



IRC Congress 2022

Minutes

Saturday, 15th October 2022

Grand Hotel Excelsior, Valetta, Malta and Zoom Video Conference Meeting

In attendance:

Michael Boyd	Chairman
Carl Sabbe	Vice Chairman / BEL IRC
Godwin Zammit	Malta IRC
Stephen Tudor	GBR IRC Committee Chairman
Willem Ellemeet	Netherlands, Noordzee Club Technical Committee
James Neville	RORC Commodore
Jason Smithwick	Director of the Rating Office
Jenny Howells	IRC Technical Manager
Emma Smith	IRC Technical Team / IRC Congress secretariat
Sally Moss	IRC Technical Team
Ludovic Abollivier	IRC Centre de Calcul Manager
Claude Charbonnier	IRC Technical Committee
Philippe Serenon	President PropIRC (FRA) / IRC Board
Eric de Turckheim	IRC Board / Vice Commodore RORC

On Zoom:

Simon James	Vice Chairman / South East Asia IRC
David Griffith	Australian Sailing Offshore Owners' Committee / CYCA
Johannes Christophers	Germany IRC
Riccardo Provini	UVAI / Italy IRC Owners' Association
Haru Hiko Kaku	JSAF IRC rating office
Chris Zonca	Australian Sailing IRC Manager
Jean-Philippe Cau	IRC Board
Luc Geirnaert	Belgium IRC
Adam Parry	UK RYA Technical Manager
Willem Schopman	Netherlands
Liz Hall	Irish Sailing Association
Alen Kustic	Croatia IRC
Jean Sans	IRC Technical Committee

Where noted as published, papers and reports are on the IRC website at <https://ircrating.org/about/irc-congress/>

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

2 Apologies for absence and proxy votes.

Apologies had been received from: Gideon Mowser, Hong Kong IRC



IRC Congress 2022 Minutes

3 Minutes of the meeting of the IRC Congress 2021.

- 3.1 The minutes of the 2021 IRC Congress meeting were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting.
- 3.2 There were no matters arising not covered on the 2022 agenda.

4 To receive a report from the IRC Board

The Chairman welcomed and thanked the participants. He restated the purposes of such annual events as being to share information, discuss and resolve current challenges encountered by our system and to ensure the availability of fair rating worldwide. He described 2022 as the year seeing the resumption of yacht racing in many locations after the pandemic disruption, a number of spectacular events providing the closest possible results and a range of efforts to enhance the IRC Rule, sometimes in the face of criticism from owners of vintage boats and some from those favouring boats perhaps more accurately described as aircraft.

5 To receive the IRC Annual Report (published)

- 5.1 IRC distribution worldwide, IRC Events, IRC Technical Developments, presented by Jason Smithwick and Ludovic Abollivier.

Jason also presented a power point summary (published).

Additional notes and comments/questions from Congress:

Age allowance:

The age allowance extension is to cater for boats built before 2000, particularly those built in GRP.

Q. Carl Sabbe asked is it a technical or policy background to the rule change? Will it discourage new boats?

A. Jason said that feedback has shown that older boats that were competitive in their day are now struggling to perform, particularly in inshore racing. IRC policy is that boats should be able to stay competitive and not be scrapped. The extended allowance will not be enough to discourage new designs, the IRC Technical Committee (TC) is being cautious in how it will be applied.

It was noted that, in the UK, people are getting into IRC with older boats - an additional age allowance will help IRC at club level.

UNCL has introduced a Vintage class (more information later in the France report in section 6 of the minutes).

Flying Headsail:

The rating of flying headsails is still conservative but the TC wants to increase their appeal as an option so their rating will be reviewed for 2023. However, flying headsails should still not be seen as a requirement to be competitive.

Hull, appendage and hull factor

Hull material(s) are an input for hull factor (HF) and IRC wants to cater for all materials including biodegradable eco resins and fibre options such as flax.

The TC is reviewing how HF is calculated. It may be renamed boat factor as it is not just related to the hull but includes appendages, accommodation, etc.

Jean Sans has done considerable work on the rating of keels. IRC inputs include keel shape, materials, and chords/span for aspect ratio. The TC wishes to move to more direct or surrogate measurements for more accurate rating. It was noted that there are variations in how different rating systems rate keel design. IRC is about freedom for designers. There is no inclining experiment in IRC but it infers stability from other rated data.



IRC Congress 2022 Minutes

The TC is investigating the rating of scow bows and planing hulls.

General comments on technical changes:

Certificate holders can see the same details regarding IRC technical developments in the Congress documents and minutes published on the IRC website <https://ircrating.org>

It was noted that IRC Congress would have a better understanding of proposed technical developments if members could see the feedback and statistics that TC uses in its research.

Administration:

The **certificate page 2** that will be included on certificates from January 2023 is a basic drawing including rated data; the rating offices have been using this in-house for the last two years to aid data checking. There is potential to add compliance with IRC-based classes on the page 2 of the certificate such as the HP30 where relevant.

The RORC Rating Office is currently working on a new version of its **MyIRC** online application system to include international boats and other new features. It is intended that Rule Authorities will continue to act as reviewing authorities for applications in their countries.

6 National Reports (published)

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

AUS (report submitted). The report is very positive. The Secondary Certificate has been well-received. The Stability Index is the only reason to get an ORCi cert and clubs run dual scoring because people have both certificates. ORC is seen as more complicated for owners and race organisers.

Q. David Griffith asked whether IRC could include stability data on the certificate.

A. Jason confirmed that a boat's IRC certificate will show international standard stability index (STIX) and AVS where it is available. Modifications to the boat may invalidate the STIX/AVS. Boats or designs without STIX/AVS data available would need to have the boat measured and inclined, and full hull lines and stability analysis are required to calculate STIX.

Q. Simon James asked about:

1) the TP 52 situation in Aus and boats unwilling to race against them.

Aus Sailing: there is a perception that the TP52s have a big rating advantage; they should race in their own class when possible.

Jason noted that the IRC formulation was modified last year for that boat type and those around it, but changes are generic and it is not possible to aim it at one particular design. The 2022 changes were related to the power and age of the boat and has resulted in correspondence from the TP52s. TP52s also win in other rating systems. They are very well sailed and constantly optimising with appendage development, etc. and they obviously hit a sweet spot. The IRC TC continues to look into it.

2) Secondary Certs, as he had noted some boats used it to simply add a spinnaker.

Aus Sailing: most boats gear up for inshore/offshore, so far most are only looking at sails but there are also more significant changes such as water ballast. The Secondary Certificate has been very useful to avoid regular certificate amendments.

There is a perception amongst short-handed sailors that they have lost the benefit of the SH certificate. Jason confirmed that the Secondary certificate encompasses the SH certificate and offers more options for changes; nothing has been lost. However, the perception was recognised and the Rating Authority will note this when promoting the Secondary Certificate.

BEL (report submitted). Endorsement is an issue for people and classes - owners do not want to measure all the sails, so events/classes opt to not require Endorsement.



IRC Congress 2022 Minutes

There are 200 boats in the cruiser rating local system; trying to counter with IRC-GO in two clubs. Need to keep IRC simple and give the best possible service to encourage owners.

IRL (report submitted).

Australian Sailing are also looking at more equipment inspection and support in their fleets as people can get confused about what's on their boat, a similar situation to the Irish report.

The RORC Rating Office held an online **equipment inspection** seminar in March 2022 and can provide the information from that. Power point PDF available online at https://ircrating.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/IRC-Equipment-Inspection-Seminar-March-2022_web.pdf

ITA - the situation is now very similar to before the pandemic, the IRC numbers are the same as 2019. There are IRC events in all areas and for all classes from small boats to Maxis. For most events, IRC boats race with the ORC fleet without problems. No issues with racing IRC, ORC or both. Very positive for next season.

GBR (report submitted). The UK Advocate scheme is successful, particularly in Weymouth where the application fees are paid by the club and reimbursement by the boat's owner is optional. Single Event Rating (SER) is intended to encourage participation, particularly for one-day events such as the Round The Island Race which is often the only IRC race a boat may do in a year. Different IRC classes are encouraged; these are limited by size, DLR, tight rating bands, etc. e.g. HP30, GPZero, P40, RC35, RC1000.

Stephen Tudor added that the GBR IRC Committee has talked for some years about a grassroots/entry level system. This year the RORC Rating Office teamed up with RYA/YTC to produce YTC ratings as a stepping stone to IRC. Youth participation is a challenge, as in Ireland; IRC crew number adjustment should be used by events to encourage them. Events should refer to IRC more in their press releases/titles to help promote the rating rule. The additional age allowance will extend the useful age of boats in the fleet, it will be good for grass roots/newcomers to start with an older boat.

FRA - IRC numbers are good in France, supported by the UNCL-IRC championships in the Med, Atlantic and Channel. Double-handed boats do well in the Atlantic championships. The inaugural Cap Martinique race was very popular with 40 boats. Overall it has been an encouraging year.

Many boats are struggling to get crews and there are few under 30s in IRC classes 1 & 2. People feel there are too many events; they want good racing plus good social, but often events are a compromise due to costs.

There are often pot hunters in OSIRIS (local handicap) and ORC Club. There is a need to improve IRC communication, train young measurers and do more equipment inspection. There is a strategy to promote IRC at club level and Single Event Ratings are issued for most events.

There is some ranking by boat type including **IRC Vintage**:

- Series boats that held an IOR certificate.
- 1972-1993 but accept older RORC boats from 1946-65.
- Can change keel, rudder, rig (but cannot move rig).
- No restrictions on hull materials.

IRC Vintage has been successful in Spi Ouest within the IRC fleet, with 12 boats, and there was a special class at the Regate Royales de Cannes. The Vintage class could be a benefit for older IOR boats.

Most 'esprit de tradition' (Spirit of Tradition) boats are eligible for the vintage class. UNCL have been asked to look at the current classic system used in the Med as it is not popular with owners and possibly IRC vintage would work.



IRC Congress 2022 Minutes

UNCL/Yacht Club de France (YCF): UNCL and YCF are now merged. YCF is the main brand and UNCL is the racing section: Pôle Course du YCF. Géry Trentesaux is Vice President of YCF. It is still the same team running IRC and the same relationship with RORC. This merger may make UNCL more powerful with FFV.

JPN (report received). JSAF wishes to use IRC only but there is a small group who demand ORC; for these boats there is dual scoring, and there are efforts to persuade them to go IRC only. Events are almost back to pre-Covid participation.

Regarding the question of conditions for weighing the 85kg crew weight. WS does not have any guidance/rules on this. We suggest light street clothes and will add it into race management guidelines.

NED - Also seeing a general participation problem. In the IJsselmeer government rules about clean water are making plants grow and preventing racing. There is growth in sportsboats, local handicap system and solo racing. There is a big group of old Quarter Tonners and similar boats who are active, competitive and this is seen as a springboard to other IRC racing. The lower cost and simplicity of the local system are attractive. IRC pricing is being looked at in NED.

SEA (report received). Many competitive boats have overseas owners coming back to their boats after Covid to find their sails need replacing; the cost of getting boats back up and running is prohibitive and the return to IRC racing may be slow for next 18 months. But events are starting to run, and it is busy measuring sails and getting boats back on the water.

Simon James had received questions from owners about rating sail cloth, exotic v. non-exotic? There is no plan to go back to rating sailcloths as it is very complex.

Russia/Belarus

The subject of Russian and Belarussian boats and owners was raised, as a lot of Russians live in Thailand and Phuket King's Cup Regatta expects to be hit by 20-30 entries due to the event's ban on those who hold only a RUS or BLR passport. This stance was from the event sponsors not from the Thailand MNA. Many Asian countries have been taking a neutral stance and the economics of running an event will influence decisions. For other SEA events there will be a lower level of restrictions and only prohibit RUS sail numbers and Russian promotion. In Korea they mainly race ORC and continue to accept entries as ORC only prevents any kind of Russia promotion; Russians have been asking for ORC classes so they can race.

In Australia, boats with Russian links cannot participate in events, this mainly applies to the Sydney-Hobart, however it is not a big issue in Australia.

European racing is more impacted by the Ukraine situation, particularly in Turkey where there are a lot of Russians racing. All Russians who usually race in Croatia have gone to Turkey to race, due to Croatian government advice.

It is difficult to make a worldwide statement by IRC as different countries react in various ways. It was agreed that World Sailing need to provide further advice for MNAs and event organisers and there needs to be clear policy on this issue. It is hoped that this issue will be discussed at Offshore & Oceanic Committee at the upcoming World Sailing meetings.

CRO - Alen Kustic is new to IRC but he has been doing measurement for some time; he is also an International Race Officer and International Judge.

CRO racing is a mix of racing and charter. As mentioned above, all Russian racers have gone to Turkey. Croatian IRC certs are mainly for Rolex Middle Sea Race, and IRC racing in Croatia will be starting again from scratch. ORC is relatively healthy but has no momentum and dropping slightly, it is used more for the charter business. There is also some line honours racing, which is no good for measurement/rating. The potential for IRC exists but the main complaint re IRC and ORC Club is the price. Suggest that IRC could have a measurement database for new owners to make application simple.



IRC Congress 2022 Minutes

MLT - There are IRC boats in most races including some bigger boats. Young sailors are racing boats like the J/92 and J/99. Offshore / short offshore races, such as Malta-Sicily and back, are popular and include a social element. RMYC has defined a cruising class in IRC, boats need a single furling headsail and other cruising features to qualify. Malta-Syracuse and RMSR are dual scored with ORC. Michael Boyd thanked RMYC for being the host country for IRC Congress, the club has been a great IRC supporter for many years.

Countries with no representative present

GRE Philippe Serenon thinks that a rejuvenation of IRC in Greece is coming.

TUR Ludovic Abollivier reported that TORC is busy with Marmaris Week and other major regattas and had a very good new manager. Very busy and encouraging.

FIN have reported that IRC is increasing after the Baltic Race, though the local system is still quite strong.

RSA The Cape to Rio Race 2023 has IRC as its principal trophy. Ludovic Abollivier has also been talking to some people in South Africa.

NOR Ludovic Abollivier has been contacted about a Half Ton Cup as they have asked UNCL support to weighing and measurement training.

USA Jason reported that ORC has been dominating since Covid as ORC took opportunity to promote it during lockdown. However, there are now a few dissenters and we need to be ready to get IRC back in when the opportunity arises.

James Neville said that the Newport Bermuda race is fixed on ORR. There is a sense that for older designs that IRC would not rate them as fairly as ORR. He suggested we could give them some certificates to compare. RORC continues to talk to NYYC, and is also looking at running a delivery race West-East for the Rolex Fastnet Race (RFR).

Eric de Turckheim said that RORC has received requests from some event organisers to count as a qualifier race for the RFR. It could be attractive to clubs to approve their IRC event as a qualifier for RFR, this could be promoted.

Carl Sabbe commented that there are very few reports compared with previous years; this is despite encouragement and personal reminders by Emma Smith. We should find a way to encourage more countries to produce a report.

James Neville suggested a survey/questionnaire of Congress members to encourage more people to attend in person as everyone benefits from the physical presence of people rather than using Zoom, it is a case of changing habits made during Covid restrictions. Cost / time of year / place e.g. limiting it to major hubs. Other interested parties could also be invited to attend e.g. Caribbean Sailing Association. Jason Smithwick acknowledged that travelling is expensive and a massive air miles footprint, so there is a need for balance.

[ACTION - COMPILE SURVEY FOR CONGRESS MEMBERS](#)

7 IRC 2022 Notices.

No notices have been issued in 2022.

8 To receive, consider and decide proposals for IRC Constitution changes (published)

8.1 To receive a proposal from the RORC and UNCL to replace the IRC Policy Steering Group (PSG) with the IRC Board in the IRC Constitution.



IRC Congress 2022 Minutes

Additional notes: There is a need to change 'UNCL' to the new title. The fifth member is currently Michael Boyd.

Proposed by Michael Boyd, seconded by Phillippe Serenon

There were no objections, and the proposal was passed.

9 To receive, consider and decide proposals for IRC Rule and Rating changes for 2023/2024 (published)

9.1 From the IRC Technical Committee.

1. IRC Policy Steering Group - See also item 8.1. above.
Approved

2. Secondary Rating Certificates.

There have been positive reports from the Australian trial this year and race organisers have managed to administer it (mainly CYCA). Ireland definitely want this rule. It is now proposed for worldwide. The advantage is that the owner pays for the secondary certificate but not for numerous amended certificates between configurations.

Carl Sabbe pointed out that if there is a boat weight change this also effect overhangs, should this be added to (b) e.g. “..(and corresponding overhangs)..” This was agreed, **wording to be finalised by TC.**

There is a need for education and to communicate to certificate holders the different instances this may be used, e.g. inshore/offshore; crewed/short-handed; racing/cruising config (e.g. Malta); or a different configuration for a single race.

Discipline around rating deadlines should increase with this rule. In the UK, boats changing configurations between Cowes Week and Rolex Fastnet Race should be required to get the secondary certificate due to the overlapping events/deadlines.

Regarding identifying from the boat which certificate they are using for the race, the Secondary Certificate will have a different certificate number. Owners will need to be aware of which configuration they are racing in.

RORC charges 50% of the full fee for the secondary Certificate.
Approved

3. Aft Rigging
This is simply tidying up the rule to simplify it.
Approved

4. Crew Classification
To match World Sailing terminology for professional/amateur grouping.
Approved

5. Sail Stamps
The proposal is for this to apply from 1/1/2024 for Endorsed certificates and only for sails certified from 1/1/2023. RORC Rating is talking to WS and ORC about a universal stamp design and will be discussing it at WS annual meetings. The IRC TC had discussed whether it should apply to all sails, or just the largest sails; or all spinnakers and largest headsail. TC decided on all sails.



IRC Congress 2022 Minutes

There was a discussion regarding:

- a) Do current Endorsement require all sails to be measured, or only the largest of each type?
Sails are often similar sizes and it is not obvious which is largest. There is confusing guidance for owners on requirements for an Endorsed certificate, is it fully measured or just an audit? UNCL and RORC to discuss and agree this as they currently have different policies.
- b) Whether the new rule should be limited to sails certified from 1/1/2023 (as written) or apply to all sails.

This rule should make things clearer regarding measurement requirements for Endorsed certificates. An event NOR or Rule Authority may change this rule. There is a concern about getting old sails certified for racing (Endorsed) and that if we demand all sails of any age to be measured/stamped, boats will not comply so event organisers may write out the rule to let them race. In countries where boats race ORCi they already have certified and stamped sails so this rule is not an issue.

The transition period was questioned – either take out the reference to 1/1/2023 completely, or simplify it and say all sails certified from 1/1/2024.

With the rule as proposed, boats with old sails would still have Endorsed certificates after 1/1/2024 [without sail remeasurement/sail stamps required].

James Neville suggested minuting the proposed rule change, but not putting it in the 2023 rules.

Options put to Congress:

- a. Accept this rule or
- b. Adopt JN proposal - no new rule but communication re 2024, before May 2023.

Congress agreed on option b.

Communication should include the stamp design, so we need to wait until that has been agreed. It was confirmed that existing ORC stamps would be accepted

Withdrawn, to be finalised

6. Number of headsails

It was further proposed to add this rule to IRC Rule 11.2 to allow a Rule Authority prescription to change it in their country or approve it for specific events. e.g. for race categories 0,1,2,3.

Congress approved this addition for 2024

Discussion:

Q. Would rule 11.2 then allow a boat to use two sails when rated for single [furling] headsail?

A. 21.8.1 would over-ride 11.2, but agreed to add 11.2 to 21.8.1 for clarity.

Q. Can you change which sails you carry aboard?

A. only if the event NOR allows it

Q. Is there a maximum number of headsails?

A. No, there will be a calculated base value and the rating will increase or decrease relative to that.

It was recognised that boats setting multiple headsails do have an advantage; this rule will mean they are rated for it.



IRC Congress 2022 Minutes

Eric de Turckheim argued that small headsails are cheaper, and long-lasting as really only used reaching. A traditional jib/genoa is more expensive and wears quicker. He requested that the IRC TC do a study on the cost of sails.

It was suggested that RORC/UNCL could collect the information in 2023 about what sails people are carrying, to help determine the base numbers. However, it is considered unlikely that we would get valuable feedback from this. Also if owners are asked the question for 2023 but there is no rating effect, it would cause confusion.

Jason pointed out that IRC needs to take some responsibility for controlling sails, re. sustainability, waste and sails being thrown away.

**Congress agreed to postpone the rule change until 2024.
Agreed to communicate the intention, proposed base number and rating effect during 2023.**

9.2 From IRC Rule Authorities.

None received.

10 The future of the IRC World Championships.

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

There is no current intention for a joint ORC/IRC World Championship.

It was pointed out that world championships are generally meaningless as they attract mainly local participants.

Eric de Turckheim outlined two proposed RORC events:

Commodores' Cup which was always Corinthian racing in teams. The intention is to revive this as a double-handed event with 30'-40' boats as there are plenty available for international charterers. The plan is to hold it in July 2024 with coastal and long distance racing. Two boat teams, only one professional allowed.

Admiral's Cup is proposed to re-start in 2025, which is also 100th anniversary of the RORC, and include some coastal, round Isle of Wight, Channel Race and Rolex Fastnet Race. RORC is still working on a proposal regarding classes, rating bands etc. It is hoped to attract entries from the US. Potentially the Admiral's Cup could travel around the world, based around a 600-mile race.

RORC is also looking at having an inshore regatta before the RORC Caribbean 600.

It would be good to see an IRC points championships including longer distance races, e.g. N.Europe, Asia, etc. It was agreed that regional championships would be good.

More communication is needed to race organisers about mentioning IRC in their communications/PR etc.

The ORC split from the joint worlds unilaterally, but this opens up the opportunity for Commodores' Cup and Admiral's Cup for IRC. Events are central to the promotion of IRC and these concepts are very exciting.

11 Any Other Business – as agreed at the beginning of the meeting

Philippe Serenon will send more information about IRC Vintage that can also be published on ircrating.org



IRC Congress 2022 Minutes

Q. ORC have a proposal at their congress to ban bow stickers and have identification on the front of the headsail instead; should IRC look at something similar.

A. Although bow stickers make identification simpler for finishing teams, it was agreed they should be discouraged to prevent pollution in the ocean.

Q. Should we integrate some environmental factors into IRC? The Class 30 OD for example allows a diesel engine or an electric engine, with the same boat weight.

A. IRC should not directly rate sustainability but ensure sustainable options are fairly rated and encourage the ethos through race organisation.

Q. Why is there no public access to everyone's certificate as there is for ORC? There have been examples of large errors on ORC certs which have been picked up due to easy access to certificates. There is not this access for IRC boats. It would also mean that organising clubs could access copies.

A. Originally this was to prevent reverse-engineering ratings. However, this is a valid point and the intention is to move forward with more certificate transparency through page 2, but the IRC rating will only be available through the listings. One option is for the data to be published without the TCC to prevent reverse-engineering. Some designers seem to have a good knowledge of the formulation, but it does not mean they understand the entire rule.

Possibly the new certificate page 2 could be linked from the online listing. This could be looked at as part of the system review for 2024; RORC also want to allow owners to be able to run simple trials online.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their participation, and expressed gratitude to the technical staff and volunteers who work hard for IRC. Thank you to our hosts in Malta and RMYC for their hospitality.

The meeting finished at 1530.