



29 April 2019

President World Sailing
CEO World Sailing

By Email

Dear Kim and Andy

I am writing in my capacity as President OKDIA, the International OK Dinghy Class Association, to express our dissatisfaction at the process and decisions taken by World Sailing last year to remove the Finn from the 2024 Olympics.

The International OK Dinghy Class celebrated its 60th anniversary year in 2017 and continues to grow in popularity around the world. Traditionally the class had been used as an intermediate step for singlehanded sailors prior to campaigning a Finn towards Olympic selection. More recently the class has seen former Finn sailors, and sailors from many other classes, choose the OK Dinghy as their racing dinghy of choice due to the one design nature of the class, the sophistication and availability of equipment, the world standard of racing including annually held World, European and regional championships and of course the social character of the class.

The 2019 International OK Dinghy World Championship was held in February in Auckland, New Zealand with over 100 boats competing. The event was narrowly won by former Olympian and Finn sailor Dan Slater, from Olympic Gold Medalist and former Finn sailor Freddy Loof, with 17 year old World Youth Champion Josh Armit finishing third. While we are rightly proud of the OK Dinghy, equally we feel that the increasing popularity of the class benefits world sailing generally as an avenue for promoting our wonderful sport across many countries.

The Annual General Meeting of OKDIA was held in Auckland in conjunction with the World Championship in February 2019. At that meeting, the Australian Representative informed the meeting that the AUS association had written to Australian Sailing expressing disappointment regarding the decision of World Sailing to drop the event intended for the Finn class from the Olympics in 2024 in favour of a 2 person mixed keelboat. There was general consent within the room for OKDIA to express its dissatisfaction and unhappiness at the general direction of World Sailing, in particular the recent Olympic class decisions, which have and will affect many within the class and the options and pathways for singlehanded dinghy sailing in general. The meeting agreed that OKDIA should write to World Sailing and represent the views of the OKDIA member countries that reflect these views.



OK DINGHY INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

I have personally sailed the OK Dinghy for almost 40 years since I was 16 years of age and am still enjoying sailing with and competing against both new and old friends from many countries. I have also recently joined the Finn Masters and have similarly enjoyed the level of competition mixed with great friendship. Like most sailors I have also had my fair share of offshore keelboat sailing as part of my lifelong involvement in the sport. With this experience I can personally echo the sentiments and concern of OK Dinghy sailors at the strategic direction of World Sailing, or it seems lack of it, and dismay at the decisions being taken. In my view this demonstrates a lack of leadership, both in honouring the past and building a shared vision for the future.

On behalf of the OK Dinghy Class I implore you and all at World Sailing to act in the best interests of the future of sailing and the people you represent.

Yours sincerely

Mark Jackson
President OKDIA