



Attention of the ISAF Windsurfing  
Committee  
Mister Williams Ceri

Bredene, 10/9/2008

Concerning: Formula Windsurfing One Design for 2012 Olympics

Dear Mister Williams, dear Ceri,

No need to introduce myself but just for the record: I am an active windsurfer since 1975 (Windsurfer®, Windglider, Lechner, slalom, speed, Mistral & Formula), I competed on national, European and World Level, worked as national windsurf coach, International Race officer, International Measurer and I am a member of the ISAF Windsurfing committee since 2001. I'm still trying to surf every week in the summer, mainly on slalom and big wave boards.

Early this year, as president of the International Funboard Class Association, I became involved in the steering committee of the project **`Formula Windsurfing One Design for 2012 Olympics`**. The project was initiated by the International Formula Windsurfing Class at its 2006 AGM and developed by the steering committee. In March 2008 we applied to be listed as possible equipment from the 2012 Olympics. Let me explain why I believe that this new equipment should replace the RS:X.

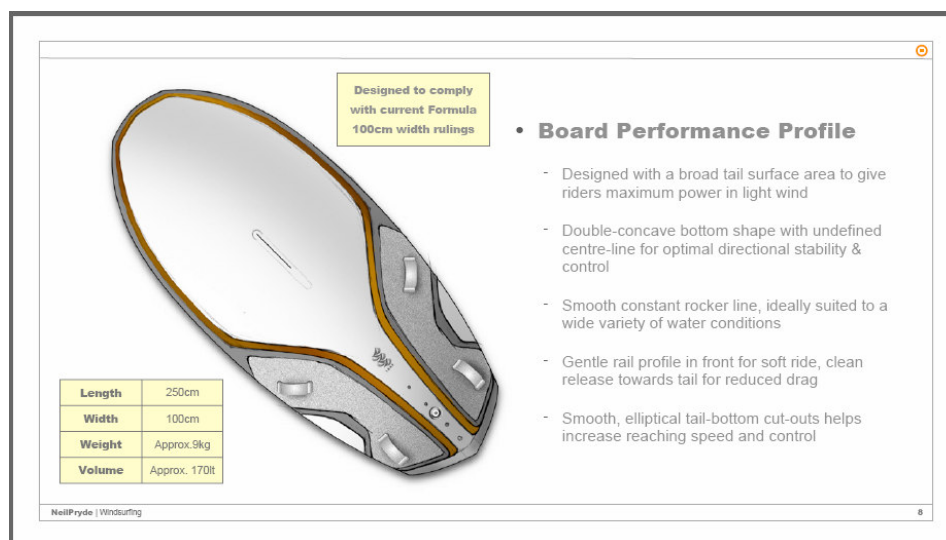
### **1) Time for further evolution**

After 3 Olympics (96, 00 & 04) the Mistral one-design equipment was considered obsolete. It no longer represented what mainstream windsurfing was all about. New Olympic equipment should be selected for 2008. Pushed by the whole windsurfing community Neil Pryde proposed in 2003 to introduce "Formula Windsurfing one-design" for the 2008 Olympics. (see attachment 1): A one-design formula board, rig, sail and fin was proposed as the best alternative. I quote 2 pages from the 2003 Neil Pryde proposal:

**Project Objectives**

- We want to see the Olympic Games as the showcase event for the very best performances in the sport of windsurfing
- The current equipment used in Olympic competition does not enable the best possible speeds and times around a course and the use of this equipment does not attract many of the best sailors to these kind of events
- To attract the best athletes in the world we need to create a contest format that will enable the best possible performances - and this requires state-of-the-art equipment (as in sailing - i.e. 49ers / Tornados)

NeilPryde | Windsurfing 6



Due to the very low wind predictions for Qingdao, the Neil Pryde "formula windsurfing" proposal had to be re-written as a "hybrid" board (with dagger board) format. This resulted in trials where, finally, the RS:X was chosen as the best hybrid board. Unfortunately the production run of the RS:X turned out to be 30 % heavier than the boards presented at the trials and the original fast planning fins of 70 cm were reduced to 60 cm (women) & 66 cm (men). The Sailing event for the London Olympics 2012 will be organised in Weymouth. **Regular breeze** is forecast and today **Formula boards plane in 6 knots** - there is no longer a need for hybrid boards.

Now is the **time to move forward on the path initiated by Neil Pryde** in 2003 and choose the "Formula Windsurfing One Design" (see attachment 2). This new equipment starts planning in 6 knots and is currently sailed by most of the racing windsurfers in the world.

## **2) Broaden the base**

Worldwide I have been looking to find one recreational RS:X surfer but I could not find one..... This board is so specific, so hard to sail, that weekend-competition surfers never use the board.

- In <6 knot conditions the old race boards) perform best
- In >6 knot conditions the Formula boards are a lot faster around the course

There is already worldwide a large number formula surfers, spread over 43 countries.

The number of active formula competitors is more than double that of active RS:X surfers. If Formula one design would become Olympic an increase to >60 countries actively racing on the New Olympic One Design is to be expected (currently 46 countries in RS:X).

To conclude: **more windsurfers in more countries** would get easy access to Olympic Windsurfing.

## **3) The Price - youth/ladies**

The new Olympic Equipment would cost **2/3 of the price of RSX**. Using the Formula Experience Class as a feeder youth class the cost would be **half** of the RS:X class.

It is also very clear to everybody who works with children and women in windsurfing that the current **RS:X class is not at all suited for youth and**

**women:** the equipment is heavy and pumping is a must under 11 knots. The equipment is also too expensive for club programs and there is no second hand market to allow annual replacement of the equipment.

#### **4) The windsurfing image**

We absolutely have to reduce **the pumping (air-rowing)**. Nobody in the sailing world likes it, and the windsurfers hate it. To eliminate pumping there are only 2 possibilities:

- stay with RS:X and set a minimum wind limit of 11 knots...or.....
- move to the Formula Windsurfing One Design and start planning in 6 knots

Of course pumping will never be totally eliminated: during starts, at manoeuvres, on a run downwind with waves, pumping will remain visible but not the rhythmic air-rowing spectacle we see now.

I also firmly believe that we should further experiment with **new formats**.....the medal race with slalom finish was a good start but we should look further.....half fleet racing, quarter fleet racing, single eliminations, double eliminations, more and shorter races, closer to the beach (audience), better TV productions using gps, camera mount, online scoring, on water judging should be further trialled.....

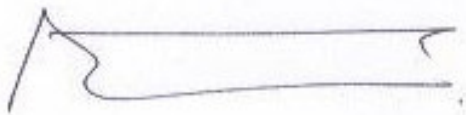
Sorry, my one-page-memo became 3 pages.....

Ceri, can I kindly ask you to double check the above with the active windsurf community in your country. But talk not only to the Olympians and their coaches, but also to the weekend surfers, the recreational surfers and ask them what they think/feel is right for the sport of windsurfing. Talk also to the clubs that are actively promoting windsurfing, that already started a Techno293 youth program, clubs that are using formula experience as youth class.....

Forget also past investments done in RS:X equipment...windsurfing is still the cheapest Olympic sailing sport and the cost of equipment is very low compared with all other investments: programs, coaches, trainings, stages,.....Investments are done in people and they switch very easy to new equipment as proven with the RS:X change. Especially if the new equipment is more fun to race!

If you have any further questions or remarks on the above feel free to ask. I'm glad to help to promote our fascinating sport and my only aim is to increase popularity of sailing/windsurfing worldwide and make Olympic windsurfing as recognisable as possible for the day-to-day surfer all over the world.

Thanks for your attention and support,



Bruno De Wannemaeker  
ISAF windsurfing committee member  
President International Funboard Class Association

2 attachments: FW2003NP.pdf proposal  
FOD2012FW.ppt proposal

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