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INTERNATIONAL CANOE FEDERATION
CHAIRMAN SLALOM RACING COMMITTEE

**Report from Jean-Michel Prono
Chairman of the Slalom Racing Committee
for the XXXI. ICF Congress in Hong Kong, 2007**

2004-2006 Chairman's Moral Report

To have the opportunity to lie down the balance of first two seasons as Chairman of the ICF SLR Committee is a very demanding exercise. From 24 months of responsibility, what are the key points I can report on to the all ICF community? First of all, even I have spent thirty years involved in Slalom Racing in all positions from athlete, coach to international event organizer, I could not imagine how wide was the field of my new position, how much this position expose you to all interests, questions from the all Slalom Racing community and make you involved in all kind of issues. My first task with the SLR Committee members has been to determine priorities.

To help me to manage the discipline, I met four time with the the SLR Committee. Two time per season distributed between January and the week previous to SLR world event. Two meetings a year is very few regarding the responsibilities and duties of the Technical Committee so we have to develop a coordination home work in order to face better the challenge of managing and inspiring the discipline worldwide. The Internet communication tool in one hand could help us to be closer to all interlocutors and on the other hand could make us over informed and solicited.

IOC evaluation questionnaire

Canoeing and SLR discipline are under IOC's evaluation as all Olympic sports. This process is conducted through the quadrennial IOC questionnaire which has been fulfilled in the end of 2004, by the Technical Committee and the ICF headquarter. This questionnaire gives us guide lines to work on the analysis of the disciplines with a full range of criteria's. I would like to invite all Slalom fans to consult regularly the IOC web site where all this key information's and reports are posted in complete transparency. This would help the Canoeing community to be informed of the real challenge we are facing in order to keep our sport in the Olympic Programme.

Athens slalom venue post Olympic use

We all have appreciated the huge success of the Olympic SLR Event in Helliniko, it has been recognized by all sports and politics authorities. However a new challenge was starting day after the Games closing ceremony; how make this venue working and hosting more canoeing activities? This has been the first task I have focused on, in December 2004 with the support of the ICF Executive committee. The newly elected Board of directors of the Hellenic canoe kayak federation and specially Mr. Antonios NIKOLOPOULOS, President, have immediately started working in close contact with the



JEAN-MICHEL PRONO

INTERNATIONAL CANOE FEDERATION
CHAIRMAN SLALOM RACING COMMITTEE

Ministry of Culture and specially "Olympiaka Akinita", in charge of the management bidding competition procedure which is today in final phase (selection of 4 candidates) and planning to announce the name of management bidder for Helliniko white water venue in the beginning of the year 2007. I have stayed several times in Athens to be aside the Hellenic federation in the preparation of the SLR world cup 2005 and 2006 and in the contacts with "Olympiaka Akinita". As tangible proof of the quality of the relationship with the Greek authorities, the Hellenic CK federation and Organizing committee have delivered twice, a very high standard World Cup competition showing to the international sport authorities and Canoe-kayak community that this venue is still alive.

Furthermore, Greek authorities, Sport minister and Olympiaka Akinita have developed a trustful relationship with the Hellenic federation to give a way to a fruitful collaboration for a fair and sustainable management of the Helliniko Slalom Centre in the interest of the Greek Canoe-kayak development.

2005 and 2006 SLR World Championships Development Programme training camps

In both World events, the development programme training camp organised previous to the competition in cooperation with Australian and Czech federations were a success. Four to five coaches and one coordinator have taken care of the 26 national federations with 30 athletes participating to the training camp under the so called "one team" programme. This camp was not only a very efficient technical preparation to the world championships slalom course but allow the participants to increase their knowledge of all high level slalom paddling procedures.

This time spent together with the best slalom athletes, in a close and friendly atmosphere, work as a tremendous motivation accelerator. Furthermore, it gave to the best slalom team's conscience of their responsibility in helping their discipline to grow worldwide.

However, ICF Slalom Racing Committee is not satisfied with the evolution of this crucial operation for securing the participation of the highest number of developing federation in this discipline. This voluntary based motivation organization is now becoming a valued and invoiced service from part of the hosting federation when it was originally presented as a contribution to the international development programme.

2004- 2008, an important period for SLR development in Asia

Korean canoeing federation has organised the 4th Asian SLR championships and for that reason has developed with the SLR Committee support his slalom knowledge as organising capacity; a new slalom course has been accommodated in a natural river bed and 8 new SLR officials were successfully educated. KCF has now to increase the number of athletes involved in slalom using for this the very impressive network of white water rivers of this country and a well-structured association.

China is the other key partner for the development. The Beijing Olympic Games must accelerate not only the China Canoe Association slalom capacity but all Asian national federations too. Starting in early 2005 with BOCOG, the preparation of the Olympics is



JEAN-MICHEL PRONO

INTERNATIONAL CANOE FEDERATION
CHAIRMAN SLALOM RACING COMMITTEE

already started with several meetings and permanent information's exchange through ICF Headquarter. This collaboration has been extended to CCA to prepare the future Olympic officials and organisation staff, taking the opportunity of the celebration of the Chinese games in Nanjing and National Chinese SLR competitions. The competition manager for Canoeing event, Mrs Luo BING has been selected after a complete season of close collaboration with both Olympic disciplines committee's Chairmen. Recently the BOCOG SLR organization staff has been implemented with Deputy Competition Manager and Technical Operation Manager for C/K Slalom Racing event. Asian Confederation must take advantage of this 4 years period preparation in the heart of its territory to set a special Olympic preparation programme, that will boost every federation activity. Setting a Continental training centre network is one priority and will be done from now to 2008.

SLR Olympic Qualification System Principles & Comments

ICF Slalom Racing committee believe that being an Olympic Discipline must be a very efficient arm lever for a better development of Slalom Racing if all NOC involved have a hope to qualify once. On the other hand, the bottom line of the 2008 Flat water Racing and Slalom Racing Olympic Games qualification system evolution has been the 2004 IOC Evaluation Questionnaire contents. These have underlined the directions our sport must improve in the coming years.

With 70 boat's quota places for 4 SLR events, the strategy to guarantee both Sport Universality and the best athlete's level of paddling is really hard to work out.

For 2004 Olympic Games Qualification system, ICF Board and SLR Committee had already studied the possibility to reduce to one boat's quota place per event the participation for the NOC. It was finally postponed because of a late decision regarding the time line of official communication of the 2004 Olympic Qualification system final draft to NOC's.

Then, for 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, an evolution to the principle "An NOC may qualify 1 boat per event maximum", was the only opportunity to increase the number of NOC participating to the Olympic Qualification events and further to the Olympic Games. We have augmented the number of Boat's Quota places to be earned by not having a second boat quota for the best NOC. We can then, offer 14 Boat's Quota places more for the 4 SLR events together

This qualification rule has been possible to introduce, once the ICF SLR competition rules has been modified in its article 6.1.1, allowing participation to more than one single individual event.

The others important information's to notice are:

- An NOC may enter Athlete(s) for a qualified Event(s) in other non-qualified Event(s) within its total number of Athlete Quota Places if the NOC has participated in that particular event at the Global Qualification Competition.
- Mixed boats from different gender: male and female will not be allowed.
- Mixed boats from different male Category: KM and CM will be allowed.
- Canoe Class is only for male participation

Sport's Universality is one key point regarding IOC evaluation. The Continental organization and participation is really spotted in the questionnaire and could be subject



JEAN-MICHEL PRONO

INTERNATIONAL CANOE FEDERATION
CHAIRMAN SLALOM RACING COMMITTEE

of improvement for ICF. For the 2008 Olympic Qualification system, SLR Committee have introduced Qualification event at the Continental level for the first time. The Continental level qualification is proposed to increase the participation of NOC's at this stage and by the way to increase the development of Continental Confederation activity in the discipline. This is especially effective by:

- Organizing and promoting a consistent qualification event in the area
- Making more accessible the participation of all affiliated NF of the considered Confederation

In the future, if we want this Continental qualification even more attractive, it must offer a greater possibility of qualification for the best "developing" NOC's in this area by increasing the number of Boats Quotas places to be earned at this particular event.

The SLR Olympic Qualification system format is made with a strong will to increase the participation to Olympic qualification stage; this is a very important motivation for both NOC's and National Federations. The Continental qualification combined with a fair number of Boat's Quotas places will help the Continents to get more involved in the Olympic disciplines. The Olympic qualification system is one of the most important "arm lever" we can set to improve the global participation at the different stages of the discipline development.

International slalom development programme guide lines

You will read the specific Report prepared by the First Vice President and the ICF Technical Director about the contents and balance of the development programme in the past two years. However I would like to give the Slalom committee guide lines for the development in the future. The ICF is in charge to built and coordinate the strategic plan for development of the sport with a priority for the two Olympic disciplines. The application of the programme must be conducted in close cooperation of the Continental associations. We believe that a partnership programme with the most developed federations will help the different operations to be organized and activity to be secure through a special relationship that will be established between a partner and foster federation. In the past years we have experienced this solidarity when Slalom Racing was in an emergency situation, we would like to still have similar solidarity to guarantee the consistency and success of the Slalom Racing development programme. The friendship training camp between the Foix canoeing club (France) and Kenya Rowing and Canoeing association is describe in the short article below (annexe 2) is a perfect illustration of this solidarity spirit we want to promote.

One other tool we would like to use is the Continental training centres. The location and settlement must be chosen by ICF with the Continental association in a country whom federation is ready to offer support to this project either because they have already a good infrastructure or they are ready to establish this kind of facility for their federation itself to improve their slalom racing level. Furthermore ICF will use this platform to coordinate and conduct slalom development in the all area with the help of the responsible expert in charge of the centre.

The promotional and educational material for spreading Slalom Racing expertise is still our weak point. Slalom committee would like to collect and organise the documents that international slalom community has already produced and provide on the web site or



JEAN-MICHEL PRONO

INTERNATIONAL CANOE FEDERATION
CHAIRMAN SLALOM RACING COMMITTEE

DVD, all the contents for coach education. To help us to built this Slalom library, we will appreciate the most advanced national federations to send to ICF headquarter the list of their existing slalom material production as a sample

After this brief first two seasons balance, I would like to end this article by a call to all partners' federations for sharing experience and knowledge with the federations who are starting their development. This is interest of all canoeing sport and guarantee for building a sustainable development.

The collaboration between the two Olympics disciplines has been more en more important because of the IOC evaluation procedure. This could be also a strong factor of improvement and enhancement we have to amplify in the coming seasons.

ANNEX Friendship training camp in France for Kenyan paddlers

In the frame of the ICF international slalom racing development programme, two Kenyan paddlers have been hosted by the Foix Canoe kayak club from June 15th to July 30th 2005

During their stay, Dominic WATTI and Titus MUKUNDI were hosted through a home stay programme and have shared all canoe club daily activity under the responsibility of Rémy DRAMARD, responsible coach of the club.

This friendship programme has two aims; firstly to develop their white water technique by training on the white water course with all range of difficulties. Secondly to learn all training process, basic slalom skinless and finally how to accommodate and maintain a slalom facility. This second point in order to spread and develop the discipline once back to Kenya.

This initiative is an illustration of the sport cooperation dynamism between Africa and France. This action has been coordinated by Federation française de Canoë kayak and Foix canoe kayak club and would be followed by a training camp in Kenya for French paddlers from Foix.

Activity report of the ICF SLR COMMITTEE Chairman

❖ From 2nd of November 2004 to 23rd of February 2005.

- IOC Programme Commission Sports Evaluation Questionnaire meeting:

November 5th to 7th was the first concrete actions for SLR Committee Chairman, participating to the meeting at the ICF headquarter with FWR Committee Chairman, ICF Technical Director and ICF Administrative Director. This meeting was a very positive collaboration between both Olympics disciplines and ICF staff. It has been a good opportunity to make a complete review of the situation. We have answered all technical matters with the maximum accuracy, in due time and thanks to the complete dedication of both Technical Director as Administrative Director.



INTERNATIONAL CANOE FEDERATION
CHAIRMAN SLALOM RACING COMMITTEE

- **Presentation of Beijing 2008 Slalom Racing venue project:**

December 6th, the SLR Committee Chairman has met with Pascal SIMON and Gilles BERNARD in Annecy to have a presentation of the SLR venue project for 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. This meeting was held taking the opportunity of the Athens 2004 debriefing for technical operation manager operations during the last Olympic games.

- **World Cup Athens 2005 and post Olympic use of the Helliniko SLR venue:**

The SLR Committee Chairman in agreement with ICF President has traveled to Athens to meet with the Hellenic C/K federation. The purpose of this visit was to clarify with the newly elected Hellenic Federation board the situation regarding the organization of the SLR World cup in July 2005. We have focused on three main issues:

- Formation of a capable Organization Committee
- Establishment of a provisional budget
- Ensuring the successful future and availability of the SLR venue of Helliniko.

At the same time, a meeting with Greek Sports Ministry authorities was organized by Hellenic federation to be informed of the SLR Olympic venue's post Olympic use. The president, the General Secretary of the Hellenic CK Federation and the SLR Committee chairman were welcomed Friday 17th, by Mr. KARAFLOULIDI director of cabinet of the General Secretary of Sports Ministry.

A complete report of the contents of this Athens mission is available for all Board members.

- **Executive meeting note about SLR Olympic venue use beyond O. Games**

A specific note regarding emergency situation respect the procedure for Athens SLR venue post Olympics use and management has been presented January 8th to Executive Committee members during their meeting in Istanbul. The aim of this document was to ask to the ICF Executive committee to allow, Slalom Racing Committee to act, as soon as possible, together with a working group of venue management experts to advise and work closely with Hellenic C/K federation and Greek Sports ministry administration. This procedure would be conduct under the Committee Chairman responsibility and ICF Executive committee control

This document is enclosed to this report as appendix 2

- **2005 SLR 4th Asian Championships project under Korean Canoe federation responsibility:**

The SLR Committee Chairman following the ICF President and ICF 3RD Vice President visit to Korea has organized a visit to the Korean canoe federation.

The purpose of this visit (from January 9th to Saturday 15th) was to advise the Korean canoe federation in the preparation of organizing the 4th Asian SLR championship:



INTERNATIONAL CANOE FEDERATION
CHAIRMAN SLALOM RACING COMMITTEE

- Expertise of the In JE SLR venue construction (Nae Rin river)
- Formation of the officials and key people of the organizing committee
- **ICF SLR Committee meeting in Paris January 27th to 30th:**

The new committee has met in Paris for his first meeting of the Olympic period.

The main topics discussed were:

- SLR Rules review and corrections before official printing
- SLR Development Programme for 2004-2006 period (principles, policy, guide lines)
- 2006 SLR World Cup series calendar
- World ranking system evolution
- **Preparation of the 2005 Sydney SLR World Championships and development programme training camp:**

The SLR Committee Chairman traveled to Penrith, from February 15th to 22nd, to meet with Organizing Committee for SLR World Championship. The complete report of this visit will be enclosed to this report when the mission will be finish.

On the way back to PARIS a meeting is planed with Korean Canoe Federation to make an intermediate balance of the preparation works for 4th Asian SLR championships.

- **Equipment donation to training center and developing federations**

The SLR Committee Chairman has been coordinating with Csaba SZANTO the shipping of SLR equipment already attributed to different National federations.

- ❖ From March 2005 to February 2006.

2005

- March 8th to 12th, first ICF Technical Delegates meeting with BOCOG (Beijing)
Presentation of Beijing 2008 Slalom Racing venue project
- March 21st to 23rd, Athens 2005 World cup preparation and meeting for post Olympic use of the Helliniko SLR venue (Athens)
- May 10th to 18th 2005 SLR 4th Asian Championships preparation, IJSL examination (Korea, Seoul)
- May 19th to 20th, meeting with SLR events organizers in Bratislava
Overview meeting about organizer's problematic, calendar coordination and race format evolution
- May 23rd to 26th, Athens 2005 World cup organizing committee meeting and post Olympic use of the Helliniko SLR venue (Athens)



JEAN-MICHEL PRONO

INTERNATIONAL CANOE FEDERATION
CHAIRMAN SLALOM RACING COMMITTEE

- June 9th to 11th, Olympic qualification system meeting (ICF head quarter, Madrid)
- June 22nd to 26th, European SLR championships and IJSL examination (Tacen, Slovenia)
- June 27th to July 2nd, Athens 2005 World cup final preparation with organizing committee (Athens)
- July 3rd to 7th, ICF Technical delegate for SLR world cup N°1 (Athens)
- July 20th to 25th, ICF Technical delegate for SLR world cup N°3 (La Seu de Urgell, Spain)
- August 18th to 21st, invitation and assistance to the U23 and Junior SLR European championships (Krakow, Poland)
- August 29th, meeting with Beijing construction consortium for slalom course and Hydro stadium (Annecy, France)
- September 10th to 19th, 2005 Chinese Games SLR event, Officials education and Organizing committee advisement (Nanjin, China), preparation of SLR Olympic games event staff.
- September 20th to October 5th, 2005 SLR world championships:
 - SLR development programme training camp
 - Technical delegate of the event
 - SLR committee meeting N° 2 (minutes enclosed in Board meeting preparation material)
- October 19th to 25th, invitation to 2005 Whitewater Asian Championships (Uttaranchal, India)
 - Expertise of different venues for setting of a SLR continental training center in India
 - Meeting with Indian Canoe Kayak Association and local authorities to coordinate the project.
- November 22nd to 24th, coordination meeting for SLR development programme (ICF head quarter, Madrid)



INTERNATIONAL CANOE FEDERATION
CHAIRMAN SLALOM RACING COMMITTEE

2006

- January 25th to 31st , ICF Olympic disciplines symposium and SLR committee meeting Warsaw (Poland)
- February 5th to 12th , technical visit of the 2007 SLR world championships venue, Foz D'Iguassu (Brazil)
 - Water test of the competition course
 - Preparation meeting with Organizing Committee
 - Coordination meeting with "ITAIPU binational"(owner of the facility)
 - Course for SLR officials

Report under redaction, to be presented at New Delhi's ICF Board meeting

2005 IJSL examination

Examination for IJSL have been organized:

- Seoul (Korea) to prepare 2005 SLR Asian championships
- Augsburg (Germany) during 2005 SLR World cup N°2
- Tacen (Slovenia) during 2005 SLR European championships
- Penrith (Australia) during 2005 SLR World championships
- Nanjin (China) during the Chinese Games SLR event to prepare SLR 2008 O.G event

2005 SLR World ranking and SLR World cup overall Ranking

From May to June 2005 because of not having the former files, the SLR Committee had developed a new software to calculate and deliver an update SLR World ranking after each designated event. An adaptation of this tool has been made for the SLR World cup overall ranking. This has be done in cooperation with a Spanish technician.

❖ From March 2006 to November 2006.

- March 13th , Meeting with Indian C/K Association in Kalsi (Uttaranchal, India l)
Presentation of Slalom Racing facility project and technical meeting with Water authorities engineers on the venue.
- April 4th to 10th , SLR Development Programme visit to South Africa, invited by Cameron Macintosh (Maluti C/K Club)
Meetings with Canoeing South Africa responsible, attendance (two days) to the SLR development programme training camp in Wagendrift (Eastcourt, RSA).
Expertise of the SLR venue in Bethlehem (Free State, RSA) and attendance at the SLR South African Championships.
- May 11th and 12th, Solkan (SLO) Technical Delegate visit for SLR Juniors world event preparation.



INTERNATIONAL CANOE FEDERATION
CHAIRMAN SLALOM RACING COMMITTEE

- May 17th and 18th, Prague (CZE) Technical Delegate visit for SLR Senior world event preparation.
- May 22nd to 28th, Athens (GRE) ICF Technical Delegate for 2006 SLR World cup N°1
- May 29th to June 5th, Augsburg (GER) ICF Technical Delegate for 2006 SLR World cup N°2
- June 7th to 11th, La Seu de Urgell (SPAIN) ICF Technical Delegate for 2006 SLR World cup N°3
- June 30th to July 2nd, L'Argentière la Bessée (FRA) Attendance to the 2006 European SLR Championships and IJSL examination session.
- July 3rd to 10th, Solkan (SLO) ICF Chief Official for 2006 SLR Junior World Championships.
- July 29th to August 7th, Prague (CZE) 2006 SLR Senior World Championships.
 - SLR committee meeting N° 4 (minutes enclosed in Board meeting preparation material)
 - SLR development programme training camp
 - Technical Delegate and Chief Official of the event
- September 9th, Lausanne (SUI) ICF Headquarters, invitation to participate partially at the ICF Executive Committee meeting.
- September 15th to 18th, Lausanne (SUI) ICF Headquarter, ICF Olympic disciplines Technical Committees Chairmen meeting dedicated to Rules evolution.
- September 26th to 28th, Montreux (SUI) ORIS meeting for 2008 Olympic SLR event with BOCOG.
 - Review of all result and information lays out of SLR event at the 2008 Olympic Games.
 - Rules evolutions and eventual modification of ORIS procedures and lay out.
- October 10th to 13th, Visit to Hungary in the frame of SLR development programme.
 - Expertise of a SLR venue project in Sangothard
 - Meeting with Hungarian C/K Federation President
 - Meeting with Secretary General at the federation HQ



JEAN-MICHEL PRONO

INTERNATIONAL CANOE FEDERATION
CHAIRMAN SLALOM RACING COMMITTEE

- October 21st and 22nd, inaugural Opening of Dutch Water Dream white water Park, Zoetermeer (NED)
 - Meeting with the Dutch C/K federation on site
 - Meeting with the DWD promoter and owner
 - International SLR event, medal ceremony

- October 27th to 29th, Lausanne (SUI) ICF Headquarter, Technical Committees Chairmen meeting dedicated to Rules evolution.

- November 2nd, Lausanne (SUI) ICF Headquarter, meeting with Siwidata Timing Company.
 - SLR timing and scoring service on ICF SLR event, feasibility study, terms and conditions
 - SLR World ranking system evolution. Presentation of simulation 2006.

- November 8th, Lausanne (SUI) ICF Headquarter, meeting with World Slalom Canoe, s.r.o. promoters
 - Presentation by the of the World series Canoe Slalom races by SVK owners of the company
 - Pro and contra arguments about World Cup series evolution
 - Medium and long term possibility of evolution

2006 IJSL examination

Examination for IJSL has been organized:

- SLR European Championships, L'Argentière la Bessée(FRA)
- SLR Junior World Championships, Solkan (SLO)
- SLR Senior World Championships, Prague (CZE)
- BCU SLR National championships, Llangollen (GBR)
- Educational and certification programme with Chinese officials in the frame work of the Beijing SLR Olympic event preparation, Xiasi (Guizhou, CHN)