

53rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL SIX METRE ASSOCIATION (ISMA)

MINUTES

Held on Saturday, 18 July 2026 at Société Nautique de Genève, Switzerland

Meeting opened: 10:00h | Meeting closed: 11:16h

Attendees:

Louis Heckly. ISMA President
Tom Owen. Vice-President (Classics)
Violeta Álvarez. Vice-President (Open)
Nicholas Berthoud. Vice-President (Technical)
Helena Paz. ISMA Executive Secretary
+ 30 others including members of ISMA, sailors and friends of the class.

1. Welcome and Apologies

The President, Louis Heckly, opened the 53rd Annual General Meeting and welcomed those present.

On behalf of ISMA, he thanked Société Nautique de Genève and its team for hosting the 2026 European Championship and expressed his appreciation to the ISMA Board and team for their work throughout the year.

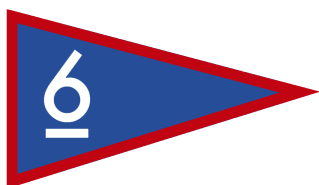
Apologies for absence were received from Peter Hoffman, Patrick Sandman and Foti Lykiardopulo.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the 2025 AGM

The table of votes for each National Association was circulated prior to the AGM and shown on the screen.

The Minutes of the 52nd Annual General Meeting, held at Seawanhaka in 2025, had been circulated to members in advance.

There were no objections or abstentions. **The Minutes of the 2025 AGM were approved.**



3. Treasurer's Report, Accounts and Budget

In the absence of the Treasurer, Foti L., Tom Owen presented the financial report.

It was noted that:

- the 2025 accounts remain healthy;
- the exchange rate used in preparing the accounts was EUR 1.15 to GBP 1;
- ISMA is now using the ClearBooks online accounting system;
- the new system is working well and allows members to pay subscriptions and invoices online, including by credit card;
- no six-month snapshot for 2026 had been included, as the Treasurer considered that a review later in the year would provide a more meaningful basis for assessing the year and preparing future budgets;
- income and expenditure relating to the International Six Metre Archive were not included in the 2027 budget presented, as Archive income varies depending on the timing and level of donations;
- the Six Metre Magazine had been fully funded through advertising income during the year; and
- the proposed 2027 budget included the increased PR expenditure associated with the new communications arrangements.

The AGM was also reminded that the figures for sail labels and Championship Fees in the 2027 budget were estimates based on expected participation at the 2027 World Championship.

Following discussion, the accounts and budget items presented to the AGM were put to a single vote.

There were no objections or abstentions.

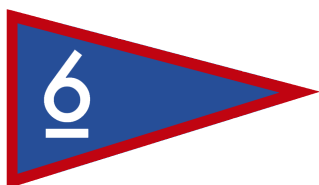
The financial items presented, including the 2025 accounts and the 2027 budget, were approved.

4. Championship Regatta Venues

4.1 2027 World Championship – Helsinki, Finland

The AGM received an update on preparations for the 2027 World Championship in Helsinki.

The Championship will take place from **8–14 August 2027**.



INTERNATIONAL SIX METRE ASSOCIATION

Ossi Paija reported that the same experienced race management team involved in the recent Eight Metre and Dragon Championships will organise the Six Metre World Championship. The organisational structure, sponsors and logistical arrangements are already well established.

The event will be based at the same island venue used for the 2011 World Championship. Additional ferry and shuttle services are planned, together with support for competitors ashore.

The expected distance from the Club to the principal race area is approximately five nautical miles. Towing and harbour assistance will also be considered as part of the event logistics.

Competitors requested that information concerning ferry arrangements and other transport logistics be made available as early as possible to assist with travel planning.

It was subsequently confirmed that the organisers expect to provide a fuller package of information, including sponsorship arrangements, dates and associated racing, in September 2026.

Action: Helsinki organisers to provide further logistical and event information as soon as available.

4.2 2028 European Championship – Club Nàutic S’Arenal (CNA), Mallorca

The venue for the 2028 European Championship had previously been approved, with the dates remaining to be determined.

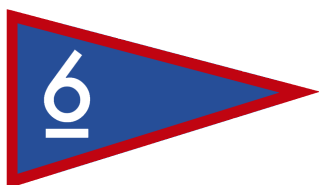
Two possible periods were discussed taking into account CNA’s feedback: one week in July and 18–24 September 2028.

The AGM considered feedback received from both the Modern and Classic fleets, together with the expected weather conditions, accommodation and transport costs, availability in Mallorca and the likely effect of the dates on participation.

It was reported that the clear preference among owners consulted in both fleets was for September. The importance of selecting dates likely to maximise participation across both divisions was also emphasised.

Following discussion, those present agreed to hold the Championship in September.

It was agreed that the 2028 European Championship will take place at Club Nàutic S’Arenal from 18–24 September 2028.



4.3 2029 World Championship – Yacht Club Costa Smeralda

The 2029 World Championship at Yacht Club Costa Smeralda had previously been approved.

Further information, including the final dates and logistical arrangements, is awaited from the Club and will be circulated when available.

4.4 2030 European Championship

No venue has yet been selected for the 2030 European Championship.

Potential interest has been identified from:

- La Trinité-sur-Mer, France;
- Yacht Club Santo Stefano / Argentario, Italy; and
- a possible Swiss venue at Brunnen.

The Board will continue to seek and receive proposals so that suitable options can be presented at the next Winter Meeting.

The importance of considering the geographical distribution of future Championships, alongside logistical and cost implications for owners, was noted.

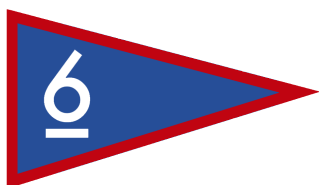
Action: The Board to continue discussions with potential host clubs and seek formal proposals for consideration at the Winter Meeting.

4.5 2031 World Championship – Royal Irish Yacht Club

The 2031 World Championship at the Royal Irish Yacht Club has previously been approved.

The Championship will coincide with the Club's 200th anniversary.

Preparations are already under way, and the AGM welcomed the prospect of holding a Six Metre World Championship in Ireland.



5. Technical Committee – Class Rule 33

The AGM considered the Technical Committee paper concerning the wording “**normally commercially available materials**” within the Class Rules, particularly Class Rule 33.

The review had identified several instances in which the existing wording could be simplified or clarified.

The proposed amendments included:

- simplifying the provisions relating to spinnaker poles and tiller extensions to permit any material;
- simplifying the provision relating to rudders to permit any material; and
- clarifying the materials that may be used when repairing or strengthening an existing spar, hull or deck originally constructed in accordance with the relevant Class Rules.

During discussion, questions were raised concerning the implications of the proposed wording for existing structures incorporating materials such as carbon fibre or glass fibre, including reinforcement at attachment points and the repair of sheathed wooden hulls.

It was considered that these points required further technical review before any amendment could be approved.

It was agreed not to approve the proposed amendments at this AGM.

The questions raised will be referred back to the Technical Committee for further consideration, with the matter to be brought back for discussion at the Winter Meeting.

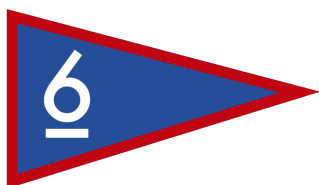
Action: Technical Committee to review the questions raised concerning repairs and reinforcement and report back at the Winter Meeting.

6. International Six Metre Archive

Violeta Álvarez presented an update on the International Six Metre Archive and referred members to the written report left on the chairs.

Members were encouraged to make use of the Archive and to support it through contributions of material, time and financial donations.

The AGM recognised the Archive as an important and unique asset for the International Six Metre Class.



It was also announced that the original painting by French marine artist **Marc Berthier**, created for the official poster of the 2026 European Championship, would be auctioned during the Championship Gala Dinner on 22 July.

The proceeds from the auction will be donated to the International Six Metre Archive.

Members were again encouraged to support the Archive through regular or individual donations.

7. Subjects for Discussion

7.1 Use of Vakaros RaceSense at the 2027 World Championship

A proposal had been submitted by Patrick Sandman (FIN) concerning the possible use of **Vakaros RaceSense** at the 2027 World Championship in Helsinki.

The AGM was informed of the experience gained from its use at the Dragon European Championship in Helsinki, including feedback from Race Officer Stuart Childerley.

The discussion recognised several potential benefits, particularly:

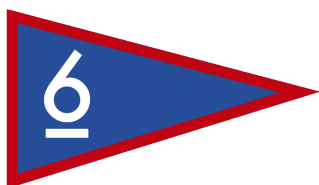
- more efficient starting procedures;
- immediate identification of boats over the starting line;
- fewer general recalls;
- improved information for competitors and race management; and
- greater efficiency in managing large fleets.

Members also raised considerations regarding:

- the Six Metre's status as a development class;
- compatibility with other electronic systems already used by competitors;
- the proprietary nature of the Vakaros system;
- the cost of requiring competitors to obtain additional equipment; and
- the need to ensure that competitors who do not own a Vakaros unit are not required to purchase one solely to participate in the Championship.

Possible solutions discussed included rental arrangements, event-supplied units or other arrangements with Vakaros to make equipment available to competitors who do not already own it.

No decision was taken on the use of Vakaros RaceSense at the 2027 Six Metre World Championships.



Patrick Sandman's full proposal, together with the relevant supporting information, will be circulated to members for further consideration.

7.2 Definition of a Classic

Louis Heckly read the email sent by Peter Hoffman regarding the definition of a Classic. Subject to be discussed in future meetings.

8. Any Other Business

No further business was raised.

The President thanked the ISMA Board and team for their work and thanked all those attending the meeting.

The 53rd Annual General Meeting was formally closed at 11:16h.

Helena Paz
Executive Secretary
ISMA

Attached papers:

1. Vakaros at the Dragon Europeans in Helsinki: feedback from Race Officer Stuart Childerley.

Vakaros – Report Dragon Europeans 2026

Dear Patrick,

I believe you are asking the 6M Class Association to consider the use of the Vakaros RaceSense System for your event next year on the same race area as we sailed on at the recent Dragon European Championship, where I was the Race Officer. Before making my recommendation, I would like to confirm that I have no connection to or financial benefit from this recommendation.

I would recommend the use of the Vakaros RaceSense System for the following two specific reasons for the event in Helsinki:

1. During the event, the Vakaros RaceSense System worked without any problems. I postponed two starts during the championship, with 62 entries with a 750m starting line, because the starting line was not evenly spaced with the boats. All other starts got away successfully, and any OCS boats returned to start correctly. As you are aware, this was the second major event in which the Dragon Class used the Vakaros Race Sense system, and without exception, all the competitors enjoyed the use of the system. It completely takes the emotion of good or bad calls by race officials away from the racing. The next stage would be to remove the RRS visual signals and sounds at the start and use the VHF to announce any preferences for the class. The system has several functions not used in Helsinki; however, where a class like the 6M allows a boat to have its own instruments, I would recommend using only the simplest function: identifying OCS boats at the outset. It is also worth noting that I would expect the class to expand its use as sailors become familiar with the system. Messaging boats with details of course changes, identification of the mark zone, and finishing and scoring races are all very useful functions to use in due course, improving the overall sailing experience. The downside is that all boats will know where the start line is, making starts more competitive. OCS boats are advised within 2 seconds and may be able to return and start correctly without too much a penalty for pushing the start line hard. Perhaps the system could be adjusted to provide a short 4-5-second delay, ensuring there is a good reason to get a good start behind or on the start line. In Helsinki, most boat owners preferred to purchase devices, but having loan units available and then purchasing them was really appreciated.
2. The race course area in Helsinki has two strictly observed anchoring areas of approximately 0.5nm square. On occasions, the Race Committee vessel was unable to anchor in a position to avoid the rocks, islands and shipping lanes. I introduced a Sailing Instruction to enable us to start and finish races between two robotic marks, with the Race Committee vessel standing by, observing and making all necessary race signals during the start sequence. We also finished a race in a similar manner. The ability to use the robotic marks and the Vakaros Race Sense System enabled us to race in all conditions throughout the race area.

I genuinely think this would be a very positive step forward for the 6M Class Association and would make racing in Helsinki a better, more enjoyable experience. Below are details of my notes that were recently published in Yachts and Yachting/Sail World, which may give you insight into where we might expect race management to be in a couple of years for most classes.

Kind regards,

Stuart Childerley OLY

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The Future of Race Management: How Technology is Transforming Sailing Events

Race management for medium- to large-scale events has always relied on skilled volunteers, experienced race officers, and a significant fleet of support vessels to deliver fair, safe, and efficient competition. However, advances in technology are reshaping how events are organised and run, offering opportunities to reduce costs, improve efficiency, and address one of the sport's biggest challenges: recruiting and retaining volunteers.

Among the most significant developments are robotic mark systems such as MarkSetBot and race management technologies, including Vakaros race management tools and fully integrated event management platforms. Together, these innovations have the potential to dramatically reduce the resources required to run high-quality sailing events.

Doing More with Less

Traditionally, major regattas require multiple mark-laying boats, a large race committee team, and considerable logistical support. With robotic marks, however, the operational model changes significantly.

A race course can potentially be managed using:

- One race committee vessel (RIB or cabin vessel) with a crew of three.
- One mark-laying RIB with a crew of two.
- Five robotic marks, with an additional robotic mark available for course changes when multiple fleets are racing.

Under the right conditions, these resources are sufficient to run a major event. Communication can be managed via VHF radio, with course changes and mark movements coordinated between the race committee and mark-laying team.

Many suppliers now offer robotic marks as a rental package, complete with technical support and maintenance services, making the technology accessible without requiring organisers to make substantial capital investments.

Integrated Event Management

At the same time, event management software has evolved significantly. Platforms such as Yacht Scoring, Manage2Sail, and RRS-based systems now provide comprehensive solutions covering:

- Online entry and registration
- Official notice boards
- Results and scoring
- Hearing and protest management
- Competitor communications

The result is an increasingly seamless process from competitor entry, registration through to final results publication, reducing administrative workloads and improving the participant experience.

The Benefits

The advantages of adopting these technologies are clear.

Reduced Operating Costs

Fewer race management personnel are required on the water, reducing accommodation, travel, and volunteer support costs. This can be particularly significant for large championship events where race teams may need to be housed for extended periods.

Addressing Volunteer Shortages

Many sailing organisations are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit and retain volunteers. Reducing the number of personnel required allows events to operate more sustainably while making better use of the experienced volunteers who are available.

Improved Data and Analytics

Modern race management technology also generates valuable post-race data. Course tracking, mark positioning, and competitor analytics can provide insights that are useful not only to race officials but also to competitors, coaches, spectators, and media teams.

As sailing continues to pursue greater audience engagement, these data-driven insights are becoming increasingly valuable.

Challenges and Limitations

Despite the advantages, technology is not a complete solution.

Safety Must Remain the Priority

Regardless of how advanced race management systems become, safety and emergency planning remain paramount. Organisers must ensure that:

- Appropriate safety resources are available.
- Race officials and support crews possess the necessary qualifications and experience.
- Emergency action plans are robust and regularly reviewed.

The adoption of technology should enhance safety management, not replace it.

Venue Suitability

Most venues are suitable for robotic mark systems, but some locations present challenges. Tidal venues, in particular, may exceed the operating capabilities of certain robotic marks, requiring careful evaluation before deployment.

Connectivity Issues

As with any technology-dependent solution, telecommunications coverage can occasionally create operational difficulties. Although reliability continues to improve, signal interruptions remain a consideration for event organisers.

Rapid Product Development

Technology evolves quickly. Manufacturers regularly release new versions, software updates, and enhanced capabilities. While this drives innovation, it can also make existing equipment obsolete faster than many organisations would like.

This raises an important question for clubs and event organisers: should they purchase equipment outright or continue to rent?

Buy or Rent?

For many organisations, renting robotic mark systems may represent the most practical solution.

Rental packages often include:

- Technical support
- Maintenance and servicing
- Software updates
- Equipment storage
- Transportation logistics

Considering the amount of equipment involved and the specialist knowledge required to maintain it, renting allows organisers to access the latest technology without the burden of ownership.

Looking Beyond Race Management

Perhaps the most intriguing question is not how race management will evolve, but how technology will influence judging and umpiring.

Could protest committees operate with fewer members? Might race tracking data and positioning technology become increasingly important evidence during hearings? Could remote hearings be conducted by centralised protest committees serving multiple events simultaneously?

Many of these ideas would have seemed unrealistic only a few years ago. Today, they are increasingly plausible.

A Changing Future

The traditional methods of race management are not wrong. They have served the sport well for decades. However, the pressures facing sailing organisations today—rising costs, volunteer shortages, and increasing expectations from competitors—are driving the adoption of new approaches.

Technology is changing how race officials think and how events are delivered. While challenges remain, the growing reliability of robotic marks, integrated event management systems, and data-driven decision-making suggests that the benefits are becoming increasingly difficult to ignore.

The future of race management will likely be a balance between experienced people and innovative technology. The question is no longer whether these tools will become part of mainstream event operations, but how quickly the sport will embrace them.