

Developing skills for international ILCA racing

The intention of this resource is to provide people with information so they can make more informed decisions as to which international events are most appropriate for their development.

Things to think about...

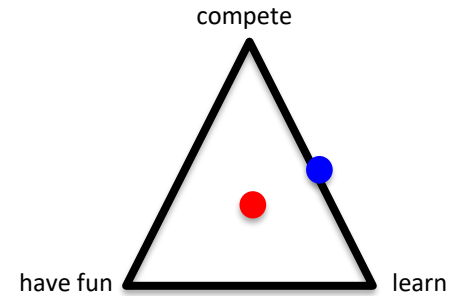
- What do you enjoy about racing?
- What is the purpose of going to an event?
- What does each event offer?
- What is the right approach for me, Athlete examples
- Future considerations
- Reflections

What do you enjoy about racing?

Everyone has different ambitions and different motivators. Before identifying international events to attend consider your motivators.

Do you want to;

- compete
- learn
- have fun



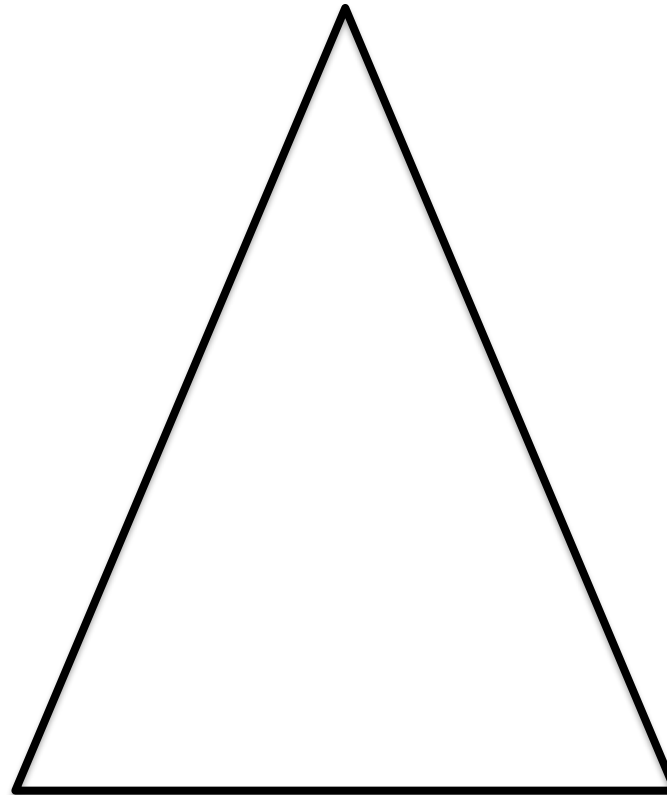
Usually it's a combination of all three.

You can think of how they relate on a triangle. If the three areas were all equally important you'd be the red dot in the middle. If competition and learning were more important you'd be the blue dot.

Being aware of your motivators will help guide you to the most appropriate events. Where would your dot sit?

COMPETE

- The key processes I will focus on **executing** are..
- The behaviours and actions I need to take to give myself the best chance to perform are..
- My expectations are built from my past experiences



HAVE FUN

- I'm going to be racing with my mates..
- I want to soak up the experience, meet foreign sailors, experience international racing..

LEARN

- The key processes I will focus on **developing** are..
- I will use this regatta to shape my understanding of the skillset required to be successful in international racing..

What is the purpose of going to an international event?

- Build international experience
- Practice racing at the front of the fleet
- To have a reference point to see what progress you've made from the work you've been doing

You should consider what is the level of competition at the event. Then use your understanding of your **ability level** and your **motivators** to decide if it is appropriate for **your development**.

			International reality	Front of fleet racing
Your level in UK qualifiers	ILCA 4	top 5	Worlds and/or Euros	Tier 2 events
		5-10	Worlds or Euros	Tier 2 events
		11-20	Euros	
		20-30	Tier 2 events	

Front of fleet racing or International reality....

Front of fleet (learn the trade)

-regattas where there is the opportunity (skill level vs competition) to be able to race at front of fleet and develop associated skills

International reality (learn the business)

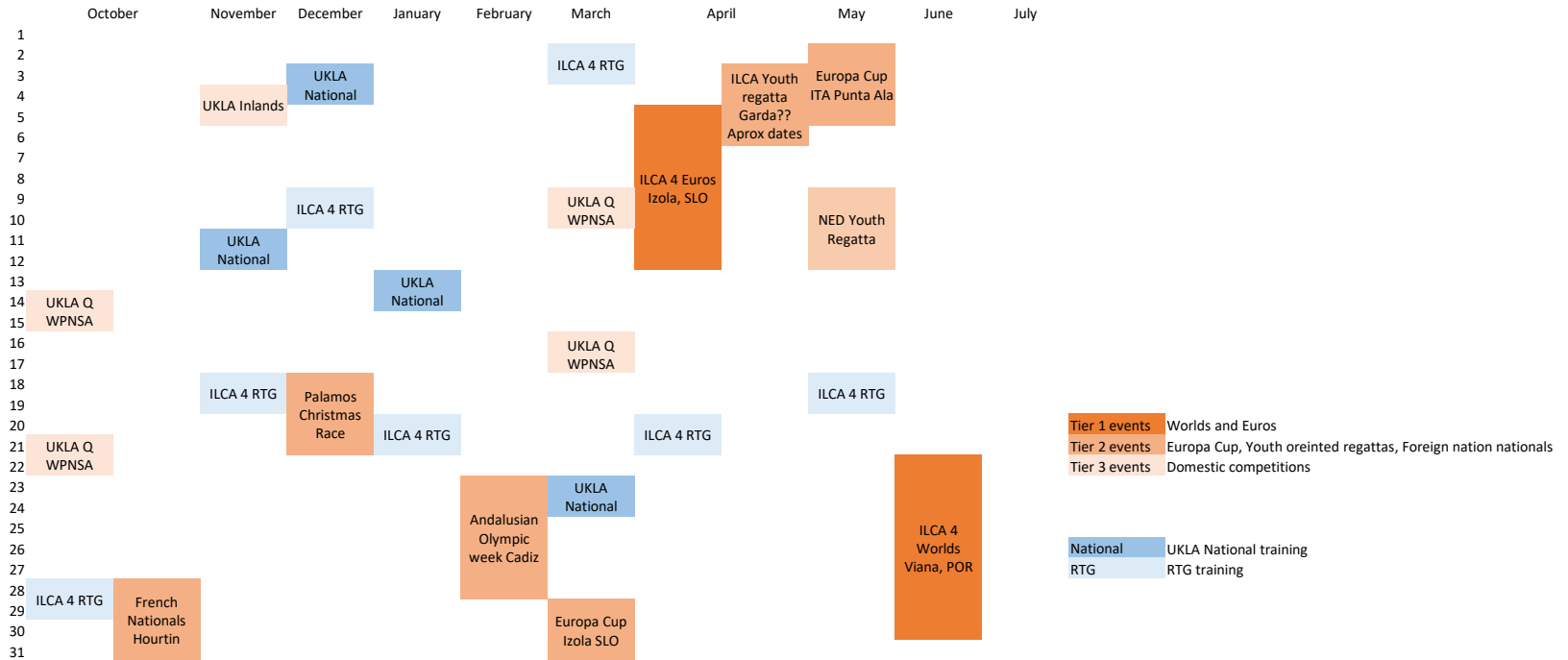
-building your understanding of the demands of racing the class. See the gap to the top level.
 -build your understanding of what the environment of a major international is like
 -may well be competing mid fleet

Competing at a Worlds may sound good, but if you've been swamped by the experience as your skill level doesn't meet the environment your long term development and desire to do future events will be impacted.

Beginning your international racing journey with a Tier 2 event could be a better experience.

Calendar

Different tier events highlighted across the season



		International reality	Front of fleet racing
Your level in UK qualifiers	ILCA 4	top 5	Worlds and/or Euros
		5-10	Worlds or Euros
		11-20	Euros
		20-30	Tier 2 events

What does each event offer...

French Nationals 28-31st Oct 2023

<http://www.francelaser.org/Nouveau/index.html>

3 racing days, 10 races

Conditions dependent on venue. 2023 Hourtin, choppy.

Palamos 18-22nd Dec 2023

<https://www.christmasrace.org/en/default/races/race>

4 racing days, 11 races

Fleet size 40-60 boats

Conditions, swelly waves. It can be 20 kts with big swell, it can be very light.

Performance Academy support available

Andalusian Olympic Week 24-28th Feb 2024

<https://www.facebook.com/carnavalrace/>

4 racing days, 10 races

Fleet size 40-60 boats

Conditions, wavy.

Europa Cups

Use website for dates <https://eurilca.org/europa-cup-upcoming-events/>

3-4 racing days, 8 races

Fleet size varies on location, usually 50-80 boats

Conditions venue dependent

Garda ILCA Youth Regatta, Easter weekend

<https://www.fragliavela.org/en/regatta/ilca-youth-easter-meeting-2023-2/>

4 racing days, 10 races

Fleet size +150 boats

Conditions, it's Garda so if the Ora is in expect something around 12-15kts.



44th PALAMOS CHRISTMAS RACE 2019 © AlfredFerre.com

What does each event offer...

Dutch Youth Regatta 9-12th May 2024

<https://dutchyouthregatta.org>

4 racing days, 14 races

Fleet size 60 boats

Conditions, chop, shifty.

Kieler Woche approx 27-30th June 2024

<https://www.kieler-woche.de/en/index.php>

4 racing days, 11 races

Fleet size 60 boats

Conditions, choppy waves and shifty wind. Either it's windy and rainy, or baking hot and light winds, dependent on if a high/low pressure is dominating Europe..



World Championships Viana, POR 22-30th June

<https://2024ilca4youth.ilca-worlds.org>

6 racing days, 12 races

Fleet size, boys 240-280 racing in 4 fleets, girls 120-140 racing in 2 fleets

Performance Academy support available

European Championships Izola, SLO 5-12th April

<https://eurilca.org>

6 racing days, 12 races

Fleet size boys 200-240 racing in 3 fleets, girls 130-160 racing in 2 fleets

Performance Academy support available

For events where you have more of an outcome focus, or tier 1 events, working with coaches you already know can help you better perform and develop.

For events where you are building your overall international experience, then gaining input from different coaches could be beneficial. Companies such as ... sailcoach .. Daniel Mihelic .. etc

What is the right approach for me?

Athlete examples

I'm a mid-fleet sailor in the UK

When sailors jump straight in with a Worlds or Euros they are often swamped by the overall experience. Limiting their ability to execute the skills they have and progress their learning.

If you've just transitioned into an ILCA 4 then attending a Europa Cup or the ILCA Youth regatta in Garda, would provide a good reference point before considering a Worlds/Euros.

I raced internationally in my Junior class (if more than 50% of the fleet was British it won't have been a real reflection of international racing).

Competing at a tier 2 event early on will begin to give you an understanding of the differences between racing internationally in your junior class compared to an ILCA 4. Which will help you better prepare for a Worlds/Euros in the future if that is appropriate.

What is the right approach for me?

Athlete examples

I race at the front of the UK fleet

Then you probably have a decent grounding in domestic racing. The opportunity is to learn the differences between domestic and international competition so you can sharpen up the relevant skills.

You might want to;

- See if there is an event in venue prior to the Worlds/Euros to give you an opportunity to experience the conditions there
- Look at doing an event 4 weeks prior to Worlds/Euros to refresh yourself with the differences in international racing
- Could look at keeping a drip feed of international racing through the year to increase your exposure to different venues and conditions. Be careful not to do too much too soon, this could be the start of many years of international racing.

Future considerations

- How will you progress your development season to season
 - If you do X events in year 1, how do you build on that in year 2?
 - How do you make sure you're not drained by it (managing travel vs school, costs and parents work) in 3 years time?
 - What is the new you can add each year?
- Perhaps look for venues which will provide conditions you aren't familiar with
- Or if you have an outcome focus, which venues might provide conditions similar to goal events
- If you're transitioning from the ILCA 4 to the ILCA 6, how could you use the 'tier approach' to provide both front of fleet racing and international experience through that transition year.

Reflections

Some questions to reflect on your international racing experience and help guide future decisions;

- What did you enjoy about the experience?
- What new experiences did you have?
- What were the challenges you faced?
- How could you better prepare for your next international?

Areas to consider

- The racing
- The dinghy park
- Racing abroad
- Racing against international competition

When figuring out what is best for your development you aren't alone. Use the coaches that you work with to develop a program that is right for you.