

IFDS Technical Committee, Ralph Roberts (NZL)

I am sitting in my office thinking about IFDS and what the Technical Committee have achieved these last 12 months.

The most important thing is that after all the talk for the last few years of the need to complete an urgent review of the Class Rules for the 2.4mR class and SKUD18 Class. This was done and now the two classes have been brought into line with the arrival of the updated Race Management Manual. This went on line in February this year. Hopefully they are locked down till 2016 Paralympics in Rio.

The SKUD18 class in particular had seating problems in the past but was remedied with the extension of the sides of the seat but according to the Chief Judge Pat Healy at the IFDS Combined Worlds, Halifax, CAN, there was still a complaint about lifting of one or both buttock(s) off the back of the seat.

This was about the crew's restraint belt being tight and buckles releasable. Gene Hinkel as Chief Measurer accepted this responsibility to pre-approve all restraints so that they all had maximum length and only allow the crew to be 10cm off the back of the seat. While checking there were a few bogus strap anchors that Gene required to be corrected and after that everything seemed to go much smoother. Pat went to say the bottom line was that of all the previous class issues were quiet and are now handled by the measurer in advance of the commencement of the regatta, as it should be.

The only other item I have seen on the email trail of late is the reaching angles on the trapezoid course for the SKUD18's and for my thought on this is if it is an issue why not allow some regatta controlled testing or experimenting for a certain time period and see if the sailors like the deeper angles. As I see it, it is a class matter for the sailors to decide.

This year Paralympic sailing has had a larger profile in the media and may I compliment the Executive, the MNA's, and the crews who are sailing for getting the word out there and most of all it is important for everyone to keep encouraging more sailors to go sailing. At the end of the day that is where the fun and enjoyment starts.

I thank all my Technical Committee for their rule knowledge and advice plus the class members for their input and last but by no means least the IFDS Executive who updated the RMM, a job well done.

Ralph Roberts

Chairman, IFDS Technical Committee