

<b>BoD November 2020</b>
<b>Typed by HQ:</b> 5 December 2020
<b>Approved by Pdt:</b> 12 Dec 2020
<b>Distributed by HQ:</b> 5 Jan 2021

INTERNATIONAL CANOE FEDERATION (ICF)

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
HELD BY TELECONFERENCE  
24 NOVEMBER, 2020



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<b>MINUTES BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING</b> <b>24 November 2020 – Online Meeting</b>
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***Participants:***

José Perurena	Spain	President (Executive Committee Member)
Cecilia Farias	Argentina	Vice President (Executive Committee Member)
Thomas Konietzko	Germany	Vice President (Executive Committee Member)
Luciano Buonfiglio	Italy	Treasurer (Executive Committee Member)
Simon Toulson	Great Britain	Secretary General (Executive Committee Member)
Shoken Narita	Japan	President of Asian Continental Confederation (Executive Committee Member)
Albert Woods	Great Britain	President of European Continental Confederation (Executive Committee Member)
Joao Manuel Da Costa Alegre	Sao Tome and Principe	President of African Continental Confederation (Executive Committee Member)
Maree Burnett	New Zealand	President of Oceanian Continental Confederation (Executive Committee Member)
Dwight Corbin	Canada	Acting President Pan American Continental Confederation (Executive Committee Member)
Frank Garner	Canada	Chair Canoe Sprint (Executive Committee Member)
Jean-Michel Prono	France	Chair Canoe Slalom (Executive Committee Member)
Tim Lodge	Great Britain	Chair Athlete Committee
Martha Hernandez Sanches	Mexico	Continental Representative America
Victor G. Ruiz	Puerto Rico	Continental Representative America
Ahmad Donyamali	Iran	Continental Representative Asia
Branko Lovric	Croatia	Continental Representative Europe
Andrej Jelenc	Slovenia	Continental Representative Europe
Jovana Stanojevic	Serbia	Continental Representative Europe
Ola Oluode	Nigeria	Continental Representative Africa
John Edwards	Canada	Chair Paracanoe Committee
Ruud Heijselaar	Netherlands	Chair Canoe Marathon
Tomislav Crnkovic	Croatia	Chair Wildwater Canoeing
Mario Santos	Portugal	Chair Ocean Racing Committee
Lluis Rabaneda i Caselles	Spain	Chair Canoe Freestyle
Donald McKenzie	Canada	Chair Medical and Anti-Doping

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## 1. Introduction

This ICF Board of Directors meeting was held online due to the world pandemic “Coronavirus COVID-19” enabling the ICF to manage the exceptional situation. The BoD meeting was convened by the ICF President as an emergency to discuss the IOC’s request to the International Canoe Federation to propose its Olympic Programme for Canoe for the Olympic Games 2024 in Paris. This was the only subject on the agenda.

It was clarified and agreed by the ICF BoD that the coerced Chair for Canoe Marathon had full voting rights for BoD meetings following the death of Jorn Cronberg the previous Chair.

## 2. BoD discussion on the Paris 2024 Programme

Tony Estanguet excused himself from being active in the discussion and voting as he had a conflict of interest in the matter and would not take the floor or vote. The Paris 2024 committee outlined the vision of the sports programme as indicated in their bid book.

The ICF President explained that the meeting today was a critical moment in the history and future of Canoeing in the Olympic Games. The ICF needed to make some decisions as the IOC had deadlines that the IFs were required to meet and these could not be missed.

The ICF Secretary General updated the BoD on the recent developments leading upto the meeting. As the BoD was aware the IOC had requested, at very short notice, a cut of athlete quotas for Canoeing in the region of 25. As the BoD discussed previously this size of cut would have serious implications for the sport. As instructed by the BoD and ICF EXCO, the ICF petitioned the IOC with statistics and logical arguments how the cuts would impact the sport.

It was announced that the IOC had agreed they would only reduce the canoe athlete quota cut to 12 places for the Olympic Games, Paris 2024. Whilst this was good news this cut still impacted the six day, 12 event Canoe Sprint which would weaken how the event could be staged.

The BoD then globally discussed the implications of the 12 athlete quota loss. The main focus was on the potential loss of days competition, lack of possibility to progress through the competition phases and having enough boats to make a suitable race (ie 4 or more per race and 12 boats overall per event). It was concluded that using similar programmes to previous Olympic Games and the restricted numbers that between four and six

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events would have only 10 boats entered which was not seen as sufficient to run a competition.

The BoD agreed that many scenarios had been discussed and assessed for the Olympic Programme. The Chairs of the disciplines and their committees had discussed this over the last four years with no clear outcome. Athletes Committee had been questioned, NFs had been involved in workshops at the ICF Congress and ICF World Championships. Ultimately there was no preferred Olympic programme with most opinions focused on individual impacts of any changes.

The ICF would put two scenarios to the ICF BoD to discuss and vote on.

Option 1. Keep the 12 Canoe Sprint Medals and 4 Canoe Slalom medals.  
Option 2. Canoe Sprint 10 medals, Canoe Slalom 4 medals, Extreme Slalom 2 medals.

The discussions between the IOC and the ICF were explained on this matter. The IOC had refused the proposal of adding 5000m races to Canoe Sprint in the last few days and would only consider Extreme Slalom as a major change to the Canoe Programme for Paris 2024. The IOC message to the ICF had been to strongly favour Extreme Slalom for the Olympic Games in Paris.

There was quite some criticism from the ICF BoD of the IOC's strategy of late minute announcements to the ICF in terms of cutting athlete quotas and then of announcing no more athletes for new events and, then less than one month before the deadline for the proposal of events, no new medal events would be considered and that they must be within the existing number of medals for that sport.

It was highlighted that the loss of 12 athlete quotas meant very unlikely could run a 6 day Canoe Sprint programme as the number of boats in each race would be insufficient. The six competition days at the Olympics were already below two hours. This culminated in low quality spectator experience and also loss of tv audience figures which both contributed significantly to IOC's analysis of which events and sports were on the Olympic Programme.

Discussions over removal of K4 and K2 were quickly discounted by the ICF BoD which meant keeping the array of boats in the Olympic Games would further restrict the logistics of the actual competition format.

For option 2, the Continental President's of Asia, Americas and Africa strongly argued that they would have more chance to qualify for the Games. Smaller countries would have more ability to contest places in Canoe Sprint and not have European dominance impact qualification.

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It was stated during the discussions that option 2 led to Canoe Slalom losing 2 quotas and no new athletes would be added for Extreme Slalom, therefore protecting the maximum number of athletes for Canoe Sprint.

It was pointed out that option 2 dealt with the constant criticism towards the ICF regarding the lack of use of the specialised Canoe Slalom venue. Extreme Slalom would add up to 3 days of spectator revenue and activity to a venue not used in the second week of the Games. It would also fit as a discipline that attracted the youth interest that the IOC valued so much.

It was highlighted that the Canoe Sprint Committee was in favour of keeping the 12 medals for Canoe Sprint. Obviously the Canoe Slalom Committee was in favour of adding Extreme Slalom to the programme.

### 3. Vote for Paris 2024 Olympic Programme

The votes were conducted on a closed electronic system with each person monitored to make sure they had voted only once. The results were made known to the ICF BoD after each vote from the ICF headquarters.

The ICF BoD was asked to vote on two options that had been explained to them in detail.

**Option 1:** 12 Sprint medals and 4 Slalom medals

**Option 2:** 10 Sprint medals and 6 Slalom medals

The vote was 14 votes for option 1 and 14 votes for option 2, no abstentions. As agreed and general practice in ICF BoD meetings the President had the casting vote and announced that he supported option 2.

The ICF BoD officially confirmed option 2 (10 Canoe Sprint medals, 4 Canoe Slalom medals and 2 Extreme Slalom medals) as the ICF recommendation to the IOC for Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

### 4. Canoe Sprint Distances

The ICF BoD discussed the idea of reducing Canoe Sprint racing to one distance to maximise the limited number of athlete quotas for the Olympic Programme in Paris 2024.

The BoD discussed that one distance was bad for the sport due to the variety and richness of the sport in terms of tactics, speed, endurance and the

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physical make up of the athletes competing. It was highlighted that the tradition, heritage and changing the youth programmes could result in major issues for clubs, NFs etc.

The BoD also considered that one distance would increase the chance of double ups for athletes. It would open up smaller waterways to competitions, including inner cities. It would allow smaller and less developed countries to train and compete as the infrastructure to train would be more easily available. For major competitions, the reduction in distance would improve preparation, slight cost savings but would mean potential to improve sport presentation significantly.

The BoD was asked to vote on the two options.

## 5. Vote on Canoe Sprint Distance

The ICF BoD was asked to vote on:

- Option 1.** All 10 Canoe Sprint events to be raced over the same distance
- Option 2.** The 10 Canoe Sprint events to be raced over two distances per gender

The vote was 13 votes for option 1 and 13 votes for option 2. There was one abstention and one no vote. The ICF President had the casting vote and announced he supported option 2.

The ICF BoD officially confirmed that the Canoe Sprint Olympic programme for Paris 2024 would be competed over two distances per gender.

## 6. Next Steps

The ICF Secretary General was instructed to contact the IOC Sports Department to give them the decision of the ICF BoD and the Canoe Olympic Programme for Paris 2024.

The ICF headquarters was instructed to inform all the NFs of the decisions of the meeting and to make a press release announcing the Canoe Olympic Programme for Paris 2024.

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## 7. Miscellaneous

The ICF BoD voted unanimously to appoint Solken as the venue for Junior and U23 Wildwater World Championships 2021.

The ICF BoD voted unanimously to appoint Tacen as the venue for Junior and U23 Slalom World Championships 2021.

**The BoD meeting was then closed by the ICF President**