

Press release

The World Sailing Mid-Year conference, which gripped the attention of so many passionate sailors and followers, came to a close yesterday in London. The World Sailing Council rejected the Equipment Committees decisive recommendation for the existing equipment to be replaced by the RS Aero for the Men's and Women's One-Person Dinghy Event after exhaustive testing and sea trials.

After a day of reflection, RS Sailing would like to sincerely thank World Sailing for giving the RS Aero the opportunity to be part of the 2024 Equipment Selection for the Men's and Women's One Person Dinghy. We were impressed throughout the whole process by the Evaluation Team, World Sailing staff and the Equipment Committee who did a very professional and impressive job. We were extremely confident in the depth and thoroughness of the Evaluation Panel to conduct a fair and complete evaluation process.

RS Sailing also sends a heartfelt thank you to all our followers and sailors, old and new, and have been completely overwhelmed by the global support for the RS Aero and RS Sailing. You've all genuinely been on this journey with us and it feels like we've made a whole load of new friends in the process.

It's undeniable that the RS Aero has been proven superior in almost every aspect. The original details in the 2024 Equipment Selection - Men's and Women's One Person Dinghy Report presented the RS Aero as the superior dinghy and the overwhelming majority vote by the Equipment Committee on Saturday confirmed it. On Sunday afternoon, during the Council vote Dina Kowalyshyn, Chairman of the World Sailing Equipment Committee, requested to make further comments before making recommendations to council. With their permission she went on to say,

"The evaluation panel had a few things to say about the RS Aero, that swayed some people in the equipment committee and should be made note of here at Council.

The hull is very light, it requires sensitive boat handling and was considered by the sailors at the evaluation to reward higher sailing skills. It's light weight and its size make it attractive and suitable for the youth pathway. Its hull is engineered with modern materials and modern production methods.

It is mass production ready, it is already being mass produced and produces a high-end quality product. This quality was well recognised by MNA sailors and was considered the highest in terms of value for money. The builder is in a satisfactory position to produce and deliver boats in reasonable time scale'.

She went on to note that, "Regardless of the challenges between the tender ILCA and Laser Performance the equipment committee recommend the RS Aero on its own merits."

We couldn't be prouder of the RS Aero, we have known for a long time that it was an awesome boat to sail but it's now proved itself irrefutably to the world that it is.

We respect World Sailing councils vote to retain the Laser for 2024 and understand that there are difficulties around change beyond which is simply the best equipment. When the world is so heavily invested in legacy equipment it's hard to move on from it. We will continue to encourage MNA's and Council Members, who are eager for change from heavier, 50-year-old design equipment, to keep sharing their message. We still believe that these decisions are not just about the Olympians; this universal sector drives the youth pathways and the opportunity to build women's participation as well. The sport is currently in decline in many regions and we

all share the primary responsibility to reverse that trend by proactively working with sailors and MNAs using the most modern equipment to present sailing to the widest possible audience in a collaborative and sustainable way.

Moving forwards the RS Aero will continue to excite sailors and provide inclusive racing globally at World Class events. The international growth of the boat will be fuelled further by the new audience that the Evaluation and Trials have introduced. Development of the RS Aero 6 rig will continue in order for the class to cater for lighter adult body weights and create a selection of bespoke Women's events. RS Sailing and our close friends at the international Class Association will continue to work with World Sailing, MNAs, Clubs and Programs around the world to ensure there are as many people as possible enjoying our awesome sport.

www.rssailing.com