



Bill Brassington
Commodore and International Chairman
1 Meadow Lane, Pitstone, Bucks
LU7 9EZ, United Kingdom

+44 (0) 7801 433171

commodore@itcaworld.org
www.itcaworld.org

April 20th 2023

National International Topper Class Associations

Dear Members,

International Topper Revised Specification and Class Rules Changes

As you are aware Topper International Limited (the Licensee), in full cooperation and liaison with Ian Proctor Designs Limited (the Licensor) and senior members of the International Topper Class Association (World) committee, have had to move the production technology from injection moulded polypropylene to rota moulded polyethylene. The move from injection moulding to rota moulded is necessary in order to safeguard the future of the International Topper, because without the change the International Committee feared for the future of the Class due to no new boats joining the fleet, for manufacturing reasons previously communicated to you.

As the design progressed, we saw that there would need to be changes to the Class Rules, and to maintain the quality of the moulding, the tooling required further design changes which in turn necessitated further changes to the Class Rules. Finally, because the production process had to change, the Specification, against which the boat was built, needed to be amended. The Specification forms part of the submission to World Sailing and any changes to it will require their approval.

So where are we now?

The approved Class Rules dated January 1st 2023 are still valid and should be adhered to.

We have proposed changes to the Class Rules which try to equalise the sailing performance between the two moulding processes. For example, we have proposed that the rules preventing the use of tape to smooth the water flow over imperfections in the injection moulded hull should be deleted, thus allowing tape to be used where and when required.

Additionally, changes were needed to the Class Rules to permit the use of hatches in the cockpit which are required in the new boat to ensure a consistent flow of the moulding material plus further consequential rule changes were needed as a consequence of these design changes.

Some of the changes prevent the use of features included in the new rota moulded version of the hull, for example the use of a turning block attached to the aft end of the centre toetraps, as this cannot be retro fitted in the older polypropylene hull due to the use of the weaker brass inserts, while the new polyethylene hull has more substantial anchors that allow it.

We have listened to our sailors, and we feel strongly that the changes to the Class Rules equalises the two hulls as far as is possible. Changes to the Class Rules can be catered for by their inclusion in an event's sailing instructions, and we have in the past used this solution while we awaited official approval from World Sailing for previous rule changes.

Likewise, the copyright holder can designate the new rota moulded polyethylene hull as an 'official International Topper' along with the agreement of an event's organisers, so that they can be raced against the injection moulded polypropylene version. The ITCA (World) committee can therefore invite event organisers to include the polyethylene hull so long as its inclusion results in fair competition.

However, we need to have the polyethylene hull approved by World Sailing before we can include the design into our World Championships. To this end, we have submitted a revised Specification for their consideration and World Sailing themselves are working with us to speed the approval process to achieve that goal and ensure that the polyethylene hull is also recognised in time for both the Irish and GBR Nationals championships.

While awaiting World Sailing's approval of the Specification, Topper International have suspended fitting the licence plate mark until such time when it has been officially approved. On approval, Topper International will send out License plates to all owners of boats delivered without the mark fitted.

National Class Associations may take their own action as to how they handle the introduction and incorporation of the new polyethylene rota moulded hull into their fleets during this transition phase and we, as the International Class Association will respect those decisions, but encourage all National Class Associations to embrace and integrate the new boat into their fleets, as it is so important for the future health of the Topper fleets around the world.

Until the approval has been received from World Sailing, the Class Rules as written and approved by World Sailing in January this year are still valid and should be applied for all official National Class Association events. For example, Class Rule C.5.5.5 states:

- a) The **sail clew outhaul** arrangement may be replaced or altered, subject to it being a block and tackle system of maximum mechanical advantage of 4:1, attached to the sail **clew** by an asymmetric carbine hook / carabiner rendering it immediately detachable.

The carbine hook has to attach to the clew as shown in the picture below, not to the clew hook, there are important safety reasons for this rule and permitting the attachment to the clew hook is not allowed and should not be accepted during racing.



Our Class Rules are the rules by which we race, and they have been developed over a number of years to ensure consistent, safe and fair racing. We are now urgently working with World Sailing to ensure this same approach is adopted for the new polyethylene hull.

Until approval is received from World Sailing, I request that sailors, competitors and their supporters respect those sailors that have new polyethylene hulls and only wish to enjoy their racing and participate in the fun, friendly class.

Yours faithfully



Bill Brassington
Commodore
International Topper Class Association