2019 was a long season for everyone, with an early Europeans in Athens, through the Tokyo Test Event and ending up in Melbourne for the Finn Gold Cup in December. I am happy to report that all the championships were very successful with great hosts and great racing.

When Marsala was forced to pull out of the European Championship because of winter damage to the club, IFA was heartened by the number of great offers we received to take on the championship at short notice. In the end the decision was taken to go to Athens, where the HSF had created a new sailing facility and which many Finn sailors had been using through the winter. They also offered a huge and generous media package, which gave the class some great exposure. The four Olympic spots eventually went to BRA, GRE, NOR and USA. Thanks to the Greeks for stepping in just four months before the event and putting on an amazing show.

Thanks also to the Circolo della Vela di Roma in Anzio for running a perfect U23 World Championship in July. The long season, and the year, ended with the Finn Gold Cup in Melbourne at the Royal Brighton Yacht Club. Much is written about this elsewhere but the hospitality was first class with some of the best racing we have had for years. It was pleasing to see 60 boats on the start line, including many from the strong Australian fleet. The club was so impressed with the class we are invited back as soon as possible.

**Event Strategy 2020-21**

The coronavirus has severely disrupted sailing schedules this year and we are working to try to run as much as possible later in the year. However, we are aware the outlook is not good. With the cancellation of Genoa SWC we still need a qualification event to determine the final two nations for Tokyo. There is one African and one European place left to fill. Initially we hoped that we could use the Finn Gold Cup in Palma, but when that and the Olympic Games were also postponed, the strategy had to change. We are still hopeful, though realistic about the chances, that we can still hold the Europeans and Finn Gold Cup this autumn. If it is possible to hold a regatta then we will.

For next year we are looking at the Europeans in April and Gold Cup in May. Robert is in regular contact with World Sailing to determine which event will be used as the final Olympic qualifier. At the present time it is more likely to be a class event than a special multi-class regatta such as Genoa. The IOC deadline for qualification has been extended to June 29, 2021, so a Gold Cup in May would keep everyone engaged for as long as possible, and improve the chances of being clear of the virus.

Of course, we also have to be open to the possibility that no sailing will be possible before the deadline. The continental qualifier must be fully open to all countries in that continent, so unless that happens, World Sailing is looking at using historical results to decide the final two places. We hope it does not come to that.

Rafa Trujillo
Vice-President Sailing