

# **Czech Sailing Federation.**

## ***Introduction***

Tomas Musil approached me upon behalf of the CSF to review the structure of the federation at present.

I have been successful in interviewing all of the Pathway Coaches, Head Coach and had input from a number of key members of your Executive Committee via email or interview. The RS Classes have added information.

I have already presented the example of the Irish Sailing Association's structure to the Executive Committee in Prague. I hope this gives perspective to some of my comments.

My report is split into 3 main sections:

- Participation
- Pathway
- Top Squads

The feedback takes into consideration a number of key factors:

1. Limited funding
2. A culture of sailing outside the Pathway in National Classes
3. Private coaching being strong and desirable to sailors/families
4. The coaches having the ability and desire to develop

## ***Participation***

With double the population of Ireland, the Czech Republic has less active Optimist sailors. Ireland boasts 300 active Optimist's, with a measure of travelling to regional or national championships as its criteria.

Sailing participation is low in the Czech Republic at present. To create a healthy Performance Base it is necessary to try as hard as possible, to create as many opportunities for young people to try sailing as possible.

The challenge following this is to create as many chances as possible for those who enjoy their taster sessions to begin sailing regularly in clubs.

It is a relentless task to be undertaken by clubs and volunteers, but in the long term, it is performance related.

The more young active sailors we have, the wider the Performance Base. The advantages are multiple:

1. More opportunity to find talented, motivated sailors with an excellent work ethic
2. Bigger fleets in the Pathway classes
3. More sailors to select from at each age group during the Pathway

4. More competitive training groups in the Talent Team squads
  5. More effective training and event support is then possible by the coach.
- Better Pathway performances should follow naturally.

With Olympic success as the motivation in either attendance or medal opportunities, pushing female participation and supporting girls through the system is essential in the expected future of 50 percent female participation. Female role models and the use of the sailing and national press could assist.

## ***Pathway***

A Pathway has been established. To confirm the federation's support in the Pathway Classes is important, especially if any changes are made.

The Pathway classes are at present in competition with other national classes to attract sailors. This is made more difficult with a culture of private coaching and independence from the federation of sailors and families.

### *Pathway Coaches*

The Pathway class coaches need to work on ways to make their program as desirable as possible. It needs to be way above anything else delivered in the domestic sailing scene. This will motivate young sailors and their families to be in the pathway classes, rather than the national class boats. Fun, structured, professional and with a feeling of development through measured improvement and results, is the objective.

Simply, if the program and coaches are World Class, sailors will want to be part of the Pathway.

Suggestions to assist this are improving the level of delivery of the Pathway class coaches through a Coach Mentoring scheme or an exclusive Coach Development Program, tailored to their needs.

Our Pathway coaches will be invested in if they agree to stay in the program. The difficulty lies where a chosen coach, who is recognized as the correct person for the class, has outside interests, coaching privately in a class competing against the Pathway. Open discussions need to be had in individual cases to make sure all of their activity as a coach is in support of the pathway.

Some input is suggesting the use of international coaches in the Pathway. I don't think this is necessary and would only be a short-term solution. If we have long-term commitment from our coaching team, then outlining our expectations of them more clearly and up skilling them will strengthen the system.

## ***Pathway Classes***

The programs between the 3 Pathway classes differ widely at present in approach.

### *Optimist*

The Optimist Class has no domestic training activity in CZE. The international program is logical and takes in training and racing with good venue choice. 6 CZE Cups and the Nationals are on the domestic racing circuit.

We are suffering because the sailors choose what activity is appropriate to attend. Many reasons motivate non-attendance, including education, cost and logistics. This prevents us from being able to deliver a complete curriculum to those sailors and preparing them holistically for the youth class coaches. This also makes it hard to climb the international fleet.

To make this group work more efficiently in feeding the youth classes, I suggest a core of compulsory training needs to be established. This will also create a more efficient use of federation funds when delivering this training.

This would create justification to have a second coach at the compulsory training with 15 boats. This can be balanced with less activity where attendance is low. To allow this to be reasonable and fair for the sailors and their families, location and timings need to be considered for cost and availability not to be a major barrier to attending.

A compulsory, core program as described above would assist all pathway classes. Exceptional circumstances for not being able to attend the compulsory activity can be written into selection policy and discussed in individual cases.

### *Laser Classes*

Laser classes. Three boats have been grouped with one coaching team. The variety in classes, ability and age group create a difficult training group. It is more than difficult to create effective training due to the boat speed differences of the classes, the difference of level of sailors and time in the class.

Rethinking the structure and how to use resources in this area is required to make this area more effective.

Program planning to separate the group can create more efficient training. This leads to more coach days required and with a healthy racing circuit, 3 classes and multiple age groups, the team already feels they are delivering a lot of activity at 142 days planned across the classes in 2018.

Running more separately the 4.7 and Radial pathway programs until the age of 19 is an option. The 4.7 and Radial sailor speed and needs differ greatly. The Standard could then take a slightly different approach. The sailors who get

supported in this class could be expected to have shown more promise in the Radial and reach an entry weight target. This would then keep the numbers low and hopefully have them talented enough to begin to work with the Top Team B sailors at 19. Females could remain in the Radial as they do now until 23 and males could remain in the radial longer where circumstances justify.

## *29er*

The 29er class project has been established. With the recent history, class coach in place and federation fleet, I suggest we continue to follow this project if you want to have a double handed class in the Pathway.

Reassuring people that no 1 class is better than another is necessary. Also that sailor's can change from Asymmetric to Symmetric boats after youth. With the low critical mass of sailors, it is necessary to support only 1 double-handed youth class. This allows us to create high level domestic racing, big fleet situations and effective training. This is not possible if we dilute the sailors between too many boats. Strengthening this class in level and numbers will lead to success in feeding the Olympic classes and improving 29er results.

I presented the Irish Pathway, past and present. At present in CZE, we are on the borderline of justifying a double-handed class in the structure due to lack of critical mass. I showed with proof and answered questions showing that the single-handed classes can feed the Olympic Skiff or female 470. If the 29er class was not running training for a year, due to lack of critical mass and level of the sailor to justify it, the coach could be redirected temporarily to the Feva class to lift its level, up skill its coaching team and feed the 29er in the future with sailors of the correct size and level.

The 29er program has a core of domestic training at present. It is necessary that this training is delivered as a training camp, like away activity with a complete daily program. This can then lead to a good curriculum, preparing the majority of sailors for post Youth level.

## RS Feva

This National Class is growing rapidly. Its growth and volunteer support justifies its development being recognized. It has the potential to be a junior class in the Pathway in the future. I think the class needs to prove its ability to feed the youth classes with male and female sailors of the correct age to develop through both the 29er and Laser Classes before this introduction can be justified.

## *General*

Where coaches are unable to deliver activity in the agreed program with the federation, it is necessary for the coaches to turn this into something positive. Finding a replacement or cancelling activity allows for outside criticism. It becomes a positive thing if a high level replacement is found with class knowledge. This can then enhance the program and remove any possible negative criticism.

Continuing to motivate national class sailors to enter the Youth classes at the correct age to allow time to develop in the new class is necessary. We need the sailors entering our pathway sideways from other Junior classes to normally enter with 3 years left in the Youth Classes. Exceptions always occur and should not be ruled out where circumstances justify.

All classes need to work hard to create a self training/home training ethic to add to sailing volume at the junior and youth ages. We need to try to create a balance of training alone (at home, in a safe club environment) and domestic racing.

All pathway programs need to change the view that sailing is a summer sport, because of the cold CZE winter. It is difficult to justify rest in the month after the worlds as I showed in my lectures, if you are unable to sail domestically for 4 months of the winter. If rest is taken prior to Christmas, the winter holidays can be used as Foundation training or racing. Boats can be transported to winter training venues earlier, creating activity from late December onwards. More program volume can be in this period if possible with education because otherwise, no sailing is taking place. This volume shift then allows for the sailors to look more after their personal training when the weather is suitable to sail at home.

## ***Top Squad***

Funding has improved to the top sailors who qualify for support at A or B level.

## ***Head Coach***

Michael is in place as Head Coach and can guide the sailors through their campaigns, using his experience to shape the sailors programs and discuss the use of their funds.

## ***Bridging the gap***

The level required to qualify for A funding is a huge jump from the level of sailors in the Talent Team. Bridging this gap for the sailors is necessary, as you need to have more people campaigning in the Olympic Classes.

Structure could be added at this point by introducing coaching where class numbers, individuals or level justifies.

Highlighting the classes you would support if justified, can guide people into the classes you want. Without guidance, in a small nation there is an incentive for all the sailors who want to campaign in the Olympic Classes to choose a different Class. This naturally removes domestic competition for the Olympic spot if the class qualifies for the Olympics.

Unfortunately, this leads to a lack of competitive domestic training opportunities and a lack of the economies of scale which sharing a coach, accommodation and transport creates.

By supporting Laser and Radial through this period, you are already looking after two classes with a large Olympic fleet. You can also feed larger Laser sailors into the Finn, a class in which you have history and knowledge, after they have acquired high-level race craft and campaigning skills cost effectively. I have shown the Radial and Laser can feed other classes.

At present it appears to be the Laser that has B level sailors and Talent Team sailors to feed into his class and justifies coaching support.

Boat loans have allowed other sailors/teams to try other Olympic Classes.

The lacking the funding for both coaching and logistics makes this gap huge to bridge. If you highlight your target classes, you can guide which classes are chosen and support where justified with coaching as outlined above.

### *Coaching Team*

Coaching support is at present the responsibility of the sailor. They employ international coaches where they can afford to and feel justification.

Unfortunately, this is not linked to the federation and the domestic coaching team of the Pathway. In the majority of federation models, it is these key coaches who are rolling good practice down the coaching team and up skilling the lower level coaches. There is no incentive to do this at present.

This will also lead to a difficulty in creating venue call books and collating venue information for the future key contests such as Aarhus Sailing World Championship 2018 or Tokyo 2020.

Some of these areas could be included in the sailor contract, when they accept A or B funding. Whether the sailor takes responsibility for collating the coach's notes on venues or passes on the responsibility, retention of this information should not be overlooked.

## ***Conclusion***

We need to push hard to improve participation of young sailors in our sport.

In brief, the Pathway Classes need to be supported as well as possible financially and with high level coaching. The objective needs to be to create a World Class Program.

Pathway opportunities are:

- Strengthen the coaching team, up skill and install a high level of professionalism
- Create a core program with curriculum in each class
- Confirm classes and position of the 29er
- Separate the Laser classes
- Recognize RS Feva's development and outline what is necessary to become a pathway class
- Improve home training ethic
- Reduce winter non sailing time

Top Squad

1. Work on support strategies to bridge the gap between TT and TS
2. Put coaching in place for the classes that justify it, especially for B funded sailors
3. Create a strategy of the target classes you would like sailors to campaign