

## 1/ Once Upon a Time: The Queens of regatta.

It measures 390 centimeters long, 63 width, 25 depth...It is round bottom, volume is ranging between 300 liters and 350 liters, the centreboard can be straight, semi or fully retractable. It is very performing upwind, quite fast but technical on the reach, a nightmare downwind in windy and in choppy water conditions. It can be routinely sailed between 5 and 25 knots of wind...What it is?



Acrobatic downwind



Bruce Kendall

This is the **Open Division II Sailboard**, a class of windsurf created by IBSA (International Board Sailing Association) and built to the International Displacement Division Measurement Rules later implemented by **I.Y.R.U** (International Yachting Race Union) from 1979 to 1992.

## 2/ The Golden age

Those of you, born in the 80s and after, certainly do not recall these boards and may even don't know how it looks like. Ask your dad, aunts or uncles...

The most famous, legendary boards, were certainly the Crit D2 and the Lechner but there were in fact hundred of different Div IIs that were shaped and produced in different countries, all slightly different but all compliant with the Class rules.

In fact they were rather a kind of little dinghy with a windsurf rig than a typical flat hull windsurfer



Fontaine Pajot VMG (blue)  
Proto Oberli  
Croconuts  
Crit D2

It was diversity within similarity:



Speedline  
Lechner A390  
Croconuts  
Dobbelman PH1  
Bic Hervé Borde  
Crit D2



In the early 80s, architects were trying different shapes. Initial boards had straight non retractable or semi retractable daggerboards, fixe mast bases, relatively low volumes (270-300 liters). Straight daggerboard was making these boards very challenging to sail in windy conditions (Crit 650, Oceanite Competition, ...)



Crit 650



Oceanite Competition



Starting 1983 and beyond, fully retractable daggerboards, hollowed hulls, mast tracks, footstraps, etc.. became the rules. Similar in appearance but different, these boards remained compliant with the tight Class rules.



Two type of sails were designed for these boards:

- Type A, typical triangular short battened 6.5 m<sup>2</sup>, until 1987
- Type B, full battened 7.3 m<sup>2</sup> sail, from 1988 and after.



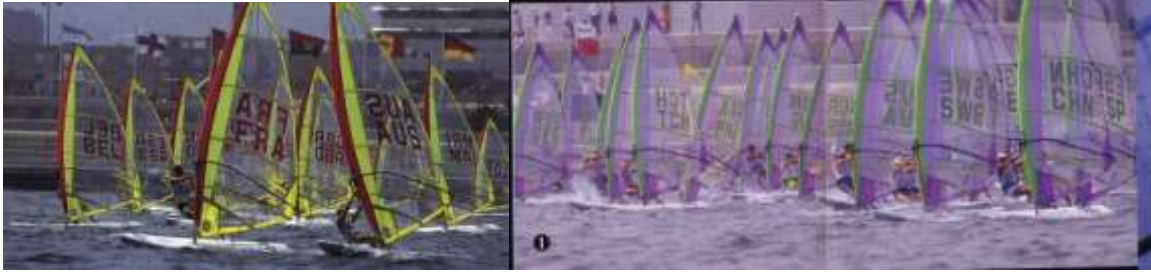
Type A



Type B

## 2/ The Glory

The Open Div II Class was chosen to represent the windsurfing family at the Olympic Games, in replacement of the Windglider. The Lechner A390 was elected as monotype one design in 1988 (Seoul, Korea) geared with Type A sails and 1992 (Barcelona, Spain) geared with a type B sails.



### **3/ The Fall**

It was the Golden Age. Technology was evolving quickly and new boards with new material or shape were appearing every year in the Class. Thousand of athletes were racing and World and Regional Championships were very busy.

Unfortunately, following the 1992 Olympics, the Lechner type was dropt from the Olympics and was replaced by the raceboard Mistral One Design.

Quickly many sailors switched to the MOD as there was no more competition organized for Div IIs. Suddenly, after 12 years of existence, the Div IIs vanished from the water and almost completely disappeared, even from people's memory.

What happened? Why such a punition?

The world of windsurfing was going already very fast and mass population needed affordable, funny and easy to use equipments. Officials wanted more spectacle as funboard was booming... So were raceboards also.

As opposed, Div II were fragile, built in small series, technical to sail and very expensive...Not to put into everyone's hands but built mainly for elite and competition.

Fortunatly some sailors kept them secretly in their garage and, from time to time, were still sailing them. Some, like me, even never stopped sailing them.

20 years elapsed since the last races in 1992-1993...20 years...It is a long time. Hundred of boards finished their life in garbages or simply abandoned in backyards.

So was the Div II destiny to disappear almost like dinosaures, until...until we, two friends and I, decided to do something and restart this Class.

### **4/ The revival – Back to the Future**

We started this group in Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/OpenDiv2/> and we quickly realized that we weren't alone. Dozen of guys and girls from our generation were just waiting about something like this to happen and were expecting and even dreaming a revival of the Class.

We found passionated people such as François who, while owning an impressive collection of boards (three dozen) maintains also a unique and very resourcefull blog about the Class: <http://pavdivision2.blogspot.com/>

Started two years ago, we are now more than 400 members from everywhere, every continents, growing steadily towards 1000. Former olympic athletes joined us and it is not finished...An Association is also on its way. People are rebuilding their fleet in their countries.

And we started racing again together.

First official race ever organized last year in France after 20 years, gathered 15 participants. Not bad after such a deep sleep.



Three races are planned already for this year, two in France, one in Greece and there is more to come in other countries. The rumour is spreading among the community and people are joining. They sort their old Div II board from their attic, clean them and go sailing.

Of course, we are facing issues with equipments (boards and sails) that are no longer produced since decades. They became rare and when we find them, they are frequently damaged. But we try to save what can be saved and restaured. We do miracles in repairing and finding missing parts to give them a second life.



It will not take that long before some shapers decides to remake some. Some sailmakers also are thinking to design new sails. Just a matter of time...

It sounds like the History is repeating itself and current tough times for windsurfing versus kitesurf explosive popularity is an outstanding opportunity for the Open Division II Class to revive and reposition windsurfing into regatta.

We believe this Class is the missing piece of the windsurfing community.

Call me if you need help. It`s time to join the Group!