



# Report

ICF Ordinary Congress  
Rome, Italy  
4-6 November 2021

**Name of the BoD Member: PRONO, Jean Michel**

**Function on BoD: Chair of the Canoe Slalom Technical Committee**

**Committee Members: Sue Natoli (AUS), Alena Maskova (CZE), Eric Lokken (USA), Syuji Yamanaka (JAP)**

**Committee Advisors: Meritxell Rodriguez (ESP), Colin Woodgate (GBR)**

Firstly, I would like to sincerely thank **Cyril NIVEL** (Technical Whitewater Manager) for his work over the last 4 years. His level of professionalism has enabled our discipline to consolidate and expand. His role in stimulating and guiding the committee on key topics has been crucial.

He has a broad knowledge which ranges across Federation & competition management, canoeing equipment as well as the requirements of Olympic preparation. At all times he has demanded high levels of delivery and personally can manage a very high and diverse workload.

He has been a particular support to me throughout this past Olympic period and whilst I will miss him, I wish him well as he moves to Paris 2024. Ironically, we will still work closely together albeit in different roles!

On behalf of the committee - Thanks Cyril for all of your work we have valued it.

## **1. Major events since last ICF Congress**

### **2019**

**ICF CSL World Cup series**, 5 stages, London (GBR), Bratislava (SVK), Ljubljana/Tacen (SLO), Markkleeberg (GER) and Final in Prague (CZE).

**ICF CSL Jun /U23 World Championships**, Krakow (POL), 16-21 July 2019  
48 NFs participating, 426 athletes

**2019 Pan American Games Lima (PER)**, 2 to 4 August 2019 – 6 medals awarded in this competition, 4 CSL and 2 Canoe slalom extreme (CSLX) events

**ICF CSL and WW World Championships**, La Seu de Urgell (ESP), 25-29 September 2019. 63 NFs participating, 378 athletes

**Tokyo 2020 Olympic CSL Test event**, 25 to 27 October 2019, Tokyo (JAP)

## **2020**

**Continental Olympic Qualifier for Tokyo 2020**; Oceania, Auckland (NZL) 1-2 February 2020, 2 quotas allocated (MK1, MC1)

**ICF CSL World Cup series**; Due to the Covid 19 sanitary crisis, only 2 of 5 originally scheduled 2020 CSL world cups have been organised late in 2020: Ljubljana (SLO) 16-18 October and Pau (FRA) 6-8 November 2020

## **2021**

**Continental Olympic Qualifiers for Tokyo 2020**

- African CSL Qualifier: La Seu de Urgell (ESP) 19-21 March 2021, 3 quotas allocated (MK1, WK1, MC1)
- Asian CSL Qualifier: Pattaya (THA) 30/03-2/04 2021-10-14, 4 quotas allocated
- European CSL Qualifier: Ivrea (ITA) 6-9 April 2021, 4 quotas allocated
- Pan American CSL Qualifier: Rio de Janeiro (BRA) Cancelled (because of the local sanitary conditions) 4 Quota's allocated through ICF CSL ranking

**ICF CSL World Cup series**; 4 of 4 scheduled have been organised under ICF Covid 19 protocol

Prague (CZE); Markkleeberg (GER) in June, La Seu de Urgell (ESP) and the Final in Pau (FRA) in the first half of September.

**ICF CSL Jun /U23 World Championships**, Ljubljana/Tacen (SLO) 6-11 July 2021. 32 NFs participating, 327 athletes. This competition was organised under ICF Covid 19 protocol.

**ICF CSL and WW World championships**, Bratislava (SVK), 22-26 September 2021, 45 NFs participating, 236 athletes. This competition was organised under ICF Covid 19 protocol.

**Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games**, Tokyo (JPN) 25-30 July 2021

35 NOC's qualified with only 82 quotas to allocate

The new 6 day programme was well accepted allowing a better showcase of the medal days

Very good organisation, despite predictions no major weather issues

Competition was spectacular and TV showed the discipline at its' best

The logistics for all stakeholders of the Tokyo 2020 Covid 19 countermeasures

were complicated but no Covid cases were declared

## **2. Tasks undertaken since the last ICF Congress**

### **Preparation /coordination of the main CSL events from 2019 to 2021**

Olympic Games Tokyo 2020, Test event and postponed Games because of Covid 19

Continental Games Lima 2019, Continental qualifications for Tokyo 2020 (4 of 5 held)

World cups series and World championships 2019 to 2021 (15 competitions in total despite Covid 19 sanitary crisis.

Two major actions have been achieved with HOC's:

- Regular conference call meetings with HOC's (at least 1/month then finally one every 2 weeks)
- Produce template documentation for all HOC's & stakeholders to guide their work and standardize the procedures and delivery of the competitions.

### **Standardization of the ICF competition schedules**

Worlds Cups and World Championships: consideration given to live TV broadcast slots available and Olympic programme events grouping as well as athlete's doubling

Juniors / U23 CSL World Championships: consideration given to the age and events grouping to ease the coaching schedule and athlete's doubling.

### **Timing/scoring development (continued from 2018)**

Thanks to the unique results management provider agreement with Siwidata we have been continuing the improvement of the results competition management and communication systems including:

The direct transmission of penalties by each Gate Judge (Smart Penalty Input - SPI) has simplify the Gate Judge's task who can now focus only on gate negotiation observation and a more accurate call of the penalties.

With SPI more gates can be allocated to more judges. This cross judging allows a better coverage of all situations.

SPI system allows fast review of any decision or discrepancy

Systematic Video Judge process for each athlete's run usually completed within their run time

All video files available for teams

- Video footage has become proof of the penalty
- Paperless management of the results

Since the technical video feed (TVS) is now part of the results management

operation, Siwidata is also the provider of this service, providing all files production technology and filming equipment. The cameras and switching are operated by a HOC / ICF volunteer crew.

The technical feed is also distributed to teams and streamed on the ICF competition web page.

#### Consequences of these improvements & changes:

Better presentation of the discipline on TV and at the venue thanks to a faster and more accurate results information/ graphics.

Results process is now more transparent. Teams can follow the results management activity live. These improvements have led to less inquiries and protests.

The Gate Judges activity including accuracy can now be followed statistically thanks to the tracking and recording of all penalty inputs.

#### **Equipment homologation**

The ICF regularly passes to national or international sport stakeholders (e.g. Organising committees for Olympic Games, Continental Games, National Federations) a list of technical products and their recognized providers specific to canoe slalom.

Through the homologation process the ICF wants to reinforce the quality control of the technical products and create a strong link with the providers.

Equipment homologated (or in the process): CSL; Gate pole, crossbar, CSLX; start platform, Gate buoys, start ramp

The ICF Technical Manager and Headquarters have produced a manual defining the specifications of this equipment. When the manufacturers want to supply equipment they can refer to this manual, ensuring equipment is standard across ICF competitions. It also allows manufacturers to homologate new equipment to meet the required specifications.

#### **Venue homologation**

The ICF Technical Manager and Headquarters have produced a manual describing the ICF homologation process for the canoe slalom / white water stadium.

The homologation process is conducted by an ICF expert panel (ICF Technical committee members, ICF staff, external advisors) nominated by the ICF Secretary General.

Homologation represents a "system of evaluation" of a canoe slalom / white water stadium. It is a process for certification that provides a forum for constructive discussion between ICF experts and venue owner, venue operator and venue contractor.

The homologation process takes place in two stages:

Stage 1: Homologation technical file to be completed by the applicant

Stage 2: Homologation session with site visit and production of a report  
All ICF competition venues hosting level 1 and 2 competitions have to be homologated. New venue bidding for this competition level has to be homologated prior to the bid being sent to ICF HQ.

The process is currently under implementation and will be a task for the forthcoming two seasons.

For more information regarding this section see:

<https://www.canoeicf.com/disciplines/canoe-slalom/venues>

### **3. *Issues and Main Points for the function since last ICF Congress***

#### **Covid 19 sanitary crisis management for CSL competitions**

##### **ICF Covid 19 protocol guidelines**

From March 2020, the worldwide sanitary crisis has impacted the sport activities and the ICF calendar in general. The ICF Board and Headquarters have without any delay assessed the situation. They very quickly established a plan to follow up the situation, liaising with all stakeholders, to monitor the evolution of the crisis, its impact on the HOC's organising capacity and Teams participation.

In close cooperation with the ICF Medical committee, with a special mention to Jane Gibson, Cyril Nivel and the technical committee have produced a Covid 19 protocol guideline for the organisers and participating National Federations.

With regular videoconference meetings, ICF Technical manager, Committee Chair and ICF Board of Directors have confirmed, when possible, in agreement with local sanitary authorities, the 2020 ICF CSL competition calendar.

Finally, 2 of the 5 2020 world cups have been organised, Ljubljana /Tacen (SLO) mid October and Pau (FRA) early November. The 2021 ICF CSL World Cups and World Championships have also been successfully delivered under this continually evolving protocol

##### **Defining a Covid 19 compatible organisation model allowing adaption or downgrading of delivery procedures (except core sport services)**

From this experience we have also learned how to reduce or reorganise, some of the "in competition" services; This could be a legacy for the post Covid era. E.g. TVS room cancelled and replaced by a download solution in each NF tent

## **2020 Olympic Games postponement and delivering the Games under Covid 19 countermeasures**

3 main challenges were faced with this situation:

- The uncertainty of the Pre-Games training calendar subject to the Japanese sanitary authorities travelling regulations and covid countermeasures. This led to several postponements from March to July.
- The process to define and agree with Tokyo 2020 the specific countermeasures at the Kasai White Water Centre during the pre-games training period and Olympic Games competition period.
- Liaising regularly with NF's and Olympic Team Leaders to consult and inform about the evolving situation and final proposal from Tokyo 2020 and the canoeing competition management.

It has been extremely time consuming for all stakeholders but the Organising Committee and the participating teams have all agreed that it has been successfully managed for achieving great training and competition conditions.

Participants, Organisers, IOC leaders and key staff when visiting us at Kasai centre have all recognized the Tokyo 2020 CSL competitions as a great show for the discipline.

### **Athlete's Representatives**

During this Olympic cycle the role of the two athletes' representatives, Jessica Fox (AUS) and Alexander Slafkovsky (SVK) has been crucial in liaising with an athlete's community very disappointed by the uncertainty created with the Covid pandemic.

Furthermore, they have also be of great help with advice to the Committee when faced with the many options, whilst at all times guided by an exceptional capacity to appreciate the complexity of the situation and the complete scope of the challenges faced.

Their availability, when they were themselves in Olympic Games preparation is to be highlighted and appreciated.

### **Launching Extreme Canoe Slalom format and introducing it to the 2024 Olympic Game programme**

The concept was developed under the auspice the ICF Olympic programme commission established in 2015 by President Perurena and Technical committee and supported by the ICF Technical Manager for Whitewater.

The format has been improving with a number of World Cup tests and three World Championships organised from 2017 to 2019 (2020 there was no competition due to Covid sanitary situation)

Once the introduction in the Paris 2024 Olympic programme was achieved, the Committee has opened a phase of consultation to collect the input of all

stakeholders.

This has included:

- Consultation and brainstorming with IOC technology department and OBS.
- Consultation with NFs and athletes (26 persons from 17 NFs). A clear framework has been set to guide the feedback on each specific item.
- Set the ICF world ranking for Extreme Canoe Slalom events
- Consultation with manufacturers to improve safety and / or performance conditions concerning the helmet, boat, body protection and an automatic start system.
- Development of Judges online course dedicated to extreme canoe slalom and a dedicated seminar from April 2021.

Due to the new Olympic status of the event after the ICF decision and IOC Ex Co confirmation in December 2020, new rules for the 2021 season were required to clarify and strengthen some areas.

Specifically, the:

- Safety rules
- Scoring system
- Competition results calculation system

This is why a rules evolution was exceptionally proposed to, and supported by, the ICF board previous to the 2021 season, to consolidate the final CSLX rules proposal to be presented at the 2021 ICF Congress.

Special attention has been given to the equipment evolution:

- Buoys length increased to 2m, better marking (number and direction)
- Roll barrier prototype (tested during the 2021 season)
- Start platform, ICF specifications (standard to all venues and improved safety)
- Automated start system, established contact with a manufacturer to build a prototype
- Helmet, ICF specifications defined for the tender for building a dedicated / adapted CSLX helmet.

## **IJCSL program - online training and assessment during 2020/2021 Seasons**

### **March 2020 – June 2020**

Liaised with Freestyle TC to understand their experience of online delivery of Judges training

Developed and tested an online training package including:

- Revision quizzes (CSL & Extreme Competition rules, ICF Statutes, CSL & Extreme video examples) available at <https://www.canoeicf.com/disciplines/canoe-slalom/officials>



- Seminar program
- Rules, statutes, video assessment tools using a "Proprofs". Sample CSL assessment available at <https://bit.ly/CSL-2021>
- Practical component to be completed once competitions return to a more normal situation

#### **June 2020 – November 2020**

Delivered 3 online seminar and assessment programs 6+6+7 = 19 total candidates (18 successful 1 failed)

Assessed 2 candidates for the practical component.

#### **June 2021 – September 2021**

Delivered online seminar and assessment program; 4 candidates

Assessed 11 candidates for the practical component

Delivered IJCSL Seminar and assessment at World Championships, Bratislava, SVK; 2 candidates

Currently there are;

- 8 candidates waiting the practical assessment
- 5 candidates on the waiting list to commence the program

Expect to deliver another IJCSL program before the end of 2021.

The online program has been well received being more flexible for candidates. We expect this will allow greater participation in the future and intend to keep this format. The candidates all use the quizzes on the ICF website prior to attending the program and as revision before the assessment.

In 2021 the CSLC has also assisted WWC and SUP to setup on-line Judges training including online quizzes and, in conjunction with GBR, a simplified introductory Judges program for Canoe Slalom & Sprint specifically for Uganda.

Big thank you to Colin Woodgate (GBR) for his work on the development and delivery of the IJCSL and associated projects and Hoichan KWON (ICF) for maintaining the database and IT support.

#### **4. *Future Initiatives and recommendations to be considered***

##### **ICF technical Manager for White Water and Canoe Polo discipline**

To welcome and develop a good working relationship as well as assist with ongoing training, for the new ICF Technical Manager for Whitewater and Canoe Polo disciplines



### **Post Covid sanitary crisis**

Implement a special plan with actions to reboot the international CSL calendar with a supportive approach to the continental (regional) competition organisation.

CSL and Whitewater disciplines "Development Programme" to be re installed if sanitary crisis allows it. There is a role for a Continental Talent Developer to be promoted allowing a closer and permanent contact with identified developing NF's.

### **Olympic agenda**

- Paris 2024 preparation with a special attention to Extreme Canoe Slalom's first appearance being a success
- Los Angeles 2028 CSL venue to be secured currently working on an existing venue option
- Continental Games (Asia 2022, Pan Am and European 2023) preparation with respective Continental associations

### **2026 Youth Games, format definition, continental qualification system**

Assist with development of the 2026 Youth Olympic Games as required

***JM PRONO, October 2021***