



IOCA (UK)/GBR 2026 Teams Selection Policy

1. Introduction

The International Optimist Class Association (UK) has a long tradition of sending teams overseas to compete in international regattas. For the sailors, being selected to represent the Class and their country is an honour as well as a major personal achievement, often coming after several years of committed training and racing in the Class. Competing overseas allows our sailors to meet and sail with some of the best Optimist sailors in the world and experience the unique international Oppie community.

Representing IOCA (UK)/GBR at an IODA Worlds or European Championship is seen by many as the pinnacle of an Optimist career, even if in reality it is only the very start of a lifetime in the sport. While for others, the IOCA (UK)/GBR Development Teams give a very valuable and rewarding experience as they progress through the fleet or before they transition to one of the RYA Youth Classes.

The other IODA Continental Championships, aside from the Euros, are also an excellent opportunity for our most accomplished Sailors; although by definition they are a distance away and the dates may not fit well with the UK school calendar. In addition, places are allocated to IOCA in a 'second round' and may come up at relatively short notice. As such they are best considered separately but are included in this policy.

The Class has a duty to ensure the best sailors are selected for teams. This policy describes the processes by which sailors will be selected for the IOCA (UK)/GBR teams in 2026.

2. The IOCA (UK) Selection Committee

The Selection Committee has three members,

- David Campbell-James, Chair of the Selection Committee.
- Chris Atherton, Junior Racing Manager, representing the RYA.
- Alan Williams, as an independent National Race Official or Race Coach.

The role of the Selection Committee is to ensure that the selection policy is followed, and the process is fair. In making their decisions Selectors are expected to be impartial and objective and to draw on their experience and expertise. Members of the Selection Committee may attend the Spring Championships, Selection Trials and Team Racing Championships to inform their decisions. The Selection Committee has the ultimate discretion to determine which of the selection criteria to take into account and who to select.

3. IOCA (UK)/GBR Teams in 2026

In 2026 we will designate our teams as either **Performance Teams** or **Development Teams**, with clear guidance on the leadership and support provided by the Class and the role expected of parents and carers (Table 1). Performance Teams will attend events with the intention of

performing—aiming for personal results, competitive outcomes, and individual goals. Development Teams will focus on the learning process, providing opportunities for growth, skill development, and teamwork, while still encouraging sailors to compete to the best of their ability and achieve personal goals. This distinction allows us to be transparent about expectations, and to ensure the support each sailor receives aligns with the purpose of their team designation.

Team Leadership and support	IOCA (UK)/GBR Performance Teams	IOCA (UK)/GBR Development Teams	Teams attending an IODA Continental Championships
Coach, Team Leader and/or House Parent as required	Worlds Team Euros Team Venice Team Racing European Team Racing Champs Monaco Team Racing (2027)	Development 1 Team Berlin Team Racing	IODA North American Championships (if places are allocated) IODA Asian & Oceanic Championships (if places are allocated)
Coach and parent support (sailors travel and stay with their parents)	Garda Country Cup Bermuda Gold Cup	Development 2 Team Junior Team	

Table 1. Team Leadership and support for IOCA (UK)/GBR Teams in 2026

Some teams will travel to an event with a coach and team leader and be largely independent. In other teams, such as the Junior Team and Dev 2, sailors will train and compete under the guidance of a coach but travel to the venue with their parents and stay with them when not training or racing. Other teams/events may work best with a House Parent, volunteering alongside a coach, and sometimes alongside a team leader as well. All teams will benefit from, and some will only be possible with, parental support in the administration, organisation and logistics of getting the team to and from the event.

4. Eligibility for an IOCA (UK)/GBR Team place

To be eligible for an IOCA (UK)/GBR team place, sailors must:

- be a member of IOCA (UK);
- sail a GBR-registered boat at the Selection Trials;
- regularly sail at IOCA (UK) events;
- be a British national or be resident in the UK.

In addition, for the Worlds, Euros and any other IODA Continental Championships, sailors must meet the IODA eligibility criteria, detailed in Section 9 of the [IODA Handbook](#): *“Sailors shall be either nationals or bona fide residents of the country they represent, unless otherwise agreed by the IODA Executive Committee. A sailor who has represented one country at an IODA World or Continental Championship shall not represent another country except in cases*

of alteration of residence, which cases shall be approved by the IODA Executive. As per World Sailing Regulations Appendix 3, Item 19.6 (d), IODA Events require competitors to have 'World Sailing Eligibility' as defined in Item 19.4 and 19.5." Sailors must also meet the age requirements of the team detailed in Table 2 *in the year of the event.*

If you have any questions regarding eligibility to represent GBR at international events, contact David Campbell-James, Chair of the Selection Committee, campbelljames@btinternet.com.

5. Events used to select GBR/IOCA (UK) Teams.

Three events will be used to select GBR/IOCA(UK) Teams in 2026 as detailed in section 7.

1. IOCA Spring Championships, 14-15 March 2026.
2. IOCA Selection Trials, 9-12 April 2026.
3. IOCA (UK) Optimist Team Racing Championships, dates to be confirmed.

If three or more races in the Spring Championships, or six or more races in the Selection Trials, are completed, the Selection Committee will select sailors for the relevant team(s) from the applicable event, based on the overall results from all races completed at that event, with discards applied as per the Notice of Race and SSIs.

If fewer than three races in the Spring Championships or fewer than six races in the Selection Trials are completed, the Selection Committee will select sailors for the relevant team(s) based on the results from and the conditions sailed in at the applicable event and any other information they deem necessary, including the anticipated conditions at the event at which a team will compete.

If the Team Racing Championships complete the Selectors will use the overall results to assist in selecting Teams. If the Championships do not complete, then the Selection Committee will select Teams based on the races sailed, the conditions sailed in and any other information they deem necessary.

6. Entry to selection events

The IOCA Spring Championships and the IOCA (UK) Optimist Team Racing Championships are open to any member of IOCA (UK).

The Selection Trials are an invitational event. Invitations will be sent in the days following the Spring Championships to the email address(s) of the parents/guardians recorded on the IOCA (UK) membership database. The following sailors will be invited to participate:

1. Sixty (60) sailors, taken in descending rank order from the [IOCA \(UK\) Rolling Ranking](#), once it has been updated after the Spring Championships. A sailor who is no longer participating actively in the Class, has been absent from racing an Optimist outside their home club for a long period and/or has moved into another junior or youth class, should not assume they will automatically be invited to the Selection Trials.
2. A further five (5) sailors will be invited at the discretion of the Selection Committee. Sailors wishing to be considered for a

discretionary entry should follow the procedure outlined in Section 9.

3. Except in exceptional circumstances a sailor who has not competed in any of the last three IOCA (UK) major events will not be eligible to attend the Selection Trials.
4. Sailors must be ranked in the top 75 of the Rolling Ranking to be invited.

In line with the IOCA (UK) Rolling Ranking [Policy](#), should Main Fleet sail fewer than three races at the Spring Championships, the event would not be included in the Rolling Ranking. If this were the case, the Selection Committee would use the Rolling Ranking at the time, plus any available evidence, to decide which sailors to invite to the Selection Trials.

7. The Selection Process

The Selection Committee will follow the procedure outlined below, provided that in their opinion there are no discretionary requests which are worthy of being given consideration for inclusion within a relevant team.

Following each selection event, sailors will be invited based on the criteria listed in Table 2 and in accordance with the following points:

7.1 To be selected sailors must be eligible to represent GBR/IOCA (UK) - see Section 4.

7.2 After the Spring Championships, a sailor may accept a place in the Junior Team and, if invited, go on to compete in the Selection Trials. If they are successful in the Selection Trials and are offered a place in another team, the sailor may decide to relinquish their place in the Junior Team but they cannot accept places in both teams.

7.3 Anyone taking part in the Selection Trials will not be permitted to enter the RYA Eric Twiname Championships 2026 in an Optimist.

7.4 Among the eligible sailors registered in the 2026 Lake Garda Optimist Meeting, the sailor ranked highest in the IOCA (UK) Rolling Ranking (updated after the Spring Championships) will be invited to compete in the Garda Country Cup. Accepting the place in the Country Cup, which takes place the day before the main event, will not preclude the sailor from accepting a place in another team.

7.5 Team places will be filled in sequence, with each team being completed before sailors are invited to join the next team listed in Table 2. After the Selection Trials, the Worlds Team will be filled first, followed by the Euros, Dev 1 and so on.

7.6 A sailor offered a Worlds place may opt to take a place in the Euros or, at the discretion of the Selection Committee, a place in a Development Team. Similarly, a sailor offered a Euros place may opt to take a place in a Development Team, at the discretion of the Selection Committee.

7.7 Accepting the place in the Bermuda Junior Gold Cup after the Selection Trials will not preclude the sailor from accepting a place in another team.

7.8 A sailor that has previously been in a performance team (a Worlds or Euros team) is not precluded from accepting a place in a development team.

7.9 With the exception of the Venice Team Racing event (which is allocated to the selected Worlds Team), and the European Team Racing Championships (which will be selected following the European Championships from the sailors attending this event), the selection and application process for Berlin Team Racing and Monaco Team Racing is outlined in Section 10.

7.10 The selected Worlds Team will attend the IOCA (UK) Team Racing Championships as a team. The selected Europeans Team are encouraged to attend the IOCA (UK) Team Racing Championships as a team(s).

Team	Event(s)	Selection criteria	Selected from
Selected after the Spring Championships...			
Junior Team	French National Championships ENVSM Quiberon, France 4th - 10th July 2026	16 sailors, minimum of 5 of each gender Oppie age 12 and under	Main Fleet results from the Spring Championships
Garda Country Cup	Lake Garda Optimist Meeting Riva del Garda Easter 2026	1 sailor	Rolling Ranking after Spring Champs
Selected after the Selection Trials...			
Worlds Team	IODA World Championships, Tangiers, Morocco 18 - 28th June 2026	5 sailors	Results of Selection Trials
	International Optimist Class Team Race, Marco Rizzotti Trophy Venice Dates TBC	5 sailors	Results of Selection Trials
Euros team	IODA European Championships, Gdynia, Poland 24th - 31st July 2026	7 sailors, at least 3 of each gender	Results of Selection Trials

	IODA European Team Racing, Campione del Garda, Italy 13th - 18th October 2026	4 sailors, 2 of each gender	The Selectors will discuss this with the Europeans Team as soon as possible after Selections *
Development Team 1	Gran Dia de la Vela Club Nautic Arenal, Mallorca Dates TBC (2 days training prior, 4 days racing)	8 sailors, at least 2 of each gender Oppie age 12 and over	Results of Selection Trials
Development Team 2	Halloween Cup, Torbole, Lake Garda 28th - 31st October 2026	16 sailors, at least 4 of each gender Oppie age 12 and over	Results of Selection Trials

Team	Event(s)	Selection criteria	Selected from
Bermuda Junior Gold Cup **	Royal Bermuda Yacht Club Hamilton, Bermuda Dates TBC	1 sailor	Winner of the Selection Trials
Berlin Team Racing	Optimist Team Cup, Potsdamer Yacht Club, Berlin Dates TBC	4 sailors, no gender requirements	Team application to Selectors Results of IOCA Team Racing Championships
Monaco Team Racing **	Monaco Optimist Team Race, Monaco Yacht Club January 2027 - dates TBC	4 sailors, at least one of each gender NB age restriction ***	Team application to Selectors Results of IOCA Team Racing Championships
Selected later in the year, after a separate call for applications...			
IODA Continental Championship Teams *	IODA North American Championships Nova Scotia, Canada 21 st - 28 th May 2026 IODA Asian & Oceanic Championships Colombo, Sri Lanka 12th - 19th December 2026	TBC depending on receiving places, typically 8 sailors, at least 2 of each gender.	Selectors will assess applicants based on a wide range of criteria including but not limited to: age, results of Selection Trials, IOCA Rolling Ranking, sailor performance in recent IOCA events and international regattas

Table 2. Events and Selection Criteria for IOCA (UK)/GBR Teams in 2026.

The dates included in the table are provisional and when confirmed will be published under the Teams tab on the IOCA website.

* The Selectors will speak to parents and sailors of the Euros Team to ascertain level of interest in attending the European Team Racing Championships, and how/if a team of 2 boys and 2 girls can be formed. It is intended that the Euros Team Racing team will be formed of Euros sailors. However if a sailor later withdraws or a substitute is needed, the team will need to apply to the Selectors as outlined in Section 11. Sailors attending the European Team Racing Championships are not eligible for Berlin Team Racing, including if a sailor withdraws from the European Team Racing team. If it is not possible to form a team from the 7 sailors in the 2026 Euros team, the Selectors will select a team based on the results from the UK Team Racing Championships, the conditions sailed in at the applicable event and any other information they deem necessary.

** Subject to an invitation(s) being received from the organising authority.

*** Sailors wishing to be eligible for the Monaco Optimist Team Race in January 2027 need to be IOCA age 14 or under when competing in the 2026 IOCA Optimist Team Racing Championships.

There is a gender quota for some teams, either because this is required in the Notice of Race or because we have chosen to do so as a Class. It is important to promote equity of access for boys and girls to our development teams, to ensure we can continue to field strong teams for the Euros and other events, and to prepare our most talented sailors for the future - Olympic sailing teams being 50:50 by gender.

After the Selection Event

No sailor or team should assume that they have a place in any team until the sailors or teams placed above them have decided which team they will elect to join. The parents/guardians of selected sailors for the Worlds, Euros and Dev 1 teams will be asked to pay their full parental contribution on the final day of the Selection Trials.

It should be noted that it might not be possible to fully select all teams at the Selection Trials, due to the length of time it can take to finalise teams. In this situation, the Selection Committee will notify sailors by phone or email as soon as possible. To accept a place in a team, sailors and their parents/guardians must sign and accept the terms and conditions of the team.

The parents/guardians of selected sailors for the Development 2 team will be asked to pay the full parental contribution upon accepting a team place. No part of the parental contribution is refundable, except in exceptional circumstances.

8. Suspension and Termination

Continued membership of any Team will normally be dependent upon:

- Satisfactory on-going performance of the sailor
- Conformance with team requirements, IOCA (UK) policies and procedures and reasonable IOCA (UK) requests;

- Attendance at designated training sessions and/or preparation regattas;
- Conformance with the relevant codes of conduct that may be laid down or recognized by the sport/class from time to time;

Notwithstanding the above, IOCA (UK) reserves the right at its absolute discretion to suspend or terminate membership from a Team at any time and for any reason.

9. Applications for Discretionary Invitations / Places

A sailor may apply to the Selection Committee for a discretionary invitation to the Selection Trials and/or a discretionary place in a team. Principally, but not exclusively, this would apply to:

- Sailors who were unable to compete in the Spring Championships for a reason beyond their control
- Sailors who were invited but unable to compete in the Selection Trials for a reason beyond their control
- Sailors who would like to make the Selection Committee aware of any exceptional circumstances / factors which are relevant to their case

An application for a discretionary invitation / place, including any relevant details, must be made by emailing the Chair of the Selection Committee, David Campbell-James campbelljames@btinternet.com by the following deadlines:

- 1) By midday on Friday 20th March 2026, in relation to a discretionary invitation to the Selection Trials, or a discretionary place in the Junior Team.
- 2) By midday on Monday 13th April 2026, in relation to a discretionary place in a Team.

In the case of illness or injury a note from a doctor or hospital should be included.

Applications will be reviewed by the Selection Committee and invitations / places may be offered to sailors who fail to achieve automatic invitation / selection. When assessing applications, the Selection Committee may take into consideration the following factors:

- Any exceptional circumstances which may have affected a sailor's results
- Performance in previous IOCA (UK) events
- IOCA (UK) Rolling Ranking
- Performance in other significant domestic or international events
- Age and potential
- Attitude and behaviour throughout an event
- Goals and aspirations
- Height and weight
- Other factors the Selection Committee considers appropriate

To inform their decisions the Selection Committee may consult with the RYA Regional Performance Managers and relevant Lead Coaches.

10. Application process for a Team Racing event

[Berlin and Monaco Team Racing](#)

Applications for teams to enter the Berlin and Monaco Team Racing events will be made by emailing the Chair of the Selection Committee, David Campbell-James campbelljames@btinternet.com by: Date to be confirmed (this will be set as 2 weeks after the Team Racing Championships takes place)

The application must include the following:

- Team Racing Event name
- The names of the 4 team members

Following the IOCA Team Racing Championships, the Selectors will use the results from the event to consider the applications received, and where possible will offer the event to the highest-placed, eligible team. A team may decline the invitation. The next-highest-placed, eligible team will then be offered the event, and so on until a team accepts the invite.

Notes:

- Worlds team members and European Team Racing team members will not be eligible to apply for Berlin Team Racing
- Within 1 week (7 days) of the application closing date, the selected teams will be approached by the Selectors with an event offer
- A team will have 48 hours to accept or decline the event as a team
- The above application process does not apply to the Venice Team Racing event or the European Team Racing Championships
- Sailors wishing to be eligible for the Monaco Optimist Team Race in January 2027 need to be IOCA age 14 or under when competing in the 2026 IOCA Optimist Team Racing Championships
- It is expected that all sailors in a team will have attended the IOCA Team Racing Championships

11. Application for a substitute in a Team Racing team

It is possible that in the time between a team being selected and the competition taking place that one or more team members may no longer be able or wish to compete. Principally, but not exclusively, this would apply to team members who would be absent due to illness or injury, or could no longer attend due to unforeseen family circumstances. If a substitute is required for a team, it is the selected team's responsibility to find a suitable replacement and apply to the Selectors. This request must be made by emailing the Chair of the Selection Committee, campbelljames@btinternet.com at the earliest possible opportunity.

12. Appeals

There will be no appeals against the published selection criteria or the actions of the Selectors, provided they follow the selection policy. By entering the Spring Championships and/or Selection Trials sailors agree to this condition. The grounds for appeal may not include any alleged error of judgement of the Selection Committee and are limited to allegations of: failure to follow due process; bias/undue influence; or some other misconduct.

Should an appeal still arise then the process will be managed by the RYA, following the [RYA Racing Department Appeals Policy](#). Notice of intention to appeal should be submitted and addressed to the Racing Operations Manager, Olivia Risk, by emailing racings@rya.org.uk as soon as reasonably practical and in any event within 7 days of the selection or deselection being announced. The appeal shall be submitted in full within 14 days of the selection or deselection being announced.