

**Minutes of the 2024 J/24 World Council Meeting**  
**Open Virtual Session October 17, 2024**

- 1) **Call to Order, Roll Call and Welcome:** The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. EDT. We have a quorum. Attendees: Will Welles (Chair, USA), David Cooper (Vice Chair, GBR), Nicolas Cubria (Executive Committee, ARG), Maïke Hass (Executive Committee, GER), Aris Pallikaris (Executive Committee, GRE), Mark Usher (Executive Committee, IRL), Dan Busch (Executive Committee, USA), Nancy Zangerle (Past Chair, USA), Curt Barnes (ITC, USA), Michael Peters (ITC, GER), Ramiro Clemente (ARG), Steve Wright (AUS), Hugo Ottaway (AUS), Megan Aulich (AUS), Katie Coleman Nicoll (CAN), Jeff Jorgensen (CAN), Sam Marshall (GBR), Gianni Riccobono (ITA), Marcus Rogers (USA), Christopher Howell and Julie Howell (ODAM, USA).
- 2) **Appoint Secretary:** Will Welles appointed Julie Howell as the secretary.
- 3) **Approval of 2023 WCM Minutes:** *David Cooper made a motion to approve both of the 2023 WCM minutes as posted at <http://www.j24class.org/organization/class-documents/wcm-minutes/>, seconded by Nancy Zangerle. Approval of the minutes passed unanimously.*
- 4) **Chair's Overview:** Will recapped that we had a good year, culminating with the Worlds in Seattle USA. Looking forward to 2025!
- 5) **Review of Reports:**

**Executive Director:** See Attachment A. Chris summarized that the Class has more than \$80,000 in the bank, and we will get into the financial details at the Business meeting. Overall, Class membership has slowly declined over the years. Chris will propose an update for the 24/25 fiscal year budget to shift Championship support to a more regional level in an effort to keep the Class in the black financially (eliminating ED travel). The Class processed 93 measurement certificates in the fiscal year, and continues to distribute quarterly newsletters. The social media coverage shows solid numbers of followers and reach for the J/24.

**Technical:** Curt summarized the following:

**Measurers:** The ITC communicates regularly via email with the more active Measurers, which has allowed them a way to ask questions and seek advice. The list of template assets is also becoming more accurate. We now have 78 Class Measurers worldwide.

**ITC activities:** Nancy Zangerle has been actively organizing templates for regatta documents – NORs and SIs. Nick McDonald (UK) will be handling inspection for the upcoming 2025 Worlds. Michael Johnson just finished a masterful job of premeasurement of 56 boats at the 2024 Worlds.

We have noticed an increase in penalties for simple violations like not having equipment secured or certificates on board...likely because some teams just not being fully aware of the

Rules regarding these things. So upcoming FAQs in the newsletter will focus on some of those basics.

There are continued questions related to the Closed Rules. Again: boats are only allowed what is specifically spelled out as allowed in the Class Rules or if it was the way the boats came from the manufacturers. Rules used to say things like “No Titanium.” Now, with Closed Rules, we took those negative statements out. For example, carbon fiber is only allowed where the manufacturers delivered boats with that included. Therefore, carbon is allowed in spin poles, tiller extensions, winch bases, compass mounts and cleats. Nothing else (no, not in traveler bars or motor mounts...). The ITC has directed Measurers (who often fill the technical role at events) that any questions regarding Closed Rules be brought back to the ITC for review, rather than any event technical chair making a ruling at the event. Expect a few proposals coming soon, mostly for clarification.

In an effort to respond to members’ desire to cut down the days of pre-event inspection (less time measuring and more time racing), there has been a shift toward electronically handing in equipment lists and certificates for review a week prior to events. Coupled with less pre-event inspections, but increased spot checks during the events, this has been well received by members. Inspection at World Championships will be similar as in the past, with boats being pre-inspected thoroughly in the days prior to the event. Inspections at other levels of events (including Continental and National events) will be less days of pre-event inspections but more spot checks during the events. This approach has been called the “honor” system, but...with verification. Members must note that the penalty for being out of tolerance in a spot check is considerably more severe than in a pre-event inspection.

We now have written guidelines for what items should be measured at various levels of events, and how to become a Class Measurer. Recognizing that most sails are made from templates and quality control has been good, there has been a shift toward the sailmakers being responsible that their sails are within tolerance when they leave the loft. For some events, we have been measuring only one suit of each of the sailmaker’s sails, since they tend to be identical.

The Technical Committee always welcomes feedback on technical topics. Always looking for more Measurers! Contact Curt, anyone on the ITC or another Measurer if you know of someone who might be a good fit.

**Copyright Holder:** To our knowledge, no new boats have been built.

## 6) **Championship Reports:**

**2024 World Championship Recap:** Corinthian Yacht Club of Seattle, Washington USA, September 28-October 5. David said that competitors felt very welcome, and the event was excellent. RaceSense was utilized on all boats, and the response was very positive, streamlining the starting process. Expect to see more usage of this technology going forward. Nancy asked about how many course fives were used, and the recollection was 2-3 times (due to upwinds going away from the harbor and to expedite racing when they started later in the

day). It was difficult for the Race Committee to see protest flags at course 5 finishes. Feedback has been received from an IJ that we should increase the size of our protest flags for better visibility, typically listed in the NOR or SIs. We could also require a specific location of the flag. Unfortunately, racers tend to miss details in these documents. This is something for the Technical Committee to ponder.

**2025 World Championship Report:** Plym Yacht Club & Saltash Sailing Club Plymouth GBR, September 6-14. Sam Marshall is the regatta chair. Planning for the 2025 World Championship is well underway with venue, format and several key personnel in place already. There is significant national interest in the Class approaching the Worlds, which is promising, and many of the fleet are looking further afield to European events, such as Kiel and the European Championship, and to future World Championships, as well as the prospect of hosting more international events following 2025. The 2025 event will be quite unique in that it has two host clubs: Plym Yacht Club and Saltash Sailing Club. The event will be held, however, on the Mount Batten Peninsular on the east side of Plymouth. This location has been chosen because it has extensive marine facilities, close access to the race area and extensive local hospitality venues, as well as surplus accommodation in the form of hotels, B&Bs and camping options for travelling sailors. Just right of the Marina entrance is where social and land-based activities will take place, and further right is a ferry, which is a 5-minute trip to the City Centre and yet more accommodations, food and drink. The measurement and launching/recovery will take place 5 minutes by sea northwest of the marina. They are in close communication with the boatyard about logistics, and are confident that craning and effective measurement will be fluid and easy, with Nick McDonald having done several walkthroughs onsite with Sam and the Yard Manager. They will have appropriate teams in place depending on the entry mount, and this will be tailored accordingly as we get closer to the event. To date, they have £19,600 of sponsorship cash agreed for the event. There is an event committee of about 15, and whilst not scrimping on costs, a lot of expenses have been reduced by internally covering things like accommodation where possible. Additionally, from a competitors' perspective, the overheads are reasonably low, with ample accommodation, food and drink available at quite modest prices. A number of hospitality partners are on side, meaning that most days will have varied social events, ensuring a thorough and well-rounded British experience for the J/24 fleet. The main event personnel are in place, with PRO, ARO and full race management teams agreed for pin and committee boats. Robert Stewart is onboard for running the Jury, with Jared Hickman from the US also signed up. The remainder of the Jury team are shortly to be ratified by Robert. They anticipate availability of 20 charter boats from across Europe, which should more than satisfy the charter demand for the 2025 event, with approximately 15 quality British boats, as well as local Irish and German boats also available. This should more than satisfy the requirement of overseas travelers. They anticipate a large percentage of the entry coming by road. Multiple ferry discounts are secured to ensure that this is an attractive and viable offer, and they will shortly go live on the event website.

Nancy clarified that the officials will need to be approved by the IJCA Executive Committee, and we have a list of recommended individuals. This will be discussed further offline.

**2026 World Championship Report:** Sandringham Yacht Club, Melbourne, Australia, November 4-11. Megan Aulich shared a presentation highlighting four Championships in 2025

and 2026 and a pre-Worlds in early November 2026. The OA is collating inventory of J/24s in Australia and progressing on this charter evaluation. Multiple levels of sponsorship are being sought; they have had past success in this area. Hugo Ottaway will lead inspections. They are working on Jury and RC ideas, and of course, costs/geography will be a factor here. Sandringham Yacht Club had some recent upgrades, and they have two cranes. Expect a focus on social events.

**2027 World Championship Report:** Rochester Yacht Club, Rochester, NY USA, October 2-9. This is a great club that has hosted World Championship before, more details to come.

**2028 Worlds Discussion:** The Italian Class submitted a letter stating that given the success of the European Championship in Porto Cervo, they would be glad to host the next J/24 World Championship to be held in Europe. They would like to propose for the World Championship location in Porto Cervo Sardinia again with the organization of the Yach Club Costa Smeralda. Chris pointed Gianni to the online guide for proposal submission so we can revisit this at the Business meeting.

Regarding the 2025 European Championship, the Class received an e-mail yesterday stating The Netherlands can organize the European Championship July 7-12 in Wemeldinge. European NCAs need to get back to a long-term rotation to set the schedule three years in advance. If hosts are not forthcoming, we could issue a Request for Proposal. Maiké shared that Sweden will host the 2026 European Championship, details to come.

#### 7) **New Business/Open Discussion on Future Strategy:**

Steve suggested a membership tier for youth: That the World Council consider setting up a membership tier for Junior/Youth sailors with a discounted J/24 Class Association membership fee payable. It is suggested the discounted fee be set at half the full adult fee.

Supporting discussion:

- With a multitude of choices for junior sailors, the NSW and Australian J/24 Class Association are trying to encourage participation and remove any barriers to having new young crews sail and learn on a J/24.
- For many sailors in the past, and no doubt into the future, a J/24 may be the first keelboat that a young sailor sails on and the first time a team of more than two works together.
- As we all know, the one design nature of a J/24 is absolutely educational to any new crew wishing to develop skills for a lifetime of sailing.
- However, increased costs of living pressures are definitely on parents and teenagers minds when looking at new sports and participation. This is also seen in sailing across the world where lower cost one design racing remains popular for all ages over more expensive custom designs.
- In almost all sailing Classes, declines in numbers regularly racing are being seen and fleets are being sailed by older and older sailors.
- Encouraging greater participation by both younger sailors and women and girls we see as key to keeping the J/24 Class thriving into the future.

- In NSW, an experiment to encourage greater junior participation was undertaken in 2023 through the subsidization of junior sailor fees - those that were high school age or students (not working). This seemed to help in terms of encouraging more juniors to sign up for J/24 Class Association membership. The fee was set at half the regular membership rate (the association subsidizing the other 50%). This in turn we believe helped in achieving increased participation by juniors either on 'all junior' sailed boats or within other more experienced teams as new crew members.
- With new 'all Junior' crewed boats, the Association was actually gaining five, or in some cases six, new members per boat. We now see these sailors becoming part of other teams and one junior even participated in the recent World Championships in Seattle.
- The J/24 remains a great all-around boat for young people to get into sailing and racing - its size and one design pedigree making it an ideal first step into keelboats and real team sailing. The participation pathway provided by regattas at local, state, national and even World Championship level, in fleets with other younger sailors, is a great incentive for young sailors to choose to sail J/24.
- Adding an additional lower cost membership tier for junior sailors is worthy of consideration to remove any barriers to joining. Simply having a separate fee suggests that we are encouraging young people to join and that there are already junior members sailing. Note: the applicable age being under 25.

Nancy supports the initiative but thinks it's best driven by NCAs to suit their particular needs. Assuming we are talking about adding new youth members (and not pulling from our current numbers), this shouldn't have a big effect on the bottom line. Let's allow NCAs time to ponder this and discuss further at our Business meeting.

#### Country Updates:

USA: Marcus highlighted six junior boats and four women's boats at the Seattle Worlds. The OA had a charter chairperson managing 14 charter boats, which worked well. Overall, the USA has lost a few key players, but the national Class is strong.

CAN: Katie reported that they just had their first national annual meeting in five years. There is a growing fleet in Ottawa, but boats are scattered. A new board is needed, and they will meet again soon.

GRE: Aris said they have 10-15 boats in regular attendance, and their National Championship is coming up (the event will also include Board elections). The fleet is stable, with young people providing new ideas. Greece might like to host the European Championship in 2027.

IRL: Mark noted that participation was a little down this year, but hoping better for 2025 with the Worlds in England.

GER: Maike stated that 18 boats competed in their National Championship including several female crews. They have one more regatta this year.

AUS: Steve shared that they are a little scattered amongst the various yacht clubs/geography.

Momentum is growing for the 2026 Worlds, including potential boat purchases. There is discussion of shipping boats to AUS for the Worlds and selling them there afterward. Hugo estimated there are currently approximately 250 boats on continent.

ITA: Gianni told us that their National Championship recently concluded, and their Circuit will finish in November. The 2025 calendar is being planned.

ARG: Nicolas documented Nationals in the beginning of the year, with active fleets in the south and center of country. Ramiro attended the Worlds, great to see a new generation! They aspire to reinstate a South American Championship in 2025.

8) **Closing Remarks:** See you on November 14! Thank you for joining today.

## **ATTACHMENT A: Executive Director's Report, Christopher Howell**

### **Administration**

We are now marking 12 years of administering the IJCA, and we feel we are contributing to the vitality of this 46-year-old Class. It was great to be onsite throughout the IJCA's active year at the World Championship in Seattle, European Championship in Porto Cervo and North American Championship in St. Petersburg. Meeting J/24 racers and seeing friends from over the years is very rewarding, and we feel blessed to be part of this Class.

### **Financial**

The fiscal year ended on 30 September, and as projected, the P&L will show a negative income this year. Royalty tag sales came in slightly above budget and membership slightly below. The Class is still strong financially with over \$82,000 on the Balance Sheet (almost two times our yearly budget). This is a healthy sign for any non-profit organization. As you may recall, we approved a 2023/24 budget with a negative (\$6,200) YE income. Unfortunately, there is no new magic when it comes to the finances, and we will be in the negative. We have implemented membership dues and royalty tag fee increases in recent years, but the Class is slowly retracting (as is sailing in general). The J/24 is still amazingly strong around the world, but we will need to work within our means. For this reason, the 2024/25 budget will reflect a change in travel and management fees of the Executive Director. I suggest we shift the Championship Event Class Representative duties to regional volunteers and the Technical Committee. I also believe the social media aspect of our event duties can be shifted to working as real-time as possible with local resources. Julie and I can make ourselves available if the OA requests our participation and covers expenses, but we will not plan to attend the major Championships. We hope that these suggested changes will sustain the Class for the near future, without a further increase in costs to the membership.

### **Measurement Form Administration**

In the most recent FY, the Class Office has processed new measurement certificates or changes of ownership for more than 90 hulls. This procedure starts with working with the Technical Committee/Measurers to obtain accurate and completed Measurement Input Sheets. The data is then inputted at the Class Office into the master measurement file and merged into a Word document for conversion to PDF when distributed to the owner. This merge process is also utilized when revising certificates following a change of ownership.

### **Newsletter**

Since 2013, we have distributed 43 editions of the newsletter with four per year since 2016. The archive of all editions is at <http://www.j24class.org/newsletter/>. Thank you to all the NJCAs for their contributions. The Class Office distributes the newsletters via e-mail in a PDF format to supplement the distribution of Class information amongst all NJCAs. The next issue will be sent in December. We appreciate the continued photographs and content from NJCAs, and North Sails and Quantum Sails as advertising supporters.

### **Public Relations Efforts**

The IJCA website was brand new in 2024, and as always it is helpful if this group can help us identify areas to improve. Social media continues to give the Class exposure worldwide, as the first means of distribution of news and events. At major Championships, Julie and I have posted live updates/videos

from the water as well as daily post-race photos. This is supplemented by daily press releases to the sailing media. The International J/24 Class Facebook page has more than 6,880 followers, better than many comparable Classes. The Class Instagram account has more than 2,900 followers. The graphs below show reach of social media for the 2024 World Championship. We feel it is this effort that continues to show to the world that the Class is alive and well. By demonstrating the strength of the Class, we protect the brand and the value of boats.

