

Proposed Principles for Rowing Event Programmes [Working Draft 2 at 270815]

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 : The race distance for rowing should reflect that rowing is an endurance sport
 - 1.1. The minimum race distance should match the endurance profile of the sport.
 - 1.2. The minimum time for racing should reflect the balance of endurance and strength.
 - 1.3. Therefore, the Olympic regatta distance could vary as long as the above principles are met
2. Number of Lanes
 - 2.1. The number of racing lanes should guarantee best possible fairness – eight to ten offer the most flexibility for finding six lanes offering equal conditions.
 - 2.2. The number of racing lanes could change depending on the level of the event
3. Number of Days
 - 3.1. The number of days on the racing programme should reflect on the level of the event.
 - 3.2. The number of days could change depending on the level of the event – one rest day between rounds, one rest day after repechages, one race each day, racing two times per day are options.
4. Number of Final Days
 - 4.1. The number of finals days should correspond with the interest and attractiveness for television, spectators, budgets for teams and OCs

Racing Structure

5. Balance of long and short boats
 - 5.1. There should be a mix of fast boats (eights/quads) a slower boats (singles/pairs)
 - 5.2. This allows for different heights and weights, differences of fast-twitch versus slow-twitch muscle fibres, body types and traditions.
6. Balance of sculling and sweep rowing
 - 6.1. There should be a mix between the two main disciplines of the sport – sculling and sweep rowing, defined by tradition, skill sets or body types/height or weight
7. Balance of heavyweight and lightweight
 - 7.1. Rowing should offer opportunities for rowers of different body types to participate.

7.2. The lightweight category has sporting and a political justification for universality.

8. Excellence vs. Universality

8.1. The event must include the best rowers in the world

8.2. The event must include rowers from all continents

8.3. The event enable/require developing nations to be represented

8.4. A percentage of places should be established based on excellence vs. universality

9. Gender Balance

9.1. The representation of the two genders should be 50/50%

9.2. When setting the timing for moving to equal representation, the side effects need to be considered, such as providing an advantage some nations and disadvantage others? Effect on small nations versus large nations

9.3. Equality means the number of quota places and the number of boat classes offered.

Additional Factors

10. Inclusiveness

10.1. The different parts of the rowing family should be included as much as possible in events

11. Integrity/rowing values

11.1. The events offered should match our values – clean, endurance, etc

12. Spectator Experience

12.1. The event programme needs to be attractive for spectators

13. Image production

13.1. The event programme should produce an attractive experience for television viewers

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?