

Principles of a Rowing Event Programme [Working Draft at 180615]

Context:

In 2013, the Olympic Movement entered a new era with significant changes for the future. The 2012 Olympic Programme Commission Report and Agenda2020 have modified the general landscape and brought more flexibility, notably for the Olympic Programme. From now on, IOC will evaluate not only the sports at the Olympic Games but each of the events. The Executive Board of IOC will ultimately select the events that will be on the Programme.

This means that each event will have to be justified along with a full background of why it is unique and different from the others. The knock-on effect is that all events in the FISA programme should be re-assessed and reviewed based on principles as well so that the pyramid of participation correctly leads to the Olympic games event programme.

As well, all aspects of the venue for each sport now will have to be fully justified in order to establish the costs of staging events. It is important now for FISA to step back and fully review all events and all elements that influence the size and complexity of a rowing venue. This paper attempts to identify and address the principles that should be considered when establishing a rowing event programme.

Regatta Structure

1. Race Distance : should Olympic Rowing remain an endurance sport?
 - 1.1. What is the minimum race distance to match the endurance profile of the sport?
 - 1.2. What the minimum time for racing to match the endurance profile of the sport?
 - 1.3. Should the Olympic regatta distance be exactly 2000m or approximately?
2. Number of Lanes
 - 2.1. Does the number of lanes help guarantee best possible fairness? Should this depend on the level of the event? High level – eight lanes? Lower levels – seven and six lanes?
 - 2.2. What should be considered for the allocation of lanes?
3. Number of Days
 - 3.1. What are the criteria that should be considered to determine the number of days of the programme?
 - 3.2. Does the number of days match these criteria?
 - 3.3. Does the number of days match the level of the event? High level – one rest day between rounds?
Lower levels – racing each day, racing two times per day?
4. Number of Final Days
 - 4.1. Does the number of finals days correspond with the attractiveness for television, spectators, budgets for teams and OCs?

Racing Structure

5. Balance of long and short boats
 - 5.1. What is the mix of fast boats (eights/quads) versus slower boats (singles/pairs)?
 - 5.2. Does this allow different heights and weights? Fast-twitch versus slow-twitch muscle fibres?
6. Balance of sculling and sweep rowing
 - 6.1. Are the two main disciplines of the sport defined by history or by skill sets or by body types/height or weight?
7. Balance of heavyweight and lightweight
 - 7.1. Do the variations offer opportunities for rowers of different body types to participate?

7.2. Does the lightweight category have a sporting justification?

7.3. Does the lightweight category have a political justification?

8. Excellence vs. Universality

8.1. Does the event include the best rowers in the world?

8.2. Does the event ensure rowers from all continents are included?

8.3. Does the event enable/require developing nations to be represented?

8.4. Is there a percentage of places based on excellence vs. universality?

8.5. Is the cursor between excellence vs universality well placed?

9. Gender Balance

9.1. What is the representation of the two genders?

9.2. By moving to equal representation, what are the side effects? Does a move to equality advantage some nations and disadvantage others? Small nations (FIN, ESP, SVK, etc.)?

9.3. Does equality also mean the same types of boats?

10. Inclusiveness

10.1. What is the representation of different parts of the rowing family?

10.2. How many events include Para-Rowing per year?

11. Integrity/rowing values

11.1. Do the races match our values – clean, endurance, etc?

12. Spectator Experience

12.1. Does the event produce exciting racing for spectators/viewers?

13. Image production

13.1. Does the event produce an attractive experience for television viewers?

14. Variety

14.1. Across the whole of World Rowing Events, are all disciplines of the sport considered?

Venue requirements

The amount of water space and land space required will depend on the above.

Additional Questions:

Mixed events?

Are mixed events relevant for the sport? What is the argument or the reason that we cannot have mixed event in rowing?

Could it damage the existing balance of results and performances?

If deemed relevant, how to start them... local, national, regional, world-level?

Doubling up?

Is doubling up a positive for the popularity of the sport? Does it create legends and promotion?

Or does it take away medals from more national federations?