



Snipe Class International Racing Association Change Rule - Proposal Form

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From SCIRA Board Technical Committee National Secretary 5 Fleet Captains

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Summary: To remove the requirement to fasten the forestay to the deck fitting.

Affects

- Constitution
- By-Laws
- Class Rules
- Deed of Gift
- Rules of Conduct
- NoR or SI Template

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this proposal is to make the forestay an optional component of the standing rigging.

CURRENT RULE

(Outlined in the document)

PROPOSAL RULE

(Outlined in the document)

REASONS

Proposal to remove the requirement to fasten the forestay to the deck fitting, by making the forestay an optional component of the standing rigging. This proposal maintains the forestay as an optional component, ensuring that any sailor who prefers the traditional configuration remains free to continue using it. This change supports the Snipe Class mission of maintaining low costs and high accessibility by reducing equipment degradation, specifically the friction between the jib sail cloth and the forestay during gybes.

(Outlined in the document)

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Summary:

Affects:

Constitution

By-Laws

Class Rules: X

Deed of Gift

Rules of Conduct

NoR or Sis template

Other

Objective:

The objective of this proposal is to make the forestay an optional component of the standing rigging. This change supports the Snipe Class mission of maintaining low costs and high accessibility by reducing equipment degradation, specifically the friction between the jib sail cloth and the forestay during gybes.

Current Rule:

C.9 RIG

C.9.3 CONDITIONS FOR USE, MAST

- (a) Halyards shall be set inside or outside the **mast**. 12
- (b) **Masts** shall only have attached one **forestay** and two side **shrouds**.
- (c) The **mast spar** shall not be adjusted at the **mast** step while *racing*. The butt of the **mast** shall be limited at the **mast** step by one transverse pin. Any **mast** step with a sliding adjustment system is allowed, providing that the position of the slider is fixed by a bolt and nut or a screw.
- (d) The butt of the **mast** spar shall be attached to the mast step with a safety latch or any alternative fitting. Tight rig is considered equivalent.
- (e) The **mast spar** shall be stepped in the **mast** step in such a way that the **heel point** shall not move more than 2mm in any direction.
- (f) For boats built before January 1st 2001 only, the **mast** shall be stepped on keel or on the flotation tank with a max tolerance of 51mm
- (g) Movements of the **mast** shall be restrained by fore and/or aft guys or mechanical restraint **connected** to the **mast** below the **lower point**, or blocks at deck level. Shims of any material may be added to both sides of the mast spar hole to limit the side movement of the mast. The shims shall not be adjusted while *racing*.
- (h) Any stopper shall be placed 5mm above at the **upper point** to prevent the **mainsail** to be hoisted above the **upper limit mark**. **Mast spars** with **halyard** locks at **mast** head shall not be required to have the stopper.
- (i) Spreaders shall not be adjusted while *racing*.
- (j) The **mast** fitting block from which a retractable **whisker pole** is launched shall not project further than the forward edge of the **mast**.

C.9.6 CONDITIONS FOR USE, STANDING RIGGING

- (a) The effective length of the **shrouds** and the **forestay** shall not be adjusted while *racing*.
- (b) Rigging links and rigging screws shall not be adjusted while *racing*.
- (c) The length of the **forestay** shall prevent the **mast** to touch the aft side of the hole in the deck when the pusher-puller is disconnected.
- (d) The use of shock cord while *racing* to remove slack of **forestay** and between the **shrouds** and the **mast** is permitted.

C.10.6 CONDITIONS FOR USE, JIB

- (a) The jib shall be hoisted and lowered on a **halyard**, which shall be connected to the luff wire or line by any system. The **halyard** may be adjusted while *racing*.
- (b) The jib shall have a wire or a fibre line (excluding PBO and carbon) fastened inside the **luff** while *racing*.

(c) The jib luff wire or line shall be attached to the deck and it shall not be adjusted while *racing*.

(d) Jibs shall be capable of being attached to the **forestay** fitting without disconnecting the **forestay**.

(e) The use of **jib hanks** is optional. If used, there shall be minimum 5 and maximum 10 **hanks**. If sleeves are used a maximum of 254 mm of the **forestay** shall be covered.

F.6 STANDING RIGGING

F.6.1 MATERIALS

(a) **Standing Rigging** may be made with any wire or rod.

F.6.2 DIMENSIONS

Forestay diameter minimum 2.5 mm maximum

Proposal

I) Main Proposal

C.9 RIG

C.9.3 CONDITIONS FOR USE, MAST

(a) Halyards shall be set inside or outside the **mast**. 12

(b) **Masts** shall only have attached one **forestay** and two side **shrouds**. **The use of forestay is optional.**

(c) The **mast spar** shall not be adjusted at the **mast** step while *racing*. The butt of the **mast** shall be limited at the **mast** step by one transverse pin. Any **mast** step with a sliding adjustment system is allowed, providing that the position of the slider is fixed by a bolt and nut or a screw.

(d) The butt of the **mast** spar shall be attached to the mast step with a safety latch or any alternative fitting. Tight rig is considered equivalent.

(e) The **mast spar** shall be stepped in the **mast** step in such a way that the **heel point** shall not move more than 2mm in any direction.

(f) For boats built before January 1st 2001 only, the **mast** shall be stepped on keel or on the flotation tank with a max tolerance of 51mm

(g) Movements of the **mast** shall be restrained by fore and/or aft guys or mechanical restraint **connected** to the **mast** below the **lower point**, or blocks at deck level. Shims of any material may be added to both sides of the mast spar hole to limit the side movement of the mast. The shims shall not be adjusted while *racing*.

(h) Any stopper shall be placed 5mm above at the **upper point** to prevent the **mainsail** to be hoisted above the **upper limit mark**. **Mast spars** with **halyard** locks at **mast** head shall not be required to have the stopper.

(i) Spreaders shall not be adjusted while *racing*.

(j) The **mast** fitting block from which a retractable **whisker pole** is launched shall not project further than the forward edge of the **mast**.

C.9.6 CONDITIONS FOR USE, STANDING RIGGING

(a) The effective length of the **shrouds** and the **forestay** shall not be adjusted while *racing*.

(b) Rigging links and rigging screws shall not be adjusted while *racing*.

(c) **When attached to the deck fitting**, the length of the **forestay** shall prevent the **mast** to touch the aft side of the hole in the deck when the pusher-puller is disconnected. **If the forestay is not in use, the pusher-puller shall be connected all the time.**

(d) The use of shock cord while racing to remove slack of **forestay** and between the **shrouds** and the **mast** is permitted.

C.10.6 CONDITIONS FOR USE, JIB

(a) The jib shall be hoisted and lowered on a **halyard**, which shall be connected to the luff wire or line by any system. The **halyard** may be adjusted while racing.

(b) The jib shall have a wire or a fibre line (excluding PBO and carbon) fastened inside the **luff** while racing.

(c) The jib luff wire or line shall be attached to the deck and it shall not be adjusted while racing.

(d) **When the forestay is attached to the deck fitting**, jibs shall be capable of being attached to the **forestay** fitting without disconnecting the **forestay**.

(e) The use of **jib hanks** is optional. If used, there shall be minimum 5 and maximum 10 **hanks**. If sleeves are used a maximum of 254 mm of the **forestay** shall be covered.

F.6 STANDING RIGGING

F.6.1 MATERIALS

(a) **Standing Rigging** may be made with any wire or rod.

F.6.2 DIMENSIONS

Forestay diameter minimum 2.5 mm maximum

II) Alternative Proposal B (Mandatory Hardware, Optional Deployment)

This version modifies the rule to ensure a **forestay** is always on board while granting the freedom to choose whether to **connect** it to the hull.

Modified Rule Text

C.9.3 CONDITIONS FOR USE, MAST

(b) **Masts** shall only have attached one **forestay** and two side **shrouds**. **The forestay shall be attached to the mast at the rigging point. The attachment of the forestay (connection to the forestay fitting on the deck) is optional. When no attached, the forestay shall be secured alongside the mast spar.**

C.9.6 CONDITIONS FOR USE, STANDING RIGGING

(a) The effective length of the **shrouds** and the **forestay**, **if used**, shall not be adjusted while *racing*.

(b) Rigging links and rigging screws shall not be adjusted while *racing*.

(c) **When attached**, the length of the **forestay** shall prevent the **mast** to touch the aft side of the hole in the deck when the pusher-puller is disconnected. **If the forestay is disconnected detached deployed alongside the mast, the pusher-puller shall not be disconnected be connected all the time.**

(d) The use of shock cord while racing to remove slack of **forestay** and between the **shrouds** and the **mast** is permitted.

C.10.6 CONDITIONS FOR USE, JIB

(a) The jib shall be hoisted and lowered on a **halyard**, which shall be connected to the luff wire or line by any system. The **halyard** may be adjusted while racing.

(b) The jib shall have a wire or a fibre line (excluding PBO and carbon) fastened inside the **luff** while racing.

(c) The jib luff wire or line shall be attached to the deck and it shall not be adjusted while racing.

(d) **When the forestay is attached to the deck fitting**, jibs shall be capable of being attached to the **forestay** fitting without disconnecting the **forestay**.

(e) The use of **jib hanks** is optional. If used, there shall be minimum 5 and maximum 10 **hanks**. If sleeves are used a maximum of 254 mm of the **forestay** shall be covered.

Reasons:

I) Main Proposal's Reasons

The objective of this proposal is to make the **forestay** an optional component of the **standing rigging**. This change supports the Snipe Class mission of maintaining low costs and high accessibility.

- **Reduction of Equipment Degradation:** The primary cause of **jib** degradation—even with the current **160 gr/sqm** cloth requirement (the old cloth was 130 gr/sqm)—is the friction between the sail cloth and the **forestay** during the **gybe**.
- **Inevitability of Contact:** Even with an experienced **helmperson** and **crew** possessing perfect timing, friction is unavoidable during every **gybe** in all wind conditions.
- **Cost Efficiency:** A **jib** typically has a service life estimated at less than half that of a **mainsail**. Eliminating mandatory **forestay** contact significantly reduces the accelerated degradation caused by repeated friction.
- **Miami Fleet Evidence:** The Miami Fleet has acquired extensive experience training without a **forestay**. These tests were conducted across all wind and sea conditions, including particularly strong or gusty winds.
- **Proven Performance:** Elite sailors, including Ernesto Rodriguez, Augie Diaz, Justin Callahan, Enrique Quintero, and their **crews**, have reported no structural or safety issues during these extended trials.
- **Structural Safety:** Safety is maintained because the **mast spar** is prevented from moving aft by the **pusher-puller** (mechanical restraint). To ensure this stability, the proposal mandates that the pusher-puller shall not be disconnected.
- **Consistency with ERS:** Making the **forestay** optional is consistent with **World Sailing Equipment Rules of Sailing (ERS)** and existing class precedents, such as optional **jib hanks**.

Additional Safety Considerations:

- **Reliability:** It is extremely rare for a jib wire or jib halyard to fail. In any case, even in the extremely rare and unfortunate event that this should occur, safety is guaranteed by the pusher-puller. Statistically, mast failures are more likely to result from corrosion and oxidation at the shroud-to-turnbuckle (e.g., Staymasters) attachment points or where the shrouds contact the spreaders. In the unfortunate event of a shroud failure, the mast is prevented from collapsing by the combined strength of the jib wire and jib halyard, provided the sailors are skilled enough to tack quickly onto the opposite tack. Therefore, the presence of the forestay is not a determining factor for structural recovery during a shroud failure.
- **Mast Inversion Dynamics:** Mast inversion typically occurs on downwind or reaching legs when the whisker pole pushes the mast aft at the gooseneck level. To counter this, the mast is pushed forward by the pusher-puller at deck level. A forestay—even an exceptionally short one—does not prevent inversion because, during such an event, the upper part and the tip of the mast are forced forward. While backstays (not used in the Snipe Class) would effectively

prevent inversion, the presence or absence of a forestay is entirely inconsequential to this specific structural risk.

- **Towing:** The presence of a forestay is irrelevant during towing, even when multiple boats are in line. If the jib is hoisted and the halyard is under tension, the shrouds remain loaded and the rig is stable. If the jib is lowered, extensive experience has shown that towing presents no issues as long as the mast is stabilized by pushing it forward with the pusher-puller. In any case, it must be kept in mind that the mast is inevitably pulled forward during a tow.

Sailor Autonomy: This proposal maintains the forestay as an optional component, ensuring that any sailor who prefers the traditional configuration remains free to continue using it.

II) Reasons for Alternative B

This proposal ensures that a **forestay** is always available as a safety redundancy. Sailors may keep it tied along the **mast** to prevent degradation of the **jib** during racing. If the team wishes to **deploy** it for safety in extreme weather, they remain free to do so, balancing equipment longevity with traditional safety margins.

Additional Safety Provision (Technical Committee/Board of Governors Discretion)

Although the statistical evidence and trials conducted by elite sailors demonstrate that the pusher-puller and current jib configurations provide sufficient structural safety, we recognize that the **Technical Committee** or the **Board of Governors** may wish to implement additional safety redundancies.

If deemed necessary for an extra margin of safety—even if primarily for precautionary reasons—this proposal could be supplemented by introducing **minimum diameter requirements** for the jib wire and the jib halyard.

The following specifications are suggested for such a provision:

C.10.6 CONDITIONS FOR USE, JIB

- (a) The jib shall be hoisted and lowered on a **halyard**, which shall be connected to the luff wire or line by any system. The **halyard** may be adjusted while racing. **Minimum diameter of the halyard: 3mm if wire, 5mm if fibre line. Carbon and PBO not allowed.**
- (b) The jib shall have a wire or a fibre line (excluding PBO and carbon) fastened inside the **luff** while racing. **Minimum diameter: wire 3mm, fiber line 5mm.**
- (c) The jib luff wire or line shall be attached to the deck and it shall not be adjusted while racing.
- (d) **When the forestay is attached to the deck fitting,** jibs shall be capable of being attached to the **forestay** fitting without disconnecting the **forestay**.
- (e) The use of **jib hanks** is optional. If used, there shall be minimum 5 and maximum 10 **hanks**. If sleeves are used a maximum of 254 mm of the **forestay** shall be covered.

F.6 STANDING RIGGING

F.6.1 MATERIALS

(a) **Standing Rigging** may be made with any wire or rod. **Minimum diameter: 2.5mm.**

F.6.2 DIMENSIONS

~~Forestay, if used,~~ diameter minimum 2.5 mm