

ICRA Report for Ireland - IRC Congress 2020.

Irish IRC and ECHO cert and market analysis

There are currently 197 IRC registered boats in Ireland, with a further 138 registered for an ECHO cert. This is very good numbers considering the massive impact that Covid 19 has had on racing this year. We believe this is mainly as boats renewed certs at the start of the year, before Covid 19 had an impact.

ICRA did promote a discounted cert half way through the year to encourage boats to take out certs for the autumn series, as they looked like they were due to proceed. Conscious that yacht owners were only starting to get back on the water, for what will be truncated season, ICRA worked with Irish Sailing and RORC, to provide funding for discounted certs, in order to do what it can to encourage boats to take out certs and take part in racing events.

The funding allowed for yachts to avail of an ECHO cert from the 1st August ongoing to the end of 2020, for less than half the current price, at just €20 per cert. ICRA has also arranged to provide a discount of €20 off any IRC cert cost purchased between the 1st of August and the 1st September.

ICRA also confirmed with RORC, and promoted the fact that from the 1st of September that boats will be able to avail of half price IRC certs. However, unfortunately while these events started they were subsequently cancelled.

Much of the racing that took place in 2019 focused on local club racing, using a pod system of crew, that avoided asking people to travel and mix at events. This meant that most or large scale national racing events were cancelled, including the 300 year centenary for Royal Cork Yacht Club, that originally included the National Championships. The Round Ireland offshore event was also cancelled.

IRC Ratings

Comments from 2019 still apply...

1. As in any fleets some feedback has been raised about certain yacht ratings in a number of classes, where some boats appear to perform ahead of the certification, while others struggle to perform to cert. In Ireland this is apparent in the strongly supported class 2, with ratings from 0.980 to 0.920, where the top six boats are all of a similar type and race strongly against each other, but other boat types struggle to compete against them. While the popular J80 class has great racing against each other in one design, but appears to struggle to sail to cert despite very strong crews.
2. Given the increasing desire for boats to compete in offshore and inshore events, there remains a strong demand for a 2 cert approach, where boats can have 2 certs at the same time and be allowed to use one or the other, depending on the event. It is very expensive to continuously change between certs.