

Name: Henriette Engel Hansen
Year of birth: 1982
Gender: Female
Nationality: Danish
Disciplines: Kayak – sprint and marathon
Language: English (written and spoken),
German (basic),
French (basic)



Sporting carrier

I began paddling at the age of 20 and have been competing internationally since 2005. I have participated at three Olympic Games – Beijing and London in K1 and in Rio de Janeiro in K4.

It was a bit of a coincidence that I fell in love with canoeing. I went on a weekend course just to get the basic skills for kayaking as I wanted to do some adventure racing. I didn't get to do any adventure races. Instead three years after I raced European Championships in marathon in 2005 and was selected for the sprint national team in 2006.

Since 2006 I have been racing sprint internationally. After the Olympic Games in 2016 I have decided to have a break from sprint and instead focus on marathon.

As years have gone by I have been more and more interested in helping to improve the conditions for the athletes in the sport I love so deeply. Therefore, I volunteered for the ICF Athletes commission in 2013 and was the athletes representative in the Danish Canoe Federation from 2014 till after Rio.

Best results:

- 3 x Olympian (Beijing, London and Rio de Janeiro)
- 1 x World Champion 1.000 K2 (2014)
- 2 x 3rd at ICF Sprint World Cup series (2009 and 2012)
- 4 x World Champion in marathon K2 (2007, 2008, 2009 and 2013)
- 1 x European Silver medal 1.000 m K1 (2013)
- 1 x European Bronze medal 1.000 m K1 (2009)

Personal carrier

Along my sporting carrier I have a master in Economics from the University of Copenhagen where I graduated in 2008. Since 2008 I have been working as an Economic Advisor in three different positions. Latest I have begun working at COWI A/S, a large engineering and economic consultant company.

COWI has more than 6.000 employees and have projects all over world. At COWI I do different welfare economic analysis and financial analysis of everything from clima changes, waste handling, artificial pitches, to medicine effectiveness and much more.

I live close to Lake Bagsværd in a house with my husband and dog.

Reasons and motivation to run as a candidate to the ICF Athletes Committee

ICF is built upon athletes who every day work hard to become the champions in their disciplines. Athletes who are willing to put canoeing higher than anything else in their lives to chase their dream. It's important that the frame ICF works in stays focused on the athletes as ICF is the athletes.

As an athlete who have been competing internationally for 12 years and participated at three Olympic Games. I know better than most how it feels to be an athlete for better and for worse. I have a strong bond with the athletes in the sport and I have recently tried myself to put canoeing upon everything I care about.

From my first term as a member of the athlete's commission I have gained knowledge of the political system in the ICF but also in the IOC. A knowledge I can now utilize in the next four years in the athletes commission if given the chance. From a strong position, I can continually push for improving and optimizing the conditions for the athletes.

During my last four years in the athletes commission I have had a good cooperation with the staff of the ICF in Lausanne, the board members of the ICF and the athletes representatives in the IOC Athletes Commission. I have had a good dialog with many athletes racing internationally both in sprint and in marathon and also the team behind the athletes. I have helped and supported athletes when they have had issues concerning selections and other difficulties. I have expressed the athletes demands and views in the board of the ICF and advocated to make decisions primarily benefiting the athletes.

My program for 2017-2021

Athletes in the ICF

To strengthen the voice of the athletes within the ICF. It would be beneficial for all the disciplines within ICF to have athletes representatives in all the standing committees of the ICF. Not just the disciplines represented by the members of the athletes commission but all disciplines from sprint and slalom to wildwater and dragonboat. Athletes is the passionate expert.

IOC and the Olympic Games

We have to work with the IOC to follow their strategy. Gender equity is a strong request from the IOC especially towards the Olympic Games in Tokyo 2020. I support and encourage gender equity. The preferred way would have been to add more participants and medals in canoeing and not cutting off disciplines that have a strong field today. Gender equity is also important outside the race course among the trainers and the leaders in the national federations and the different boards.

We have to work hard for canoeing becoming a larger sport at the Olympic Games. This requires a great effort to improve the media exposure of canoeing worldwide.

Media

A better media exposure will increase the knowledge of canoeing and possibly make canoeing more known and popular around the world - even in countries where canoeing is just a small unknown sport today. This can improve the financial base within canoeing and ease the possibilities for sponsorship both for the national federations and the individual athletes.

Antidoping

The ICF has to show zero tolerance against doping and work hard for keeping canoeing a clean sport where the athletes compete as equals and where the winners are true winners.

We need to work hard to educate and inform all athletes around the globe about their rights and possibilities regarding doping issues.

It's important to emphasize that the vast majority of athletes in canoeing are clean and potential victims if the fight against doping is lost. These athletes have to continue the hard work and act as role models in their countries to ensure pressure is put on those in charge to keep the sport clean.

The battle to keep canoeing a clean sport is tough but necessary for our self-preservation. This is the only way our sport will remain credible.

Athlete retirement

In most cases athletes can't make a living from the income from canoeing while paddling and the same is even more evident after a sporting career. I therefore support an ICF based program that connects athletes to universities and educational institutions to make it possible for athletes to paddle and study at the same time. This program has to go hand in hand with the IOC educational initiatives including the IOC Athletes Learning gateway.

Summary

To summarize the above, I have a strong and honest communication with the athletes, the ICF (staff and board) and the IOC athletes commission. I have more than 12 years of experience with being an athlete myself. I have gained in-depth knowledge of how the ICF board works. I represent both the sprint and the marathon athletes. I am aware of the IOC and the ICF strategies have to run hand in hand with the athletes requests. I will work hard for improving and optimizing the conditions for the athletes in the ICF.