18/07/11

International T293 OD Class Association : Annual General Meeting, Thursday 21 July 2011

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8. Any other business

8.1 It is proposed that Bic Sport change the current Trim Box to Deep Tuttle Box. See Appendix B

Dear T293 OD Class Committee,

We would like to outline our reasons for making the above proposal to change the fin box of the T293 OD Board from Trim Box (TB) to Deep Tuttle (DT).

Firstly, it should be considered that in BIC Windsurf's current production this TB system is only used on the T293 OD board. All other windsurf boards use the DT fin box system (for the same reasons as # 1 b), c) & d) below).

1/ Why is BIC Sport proposing to make this change?

a) Security / Flexibility of Supply

As the Trim Box is used only on the T293 OD Board, we are concerned about our ability to continue to supply the board with this fin box in the long-term.

For example, in order to source just the aluminium rail of the TB system there are very large minimum order quantities and long lead-times involved - A stock of 2 years production of fin boxes is required to be ordered at one time. Obviously this is both a risky and expensive position to try and maintain in the long-term.

On the contrary, the DT fin box is :

- Largely made with plastic injection moulds, and
- Consistent across the whole BIC Windsurf production.

This makes it a much lower risk and more economical position to maintain in the long-term.

b) Board / Fin Durability

When comparing the two systems and how they fit in the board :

- TB = Shallow fin box + one screw system attaching the fin to the board. Stopper at the front of the fin fits underneath a movable slider, which in theory allows a "forward" and "aft" fin position.
- DT = Deep fin fox + two screw system attaching the fin to the board.

The fin is therefore much more solidly supported in the board with the DT system resulting in a more durable and long lasting product in the long-term. The DT system also allows for a bigger fin to be fitted in the board (see below d).

c) Ease of Use

Continuing with the above comparison in b), in mass production it can be more difficult with the TB system to always ensure an accurate alignment of the fin screw holes + the board screw holes. This is mainly due to the production tolerances of the stopper system. Therefore, this minor problem will be eliminated with the DT system, resulting in a product that is easier to use and set-up for the final user.

d) Long-term Product Life Cycle

Finally :

- The TB system was a "BIC Sport" unique system, developed some time ago.
- The DT system is an "industry standard" used by a number of board and fin manufacturers.

As a result, once a T293 OD sailor has finished sailing in the T293 OD Class, if they want to continue sailing their board with a bigger fin in more "freeride" conditions, it will be more easier to do so.

18/07/11

2/ What are the possible performance consequences of this change?
We have tested extensively the differences in the performance of the board with either a DT or a TB. Even though theoretically a DT fitted board should be more performing than a TB board in at least planing conditions (as the fin is more solidly fitted in the board, the relationship between the rider and the fin is more direct), it is impossible to say that this is actually the case.

It is our conclusion following testing that any differences in performance between a DT and a TB fitted board are purely psychological and in terms of "feeling", rather than there being a direct influence on the performance of the board.

For example, the differences in feeling note by our testers (translated from French) : *"… it seems that the board planes earlier, and the board is more reactive."*

As a result, it is our opinion that this change does not affect the One Design characteristic of the T293 OD, nor will it be a determining factor for a rider if they want to participate at the highest level, and any psychological factors are outweighed by the other benefits listed.

3/ When would this change be introduced if approved?
From board deliveries ex-BIC Sport starting in late 2011, early 2012.

4/ Would there be any cost implications of making this change?
No.

5/ How long can spare parts be supplied for the existing TB fitted fin?
The supply problems associated with the fin box are not the same as the fin, as both the materials and/or supplier are different. Therefore it will be no problem for BIC Sport to continue to supply the TB fin as a spare part, and for all those that already have a TB board, for as long as reasonably necessary.

CONCLUSION : *To ensure an ongoing and reliable supply of the T293 OD Board, and a better product for the end user, BIC Sport would strongly recommend that the Int. T293 OD Class Association consider supporting the change of the fin box from Trim Box to Deep Tuttle.*

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