

# THE RING

## New Concept Racing Course

- The practical realisation of 'The Ring', as a sailing course, is a very technical issue. With our present knowledge it is possible to imagine how to create it anywhere, except in very deep water, with normal marks and lane markers spanned between them (as in swimming pools, rowing or Kajak-Kanou (Kayaking & Canoeing) , where they are called lane borders). Even tide and the current issues could be solved, if we let some experts think on this. They will undoubtedly come up with much more sophisticated solutions.
- If you look at track and field events, motor car and bike racing, horse racing, rowing, kayaking and canoeing, they all have created 'Rings', or lanes, for their races. One of the main issues with understanding a sailing race is that boats are often sailing away from each other, even on the same leg of the course, because the current design of courses encourages the use of tactics to gain an advantage, such as endeavouring to find a better wind elsewhere on the course. The public and the media, however, absolutely do not understand how this works, nor can they follow the actual standings in a race, or the need to gain an advantage because of a change of wind. Using the 'RING' as a course would enable the whole race to be covered, every second, by keeping the competitors in a confined area and in some semblance of order. Whilst revolutionary in concept, even the most sophisticated of 'Ring' solutions would not be too expensive to create and will never match the cost of say the Nuremberg Ring, or an Athletic Stadium.
- To solve the issues of PMS and other penalties, there will be penalty boards and the penalty bays and marks. A second start line could be introduced, set 1 to 1,5 boat lengths behind the actual starting line. This would be controlled by electronic equipment, and in event of a boat being over the first line, but between the two lines, it would need to complete 1 penalty (Penalty = sailing into the Penalty Bay and rounding the Penalty Mark). If a boat is over the actual starting line (the second line) it would immediately be disqualified and would need to leave the course. (This system could be used already with our present formats, although the matter of the electronic control equipment would need to be solved). The general idea with penalties is, that it should not cost too much distance, the boat should be able to remain in the race (like Formula One drive-through penalties).
- The judges would be positioned on the outer, or inner side of the 'Ring', either mobile in RIBs, or anchored, equipped with devices connected to the Penalty Boards
- Spectator boats would be positioned at the lower end and in the starting area, on the outer side. (good vantage point: after some time structures could be built for permanent use – SPONSOR opportunity!)
- Of course there would need be NEW RULES as well. One of the most disturbing for sailors would be the 'right hand' rule, (give way to 'traffic' from the right) instead of our actual Starboard-Port rules of today. That would be much more understandable for public and the media and would have the advantage of allowing to re-entry to the course after completing a penalty, without queuing.
- The advantage of starting downwind is that the field doesn't split after the start, they are sailing in the same direction and this is much more understandable for the public. It could be ruled, that hoisting of spinnakers, or gennakers, is only allowed 30 seconds after the starting signal. This would reduce the risk of an incident at the start, yet give the public an exiting moment just after the beginning of a race.
- Countless details have yet to be worked out, but first the idea needs to be give careful consideration and the concept approved. When this is done work can start on the detail.