

# **Fireball AGM of 25 August, 2025; 19:00 local time Arco, Italy**

## **Minutes**

**Present/present online:** Nick Rees, Guy Newson, Olivier Burgaud, Heather Macfarlane, Jakub Napravnik, Frank Miller (standing in for *Cormac Bradley*), Dave Hall, Ruedi Moser (Website), Mianne Erne (minutes). Representatives from AUS, BEL, CAN, CZE, FRA, GBR, IRL, ITA, KEN, SUI

## **Agenda**

1. Reminder of Mission
2. Minutes from 2024 Worlds Geelong meeting
3. Review of Decisions and Council Votes
4. Commodore's Report
5. Treasurer's report.
6. Technical Committee Report
7. Marketing and Fleet Development Committee Report
8. Future Events
9. Any Other Business

## **Minutes**

### **1. Reminder of Mission**

The mission of Fireball International is to promote and facilitate Fireball racing and sailing worldwide by:

- Encouraging Fireball racing internationally;
- Promoting strong Fireball fleets throughout the world;
- Maintaining the one design nature of the Fireball class;
- Keeping the boat modern; and
- Promoting communication amongst Fireball fleets and sailors worldwide

### **2. Minutes from 2024 Worlds Meetings**

No comments, approved

### **3. Review of Actions and Decisions**

A brief summary of important decisions and actions by the executive is given (as outlined in Commodore's Report)

### **4. Commodore's Report**

for Commodore's and Rear Commodores' annual reports see appendix

## 5. Treasurer's Report

- Graphs are handed out, financial situation explained.
- Finances are in good shape (£29,000 in the bank), the money spent on containers to and from Australia is being recovered; fees from events and revenue from the new boats that have been ordered are coming in.
- The big expenses have been subsidies for containers. To keep expenditure low, we try to organize charter boats rather than subsidize containers.
- AUS: other boat classes charge slightly higher entry fees for competitors from close by, use that to sponsor overseas participants. On the other hand, this may scare off local competitors. Also, this wouldn't work well in locations where there are few local participants.
- Issues raised: Should we raise the fee? When will it get unfair on people who don't go to international events?
- Guy suggests keeping the membership fees the same, he will keep an eye on a healthy balance.

## 6. Technical Committee's Report

Suggested and tried out different designs, one of the problems was that class rules were supposed to be changed before the prototype was built and presented to the public. WS was very helpful in processing the rule changes. Windermark built the boat, which was presented at the UK Dinghy Show. Several boats have been built since then and more have been ordered.

There are still a few issues to be sorted out with World Sailing. Being part of World Sailing has its advantages and disadvantages. Being part of the official organization gives classes more heft, on the other hand there are a lot of rules and requirements that cost money (e.g. formalized measurements and international jurors at international events)

**Council decision: Dave Hall to be awarded lifelong honorary membership.**

## 7. Marketing and Fleet Development Committee Report

Purpose of committee: Promoting strong national Fireball fleets, sharing materials, and increasing communication between NCAs.

The members of NCAs who have been sharing and using video and other material produced and collected by the committee all found the work done very helpful.

The committee needs to know what materials can be shared freely, who has to be credited with the creation of content.

A future aim might be to collect more structured information on e.g. age of sailors.

IRL: we need a YouTube channel, we need to look into allowing GoPros during races.

CAN: we should try to get input from participants who usually sail other classes, from first-timers; also document father-son/daughter teams etc.

## 8. Future Events

2026 Worlds Torbay  
2026 no Europeans  
2027 Europeans in France?  
2028 Worlds Kenya  
2028 Europeans Belgium?  
2029 Worlds Europe – France?  
2030 Worlds Europe – Garda?  
2031 Japan?

Council decision: 2028 Worlds will be held in Kenya, in February.

## 9. AOB

- Executive have discussed Vakynos or similar systems, but it would cost every boat a substantial amount. AUS: There are new systems – keep collecting information from classes who use it. – We don't want to raise cost for sailors. Could sailors rent the device?  
Ben will continue to collect and share information on different devices and systems.
- Centreboard weight tolerance should be reduced, then a specific regatta weight (including centreboard) could be included in the rules.
- Discuss rule change about GoPro use
- Clarify the rules on sail stoppers – if you use a shark tooth system you need to be able to pull higher than the mark. Do we need stoppers on the boom?
- Discuss how AI could help the class.

Decision: Reduce centreboard weight tolerance, then include a specific regatta weight (including centreboard) in the rules

Decision: Change rules concerning GoPros

Decision: Keep looking into start control systems

End of meeting: 20:30 local time

Torbole, 25 August, 2025



Mianne Erne

# Appendix – Annual Reports

## Commodore's Report

I must admit that when Christina approached me at the 2023 Europeans in Slovenia and asked whether I would be the next class commodore, I didn't jump at the chance. I had been thinking of volunteering for a minor role within the UK Fireball Association, but the idea of serving on the Fireball International committee, let alone taking on the Commodore role, wasn't on my radar. However, after some internal debate, I was persuaded.

The year started with the daily tracking of container ships to see whether they would get to Australia in time for the worlds, and the dawning realisation that with every delay, the chances got increasingly remote. Clearly the impact on the event of the UK or Czechia containers failing to arrive would be enormous. However, this was ignoring the resourcefulness of the Australian Association who concluded that no small issue like a war in the Middle East would impact the event, and they set about sourcing 13 boats from around the country, and bringing them to the venue, along with spare equipment, sailing gear and anything else

However since the last meeting there has been a number of achievements. The biggest, of course, has been passing of the new rules, and launching of the new style Fireball at the RYA Dinghy Show in early 2025. This has generated a lot of interest and around 14 orders so far. I think this has been extremely positive, and has generated a lot of interest in innovation, which I think is important if we are to keep the class relevant, whilst still remaining tied to our one design roots.

We had a well attended Europeans at Maccagno, which was impacted by difficult conditions, meaning a lot of early starts, but credit goes to the race committee for getting 9 races completed. The results were extremely close - the top 3 boats finished within 3 points of each other, and the top two boats having to count results in the 20's. However, credit goes to the ever consistent Claude Mermod and Ruedi Moser for bring home yet another championship.

The 2025 Worlds at Arco in North Garda are clearly already a successful event, with 134 entries, and we look forward to an amazing event. The future programme is filling up, with the Torbay Worlds preparation going well, and a worlds in Kenya provisionally allocated in early 2028.

We also formed a Marketing and Promotion committee, ably chaired by Heather Macfarlane, which is seeking to galvanise and align promotion for the class across the world.

Looking around the countries, it is great to see the younger generation starting to run the class in Italy, Belgium and Ireland, with some revived interest in Australia, the South of France and promising signs in the UK.

On the down side, one initiative I tried to kick off, was to create an annual report, possibly available in printed form, with reports and photos from all the NCA's. About half the countries responded, but it would be great to have a good response in 2025.

Another issue that occurred was that World Sailing did a class audit earlier this year and found the class wanting in a few areas. This is partly because we never received the link to the Annual Report submission, but also because the World Sailing regulations had got ahead of the reality. We are working with World Sailing to rectify the remaining areas.

Overall, I feel that it has been a successful year for the class, and I am looking forward to continued progress over the next year.

## National Class Association Reports

### Australia

2024 was a big year for Australia starting with the World Championships held at

Royal Geelong Yacht Club in February. We welcomed visitors, both overseas sailors and the many past Australian sailors that came to participate in our legends social event at the championship.

We did our best to get sailors missing their boats on the water in loan boats and very

much appreciated the attitude of those sailors to make the best of the situation. It was truly challenging for everyone to have 2 of the 3 overseas containers not arrive in time for sailors to compete in their own boats.

From an Australian outcome perspective it was great to see a number of the

Australian competitors upgrading their boats at the end of the regatta.

There was a good turn out of Fireballs to the Annual Easter Regatta.

As we launched into the 2024 part of our current season there has been excitement about the prospect of sailing at Lake Garda. Several new teams have purchased boats and have been participating in events.

The season in Australia has been marked by unusual weather. Fireballs were fortunate comparatively, in that we managed to get regattas completed, but two events in our calendar were completed with only 2 races:

1. The National Championship at Eden, in Feb 2025, was the most disappointing in this regard, with 2 very light races completed on day 2. Days 1, 3 and 4 were blown out with no racing. Tom Gillard and Andy Thompson won after well calculated tactics saw them come back from mid fleet to the front in race 1. The name of their boat that they bought after the 2024 World Championship stayed in the theme of "Expensive Event"!

Brendan Garner and Ben O'Brien sailed very consistently to take out the Australian Champion title, finishing just behind Tom and Andy overall.

2. The Cairn Curran Sailing Club - one of our iconic country camping locations was also completed with only 2 races in November 2024. It included a weird mini-tornado ripped along the water line picking up and throwing boats in the process of launching around. It was less than a 20m wide path of devastation! Our tents 50m up the hill were fine – go figure!

Then on day 2 of the regatta – no wind!

State Titles held in Victoria and South Australia had better luck with the weather and created a good meeting point for fleets to get together.

Victorian States, sailed bayside at Sandringham Yacht Club saw some very tight competition. Countback was required to separate 1st and 2nd place with Heather Macfarlane / Chris Payne winning from Sophie Jackson / Andrew Perry.

South Australian State Titles were sailed across 2 weekends at Adelaide Sailing Club in November 2024 and Brighton Seacliff Yacht Club in March 2025. Small fleets and tight competition saw racing go down to the wire and the experience of sailing together plus time on the water saw Jalina Pivetta (née Thompson-Kambas) / Nathan Stockley take out the title from up and coming team Jess De La Perrelle and James Gaskell.

Our Focus of IFAA for 2025 is #MFSMO: More Fireballs Sailing More Often.



## Belgium

For Fireball Belgium the year 2024 was a really calm year but after all not a completely lost year.

Due to my retirement mid-season and all different activities around I had little time to spend on the class.

And 'naturally' nothing happened. So no more regattas and no more championship. (After the Covid-period where in Belgium all boating was forbidden during a complete season it never really came back to live)

But luckily Jules Orient woke up and within his young enthusiasm he organised in September in Antwerp a 2 days training.

10 boats attended. Some older teams suddenly woke up and came back. And for some 'outsiders' to the class a place on a boat was offered.

This was a very good initiative and all participants were extremely enthusiastic.

For 2025 we set up a prudent calendar with one regatta/month.

Let's hope they will continue to attend as for this year already 12 boats+crew paid their membership + 6 members without a boat.

The website has also been updated : [www.fireball-Belgium.be](http://www.fireball-Belgium.be)

There is also a lot of enthusiasm about Garda, so cross fingers

I'll ask Piet ( our secretary in copy) to provide the list of members & boats to Olivier Brugaud (anyway, it is also publically available on our website)

## Canada

Fireball Canada 2024 Report to IFA

2024 was a year of hopeful enthusiasm for the Canadian Fireball Association. It started early with three teams attending Worlds - a great festival put on by our Aussie cousins!

Upon returning home the new executive drummed up annual memberships and scheduled the season of sailing. As winter faded we derigged iceboats, stashed hockey sticks, and searched spring snowbanks for cocooned Fireballs. After local Icebreaker Regattas, we moved onto regional events in Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia and Alberta. Domestic sailing peaked with Canadian Championships at Nepean Sailing Club. It'd take 4 days of driving to get from our most westerly to most easterly fireballer's waters, so our continental commodore, Evelyn, shortened that distance by hopping a plane to add a cross-country flavour to 'CANS'. Congrats to champions Pierre Carpentier and Tom Bird, Joe Jospe and Tom Egli in second and Ian Maclaren and Rune Langsten in 3rd. A few weeks later western CAN and USA sailors met at Columbia River Gorge for a North American demolition derby. Mark Cummings & Evelyn Chisholm kept capsizes down to single-digits to win, with Richard & Liam Quinlan surviving to second and Americans Clay Poulson and Adam Aguirre coming third. The Canadian season ended in early October with the Peter Kelly Memorial Regatta at Pointe Claire, Quebec, host club of the 2019 Worlds. On the development front, several Fireballs changed hands with a few new and returning sailors ready to hit the water. Acquiring competitive boats is an ongoing challenge in Canada. We rely on a few enthusiastic and devoted amateur builders to recharge our fleets in small doses. Attracting young sailors to Fireball is an ongoing challenge with other classes and other recreational activities attracting graduating youth sailors. We're keen to take on the challenges, though, and are looking forward to an exciting season with a greater Fireball presence across the country, highlighted by Canadian Championships on spectacular English Bay in Vancouver!

Fair Winds

Richard Quinlan

2024 President

Canadian Fireball Association

Minutes of Fireball Council meeting at Arco, 25 Aug 2025

## Czech Republic

## France

The French Fireball Class is well alive! In a difficult environment when most classes in France are at their lowest the Fireball keeps existing sailors and attracts a few new teams each year. We were the largest senior fleet at the French Handicap National, only beaten by 29er from the youth training groups. Our French Championship is still our main event in summer and attracted 25 teams from all over France, We hope more foreign teams will come to enjoy French food and good sailing in the future . We keep the number of Fireball dedicated events at about 4 or 5 a year to keep them eventful and reduce travel costs, and let teams participate in club or regional regatta, making the boat visible to younger sailors.

Our actions to help newcomers are paying off: an all-feminine team used the class boat in 2024 and will continue in 2025, the new teams progresses are also impressive, thanks to the training sessions organised by the class and year long support provided by more seasoned sailors. This is a key to keep newcomers, allowing them to close the gap with the rest of the fleet as quickly as possible and avoiding them quitting after one or 2 seasons. The development of the fleet in the south of France is also remarkable, even if the different fleets cannot meet very often due to distance.

Our 2024 AGM saw the arrival of Xavier Broise in the management committee, in charge of sports events and bringing a new energy to the team.

Since a few years participation in international events held in Europe is getting stronger and we can expect a large French team in Garda next year. Some French teams are now competing at the front of the fleet, this helping to improve the level of the whole French fleet.

2024 was a good year and even if a lot of discussions and interrogations remain on the future of the Fireball I'm confident our plans for the next few years will keep us on the same path.

Jean Robillard



Great Britain

Ireland

Italy

Japan

Kenya

Fireball sailing in Kenya is alive and kicking.

As usual we had the Nationals in Kilifi for 3 days in July on the coast in sparkling conditions: 7 boats on the start line, with plenty of sunshine and wind of 10-20kn.

6 boats had at least one teenager on board which is great for the future and injected lots of energy. Congrats to Chris Childs & Robin Bebbington for the victory.

In Lake Naivasha in the Rift Valley, where most of the boats live (90km from Nairobi), we have had some good events, including in October when Nick Rees visited us.

Any fireball sailors visiting Kenya are very welcome to get in touch, and we'll happily host you if you want to come sailing.



## Slovenia

The 2024 season was planned as a continuation of the excellent atmosphere and fighting spirit from previous years. As has become tradition, the season kicked off with a gathering at Camp Šimuni, where we were once again warmly welcomed — both by the camp staff and by favorable winds.

After a busy start in May, the season continued with two regattas: the first held in Velenje, followed just twelve days later by another in Izola. The competitions in June started in the ever-"hospitable" Murska Sobota and concluded with the "Sea-Bohinj Regatta".

Following a summer break, the season resumed with an active September filled with intense racing and social events. We began with the National Championship in Izola, hosted by JK Olimpic. The season concluded at JK Pirat.

Throughout the 2024 season, 10 boats competed regularly, with an average attendance of seven boats per race.

## Switzerland

Fireball Regattas 2024, with number of Swiss entries:

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Entries</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Geelong	February	4	World Championship
Mammern	April	16	
Thun	Mai	16	
Kreuzlingen SM		20	Swiss Championship (1x I und 1x F)
Beinwil	Juni	16	
Davos		15	
Einsiedeln	Juli	18	
Campione		6	Italian Championship
Luzern	Aug	14	
Murten		13	
Maccagno	Sept	15	European Championship
Romanshorn	Oktober	17	

Minutes of Fireball Council meeting at Arco, 25 Aug 2025

Thalwil	November	12	
	<b>Total</b>	178	

USA