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INTERNATIONAL CANOE FEDERATION ICF

FREESTYLE COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE ACTIVITY REPORT
1ST JAN 2007 - 1ST OCT 2008
XXXII ORDINARY CONGRESS
ROME 2008





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2008**

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REPORT TO THE XXXII ICF CONGRESS ROME FRIDAY 28TH AND SATURDAY 29TH OF NOVEMBER 2008

I – COMMITTEE MEMBERS

1.- MEMBERS.

After the XXXI congress held in Hong Kong and the election of Mr. Lluís Rabaneda i Caselles as chairman of this new committee, 4 people were appointed to be members of the Freestyle Committee in the period of the next 4 years. Attached on the appendix 1 a Power point with a short description of this committee and tasks.

- **Mr. Mike Birkbeck – UK.** Mike was the chairman of the old IFC (International Freestyle Committee) the body governing Freestyle before our sport decided to join ICF. He was one of the more important persons developing rules and finding organizers and helping those to set up proper competitions with the right standards. Mike also has been for many years Chairman of the BCU Freestyle committee.
- **Mrs. Krsitine Jackson – USA.** As Mike, Kristine has been involved in freestyle since the beginning member of the old IFC working group. Head of the USA delegation at many Wchamps. His husband has been 4 times World Champion. Organizer of many events in USA. Lots of experience in judging.
- **Mr. Jon Souillot – FRANCE.** Jon is the chairman of the French Freestyle Committee, and his job on rules, and judging in France and later in the ICF Committee has been superb and one of the key improvements of this committee.
- **Mrs Ingrid Schlott – GERMANY.** Old competitor defending the German flag, she is currently the Chairwoman of the German Freestyle Committee. A huge background on competitions and judging, her work on the rules with Jon has been the key to make a proper set of rules. Also she has been in charge of the World Cups 2008, and the feedback from those events has been the best far away since we organize the World Cups.



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- **Lluís Rabaneda i Caselles – SPAIN.** Elected Chairman in the XXXI ICF Congress in Hong Kong. Organizer of the 2001 World championships, Eurocup events in 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, and also the first official European Championships 2004. Chairman of the Freestyle Spanish committee from 2000 till 2004. ECA technical delegate for Freestyle from 2004 till 2007. And member of the old IFC committee together with Mike and Kristine.

2.- TASKS.

- Mr. Mike Birkbeck: In charge of Contact to NF and searching for new contacts in new countries. Also in charge of the data base.
- Mrs. Krsitine Jackson: In charge of events. Cooperation with organizers and looking for new ones.
- Mr. Jon Souillot: In charge of developing Rules and the Judging system and seminars for Judges.
- Mrs Ingrid Schlott: In charge together with Jon on Rules and with Kristine on the competitions side. Supporting organizers.



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II – MEETINGS

1. 9TH TO 11TH March 2007 – LAUSSANNE – ICF HEADQUARTERS

The first committee meeting was held in Lausanne, to meet for first time together at the headquarters using the facilities there and also to meet the Secretary General, Mr. Antoine Goetschy, he was introducing few points of the ICF way to work, and he was very useful for a new committee as ours.

The main discussion in this meeting was to make a calendar to set up a new set of rules to follow all the steps and to be ready with a total new set of rules for the XXXII congress in Rome, to be approved. So in that first meeting we make a schedule and also we appoint Ingrid Schlott and Jon Souillot as persons leading this work.

The second issue of this meeting was to try to set up a minimum standard for the World champions that 2 month later where held in Canada. Also start contacts with 2009 World Champs organizers and find the 2008 World Cup organizers.

Finally the committee agree to create a layout for what we called **JUDGING PROGRAM** to create seminars and how the judges will be selected and how judging will be done in the future. This is a crucial point in our discipline.

2. 4TH to 5TH May 2007 – OTAWA-CANADA

The second committee meeting was held during the World Championships in Ottawa-Canada. Mainly focussed in the issues of the World Championships.

The committee was making an overview on the rules situation. And also we had a first meeting with the 2009 World Championships organizer.

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3. **30th November to 2nd December – BARCELONA-SPAIN**

Third meeting in Barcelona, was crucial for the rules. We spend ¾ of our time there to finalize a proper DRAFT, that was send it later to the BoD for there approval. This DRAFT will be the core of our sport in the next 2 years.

We also create a set of basic rules for the World Cup 2008, specially on how to register to this event. And we also agree the creation of a logo for this competition, that was a good point because later during the World Cup a lot of media , specially magazines used this logo as image of the overall World Cup. You can see the logo in Appendix 2.

Finally we make a plan to identify possible future organizers for World Championships and World Cups.

4. **31st October to 2nd November – PLATTLING-GERMANY**

This meeting will be held in the city of Plattling before the congress. Few reasons are to do this meeting in Plattling, first of all is because Plattling is one of the best places for freestyle competitions in Europe and also because The German Canoe Association and the town council are interested to organize the 2011 World Champs and one of the 2010 World cups.

In this meeting we will make a report on the past 2 seasons and a overview on the next 2 seasons before our mandate in this committee expires.



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III – COMPETITIONS HELD

1. 2007 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS . OTAWA RIVER – CANADA

This event was held in Ottawa River – Canada. The Canadian NFs was organizing this event together with a rafting Company, Wilderness Tours, the owner of this rafting company is the current Freestyle representative for Freestyle in the Canadian NF.

A member of our committee was there 7 days before of the competition trying to help to create the minimum conditions for a proper event also 2 more members of this committee and myself where attending at the event.

We also get the support there from the Jury members, Mr. Albert Woods and Mr Antoine Goetschy.

The event in terms of organisation and infrastructure was ok. In terms of sport program was not so good, and we where focussed to try to warranty the consistency of judging. As a committee we where critics with what we saw there. So I think we learn a lot and the next worlds will be done in a better way.

The medals where distributed: USA(6), Canada (5), GBR (5), France (2), Japan, Australia, Slovakia, Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland (1). In total we get 21 countries competing, and we miss 4 or 5 nations for different motivations as Visa or no Freestyle committees on their countries. As you know we had a positive doping, we will work to inform the athletes to know about the doping regulations in the future.

Finally I want a says a big thank you to Mr Woods and Mr. Goetschy for their support during the hole event.

2. 2008 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS. OURENSE-SPAIN

Requested by ECA president Mr. Albert Woods to support them on this event, because the ECA has no Technical delegate at the moment for Freestyle, we where of course immediately supporting the ECA.

Lluis Rabaneda was appointed by the Spanish Federation as Head organizer and Ingrid Schlott was during the event to support in the Judging and team captains meetings.

The event was done in Ourense in the region of Galicia/Spain. It was very interesting to see a freestyle competition inside a town on 150000 population, that was really displaying the image o



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of our sport. One of the more interesting points was to see how the local media was interested in the event even if at the same time was a preolympic basketball competition with teams as Spain (silver medal at the Olympics and world champion) Lithuania and Greece, the media was more interested by the freestyle event as for the basketball event, even some of the papers where saying freestyle kayak is beating basketball specitation.

We will keep cooperating with ECA since they doesn't appoint a new Technical delegate, so now at this moment we are evaluating the 2 bids received to organize the European Championships 2010 and we will make a report to them to take a decision.

3. 2008 WORLD CUP – PRAGUE(CZE), AUGSBURG(GER), THUN(SWI)

Those 3 events where one of our main points for this 2008 and also for the future, We strongly believe that the Freestyle World Cups could be one of the keys to develop freestyle. The worlds are to choose the best, but the World Cup can spread the Freestyle image around much easier and better, as happens with skiing or snowboarding.

We select 3 of the best paces and best organizers in Europe for this World Cup and the result was magnificent, nearly 250 paddlers in each event from 24 countries. Media involved in all 3 events, TV coverage, Internet,... We had a media partner the magazine KAYAK SESSION, they develop a site in internet where we spread all the information (<http://kayaksession.com/WC2008.php>).

Ingrid Schlott was in charge of those events to cooperate with organizers, we are pretty happy with the hole event and we will make a proper report after our meeting in Plattling to identify mistakes or points to make better for the 2010 World Cup.

A big thank you to the Czech, German and Swiss federations for their support to the discipline and to the organizers.

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IV – IMPROVEMENTS & DEVELOPMENTS

1. New Set of Rules and Appendixes.

That was one of the main jobs for this 2 year period. We bring to this XXXII congress a relocked set of rules following the ICF rules layout, and also conditioning the rules to a more modern point of view of freestyle. We also re adjust all the values on the maneuvers and tricks and we try to make it easier for judging and for spectators.

We organize the set of rules and outside the appendixes for moves and values, to try to be open to changes in between the congress, so we are totally sure that those rules can be using it for a long period with small adjustments.

We openly ask to all the delegates in this congress to accept this new set of rules.

2. Cooperation with ECA.

As mentioned before, since may we are closely cooperating with the ECA to give them a maximum support to develop European Championships and other regional events. Since the moment where they will not have a Technical delegate the ICF freestyle committee will support the Bod of the ECA in all the Freestyle subjects.

We strongly believe that supporting continental associations can be another way to develop our discipline for this reason we keep open to other continental associations to help.

3. Contracts for World Cups

Another improvement done in this 2 season period was to make a contract for the World cup organizers where we define the duties of the ICF and of the organizer in this event. For the future those kind of agreements will be the best tool to develop those events, our committee was the first doing it for World Cups together with the Sprint committee.

Those contracts are the way to clarify all the possible situations during the competitions and creating a proper network in between organizers , national federations and ICF.



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4. Freestyle judging development plan

This plan together with the new rules, where the more ambitious project of those two years , using the experience of Jon Souillot who already did a similar project in the French Federation, we set up a project for Judging and for Judges,

We did the first ICF FREESTYLE JUDGES SEMINAR this year in Prague , previous to the World Cup, and we plan a second one next year, to have a bunch of judges ready for the World Championships in 2009.

This Judges plan should help us in different parts of the judging :

- Roles of each judge (International Freestyle Chief Judge, International Freestyle Judge and Master chief judge)
- How the judging system diagram will works in between all the parts involved (National federations, Judges, Committee and ICF)
- Nominations for events.
- Continuous evaluations of the judges.
- Conditions to apply to be a judge
- Exams for each category

Without doubt this will not be easy but we strongly believe that this plan can open doors in the future to our discipline.



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V – UPCOMING EVENTS

1. 2009 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS , THUN – SWITZERLAND

This event will be held in Thun Switzerland from August 31st till September 6th 2009

This World Championships, clearly, have to be the best Freestyle event ever. For several reasons:

- a. One of the best spots existing
- b. Inside a very nice town. Thun
- c. Lots of organizing experience (1997 first event, 2002 European championships, 2008 World Cup final)
- d. Central Europe Venue
- e. Good feedback from World Cup 2008
- f. Working in this project since 2006

They plan to have 80 volunteers, with a team of 140 people running the event, in partnership with the city of Thun, civil protection of Thun, Military base of Thun, Tourism office and WWF Switzerland.

Also TV production & worldwide distribution, billboard campaigns, screen campaigns, Swiss and Europe wide media partnerships, advertisements, promotions, flyers and posters. That will create a huge speciation and we spec around 30000 visitors.

We spec around 35 to 45 countries competing the 5 continents represented and around 400 athlete there, will be an athletes village that will help to create a perfect atmosphere.

All those points should help to have a huge show. We only will like to request all the National federations to support their paddlers to come to this event and also all the presidents and delegates to come and see the Freestyle discipline in his major event.

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2. **2010 WORLD CUP 2010 (Biding process)**
3. **2010 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS (Biding Process)**
4. **2011 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS (Biding process)**

All those events are under inspection by now, hopefully during the congress all them or 80% of them will have already an organizer appointed.