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2016 Olympics: Kiteboarding ousts Windsurfer for 2016

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In a completely unexpected move, the ISAF Council has voted to have Kiteboarding as an Olympic Event for the 2016 Olympics in Brazil.

The vote to make the switch was by 19 votes to 17 votes for the Windsurfer, meaning that one less vote for the Kites would have carried the day for the Windsurfer

Kiteboarding was the third Olympic event to undergo Evaluation Trials at Santander, Spain in March. However unlike the other two - being the Womens Olympic Skiff and the Mixed Multihull - which were givens as Events in the 2016 Olympic equation, the Evaluation Trial for the Kiteboards was to determine its suitability for the 2016 Olympics.

That answer was required due to the fact that Kiteboarding has had a very tense relationship with the ISAF.

The ISAF Council was expected to take Kiteboarding into the 2013 World Cup circuit as a full event and assimilate it into the sport.

The Evaluation Team produced a report that spoke in glowing terms of Kiteboarding and what it could bring to the ISAF's competitions, however the same was said of windsurfing when it was first included in the ISAF and Olympic Sailing families.

Then as now with Kiteboarding, the bulk of the windsurfers sold were for recreational use only, and there were no club fleets of windsurfers.

Subsequently fleets did build as the Windsurfers shifted into the ISAF regatta circuit. It has also taken some time to build a full junior circuit and class progression into windsurfing.

The very nature of Kiteboarding means that it is not possible for young sailors of 12 years and upwards to Kiteboard, and it remains to be seen as to what class progressions are established.

While speaking highly favourably of Kiteboarding, the report did not take the same expansive view of windsurfing, ignoring the television and media coverage generated by circuits like the PWA . Instead focussing on the Olympic event only

The recommendation of the Evaluation Team was that Kiteboarding be taken one step further and for the sport to be sailed at ISAF World Cup events. But the Council has bounced that one level higher and gone for full Olympic inclusion.

The events to be contested at the 2016 Olympic Games are confirmed as:

Men's Kiteboarding
 Women's Kiteboarding
 Men's One Person Dinghy - Laser
 Women's One Person Dinghy - Laser Radial
 Men's One Person Dinghy (heavy) - Finn
 Men's Two Person Dinghy - 470
 Women's Two Person Dinghy - 470
 Men's Skiff - 49er
 Women's skiff - 49er FX
 Mixed Two Person Multihull - Nacra 17

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