

IRC Rating System - 2020 Annual Report to IRC Congress and World Sailing

1. IRC OVERVIEW

The IRC Rating System is managed by the IRC Rating Authority (RORC Rating Office & UNCL Centre de Calcul) and further administered by 42 additional rule authorities worldwide, on seven Continents, making it the most widely used Rating System available, with **IRC certificates issued in 44 countries**.

► IRC Numbers

Joint figures from RORC and UNCL show that at the end of August the overall total boats rated is 2800 which is a reduction of 38% (1697 boats) from the end of August 2019.

The RORC Rating Office has rated 1833 boats (new applications, revalidations, single event ratings (SERs)) to the end of August, a reduction of 36% (1028 boats) from the end of August 2019. UNCL rated 963 boats, a reduction of 41% (673 boats) from the end of August 2019.

The Coronavirus situation has decimated the early 2020 sailing season Worldwide and this is reflected in the IRC rated boat numbers for 2020. Encouragingly, the early indication for figures in September are showing significantly more activity than normal for that time of year due to events that have been postponed and moved later in the year. There is an expectation that some of the numbers will recover but not expected to be back to the regular number of annual rated boats.

2. EVENTS AND CLASSES

IRC remains the principal International Rating System for a long list of events around the world, with the offshore classics, including among others the RORC Transatlantic Race, Rolex Fastnet Race, Rolex Sydney Hobart Race, Rolex Middle Sea Race, RORC Caribbean 600, Rolex Giraglia Race, Spi Ouest France, SNIM and the Voiles de Saint-Tropez using IRC as the rating system for the principal trophies.

► Local Events

Some local events have been cancelled or postponed due to the Coronavirus situation but there have been many local events taking place by adapting to the circumstances and local restrictions.

In the UK there was also a schedule of a series of 11 IRC regional championships around the UK with good participation, including the GBR Nationals, Double-handed Nationals, Scottish Championships, Welsh National Championships, Channel Islands

Championships and a new event in Bristol Channel. Some events were postponed and only 4 events were cancelled.



Also in the UK, RORC held a summer series which was designed to replace part of the 2020 RORC Season's Points Championship. With 136 boats entered across the IRC Classes, the series was won by James Neville in his HH42 Ino XXX. RORC have an Autumn series of double-handed offshore races to finish off the UK racing season.

IRC is also used for a number of rating classes in the UK including the Fast 40+, Performance 40, HP30, RC35 and RC1000. These classes enjoy close racing within an IRC Rating band.

Since the start of the Coronavirus crisis and on several occasions, UNCL has reorganized the race calendar of the UNCL IRC Championships which concentrates most of the French IRC racing activity (crew and short-handed). These multiple changes were made possible thanks to the perfect coordination between the UNCL and all the partner clubs of these championships.

In the Mediterranean, 19 races have been scheduled as part of the [UNCL Championships](#). The Quadrasolo Duo has gathered 53 boats, double-handed or "Solo". At the time this report is written, Marseille Horizon 2024 (postponed SNIM) was cancelled at D-3 with more than 110 Entries. With the main competitions being held from the second half of September, it is not possible to establish an overall balance. Nevertheless, entries at Duo Sails (75 Short-handed), new Coupe Napoleon (35 crew+SH) and Novembre à Hyères, both introduced to the UNCL Championship for the first time, illustrates the dynamism of IRC and the enthusiasm of the Mediterranean competitors towards our Rule.

Outside the Mediterranean UNCL Championship, the Voiles de Saint-Tropez should be held at the beginning of October and welcome an acceptable number of entries taking into account the current situation.

In the Atlantic and the Channel, the [UNCL Championship](#) races that were able to take place were successful: 41 boats raced the Drheam Cup, Cherbourg – La Trinité sur Mer (including 27 double-handed boats), 75 boats at the Nuit de l'Armen (51 double-handed boats), 36 at L'Atlantique Le Télégramme, Lorient (25 double-handed boats), and around 100 IRC boats expected at Spi Ouest France at the end of September. Those figures confirm that short-handed racing is a main engine of the French IRC sailing activity along this part of our coastline.



Further North, the Ostend Sailing Weekend will be the first IRC event held this year in Belgium (19-20 Sept). Thanks to WWSV involvement, more than 30 IRC boats will participate, using IRC SER certificates.

► 2020 IRC European Championship

The 2020 IRC European Championship was due to be held in Cork, Ireland during Cork Week and included in "Cork 300"- the Royal Cork Yacht Club's tri-centennial celebrations in July 2020. Unfortunately the event was cancelled due to the Coronavirus situation.

► 2020 Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup

The annual Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, incorporating the Rolex Maxi 72 World Championships, is a prestigious IRC event held in Porto Cervo, Sardinia, on the first weekend of September. The event is organised by the Yacht Club Costa Smeralda in collaboration with the IMA (International Maxi Association). Due to the Coronavirus social distancing restriction, for the slower Maxi and Mini Maxi Division, a further trial was developed in co-operation with the RORC Rating Office allowing boats the option to sail with 50% and 70% crew number and gain a rating benefit.

The event was due to go ahead as planned with several changes, but was cancelled a few days before the start of the event due to a Covid-19 outbreak in Porto Cervo.

► 2021 Events and Championships

The 2021 IRC European Championship will be held in the Mediterranean in Hyeres, France together with UNCL, COYCH and Yacht Club de Porquerolles. The date will be in June after the Giraglia Rolex Cup.

The 2021 Rolex Fastnet Race starting in under a year's time on 8 August 2021 and will see a new battle of IRC yachts and a new challenge for the sailors with the race finishing in Cherbourg en Cotentin rather than Plymouth.

Cap-Martinique 2021 is a new offshore race on the UNCL calendar for April 2021. This race is for single-handed or double-handed IRC boats and will be raced between La Trinité sur Mer and Fort de France.

3. IRC CONGRESS

The IRC Congress will meet on 17 October via a conference call to manage quarantine and social distancing restrictions around the World. A new IRC organisation has been agreed between RORC and UNCL and this will be announced and presented during the meeting. The IRC Congress will discuss the organisation of IRC and IRC Events around the World. The proposed technical development will be presented and approved. There will also be considerations of the IRC/ORC World Championships for the future.

4. TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENTS 2020

► IRC Program and Certificate Processing

During 2020 the IRC Rating Office has developed a new IRC program for processing certificates and storing of the boat information. The IRC formulation has been developed into an open source language. This has been updated to a bespoke Windows application and allows for visual tools, statistical tools, easier research and development and onward further development of the program.

The IRC Technical Committee continues their many discussions via digital discussions etc. Rule changes are being developed to present to the IRC Congress in October and a good number of rating calculation development are being discussed.

► **IRC Rating and Rule Changes for 2021**

There are proposed rating changes for the following areas:

- Whisker Poles
- Headsails

The final modifications will be confirmed at the IRC Congress and will be published later in the year for sailors to understand the changes.

► **Rating Changes Beyond 2021 and for Further Consideration**

Technical Committee research continues into the following areas: Code 0s/flying headsails, crew number, keels, number of headsails and aerodynamic drag.

5. MEASUREMENT AND RULE AUTHORITIES

We continue to help our Rule Authorities around the world who look after the network of IRC measurers while offering resources for appointing and training measurers. The work on UMS with ORC and World Sailing continues and we maintain the use of IHC for sail measurement around the world expanding its use for IRC.

6. FLEET STATISTICS

So as to provide more suitable statistics for comparative purposes we have included the total number of certificates issued as well as the number of boats rated for each of the last 5 years in a table below. From this we can see that the predicted number of certificates for 2020 is in the region of 3,700 worldwide, to approximately 2,800 boats.

IRC Certificate Distribution at 31/8/18

Country	Continent	Region	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	To 31 August 2020				
								2019 to 31/8/19	2020 to 31/8/20	boats	if over 10 boats	
										2020 - 2019	% difference	
ARG	S America	South	11	2	0	10	5	0				
AUS	Oceania	South	426	371	388	442	439	298	192	-106	-35.6	
BEL	Europe	North	59	48	48	56	45	42	14	-28	-66.7	
BRA	S America	North	66	46	49	61	89	82	45	-37	-45.1	
BUL	Europe	North	26	28	18	20	21	20	17	-3	-15.0	
CAN	N America	North	39	32	24	27	22	22	4			
CHI	S America	South	37	18	13	17	20	2				
CHN	Asia	North	62	80	72	86	93	76	6	-70	-92.1	
COL	S America	South	9	0	0	6	4	4				
CRO	Europe	North	13	12	6	12	10	6	3			
DEN	Europe	North				4	1	1				
ESP	Europe	North	93	110	106	96	115	108	60	-48	-44.4	
FIN	Europe	North	13	12	16	19	12	12				
FRA	Europe	North	758	761	694	603	608	575	409	-166	-28.9	
GBR	Europe	North	1574	1608	1472	1424	1399	1357	897	-460	-33.9	
GER	Europe	North	53	30	44	47	38	35	10	-25	-71.4	
GRE	Europe	North	50	39	22	23	25	18	6			
HKG	Asia	South	92	77	84	84	84	71	53	-18	-25.4	
IND	Asia	South		1	11	16	11	3	2			
IRL	Europe	North	320	310	326	301	293	289	192	-97	-33.6	
ISL	Europe	North	12	12	13	13	11	11	12	1	9.1	
ISR	Europe	North	1	2	1	2	0	0				
ITA	Europe	North	631	526	468	459	440	356	135	-221	-62.1	
JPN	Asia	North	309	293	296	269	286	264	214	-50	-18.9	
KOR	Asia	North			1	3	1	1				
MLT	Europe	North	57	48	42	49	33	28	24	-4	-14.3	
MRI	Africa	North	4	13	5	9	0	0				
NCAL	Oceania	North		5	1	0	0	0				
NED	Europe	North	147	139	126	118	113	111	73	-38	-34.2	
NOR	Europe	North	7	2	6	9	1	1	1			
NZL	Oceania	South	27	25	14	13	1	1				
PHI	Asia	South	5	1	1	6	6	1				
ROU	Europe	North			10	1	3	0				
RSA	Africa	South	46	34	6	0	0	0				
RUS	Asia	North		11	10	13	11	8	5			
SE Asia	Asia	South	104	86	70	92	78	30	10	-20	-66.7	
SLO	Europe	North			1	0	1	0				
SUI	Europe	North			5	4	10	9	5			
SWE	Europe	North			5	12	4	3	3			
TPE	Asia	North		5	5	5	9	9	8			
TUR	Europe	North	338	289	282	281	291	220	185	-35	-15.9	
UAE	Africa	South	57	48	39	41	38	6				
URU	S America	South	24	15	14	18	17	5	11	6	120.0	
USA	N America	North	248	180	165	157	156	144	67	-77	-53.5	
Worldwide			54	56	68	57	70	62	30	-32	-51.6	
Other	N/A	N/A	14	11	0	8	3	3	1	-2	-66.7	
Totals:			5786	5386	5047	4993	4917	4294	2694	-1600	-37.3	
As % of previous year:			95.9%	93.1%	93.7%	98.9%	98.5%		62.7%	-24.6%		
Number of Certificates			7721	7335	7155	7023	6875	5892	3352			