GOLD FOR TUNNICLIFFE & GOODISON

Laser 4.7 World’s 400 Sailors & 40+ Countries

NEW Mainsheet Blocks & Centreboard Brake
Paul Goodison...

Congratulations on winning Olympic Gold in Qingdao after your 4th place in Athens. What do you think was the key to your success this time?

I think really this time it was about focusing on just the one event and not really worrying too much about what happened in the rest of the events in the run up to the games. Last time I tried to win every regatta in the year of the games but you don’t need to win every regatta – as long as you win the important ones! It was just a shift in focus and trying to peak for just one event. You seem to have made Qingdao your home, winning the two Olympic Test Events and the Olympic Gold medal. Could you plan for the difficult conditions in Qingdao?

I think after coming 4th last time (in Athens) we sat down and decided what we needed to do to try to make sure that didn’t happen again in China. For me the whole 4 years was about trying to become the best sailor I could be in the conditions expected in China. My whole training was changed to peak in those conditions, in the end I lost nearly 10kg in weight specifically for the Olympics. Each year we went to China I tried to lose a little bit of weight for the Pre-Olympic regattas. I think just spending lots of time there and getting comfortable in the surroundings helped.

Do you think the tactics that worked so well for you in Qingdao can now be applied for other regattas and to help you win the World Championship title that has proved so elusive in the past?

It would be amazing to win the World’s at some point. It seems to be my jinxed event where I always slip up. I think in the run up to Athens it was because I just wasn’t good enough. This time round I think the focus was just somewhere else making it easier to slip up. Obviously the conditions were different and there were other guys that were better in stronger winds.

Did you have a game plan for the Olympics? Were there any surprises for you?

It was a difficult regatta. My biggest worry was that we had been concentrating so much on light winds. When we got to Qingdao we actually had a couple of windy races. That for me was the biggest fear. I was pretty confident with myself in the lighter winds but not so sure of myself in the stronger winds. Going to the Europeans a couple of weeks before the Olympics really helped me because it was so windy at the Europeans and I did so well it gave me confidence that I could pull through the strong wind days too. I think the key was to be strong in all conditions.

Your battle with Rasmus Myrgren in the medal race was exciting for us all to watch. If you had been in his position, trying to protect the silver medal, would you have done things differently?

Yes, for sure. My plan was just to sail a normal race but two minutes from the start I looked at the course and it all seemed to be falling apart. The conditions meant that anything could have been possible. So I decided to engage and unfortunately for Rasmus he ended up getting a little bit too far away from the other guy. I think if I had been in his situation I would have definitely done things differently. I would have been expecting it a little bit more and just trying to distance myself from the other guy who was essentially going to try to do this.

What do you do in your free time when you’re not sailing the Laser?

I love to go windsurfing and mountain biking. The only break I’ve had since being back from China was to go surfing for a few days. I threw the tent in the back of my car and left my phone and computer at home to get away from it all.

Who has had the greatest impact on your sailing? Why?

Initially my parents as they were the ones that took me to all of the sailing events. Then growing up and competing against Ben Ainslie and actually being his training partner for the Sydney Olympics was obviously a great influence. I could see what was needed to win and how to campaign properly. After that I’ve worked closely with my coach Chris Gowers for the last 10 years and he’s had a major influence on my sailing.

What are you currently listening to on your MP3 player?

The Kooks and Kings of Leon.

What are your sailing goals and plans for 2009 and beyond?

When I finally get some time to myself I will be taking some time out. Before Christmas I think I will reassess what I am going to do next. In the long term future I would love to do another Olympics and then maybe something like the Volvo Ocean Race or the America’s Cup.

What would be your 3 most important tips for sailors starting a 2012 Olympic campaign?

1. Buy my book!!
2. I think it’s all about having fun. I grew up never really aspiring to be an Olympian. I had my heroes, like Daley Thompson, but it was just about having fun on the water.
3. Give it your all and try not to leave any stone unturned.

We have heard a rumour that you will be starting a 2012 Olympic campaign in another class. Is this true?

I don’t know yet. I am going to wait until the classes are announced. I would obviously love to go Star sailing if that’s a possibility. I love sailing Lasers and if there is the opportunity to go to London in the Laser I would definitely want to take it.

Thank you very much for speaking to us. We wish you the best of luck in the future.
Anna Tunnicliffe...

Congratulations on winning the Laser Radial Olympic Gold Medal. How does it feel to be the Olympic Champion?

Thank you, it feels amazing. It’s been a dream of mine since I was 12 or 13 years old, and to have finally accomplished it is definitely a dream come true.

What do you think was the key to your success?

I had a great support team with me. I had two very good coaches and some excellent training partners leading into the event. My coaches Mitch and Luther both played a big part in their special areas and my husband Brad Funk spent a lot of time in the Radial getting me ready for the Games.

Overall you had a really consistent Olympic Games with only one race finish lower than sixth. What do you think helped you to achieve that in such challenging conditions?

My game plan going into the regatta was to sail a conservative but consistent regatta. We had talked about not taking too many risks early on and just keeping my results in the top 6 or 7. For me the big thing was to get off the start line and stick to the game plan that I had worked with Luther on before the start, adjusting it when I needed to. I felt I had pretty good speed most of the time so it allowed me to hang in my lane allowing me to do what I wanted to.

The medal race was very exciting. How did it feel when you were back in 9th place?

I was a little nervous for sure, but I kept telling myself that the race was far from over and that in these conditions, anything can happen. And it did!!

What was going through your mind when you realised that the wind had shifted and you were on the favoured side?

I was very relieved to be on the favoured side...haha...because I got it very wrong on the first beat. But I kept saying “Please stay with me, please stay with me” so that I could move up through the fleet.

Were you surprised by the performance of any of the other competitors? Who were you looking out for?

Not really. The fleet was very tough as it had been all year long. We all knew who the top players would be and I think that everyone I expected was right there in the hunt for the medals.

How did it feel to sail in your first Olympic Games? How did you remain level headed despite all of the distractions?

It was very exciting to be at my first Olympics. I got to experience the opening ceremony and I think it had a big impact on my event. When the torch was lit, it hit me that we were there, at the Games, it had started and it was game on!! As for the stress, I tried to have fun with it all. Also, coming out of the USA we have a very stressful Trials system, and I think having gone through that, I was much better prepared for the event.

What do you do in your free time when you’re not sailing the Laser Radial?

Now I’m training for my first triathlon, a half-ironman at the end of October. I like to do some sailing in other boats to try and keep my learning curve going up, and I also enjoy coaching. Besides fitness I like to read and hang out with my husband.

What are your sailing goals and plans for 2009 and beyond?

Right now I am planning on sailing the World Cup series. I am also going to try and do as much match racing as possible, but I’m definitely aiming for London in 2012.

Who has had the greatest impact on your sailing? Why?

A lot of people have had a big impact on my sailing. Firstly my parents for getting me into the sport. My college coach, Mitch Brindley, brought me from being a young brat to being more professional about my approach to sailing and since then has played a big part in my mental training for the sport. My husband Brad took me to my first international regatta and has been very supportive of me and my sailing ever since. My other coach Luther Carpenter because he has made these last couple of years fun and kept me wanting to come back to learn more every time. And then my idol, Robert Scheidt, for just being a great sailor...his record is very impressive, and it’s something I think we should all strive to achieve.

What would be your 3 most important tips for sailors starting a 2012 Olympic campaign?

1. Realize that you are a professional athlete and act that way.
2. Work hard, but don’t over train...know when to stop and take a break.
3. Have fun.

Thanks Anna, we wish you the best of luck in the future.
The Olympic Sailing Centre in Qingdao, China, was host to 400 of the world’s finest sailors racing in 272 boats representing 62 nations during the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games Sailing Competition. Following the Finn, the 49er and the Yngling, the Laser and the Laser Radial Sailing Competitions commenced on the 12th August 2008 in light winds.

New Zealand’s world number 2 ranked sailor, Andrew Murdoch (NZL), grabbed the early lead after day one of racing in the Laser at the Beijing Olympic Games posting solid 2nd and 5th place results on a day that competitors described as tricky, frustrating and difficult.

In 23rd overall, double Laser World Champion and world number 1 Tom Slingsby (AUS) had what he described as "two bad ones", giving him a mountain to climb to get back into contention.

American world number 1 in the Laser Radial, Anna Tunnicliffe, got off to a good start in her campaign for gold and held the overnight lead following a 4th and 5th place on day 1.

Despite not winning a race, Tunnicliffe’s consistency ensured her a two-point lead over Belgium’s Evi Van Acker who comfortably won race 1 from Penny Clark (GBR) who had amassed an 18-point lead over nearest rival Rasmus Myrgren (SWE) going into the double-points Medal Race needing a 9th place or better in the 10-boat fleet to secure gold.

In the Laser Radial fleet Tunnicliffe also took steps towards the gold medal, regaining the overall lead. She recovered well from a 15th place finish at the start of the day to get a pair of second places in races 8 and 9 to finish as one of only three sailors in the running for the gold medal.

With 21 points separating her from fourth place, she guaranteed herself a spot on the podium. The previous fleet leader, Volungeviciute, also struggled in the first race of the day but came back strongly with sixth and fourth places finishes to end her series.

World number 2 Lijia Xu of China came out of day 5 in a strong position after scoring a bullet in race 7. She finished the day with an 11th and a 6th to be third overall going into the Medal Race.

The Laser Medal Race got underway on the final day of racing in a light northwesterly breeze of around 6 knots. Goodison’s massive lead over the rest of the fleet meant that Myrgren was the only contender who could potentially beat him to the gold medal. With that in mind, Goodison put a tight cover on Myrgren, tracking his every move and pinning him well behind the other eight competitors as the race got underway.

Goodison narrowly missed out on the medals in Athens, but the British sailor was not to be denied in Qingdao. He ruthlessly sailed his only rival for gold out of contention and although he only finished ninth in the Medal Race, the large points lead he had established meant he still secured overall victory. Zbogar finished second in the Medal Race to win silver, with Romero taking bronze.

Things didn’t look so good for Anna Tunnicliffe during the Medal Race when she had fallen back to ninth place. She battled back fiercely and managed to be on the favoured side following a big shift on the second wind leg, eventually crossing the finishing line in second place to secure the gold medal, the USA’s first gold medal of the 2008 Olympic Sailing Competition.

Aged just 25, the world number 1 sailor can now add Olympic gold to her list of achievements.

Gintare Volungeviciute won the Medal Race to take silver. For the first half of the race she had been in a gold medal winning position, but despite coming so close to Olympic victory she was still delighted with her success, becoming the first Lithuanian to ever win a medal in sailing at the Olympic Games.

The bronze medal went to Lijia Xu of China, the first medal for China in the 2008 Olympic Sailing Competition. Xu, the 2006 World Champion, came third in the Medal Race to secure herself a place on the Olympic podium.

Full Results at: http://www.isaf.com/olympics/resultscentre.php
The World Council met for the first time in a mid-year meeting and with only the “core” members present, namely the four Regional Chairmen, two builder representatives, the Executive Secretary and the President. This intermediary meeting was decided as a test at the last “full meeting” held in February 08 in Terrigal, Australia. It was felt that the time span between the Terrigal meeting in February 08 and the first one (the ‘first time in’ in Terrigal meeting in February 08) was quite big. While the World Council uses e-mail and telephone extensively for their internal communications, certain more complex issues can only be treated adequately and efficiently in face to face meetings and decisions might therefore be unduly delayed. The smaller size (actually the one foreseen in the constitution) was decided to keep the expenses down, but also to facilitate exchange of opinions and decision making. Whether or not we will continue with such a mid-year meeting in this form will be discussed and decided at the Halifax meeting. Personally I found the experience quite positive: we had in depth discussions on important issues which face the class and several urgent decisions were made.

We approved the 2007 accounts (the ILCA accounting year goes from October 1st of the preceding year until September 30th), took note of the results of a provisional account closing for 2008 (not audited yet), approved the budget 2009 and looked at the forecasts for 2010 and 2011. See Fig 1.

A proposal originating from the UKLA and submitted by the European Chairman to reduce substantially or even eliminate the membership fee collected annually from the Districts (£ 0.5 per member per year) was unanimously rejected. However, the Council approved a proposal that the ILCA bank charges for the payments of the membership fees by the Districts will be carried by ILCA in the future instead of by the Districts. This corresponds to normal international business practices. It amounts to approximately 5% of the membership fees transmitted and will reduce the cost to the Districts accordingly. The approved budget of 2009 as above, taking this into consideration. The forecast 2010 and 2011 show an increasing deficit. The Council felt that this was for the moment acceptable and does not require any immediate action in view of the accumulated funds by the Association.

Quite some time was spent on technical matters and rule changes, which had been pre-discussed in a preceding full day meeting between the Technical and Measurement Committee (TMC) and the builder representatives. Tracy Usher, the chairman of the TMC has written a separate article on this subject, which you can also find in this issue of LaserWorld. The World Council accepted all the different proposals by the TMC.

In the area of organisation and planning of World Championships the following decisions were made:

- A Laser Junior Standard Men World Championship will be introduced. It will be open to sailors who will reach 17, 18, 19 or 20 years of age in the year of the championship and will be an “allocated event” (with qualifications for the limited allocated places per country/district). The first one will be held in 2010 in Hayling Island in parallel to the Laser Standard Men World Championship to be held there.
- The age brackets for the Laser 4.7 Youth policy were slightly modified: the “under 15 age category” will become “under 16 age category”. Based on past and projected future World Championship participation this change would give us a better chance to give two official World Championship titles for “Laser 4.7 girls under 16” and “Laser 4.7 boys under 16” under the current restrictions imposed by ISAF for such titles regarding the minimum number of participants and countries represented.
- The venues for the 2010 World Championships were confirmed subject to the final signature of the contracts with the organisers:
  - Laser Standard Men: Hayling Island / UK
  - Laser Standard Junior Men (new): Hayling Island / UK
  - Laser Masters: Hayling Island / UK
  - Laser Radial Women: Largs / Scotland
  - Laser Radial Men: Largs / Scotland
  - Laser Radial Youth (Men and Women): Largs / Scotland
  - Laser 4.7: Pattaya / Thailand
- The preferred regions for the World Championships 2011 and 2012 were also decided. With the obvious exception of the 2011 Laser Standard Men and Laser Radial Women World Championships which will be part of the ISAF Olympic Classes Worlds in Perth, all the others will be open to bids. The bidding documents and process will start by year end 2008.

It was also decided to further improve the ILCA internet pages by a more up to date regatta reporting.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy and successful 2009!

Heini Wellmann, Class President.
Trogir, Croatia on the beautiful Adriatic coast became a true sailing Mecca when a record fleet of 400 young sailors from all over the world arrived for the 2008 World Laser 4.7 Youth Championships. The entries, from over 40 countries, came from all six continents and all points of the compass and included entries from several countries who sent representatives to the World Laser 4.7’s for the first time.

To cope with the high entry the 279 boys and 116 girls, all under 18 years old, were split into four fleets and two fleets respectively and sailed 4 days of qualifier races before being split into finals fleets for the last two days.

The boys got off to an exciting start on day 1 of the championship. Conditions were tricky due to a blustery wind which kept changing direction and strength, keeping sailors and race officials on their toes. Israeli sailor Shahar Jacob and Singapore sailor Scott Sydney both got off to a great start, each winning two races in their respective fleets and finishing in joint first position on the leader board. In the two girls’ fleets, sailing on the inshore course, Croatian locals took the top spots. Favouring strong winds, Matea Senkic was pleased with the conditions. An excellent start in the first race set her up nicely and she won the race. In the second race she came fourth in her fleet and so finished the day in the top spot on 5 points. Just one point behind her, fellow Croatian Antea Kordic settled on 6 points after her fourth and second place finishes.

Sailors were greeted by great conditions on the second day of the qualifying series with a consistent Maestral wind of around 10 knots. Senkic successfully defended her top spot with a fifth and first place finish, but Kordic had a difficult first race in which she finished 18th, and, although she hit straight back with a first place in the second race, it wasn’t enough to keep the second overall dropping down to fourth.

Spanish competitor Patricia Coro Leveque moved up from third place with 15 points. Elizabeth Yin from Singapore sailed well scoring a second and fourth closing in on the competition finishing in third position overall on 18 points.

In the boys’ competition, jaws were dropping as Jacob scored yet another two bullets, showing terrific skill and determination as well as technique and raw speed. Hot on his trail was Sydney who delivered a consistent performance and came in second place overall after a fourth and third place finish. Third overall was taken by Greek contender Nikolaos Chрисos who complemented his second and fourth place of day 1 with an impressive victory in the first race and a third place in the second race to finish on 10 points.

Maintaining his impressive record of achievement in the competition, Jacob finished second in his first race and fourth in his second race on the third day of the qualifying series, leaving him two points clear at the top of the leader board. Jacob is aiming for the top. He sees himself as an Olympian one day and is prepared to put in the work to make sure that happens. His coach, Erez Eliahou, who has worked with him for four years, confirmed that grit and determination are Jacob’s principal qualities.

It was also a good day for Chрисos who scored victories in both his group races finishing with 8 points and snatching second place overall from Sydney. Sydney showed a consistent performance again and ended the day in third overall with 14 points.

In the girls’ competition, Senkic maintained her impressive run and excellent results of first and fourth in her two fleet races and assured her position at the top of the leader board with 11 points. Yin worked her way up the leader board, winning her first race and then scoring a ninth place in the second race, pushing her into second place on 17 points. Patricia Coro Leveque finished the day in third place overall just two points behind Yin.
Leveque is a determined young woman who only started sailing the Laser 4.7 a year ago. She trains four days a week on the sea and in the gym – it seems to pay off!

It really couldn’t have been much closer at the top of the girls’ leader board. After an exciting fourth day’s racing in the qualifying rounds with great weather conditions, Senkic hung on to her overall lead by a single point from Elizabeth Yin. Senkic took a strong second in her first race and scored a ninth place in her second race. After 8 completed races in the qualifying rounds, Senkic was able to discard her ninth place and so retained her overall lead with 18 points.

Yin, on the other hand, had a slow start to the competition on day 1, so after discarding her first race result of 11th place, couldn’t afford to slip up on day 4 of the championship – and she didn’t! She blasted the competition, demonstrated real quality and won both her group races in fine style, finishing with 19 points and opening up a considerable gap in the results table over the rest of the fleet.

In the boys’ competition, Jacob continued to show real class and a maturity beyond his years. In his two races he again dominated the field, scoring a second and a first place to draw four points clear of Chriseos. Chriseos himself proved to be a competitor worth watching after scoring four first places in his fleet races so far and clearly demonstrating noteworthy strength, technique and speed.

Christos Chionas, a well-known coach from the Piraeus Sailing Club in Greece with a good track record of trainee successes in Olympic and World Championship events, put Nikolaos’s success down to his hard work and keen ambition to improve.

What would sailing be without its inherent unpredictability? Throw a bit of blustery wind and waves into the equation and the form book goes out of the window. Most of the first day of the finals series saw perfect racing conditions consisting of a maestral wind of 12 to 20 knots. However, a sudden tramontana wind from the NW, a swing of 60 degrees, called for a radical change in race plan and the second boys race was interrupted, the course was changed and after a delay of an hour the race re-commenced.

Jacob’s first race was, by his own elevated standards, a problematic one in which he only managed a 13th place. However, the rules allowed him to discard this score and in his second finals race he again demonstrated his superiority despite the course changes and finished in second place. This left him at the top of the table with a remarkable 11 points after 10 races and a seemingly unbeatable 15 points lead. Sydney had a mixed day and was also grateful for the opportunity to discard his 39th place in the second finals race, but his eighth place in the race before was enough to lift his overall position from third to second. After a second and seventh place, local contender Lovre Perhat moved into third overall. Perhat had started the championship with a respectable 15th overall and then started a quiet but determined ascent up the leader board.

In the girls’ fleets, Elizabeth Yin scored a very strong first place followed by a ninth and so passed Croatia’s Senkic to head up the leader board with a six point advantage.

Senkic had a trying day with a respectable eighth place in her first race but a (discarded) 28th in her second fleet race. Spain’s Patricia Coro Leveque, who finished the day in third place, was according to her supportive father more than happy with her performance. And not surprisingly - second and fourth places in technically difficult circumstances is not a bad result at all.

Sailing conditions on the last day of the finals series were tricky again due to a storm system further up the coast which caused the wind to veer. Jacob finished tenth in both of the races and concluded the championship on 31 points. 18 points clear of the rest of the fleet. His crown as Laser 4.7 Boy’s World Champion 2008 was thoroughly deserved and a first for Israel in any Laser fleet. Singapore’s Scott Sydney retained his second overall position after winning the penultimate race of the championship.

Sydney has a way of using his power and height to good advantage and his runner-up placing is a clear affirmation of his sailing skills and the continuing development of Singapore’s high performance programme.

Jacob and Sydney were joined on the podium by local sailor Lovre Perhat who finished the championship on 60 points.

In the girls competition, Antea Kordic and Matea Senkic, who came third and second respectively in the girls fleet, demonstrated without doubt that Croatia has the potential for world-beating performances in future senior women’s international events. But the championship crown in the girls fleet was reserved for the remarkable Elizabeth Yin from Singapore, who finished the championship on a high with a victory in the last race and a tremendous 27 point lead to the rest of the fleet.

Laser Standard silver medallist, Vasilij Zbogar, just back from Qingdao, made the short journey from neighbouring Slovenia to present the prizes at a spectacular closing ceremony.

Now arguably the largest and most important class in the Laser single-handed family, the sheer size of this year’s Laser 4.7 World Championship, one of the biggest events ever held by ILCA, is an affirmation of the strength and growth of the Laser 4.7 class worldwide. The Laser 4.7 is used by a number of countries for sailors progressing from the Optimist class and has been particularly attractive to new sailing nations who have started with a strong Optimist programme introducing youngsters to sailing and are now looking for an easy, low cost youth development programme.

As the sailors grow older and stronger and are ready to progress at their own speed, they don’t need to change to a completely different boat, but can simply replace the mast and sail with a Laser Radial or Laser Standard. In addition to being much more cost effective it also means it will take the sailors less time to adjust to a just a rig change and instead continue working on improving technique and tactical skills.

Full Results at: http://events.laserinternational.org/en/events/results/100z15
The ILCA Technical and Measurement Committee (TMC) met with builder’s representatives on 17th October 2008, in London, immediately preceding the mid-year World Council meeting (see Heini Wellmann’s article in this issue of LaserWorld). A large number of topics were addressed in the TMC meeting, with proposals then carried forward for approval by the World Council. This article attempts to highlight the main results of these meetings.

A number of proposed Class Rules changes were considered with the following six to be submitted to the membership for approval:

1. A common sailor complaint centers on the rudder. The rudder o-rings responsible for the proper operation of the self-bailer. In particular, they seem to need frequent adjustment and/or replacement and often sailors can’t easily find builder supplied replacements. To help alleviate this situation, it is proposed to modify rule 13 to deregulate the o-rings and allow for alternative replacements, provided the inherent function of the bailer remains unchanged.

2. Several years ago, rule 14(d) was introduced which aimed to help reduce the wear on the gelcoat at the top front edge of the centerboard case by allowing the use of a small piece of plastic tape. However, sailors have come to the conclusion that available plastic tapes are rubbed off almost immediately by the friction of the centerboard as it slides up and down. The aim of this rule change is to de-specify the tape, allowing the use of any general material, of the same dimensions, to protect the gelcoat.

3. It is a good bet that every Laser sailor has, at some point, used either tape or a marking pen to place reference points on the boat (for example on the boom to measureouthaul settings). Technically, this is not strictly legal and it is proposed to introduce a new rule to explicitly allow this common practice.

4. Another common practice which is not strictly legal is the use of lubricants (e.g. silicon sprays) above the decks (for example on the boom to measureouthaul blocks specified in rule 3(f)(v) be slid easily). This is another rule change aimed at explicitly allowing another common practice.

5. Sailors have requested that the outhaul blocks specified in rule 3(f)(v) be allowed to be bolted to the gooseneck. A real improvement in the boat and/or its equipment. After long periods of testing, two changes received final approval:

1. The centerboard brace has been redesigned and the new version both looks and performs much better. The centerboard much better and has a much longer lifetime. This item should be available mid/late 2009 and is expected to retail around $10 US.

2. Harken have developed a new set of ball bearing blocks to replace the venerable Holt boom and traveller blocks. These blocks not only run much easier, but their design also addresses wear issues that the Holt blocks suffered from. These should be available mid/ late 2009 and a complete set is expected to retail around $90 US.

In addition to the above, the status of the GRP foils was reviewed. Both Performance Sailcraft Australia and Laser Performance are producing GRP foils which have been shown to match the performance characteristics (shape, weight, flex, etc.) of the Crompton foils. Laser Performance GRP foils will be available to Europe, North and South America in early 2009.

The TMC also reviewed progress on several Measurer and Measurement issues:

1. Jean-Luc Michon has completed a final draft of the Measurer’s Manual and it is undergoing final review. When done this will be placed on a Measurer’s section of the website and then a program of training and certifying District Measurers will commence with the goal of being able to have a certified ILCA Measurer in all major sailing areas.

2. In addition to training Measurers, a Measurement section of the ILCA website is under development. It will include a frequently asked question section, a section with photographs of both legal and illegal rigging options and other things which the sailor can access and use to help them understand some of the details of the Laser Class Rules.

3. The TMC aims to develop a standardized procedure, and web based form, for the measurement process. A web based form will also be developed which enables a sailor to request assistance from the class in dealing with a quality problem with their boat.

Finally, the TMC discussed at length several longer term projects whose primary aim is to reduce the average weight for Laser Radial sailors but field testing indicated a reduction in performance in lighter winds. A composite mast with the same bend characteristics as the aluminium seems promising as a way to solve permanent bend and breakage issues but there is some concern over long term durability. In the meantime, the builders have made significant progress with the aluminium mast and, in addition, Clive Humphris (ILCA Technical Officer) has developed a “split collet” to replace the currently riveted mast collar (the primary failure point for the aluminium spars). The “split collet” is essentially a two piece

(small longitudinally) plastic cup which inserts into the top of the lower spar and “holds” the upper mast. This removes the mast collar and the need for the rivet allowing one to rotate the mast at will. This design has been prototyped and looks to be very promising. Stay tuned for more information!

The TMC reviewed the status of two proposals to modify the Standard sail. One, design, from Hyde, is a bi-radial cut using a yarn tempered cloth which aims to improve quality and durability while retailing at around the same price. The second, from North, modifies the standard cross cut shape slightly to address some shape issues, adds improved reinforcements at key wear points and aims to improve durability while decreasing cost. Both proposals were well received and, after a lengthy discussion, the TMC and builders agreed on a common set of objectives to improve quality and durability while maintaining the current performance. The next round of prototyping will begin soon with the goal of making a decision on the time scale of the next World Council meeting.

The TMC will meet again next summer before the World Council meeting in Halifax. Sailors who have questions, comments, suggestions, etc. can contact the Technical Officer at technical@laserinternational.org.