



Flying Fifteen International – Australia Inc

President - Les Kearney

Qualification for the 2021 FF World Championship Australian team

Those of you who have looked through the National Yacht Club of Irelands web site (see <https://www.flying15worlds2019.com/>), may have noticed that on the list of Entries, there are already 11 Irish boats pre-qualified for the regatta. In addition there are a further 9 boats looking to qualify at the Pre-Worlds. The reason for this is the 2018 Irish Nationals was the Qualifying event for the 2019 Worlds. This is a system that has been running in the the UK for many years, the year before the World Championships is the year when they hold a series of qualifying events.

Historically, in Australia, we have simply used the Pre-Worlds as the qualifying event, when the World Championships have been held in Australia. When we look at how numbers are allocated in Australia, based on our current Membership level we are allocated 13 places (assuming item 10 of the current Ballot is approved), in addition as the host nation, the FFI constitution allocates a further 4 places to the host nation that are to be allocated at the pre-worlds, so 17 in total.

However, in addition to the 17 places noted above, if other countries do not take up their allocation of places, these are also available, based on a boats finishing position at the Pre-Worlds. By way of example, at the Melbourne Worlds in 2009, this equated to a further 24 boats, while in Esperance a further 6 boats – although it is worth noting that in Esperance there were only 68 entries, so a further 18 could have qualified at the Pre-Worlds.

The Issue:

At the FFIA AGM in Mornington 2018, many boat owners on the East Coast highlighted their concerns about having to travel to Fremantle, hoping to attend the Nationals and Worlds, with no guarantee of qualification for the World Championships. The minimum time for the entire trip would be 3 weeks, the cost of this would be a significant amount.

The Fremantle Worlds is being promoted as a fantastic sailing venue, lots of wind, Freo Docker, big swells etc, with this, it's reasonable to assume the potential for gear failure will increase, the probability of a missed day/missed races also has real potential. When you consider both issues (gear failure and missed day/races) coupled with a qualifying regatta over 4 days with 2 or 3 races a day, travelling without the knowledge of sailing more than the pre-worlds is not very palatable, and is being identified as a barrier to attending.

With so many fleet members highlighting the above issue, FFIA believes it's our responsibility to identify a solution to the problem.

We need to find a model that is suitable for all fleet members, both East Coast and West Coast.

Proposal:

To change the 2021 Worlds qualification into a series, with an East coast consideration heat at the 2020 Nationals and a second round at the 2021 Nationals (pre-Worlds), this could generate more interest in both

the 2020 RQYS nationals and from an east coast perspective, more participation at the 2021 pre-worlds as well as the worlds event.

To adopt a system, similar to that being used in both the UK and Ireland for their teams when the World championships are being held in their home countries.

Without the knowledge of exactly how many positions will be available to the Australian fleet, we need to allow for both fleets to be able to qualify to sail in the Worlds.

It is expected that, as a minimum, there would be 17 places for Australian boats - this being 13 allocated (subject to ballot confirmation) and 4 wildcard spots. In addition it is extremely likely that there will be further places available, but we can't guarantee this.

Considering all of the above, we propose a model that allows for qualification:

- 1) 5 Australian places be made available at the 2020 Nationals
- 2) 8 Australian places, (plus 4 FFI places), be made available at the 2021 Nationals
- 3) 4 Places allocated by FFI to the host nation
- 4) Any additional places be made available at the 2021 Nationals (historically been well over 20 boats)

We believe the above proposal is both fair and equitable to both the East and West Coast fleets. In addition, it addresses both of the objectives highlighted above.

My belief is that this scenario will not significantly disadvantage any competitor hoping to qualify for the 2021 worlds. Albeit, 8 places available in the pre-worlds, plus 4 FFI allocations, plus, any vacancies from other countries, not guaranteed, but highly likely

By this proposal we are not forcing attendance at the 2020 nationals, merely, allowing prospective worlds competitors, particularly from the East coast, the confidence of being able to prepare for both 2021 regattas. Also, creating more interest in the 2020 Nationals.

If the situation was that the 2021 worlds were held on the East coast, then I am reasonably confident that the above proposal would be adopted as a fair selection system

This proposal was borne following FFIA meeting concerns regarding attendance at the 2020 RQYS Nationals, and supported by my feeling of the mood of the 2018 AGM at Mornington when this was discussed but not voted on as it was not formally proposed. If you have any queries please call me.

Yours,

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