



International Rafting Federation

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY CONGRESS HELD VIA EMAIL FROM THE 16 TO 20 SEPTEMBER 2002

- 1) a) Opening email was sent by President, Peter Micheler.
b) Present at Congress: Peter Micheler (Germany), Tony Hansen (BOD), Sue Liell-Cock (South Africa), Rafa Gallo (Costa Rica), Robert Kazik (Czech), Jacob Faerch (Denmark), Grant South (New Zealand), Shige Assano (Japan), Graham Mafredi (Australia), Herwig Rogiers (Belgium), Mark Joffe (USA), Atac Besi (Turkey), Steve Nomchong (BOD), Sergei Trofimenko (Russia), Amalia Yunita (Indonesia), Igor Bielcik (Slovakia).
c) Apologies: Claire Lovell (Britain); Mexico
d) A quorum was established – 14 out of 22 members were present.
- 2) Administrator / Secretary's report, which was sent out to all members with this agenda, on the 28th August, is accepted as read by all members.
- 3) Discussions and New Resolutions on proposals that have been submitted.
 - a) Financial Report – no points were raised, therefore it is accepted.
 - b) Membership fees – Proposal for the 2002 / 2003 period is \$600 for competing countries and \$200 for non-competing countries. Final vote was 12 for, 0 against and 2 no answers. Therefore the new fee structure is \$600 for competing countries and \$200 for non-competing countries.

Various comments and suggestions about how to pay this were noted. If countries do decide to pay \$200 first because they are unsure if they will compete and then pay the \$400 later, they will have to pay an extra \$15 to cover the extra bank charges that we incur. Splitting the amount into 2 over the 2 years (ie \$300 each year) is definitely not ideal but is possible for the 2002/2003 period, but the same extra fee of \$15 will have to be charged for the second payment.
 - c) Guide Education & Training – it was viewed by many that the GT&E certification system is moving too slowly but it still has the potential to work and everyone is keen to see this happen. Everyone recognises that a lot of work will be needed. The best place to start is to run as many workshops as possible. Sue proposed getting people specifically keen on GT&E to work together on one committee. This was generally agreed upon as best step. Persons proposed for this committee: Steve Nomchong, Jakob Faerch, Robert Kazik, Steve Thomas, Grant Southy, Herwig Rogiers, Rafael Gallo, Sue Liell-Cock, Freddie Maifredi.
 - d) Olympics – Peter filled in everyone on the Greeks' present project of finding sponsorship to hold the 4-man World Rafting Champs in March/ April next year. The aim of this event is to bring attention (media, public and IOC (International Olympic Committee)) to rafting and to

the prospect of holding 4-man races on the Olympic Slalom course in Athens in 2004, with the longer term goal of having rafting at the future Olympics. This event would be totally separate from the 6-man World Rafting Champs being held in Czech later in the year. This discussion brought about a lot of interest with regard to holding 4-man rafting events on the artificial courses that already presently exist. Events are already held on many of these artificial courses as was pointed out by Herwig (events done in France) and Robert (events done in Czech). It was also suggested that the Greek event should maybe be Euro Champs with invitational international teams to avoid confusion of having 2 World Champs in one year and also because there is always the possibility that the representation at the Greek event may not be international enough considering that there are 2 events in 2003 that teams would have to travel to and find the funding for. Peter replied saying the strength of the event lay in it being a World Championship.

Jakob made available to us a document from the IOC that says that Canoe Slalom has been dropped from the 2008 Olympics onwards. This has a great significance for us.

Other points that were then raised in the discussions were that the ICF (International Canoe Federation) is still intending to hold onto its position of representing rafting internationally. This affects our attempts at becoming a member of GAISF (General Association of International Sports Federations) and our representation to the IOC.

The interest among our members to take rafting to the Olympics came out as very strong during these discussions. It was therefore concluded that this topic needs continual work and interaction from the members. A group will be formed to continue the work being done as well as the discussions and input of ideas. We need to discuss extremely important issues, which will define the direction we will be taking. For instance: are we going to combine with the ICF? If yes, what are the advantages and disadvantages? If no, we must continue our plan to join the GAISF and we must therefore look, in detail, at what we still need to do for that. And we must also look at what our other options are. Anyone interested in being involved with this group must send their name through to Sue.

- e) Raft Race Rules – discussions were varied with some of the proposals generally being accepted and others being quite controversial. Paddling Prior to Start, Sprint Format and Lifejackets were the 3 proposals that generally everyone agreed about. The Point System and the Boat Spec were controversial.

The Point System mostly varied between those that felt the Sprint deserved an equal amount of points as the Slalom, due to the large number of runs the top teams had to do, and those that felt Slalom was more technical and therefore deserved more points. It was also brought to our attention by Robert that the proposed point systems can lead to a tie for first position, which is not ideal. This possible needs to be looked at further. Peter feels that the TT should be separated from the Sprint again to form another discipline and the two to have 100 and 200 points respectively. As this is a different proposal entirely it could not be included here.

As far as the Boat Specs, generally everyone felt that it would be great if teams could buy their own rafts so that organisers didn't have to provide them and teams could then train in them all year. The difference in feeling, however, tended to be over whether it was possible to actually ensure that these team-owned rafts did fall within the specs laid down or not. The priority is to ensure that the rafts used do not differ to an extent where the raft design dictates the winners and losers. The reason being that countries with stronger economies and better raft building facilities would have a huge advantage and the aim of the races is to find the best teams, not rafts.

The full proposals and results are below.

1. PADDLING PRIOR TO START - Proposal: that we allow a team to paddle prior to the start providing the Starter can restrain the boat until the Go signal. [Additional comment: please note, there is provision for rules to be changed for specific events if the race organisers apply to the BOD / Sport & Comp Committee for the change, and it is accepted.]
RESULT: Yes = 2 , No = 10, no answers = 2. Proposal is rejected.
 2. SPRINT FORMAT - Proposal: that after Round 1 teams are grouped into the head to head format so that the maximum number of teams race but that no team races unopposed. That means that if there are 3 teams in Round 1 then the fastest two teams go straight to the final, of 4 to 7 teams 4 fastest go into semi-final, of 8- 15 teams 8 go into quarter finals, of 16 or more teams 16 go into Round 2. Teams eliminated after Round 1 will be positioned according to their times as per the current rules. RESULT: Yes = 11, No = 1, no answers = 2. Proposal is carried.
 3. POINTS - Proposal: (A) Sprint – 200, Slalom – 300, Downriver – 500 for a Total of 1000 points or even simpler: (B) Sprint – 100, Slalom – 200, Downriver – 300 for a Total of 600 points. (C) leave as is (which is Sprint and Slalom both 300, DR is 400). RESULT: A = 4, B = 2, C = 5, 1 abstention, 2 no answers. Proposal C has the larger number of votes of the 3. But it can be noted that A and B are the same concept in principle and so the vote for this rule change has not been convincing in any direction and it is preferable that we re look at the proposal and try to work out how to come up with an answer that will satisfy a larger majority of the members. It is therefore propose that we re look at this issue in the very near future. As we are out of time now, Sue will instigate this after the Congress. In the meantime, the rule stays as is.
 4. BOAT SPECIFICATIONS - Proposal: (A) that the specifications for the standard IRF R4 and R6 racing boats be reviewed so that they can be used by boat manufacturers and are practical to enforce at competitions. That way teams can train in and bring their own boats to events and organizers are relieved of the task of supplying boats. [Additional comment (B): The discussions showed very varied ideas. It is not an issue for the coming Euros or Worlds. Sue therefore suggests a sub-committee is formed to look into drawing up specs for rafts, as well as exactly how these would be measured and checked at races and so find out if it is really feasible.] RESULT: A = 3, B = 7, C = 2, no answers = 2. Proposal B is carried. Therefore, a sub-committee needs to be appointed to look into this. As we are out of time now, Sue will follow this up after the Congress. In the meantime, the rule stays as is until the findings of the sub-committee are presented.
 5. MINIMUM FLOATATION OF BUOYANCY AID/ LIFE JACKET - Proposal: (A) the minimum be reduced to 7kg. [Additional comment (B): lets include an option that organisers of events are allowed to specify higher amounts if requested through the BOD / Sports & Comp Committee.] RESULT: A = 0, B = 11, C = 1, no answers = 2. Proposal B is carried.
- f) Bids for worlds – The following countries have shown interest in possibly holding future World Championships.: - Indonesia for 2004, Costa Rica for any time, Ecuador for 2005
- g) Goals for 2003 onwards – taking the discussions into consideration, the key goals for 2003 and onwards are to: a) Increase recognition of the GT&E certification system in as many countries as possible; b) Take rafting even closer to the Olympics; c) continue to organise continental and world champs as far ahead as possible. Another important goal that will be started upon is creating the Operator Standards.
- 4) Election of Board of Directors. The following persons were voted onto the new Board of Directors:

Peter Micheler
Rafael Gallo
Tony Hansen
Sue Liell-Cock
Robert Kazik
Steve Nomchong
Mark Joffe
Sergei Trofimenko
Jakob Faerch
Steve Thomas

Welcome to the new names on the BOD – Jakob and Steve.

- 5) Any additional business – there was none brought up
- 6) Next Congress – 2 years time
- 7) Closing of this Congress – from the level of productivity and interaction that came out of this Congress, it was concluded that an email Congress is very viable! Sue thanked everyone for their participation. It was very evident that, when working together as a group, ideas and prompts come from all quarters. These sessions are therefore very productive and we can all be happy with the leaps forward that we have taken during this Congress. The input from everyone was much appreciated.