

REPORT ICF WORK GROUP FOR DISABLED CANOEING (PADDLEABILITY)

ICF CONGRESS ROME 28-29 NOVEMBER 2008

I want to come back, because of the short time since the last Congress, to the report that the ICF Work Group for Disabled has shown to the ICF Congress in Hong Kong on 12 – 13 January 2007.

These are the summarized actions done in this period:

- to awake the National Federation to increase the activity of Disabled Canoeing;
- participation of ICF to the 1st International PaddleAll conference organized by the Canoe Kayak Canada in Montreal on 27 – 30 March 2008, where were focused the principles concerning the rules of Competition, kind of boats, Disability Categories etc. etc. (see Attachment);
- Report to the ICF Board Meeting on 11-12 April 2008, when the ICF Board has approved the new rules temporarily;
- Carrying out of the International Disabled Competition in Milano 17th -18th May 2008, where about 7 countries have taken part, an interesting number but still not enough to ask to the International Paralympic Committee the participation of Canoe Sport to the Paralympic Games in London 2012;
- Various contact with the International Paralympic Committee to define all the aspect concerning the Disable Canoeing.

The ICF Board in Madrid has approved as well that in Halifax 2009 during the Flat water championship there will be the first World Disable Championship of Canoeing, what is surely a great result that hopefully will have a great participation of Disable Canoeing Athletes and will allow our sport to enter the Paralympic Games finally.

I want to address a special Thanks to all those National Federations that with big effort have organized and taken part both to the Conference in Montreal and to the International Regatta in Milano.

I want to close my very short report with the Invitation – Reminder to all the National Federations that this goal can be achieved only if this will be increased at national level

Francesco CONFORTI
Chairman
ICF Work Group for Disabled Canoeing



1st International PaddleALL Conference

March 27-30

Montreal, Canada

Executive Summary

The conference concluded on Sunday, March 30th with a three hour session which outlined 4 major topics, outlined below. In addition, a draft timetable has been added to this document.

1. PRINCIPLES
2. GOALS
3. EVENTS
4. CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

This session was preceded by three full days of presentations. All the presentations are on the PaddleALL section of the CanoeKayak Canada website:

The Conference began with Mr. Patrick Jarvis of the International Paralympic Executive Committee who described the Paralympic movement, the importance of having a full national program as well as an international program and offered advice to canoe/kayak for our application to the Paralympic Games. Following Mr. Jarvis was Mr. Ray Allard who has worked for 25 years in the area of sports for athletes with a disability with the Canadian government and Special Olympics Canada. Mr. Allard spoke on successful programs and strategies for athletes with an intellectual disability. The other presenter was Ms. Allison Sheard who is the National Coordinator of the Canadian National Adaptive Rowing Team. She described the evolution and development of the international and Canadian Adaptive Rowing program. She also gave a description of the FISA Classification System. The Friday and Saturday of the conference saw presentations from Italy, the UK, the USA, Hungary, France, the Ukraine, New Zealand and Canada. These presentations can all be seen on the website as noted above. The conference attendees are noted on the CKC website: www.canoekayak.ca (Please search for the PaddleALL emblem).

The following represents a record of the proceedings of the Sunday session as described above.

PRINCIPLES

- **ICF PaddleALL program will address both intellectual and physical disabilities**
 - While the catalyst for the conference has been the Paralympic Games, the PaddleALL movement needs to address the needs of all persons with a disability, whether physical or intellectual.
- **Functional and positive approach aligned with World Health Organization protocols and IPC classification code**
 - The entire program needs to reflect WHO standards for sports and activities for persons with a disability
- **Gender balanced program**
 - As this is a new initiative and program for the ICF, it needs to be gender balanced at the onset.
- **Build a strong foundation for PaddleALL sport-development at base of pyramid**
 - In order for the program to be sustainable in the long-term it needs to have a strong foundation at canoe/kayak clubs, in regions and in nations with resourceful use of existing equipment, quality coaching leadership, awareness promotion, etc.
- **Work with existing Games/Organizations**
 - Partnerships should be developed with existing Games and the many organizations which promote sport for persons with a disability.
- **Use existing canoe/kayak equipment to promote opportunities for people with disabilities**
 - Rapid expansion of national programs will be facilitated by using existing stable boats which canoe/kayak clubs currently possess or are readily attainable and which can also be used by other types of paddlers; i.e., novices, masters, etc.
 - Canoe/Kayak is blessed with many boat types which will enable this principle.
- **International sharing of technology of coaching, and resources; knowledge transfer**
 - To build the program quickly, all nations must share their experiences and resources. There needs to be an open sharing of information.
- **PaddleALL shall be inclusive**
 - All paddlesports need to be involved in PaddleALL: flatwater canoe & kayak, slalom, dragonboat, outrigger, etc. because each boat type presents technical opportunities. A unified and coordinated world-wide approach will be the most broadly successful.

GOALS – (For the International Paralympic Committee (IPC))

- **Inclusion of canoe/kayak events in the 2012 Paralympic Games**
 - This goal is an overarching goal at this time. There are indications the IPC will still consider a sport such as canoe/kayak as an exhibition sport for the 2012 Summer Paralympic Games if a credible application meeting minimum standards could be coordinated in sufficient time. Given the tremendous advantages inclusion in the 2012 Paralympic Games would provide, the conference supported this goal as paramount.
- **Both Canoe and Kayak**
 - Since ICF is the governing body for canoe and kayak, the conference endorsed the goal that events for both canoe and kayak should be included.

- **Gender Balanced**
 - PaddleALL is an initiative to, in effect, begin an entirely new ICF program. Since there is clear international direction to all sports from the IOC to provide gender balance within sports, PaddleALL should be gender balanced from the beginning.
- **Meaningful International Competition (rigorous)**
 - Competitions should be 'competitive' and serious as opposed to being 'participatory'. In other words, identical to the standards of current ICF competition: boat classification standards, rigorous rules, officiating protocols, award protocols, etc. It should be treated as seriously as mainstream ICF competitions. Competitions should also be integrated into existing mainstream competitions.
- **ICF needs to meet IPC Standards for Inclusion**
 - 18 countries and 3 continents
- **Wide Variety of Disability Groups**
 - Sports which offer competitive opportunities for a wide variety of disability groups are more attractive to the IPC than sports which offer opportunities to fewer groups. Currently, of the 27 IPC sports, only Field Athletics and Swimming offer opportunities for all disability groups. At this time, it is not known how many disability groups can be served by rowing which is formally on the program of the IPC for the first time in London 2012 as a full medal sport. Canoe Kayak has the ability to address all major disability groups particularly through the use of team boats. In this regard, team boats are very attractive.
- **Unified, world-wide approach**
 - The approach to the IPC needs to be focussed, strong and world-wide. As the lead, world-wide paddlesport organization, ICF should be the lead organization. Equally, from the conference proceedings, it is apparent, that outrigger paddling particularly in the USA and Italy has demonstrated impressive programs.

From the technical perspective, the outrigger canoe presents the characteristics of a boat which could be successful. The conference recognized the political perspective about the outrigger canoe since there is a separate international organization (IVF) which is specifically organized to coordinate international competitions for it. The political aspects of recommending the outrigger for PaddleALL in the Paralympic Games were felt to be beyond the scope of the conference. However, the presentations at the conference clearly indicate the potential that a dialogue between the ICF and the IVF might bear significant promise in three areas: 1) It would provide a stable canoe option, 2) Its team configurations can address multiple disabled groups and 3) It would draw Australasia and Pacific Rim countries into an ICF led program, thus strengthening the ICF bid.

GOALS – (SPECIAL OLYMPICS INTERNATIONAL)

- **Gain official sport status in the 2011 Special Olympics World Games**

- 'Kayaking' is already on the program as a "Recognized" sport in the Special Olympics World Summer Games. It has been on the program as a recognized sport in Dublin (2003) and Shanghai (2007). Canoe/kayak should be on the program as an "Official" sport for 2011.
- Becoming an Official sport in the Special Olympics World Games will encourage ICF member federations to develop Special Olympics programs.

GOALS – (GENERAL)

- ICF will have opportunities for paddlers with physical and intellectual disabilities.
- National federations will include PaddleALL events in their national championship program. They will be encouraged to have the same events as the ICF as a minimum.
- Local regattas will provide opportunities for athletes with disabilities to compete
 - Same races are needed to be world-wide to ensure numbers, later these categories may change. Will help promote canoe/kayak to IPC in the beginning.
- Need maximum collaboration- events, seminars, training camps
- Use International races as both international and national ranking event
- ICF website to facilitate sharing of technical information

EVENTS

- Canoe/Kayak can address the needs of all disability groups, particularly through the use of team boats.
- Maximum four/five events in order for initial entrance to the Paralympic Games
 - It is important not to dilute events by having a few competitors in many events. It is better to have full participation in a few events in the beginning.
 - Additional events can be added after the sport is 'in' the Paralympic Games
- Four kayak events and one canoe event to be proposed for the 2012 Paralympic Games
 - 2 K1, 2 K2, 1 C2 (sitting)
 - All events at 500 m distance – (Olympic distance)
 - There are stable versions of these boats
 - K4's are problematic at this time since they are not readily available in a stable version and they would make teams too large. In addition, many countries may have difficulty in fielding K4 teams due to cost and availability.
 - The canoe needs to be a sitting type for reasons of stability.
 - Subcategories within these categories were suggested, but would lead to too many medals
 - As noted below in the table. There are more events proposed for men than women, which contradicts the principle of gender-balance. This was due to the observation that there are currently many more men (70%) participating in disabled sport than women (30%). Further reflection may be needed to address this inconsistency and whether it might weaken our bid.
- In Milan at the European 2008 Championships (May 15-18) ICF needs a number of countries and athletes competing in PaddleALL events in order to convince the IPC- we are going to get into IPC 2012. Mr. Conforti indicates the 'door is still open' for 2012 (some form of agreement between ICF and IPC). All Federations need to make a concerted effort to compete in Milan.

- ICF World Championship PaddleALL program would have more than the Paralympic Games proposal, would include events for Persons with an intellectual disability. Possibly up to 10 events
- National Federations would be encouraged to have more events than the ICF World Championship program
- With ICF permission, Canada will support the hosting of PaddleALL exhibition events in the 2009 World Sprint/Flatwater Championships taking place in Dartmouth, Canada.

CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

- Rowing classifications as starting point
 - It is simple and has been accepted by the IPC
- 500m in all categories for simplicity
- The following is the table of events and categories suggested for the ICF World Championship program. The first five events are also those to be proposed for the Paralympic Games.

BOAT	GENDER	CATEGORY	DISTANCE
K1	Men	LTA	500
K1	Women	LTA	500
K2	Mixed	LTA & TA	500
K2	Men	TA & A	500
C2	Mixed	LTA & A	500
K1	Men	Intellectual	500
K1	Women	Intellectual	500

'LTA' – Legs, Trunk, Arms

Paddlers who have the use of their legs, trunk and arms. Eligible paddlers may typically be:

- Amputee
- Neurological impairment equivalent to lesion at S1
- Cerebral Palsy Class 8 (CPISRA)
- Visual Impairment: 10% of vision in best eye with best correction (from visual acuity above 2/60 up to visual acuity of 6/60 and/or a visual field of more than 5% and less than 20%)
- Intellectual impairment: INAS-FID April 2005 criteria (ICF competitions only)

'TA' – Trunk, Arms

Paddlers who have some trunk movement but are not able to propel the boat through hip rotation due to significantly weakened function of the lower limbs. Eligible paddlers may typically have a minimum disability equivalent to at least one of the following:

- Bilateral around knee amputation, or significantly impaired quadriceps, or
- Neurological impairment equivalent to a complete lesion at L3 level, or an incomplete lesion at L1, or
- Combination of the above such as one leg with around knee amputation and one leg with significant quadriceps impairment; or

- Classification by CPISRA as eligible to be in Class 5

‘A’ – Arms only

Paddlers who have no or minimal trunk function (ie. Shoulder function only). The paddler is able to apply force predominantly using the arms and/or shoulders. Eligible paddlers may typically have a disability equivalent to at least one of the following:

- Cerebral Palsy Class 4 (CPISRA); or,
- Neurological Impairment with a complete lesion at T12 level, or an incomplete lesion at T10

(Taken from the FISA Classification Guidelines – 2008 version)

**Suggested
MAJOR MILESTONES
(Draft)**

2008	International ICF PaddleALL Conference in Montreal
2008	First major ICF PaddleALL Events - Milan
2008 (Nov.)	ICF Congress Adoption of the PaddleALL Program
2009	World Flatwater Championships - PaddleALL Events (Full Medal) – Halifax
2010	World Flatwater Championships PaddleALL Events
2011	World Flatwater Championships PaddleALL Events
2011	Special Olympics World Championships - PaddleALL Events
2012	Paralympic Games - PaddleALL Events (Exhibition) - London
2015	Special Olympics World Games – ‘Official’ Sport
2016	Paralympic Games – PaddleALL Events (Full medal)

- A meeting of the National Federation PaddleALL technical leaders will occur in Milan at the European Championships
- A one day meeting of the National Federation PaddleALL technical leaders will occur in Halifax at the 2009 ICF Flatwater World Championships

THANKS

A special thanks is due to Mr. Conforti and the ICF for endorsing the conference. His presence, contributions and leadership made everyone realize the importance of this project to the ICF and all competitive paddlers throughout the world. The support of the Government of Canada through a key financial contribution made the conference possible. The presence of Mr. Patrick Jarvis of the IPC as the keynote speaker inspired us all. The contributions of Mr. John Court of the IVF, the work of Jan Whitaker in outrigger in the US, the creativity of Suresh Paul and the long-term commitment to this program over many years by the Italian Federation and ably presented by Diego Doga impressed everyone. Finally, the facilitation skills of Anne Merklinger

of CKC and Ray Allard were pivotal to achieving the results noted in this report. In closing, special recognition is due to Allison Caiger-Watson and Christine Lafontaine for keeping us organized before and during the conference.

John Edwards
Domestic Development Director
CanoeKayak Canada

April 2, 2008
Ottawa, Canada