**.
6. Hull appendages ERS definition of 'maintenance' – **agreed**.
7. ERS definition of 'fitting' (various rules) – **agreed**.
8. Whisker poles. Rating will change and the certificate will show presence of a whisker pole. It was confirmed that there are no limitations regarding a vang/downhaul on whisker pole – **agreed**.
9. Spinnaker poles. Add spinnaker pole length (SSL) to improve rating calculation. ORC SPL definition was different from IRC hence we used SSL. As ORC have agreed to change their definition to the same as IRC we will also use SPL. No change in how you can set sails. Existing STL will be used until SPL is declared. Noted that the rating will not always reduce. – **agreed**.



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10. Flying headsails. A discussion was held about the intention of the rule in particular the STLFHmax tack point limitation, which is intended to prevent upwind flying headsails. There has been mixed feedback from sailmakers to UNCL / RORC regarding the STLFHmax with some in favour and some thinking it is unnecessary and complicated.

Salient points of the discussion:

- The flying headsail will not be counted as one of the spinnakers.
- The IRC rating will be affected by the inclusion of a flying headsail(s).
- The number of flying headsails will be printed on the certificate and will affect the rating.
- An IRC flying headsail will be largely compatible with ORC headsails set flying.
- There is a potential need to create a new tack point on a bowsprit for a flying headsail, which could be expensive.
- An existing tack point can be used as long as it complies with the STLFHmax.
- Limiting the sheeting point instead had been discussed, but would be very difficult to police as it is a floating point.
- This is an important development for IRC and it would be damaging not to agree it for 2021.

There was disagreement about whether the new rule could work without the STLFHmax. The Chairman confirmed that Congress approval is required for the rule change. New technology has tested our rule and there is respect and recognition for the work done by the Technical Committee to get to this point. The rating of flying headsails is demanded by our sport and a pragmatic solution is required.

**The Chairman proposed that Congress accepts the rule proposal as put forward by the Technical Committee, accepting that it might require further review in the future.** Congress opinion was that it would be better to leave the STLFH restriction in now and monitor the situation, rather than remove it and have to add it later.

**The Chairman's proposal was accepted.**

11. Foiling appendix F. This is not yet available; when complete it will be published on the IRC website. It will not form part of the IRC printed rule but will be referenced in the rule document. . – **agreed.**

### 10.2 From IRC Rule Authorities.

None.

## 11 The future of the IRC World Championships.

### 11.1 To consider the future of the World Championships and make any recommendations to World Sailing.

The annual World Sailing meetings will be held next week (online). JETS and EWO will be attending and the IRC annual report will be presented.

IRC's relationship with ORC is about the sailors and them being well served. JETS is Chairman of the Universal Measurement System (UMS) Working Party along with Zoran Grubisa (ORC), and Nathan Titcomb (US Sailing) has also been involved.

Regarding World Championships, currently the ORC events committee makes the decision about the event and take the bids. ORC run a World Championship every year, IRC joins in alternate years. Andrew McIrvine is on the events committee, and ORC will accept further IRC representation.

IRC needs direction from Congress about how we see our World Championship project going forwards, ie. Do we want a World Championship? Do we want a more significant role in the decision process for the venue and organisation?



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It increases interest in IRC from National Authorities the fact that we have a World Championship. The Scheveningen event in 2018 was very successful and it's a shame the event in the US this year could not be held.

Discussion:

EB said from US point of view it is critical for IRC to have a World Championship, and it is very important that if a joint event it should be on an equal footing with ORC.

PS suggested it would be better to have it every 4 years, or alternatively to have an improved set of regional IRC championships attracting boats from several areas.

RC - (post-meeting): "We would feel that IRC World Championships is a worthwhile event to hold and it should be continued. A small number of Irish boats may decide to attend future events and perhaps more so depending on where the event was taking place."

The joint scoring situation is difficult and there had been pressure from ORC to score the offshore races in IRC and the inshores in ORC using PCS. This was resisted for the US World Championship as we don't want IRC profiled as offshore only.

It was agreed that running a World Championship is a huge amount of work and associated responsibility/risk/expense. There is also no guarantee that WS would permit a standalone IRC World Championship.

Congress agreed that we should continue as currently (joint World Championship every 2 years) but:

- IRC should seek equal participation in future events and more balance in governance and decisions (eg. WC committee of 5 people - 2 each ORC/IRC + 1 independent).
- IRC should encourage more regional (eg. continental) championships.

### **12 Any Other Business – as agreed at the beginning of the meeting**

JETS was disappointed not to have been able to host everyone in London this year, but extended an invitation for next year's Congress, which will be held in London.

PS pointed out the usefulness of digital meeting tools and suggested more use of remote communication, for instance for regional meetings within similar time zones to discuss or add information and stimulate other countries. This was agreed as a good idea.

CS congratulated RORC/UNCL on the single organisation.

JPC agreed with the suggestion of increased online communication, and thanked MB for his chairmanship today.

MB thanked the Technical Committee and technical team for all their work; and wished good fortune to Japan for the Olympics 2021

The meeting finished at 1520.