

International Finn Association Press Release

How BIG is a Finn sailor?

(or The results of the 2009 census of Finn sailors worldwide)

*Ed Wright (GBR), European Champion 2006, ISAF Sailing World Cup winner 2009:
"Physically, mentally, technically the Finn is the most all round demanding
boat of them all. It's for men, not for the weak.
It is the only dinghy a man can sail in the Olympics."*

At the end of 2009 the Finn class carried out a survey of its top sailors to accumulate data regarding the weight, height and age when they started sailing the Finn, to try and build a picture of the current fleet and to examine how these factors have changed over the years.

For this statistical analysis the target group was the top 50 ranked Finn sailors in the world as well as a whole group of new young sailors coming into the class. The results that followed and its analysis make for interesting reading.

Tomas Vika (CZE): The most important thing is that there is no other Olympic dinghy class for guys like me who weigh more than 85kg. The Finn is called the 'heavyweight' dinghy, but it's not so simple: If you are more than 180cm tall and you want to work on your physical condition in a gym you will always weigh more than 85kg and that is the reason why Finn has to stay as an Olympic dinghy in future years.

Nachatar Johal (IND): The Finn gives so much flexibility in having a mast and sail designed specifically for yourself. It is very tactical sailing with not much boat speed differences in top sailors and relatively new sailors. Very cooperative, friendly and helpful international fleet. I don't have to starve myself to remain 80kg for sailing the Laser and I can eat properly.

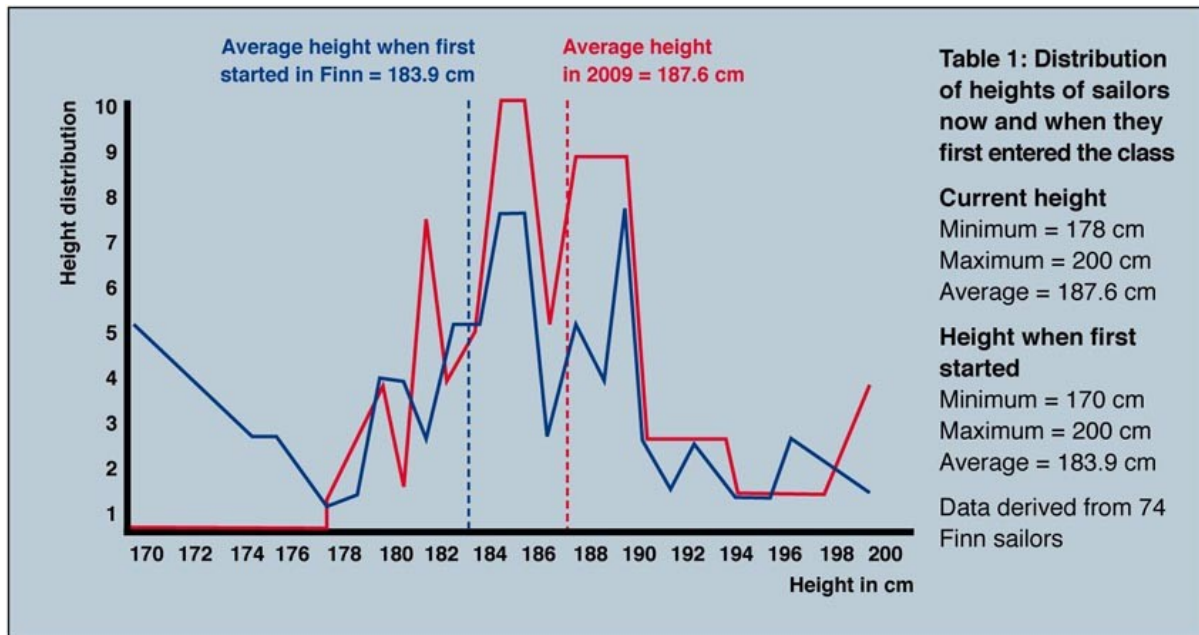
The numbers and graphs below really show the evolution of young people's physiques and the help that new mast and sail building materials have provided in making the Finn more accessible and available for a larger range of body sizes.

It is a widely reported fact that people across the world are getting taller and heavier through better diet and better standards of living and this is reflected in the results of the survey. Perhaps as a result of this, sailors are also starting in the Finn much younger than their predecessors did. In fact the average age for starting out in the Finn has dropped from 24.7 in the 1970s to just 17 in the 1990s.

In addition, in the current top 20 world ranked sailors:

- Age ranges from 22 to 44 years = 22 years
- Height ranges from 180 to 200 cm = 20 cm
- Weight ranges from 83 to 104 kg = 21 kg

Table 1 shows the distribution of the heights of the sailors compared with when they first entered the class.



Tapio Nirkko (FIN), runner up, European Championship 2009: The Finn is the only single handed dinghy for my size. It is also a very cheap class for equipment when hulls and masts are so good quality that you can sell them with very good resale price. Also sails don't wear out that quickly. As a class the atmosphere is very good and a large bunch of good sailors make the training and competitions high standard.

Table 2 shows the distribution of the weights of the sailors compared with when they first entered the class.

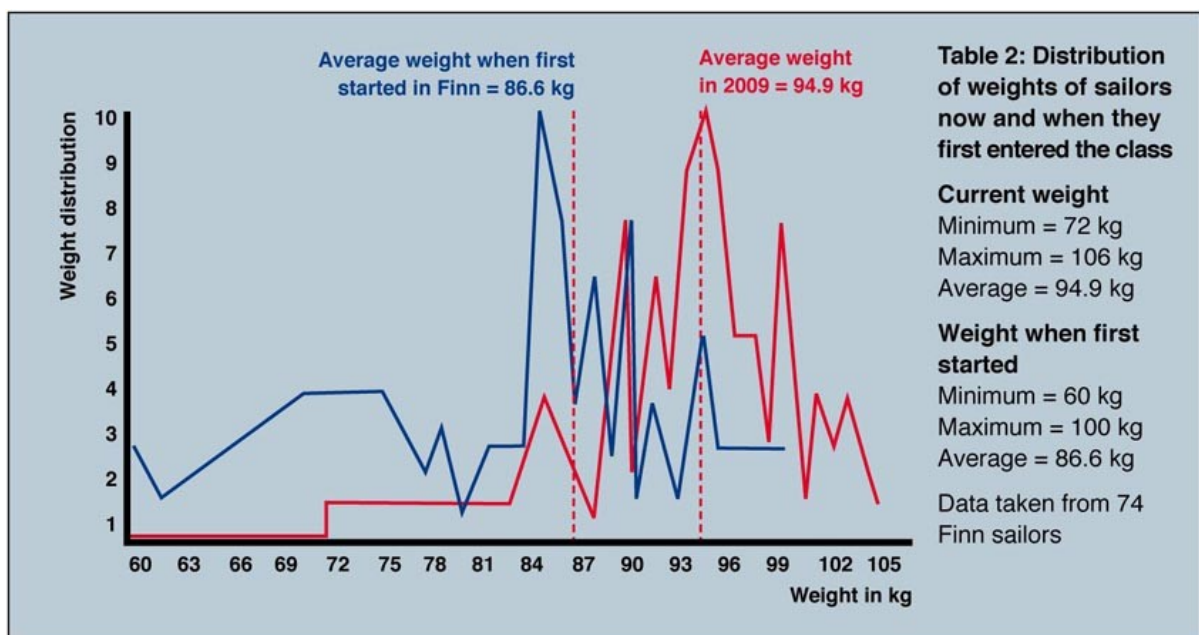
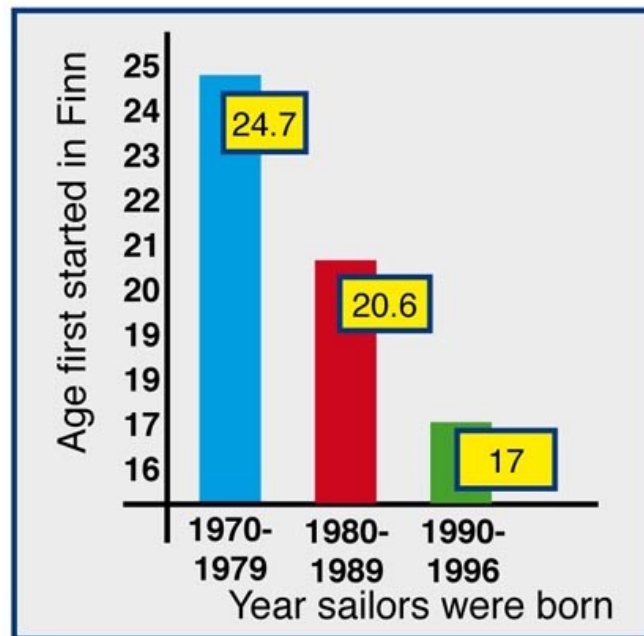


Table 3 shows the variation in age when first starting in the Finn



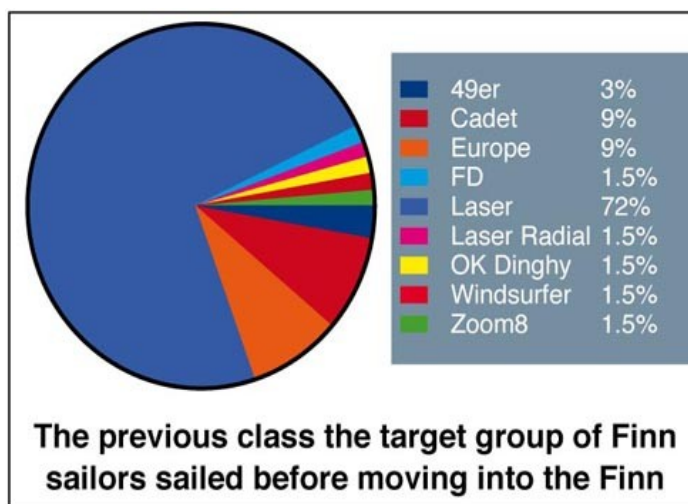
For sailors born between 1970 and 1979 the average age when started = 24.7 years
 For sailors born between 1980 and 1987 the average age when started = 20.6 years
 For sailors born between 1988 (last year juniors in 2009) and 1994 the average age when started = 17 years

Table 4 shows the statistical relationship between ranking, weight, height and age first started in the Finn

Statistical data showing the relationship between ranking, weight, height and age started in the Finn														
	World Ranking or Junior (J)	Age start Finn	Height	Weight		World Ranking or Junior (J)	Age start Finn	Height	Weight		World Ranking or Junior (J)	Age start Finn	Height	Weight
Ivan Klijakovic Gaspic	1	20	190	93	Tomas Vika	29J	16	189	96	Pavel Korych	J	18	186	85
Edward Wright	2	27	188	102	Federico Melo	30	20	188	100	Milan Hrnca	J	14	189	90
Pieter Jan Postma	3	23	189	99	Anthony Nossiter	31	25	185	105	Roman Simacek	J	18	182	95
Rafal Szukiel	4	20	193	95	Marin Misura	32	21	192	98	Patrick Deutscher	J	15	183	85
Peer Moberg	5	34	180	83	Nachhatar Johal	33	27	185	102	Tomas Hrnca	J	14	196	96
Rafa Trujillo Villar	6	19	184	104	Alexey Borisov	34	20	187	96	Arnaud Baudin	J	19	200	100
Zach Railey	7	20	194	100	Guillaume Florent	35	29	189	95	Benjamin Montagut	J	18	180	80
Tapio Nirrko	8	16	194	94	Ben Ainslie	36	25	185	85	Lennart Luttkus	J	15	191	88
Giles Scott	9	20	198	95	Alex Dragoutsis	37	18	192	94	Alexandros Raris	J	18	189	94
Dan Slater	10	28	183	94	Andrew Casey	39	26	189	97	Giannis Mitakis	J	20	186	91
Daniel Birgmark	11	30	191	90	Jan Kurfeld	41	18	186	98	Antonis Tsotras	J	18	184	91
Eduard Skorniyakov	12	26	184	93	Haris Papadopoulos	42	24	189	97	Anastasios Katsimidis	J	14	185	72
Jonas Høgh-Christensen	13	20	186	102	Karel Van Hellemond	43	19	186	97	Ross Hamilton	J	20	180	94
Andrew Mills	14	21	190	95	Gaston Pal	44	19	182	94	Anton Sadchitov	J	17	182	92
Michael Maier	15	15	188	103	Andrej Gusenko	45J	17	188	96	Pavel Chistiakov	J	16	182	82
Piotr Kula	16	19	190	98	Rudolf Lidarik	48	14	184	103	Elemer Haidekker	J	12	193	88
Thomas Le Breton	17	26	187	97	Egor Larionov	49J	17	185	105	Andrew Baglin		28	188	98
Mark Andrews	18	17	200	96	Kaspar Andresen	51	20	196	90	Joao Signorini		25	185	90
Jonathan Lobert	19	21	195	96	Filippo Baldassari	53J	21	186	92	Anastaz Petrov		15	188	100
Florian Raudaschl	20	21	187	95	Mihail Kopanov	61	15	182	100	Aare Taveter		17	182	90
Giorgio Poggi	21	24	186	95	Lauri Vainsalu	69J	20	183	93	Heiko Eesalu		17	186	106
Deniss Karpak	22	23	200	95	Caleb Paine	74J	18	190	99	Marko Kolic		19	187	104
Alex Muscat	25	23	185	94	Jorge Zarif	75J	15	190	92	Raymond Hall		18	193	104
Bjorn Allanson	26	19	190	100	Dimitar Vangelov	J	17	185	83	Vasilij Bogar		34	188	92
Ricardo Cordovani	28	19	190	96	Jan Cajcik	J	13	178	92	Efe Kuyumku		23	181	101

Jonas Høgh Christensen (DEN), World Champion 2006,2009: I love it; it is the most fun, challenging boat for strong, athletic sailors with a competitive edge and technical challenges.

Table 5 shows the previous class sailed by the target group of Finn sailors. It is interesting to note that the vast majority increasingly move into the Finn from the Laser class, for one overriding reason – they outgrow it.



Vasilij Bogar (SLO), double Olympic medalist Laser: The Finn is a very challenging class to sail, especially in trimming. I also found it hard to keep my weight around 80kg in the Laser.

Daniel Birgmark (SWE), 4th 2008 Olympics: Sailing the Olympic Finn gives you the most attractive Olympic challenge in sailing by putting very high demands on the sailors athletic capacity as well as tactical and strategic skills. It's the perfect singlehander for sailors over 85kg. Competitive equipment is easily accessible and widely spread all over the world. It also has a relatively low cost because of long lived and high quality equipment, and there is a very strong second hand market.

Campaign costs over a four year period

Boat (incl. foils, alu trolley, covers)	12,000
2 masts	5,000
3 sails per year	12,000
Total	29,000
Annual spend	EUR 7,250

Actual Finn equipment costs over four year campaign: 35 sailors provided campaign costs. The average spend was just over EUR 30,000 over four years, or **EUR 7,500 a year**.

Note: these costs are before resale on any gear. Finn equipment generally maintains high resale value, so most gear (apart from sails) can be reasonably expected to be worth 60-70 per cent of its purchase cost after a four year campaign.

Haris Papadopoulos (CYP): For me sailing Finns was a completely new sailing school. Great competition among the best sailors of the world and I want to become one of them. Even when I was very light I could still sail the Finn in strong winds. I believe the key point is that different weights and heights can sail this boat.

Caleb Paine (USA): I was 150 pounds (68 kg) when I started to sail the Radial and then a year later switched into the Laser. The Laser was a great boat, but I was still growing. The Olympics has always been one of my dreams and I would not have been able to do that in the Laser, because of my size. I was then approached by Scott Mason to sail the Finn. I sailed the boat and it was perfect. I now look forward to every sail I do in the Finn, and love competing.

Summary

In summary, the above data showcases the Finn's ability to accommodate a wide range of sailors in respect of their age, weight and height.

Moreover, the data also shows that Finns are sailed from a much earlier age at international level and that there is an inevitable need for providing a suitable single-handed dinghy for young men, being nowadays naturally much bigger than their parents were.

For the majority of the sailors surveyed, the Finn is the vital piece of equipment that keeps them training and competing at the highest level. For these young, talented and extremely fit athletes who all weigh more than 85 kg and are taller than 1.8 metres, there is no other dinghy option if they want to live their Olympic dream.

Zach Railey (USA), Silver medalist, 2008 Olympics: For single handed sailing the Finn is my only option given my weight and height to pursue my Olympic sailing dreams. With the technical and physical demands of the boat, the Finn is a pure test of a sailor's ability to react to the changing conditions on the race course under intense physical exertion.

1 May 2010
International Finn Association
www.finnclass.org