

## ICF Questionnaire 2003 Results and Analysis

A total of 52 completed questionnaires were submitted. Responses by country were:

AUSTRALIA	5
CANADA	1
CAYMAN IS.	1
GERMANY	1
GREAT BRITAIN	27
SWEDEN	8
USA	9

Although this document was circulated via National Associations and the website there were clearly problems in engaging all of our members. Translation or the lack of national/local organisation could have made these problems worse.

There were also some difficulties with the questionnaire itself , despite going through an exhaustive proof reading and drafting procedure.

Some were quite trivial and related to the wording e.g. "white sails" meaning main and jib only and excluding asymmetric spinnaker. Some respondents wondered why we couldn't have any colour we liked!

Questions 6 & 7 were less well answered with only about forty responses and there was also some slight confusion over the scoring system. A few responses only listed the top five in each case and prioritised them.

### THE OVERALL RESULTS

ID	CONCEPT	30 MIN RULE	HULL	DECK	SEAT & Carriage	FOILS	CONSTRUCTION	MAST & SPARS	W HITE SAILS	WEIGHT	ASYMME TRIC	COURSES
1	A	1 A 8	A 6	A 9	A 4	A 5	A 9	A 6	A 2	A	A 19	A 15
2	CURRENT 40	N 15	N 32	N 31	N 24	N 32	N 36	N 23	N 23	N 23	N 13	N 23
3	DEV. 11	Y 29		Y 2	Y 2	Y 3					Y 6	Y 1
4	OD (I)				YC 6	YC 2		YC 5	YC 7	YC 6	YC 1	YC 1
5					YD 2	YD 4		YD 6	YD 4		YD 1	YD 2
6			YR 12	YR 10	YR 11	YR 4	YR 7	YR 12	YR 14	YR 16	YR 9	YR 10
7			YT 2		YT 3	YT 2		YT 1	YT 2	YT 3	YT 2	

A = Abstain  
 N = No/ No change  
 Y = Yes  
 YC = Yes Change  
 YD = Delete Rule  
 YR = Relax Rule  
 YT = Tighten up Rule

- **CONCEPT.** Clearly there is a majority to stay as a Restricted Development class. The one vote for an OD class was coupled with a vote for full development status – the idea being to allow a set period for free development before freezing the rules.

- **30 MINUTE RULE.** The only new proposal in the document. This is interesting as it shows that although the fleet is basically conservative there is a substantial interest in tinkering and trying out ideas at an informal level.
- **HULL.** There was a change here from the concept vote with more abstentions, twelve to relax rules and two to tighten them. There is still a majority for no change.
- **DECK.** This was the subject of a recent change in which the rules were relaxed. Most of the fleet seem happy with this.
- **SEAT & CARRIAGE.** There was more variety of response on this. Those wanting change mostly wanted longer seats. The committee will also be looking into a "black band" type indicator rule to prevent over- extension. This item showed a 50% interest in change.
- **FOILS.** Again this provoked a wide range of answers. This could be an item which throws up longer-term issues. Some wanted an outright ban on articulated foils, others want the freedom to experiment. Quite apart from the existing American trim tabs on daggerboards, other classes have been looking at hydrofoils. Although these classes have put restrictions on them this development could, in time, be the 21<sup>st</sup> century equivalent of planing hulls. What is certain is that these are pretty labour intensive items and are expensive and delicate.
- **CONSTRUCTION.** It does not seem to be an area where there is any appetite for change, with any yes votes opting to tighten existing rules. The relative costs of the hull and deck have come down compared with the costs of gear and fittings.
- **MASTS & SPARS.** Clearly this is an area where we are more divided. 22 No, 5 Abstain and the total change vote split between those who want to relax, and those who want to tighten, the rules. No clear consensus for change.
- **WHITE SAILS.** The voting numbers are very similar to those above. I would be interested to see if there is any correlation to the physical size of the voters!
- **WEIGHT.** After the recent change to all-up weight and the reductions which were made, it is interesting to note that there is still an appetite for further reductions. Not enough support to ensure a majority but an appreciable minority.
- **ASYMMETRIC SPINNAKERS.** Perhaps this got the most abstentions as the majority of " standard" sailors feel unwilling to pass comment on an aspect they don't participate in. However the rest of the votes show that a sizeable number still see this as ripe for continuing development. The policy of setting some simple parameters while the technology and practice gets sorted out seems to have been successful and may provide us with a model for dealing with any future, as yet unforeseen, radical change.
- **COURSES.** High abstention rate, and relax/delete votes, with only 22 wanting to stay with the current rules, shows a degree of ambivalence. Most changers wanted proper windward /leeward courses for the AC, and otherwise we seem to be prepared to sail whatever the organising clubs can offer! The Olympic course is still a good all round test for Championship events.

- **QUESTIONS 6 & 7.** The results for these are shown below.

	What attracted you? (41 Responses)	What keeps you in the fleet? (37 Responses)
Performance	<b>167</b>	<b>161</b>
Reputation	<b>127</b>	<b>120</b>
Technical Difficulty	<b>123</b>	<b>121</b>
Scope for Innovation	<b>125</b>	<b>122</b>
Quality of Racing	<b>94</b>	<b>107</b>
International Status	<b>101</b>	<b>111</b>
Value (new)	<b>61</b>	<b>62</b>
Value (used)	<b>116</b>	<b>81</b>
Camaraderie	<b>120</b>	<b>143</b>
History	<b>130</b>	<b>120</b>
Longevity (of canoes!)	<b>107</b>	<b>130</b>
Unique concept	<b>134</b>	<b>177</b>
Seaworthiness	<b>77</b>	<b>99</b>
Scope for Individuality	<b>129</b>	<b>124</b>
Commercial Interest	<b>39</b>	<b>48</b>
Local Club racing	<b>77</b>	<b>61</b>
Single hander	<b>163</b>	<b>150</b>
Sliding Seat	<b>130</b>	<b>126</b>
Others	<b>19</b>	<b>15</b>

Quite apart from the fact that different numbers of people answered the questions, and in different ways, it can be seen that for recruiting sailors the key aspects are that the IC is a high - performance, single - hander, unique in concept, with a sliding seat and a reputation!

Having joined we seem to treasure the uniqueness of the concept whilst revelling in the performance afloat (on our own!) and ashore (with our comrades!) and the toughness of our boats.

I tried working out average scores and rates of increase/decrease to try to get behind these figures without much enlightenment or success. I am happy to leave that to better statisticians than me.

**FINALLY.** To everyone who sent such detailed and passionate comments to me along with their questionnaires, my sincere thanks. I read them all of course, but the sheer volume makes editing and responding virtually impossible. What really comes across is the delight we all share in these little boats and the way, quite unlike any other class, they inspire such loyalty. Not many people flit in and out of canoes as they do out of the "OD plastic fantastics". We are different in concept and outlook and we occupy a niche in the sport which I think will survive any of the internal traumas. ICs and Acs are still more closely bound to each other than they are to any other fleets and we all remain stronger for that. What we have done is to raise the total numbers of canoe sailors in the UK. Hopefully this will also be the case around the world.

I do have all of the individual responses, so if any statisticians would like to do any deeper analysis or run Access queries on specific topics I can supply the data.

Alan Powell. July 4<sup>th</sup> 2003