

INTERNATIONAL FLYING DUTCHMAN CLASS ORGANIZATION

ANALYSIS OF WEIGHTS, HEIGHTS and AGES of HELM & CREW AT THE FD WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS 2005 HELD ON LAKE BALATON, HUNGARY

INTRODUCTION

There were 83 teams from 15 Nations competing in 9 races between 12 and 16 September 2005 in a wide range of wind conditions

Prior to the racing, teams were asked to provide details of their heights, weights and ages. Full information was received from 63 teams including 9 of the top in the overall results. Some teams provided partial information.

The information received has been summarised and is presented in a series of charts with the following observations which should be recognised as points of interest and not as ways to win. It is clear above all else that sailing skill and experience are by far the most important factors in determining success in racing an FD as evidenced by the wide range of ages, weights and heights of successful FD helms and crews.

OBSERVATIONS

AGE (see Appendix 1)

There was a very wide range of age of crews from 19 to 55 years of age and an even wider range for helms from 17 to 72 years. The age range for the top 10 was 27 to 49 for Crews and 33 to 54 for helms.

The median age of helms both in the top 10 and the whole fleet was 46 years whereas for crews it was 39 for the top 10 and 37 for the whole fleet. A quarter of all crews were 29 or less and a quarter of helms were 37 or less. A quarter of helms were 50 years old or more but there were fewer crews of this age.

Looking at the total age of each team (helm and crew), it is clear that the total age of the top 10 tend to be higher than for the fleet as a whole until the total age reaches 90 years at which stage the Top 10 reduce in comparative numbers. However there are notable exceptions in that the total age of the winning team was 100 years and the total age of the second team which has previously won several World Championships was only 66 years.

Conclusion

It seems clear that the age of the helm or crew has little impact on either increasing or decreasing the chances of successfully racing a FD at top international level.

Anybody in the 17 to 55 age range has an equal chance of winning although those over 50 may find it more difficult to maintain an adequate level of fitness to win a major event.

HEIGHT (see Appendix 2)

The heights of FD Helms and crews have been the subject of many myths and it may come as a surprise to many to learn that over half of FD crews are 185 cms tall **or less** and that in the top 10 the median height is 183 cms.

Whilst a half of all crews are in the 180 to 190 cms height range, the helms tend to be less tall with half being in the 173 to 184 cms range. Furthermore, the range of heights of helms is from 155cms to 200 cms with a median height of 178cms for both the fleet as a whole and the top 10.

Crews range in height from 163cms to 198 cms with the top 10 being in the 172 to 198 range.

Conclusions

It is clear that, contrary to popular belief, it is not necessary for crews to be very tall and that there are several consistently successful teams with crews in the 172 to 180 cms range although half are up to 185 cms tall.

The height of the helm is of no significance in FD racing with top helms ranging from 166 to 195cm tall.

WEIGHT (Appendix 3)

The median combined weight of helm and crew (170 kg) is similar to the total sailing weight of a fully rigged FD (165 kg).

The range of combined weights of helm and crew was 133kgs to 200 kgs for all teams and 158kgs to 185kgs for the top 10. A team of 144 kg was in the top 15 but few teams in excess of 175 kg or less than 160 kg were in the top 50 indicating that the combined weight of helm and crew may be important.

The median weight of helms (all and top 10) was 82kg and median weight of crews was 90kg (Top 10 – 89kg).

Weights of helms ranged from 48kg to 112kg (70kg to 85kg for top 10 extended to 56kg – 89kg for top 25) and crew from 58kg to 105 kg (83kg to 100kg for top 10 & top 20). Half of the top 10 crew were in the 87kg to 93kg range and half the helms are in the 77kg to 85 kg range.

Conclusion

It is clear that a wide range of weights of helms and crews can successfully race an FD but there is a tendency towards the combined total being in the 160kg to 175kg range with top helms being under 85kgs and top crews being over 80kgs and under 100kgs.





