



International Rafting Federation

MINUTES - CONGRESS 2014 13 October 2014, Brasil

1. Opening – The congress was opened by Joe Willie Jones, the President
2. Apologies roll call/ establish delegates, establish a quorum: Countries that were represented:
Belgium, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Kazakhstan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Turkey, USA. (quite a number of these were proxies)
3. Discussions and resolutions on the proposals submitted by the BOD and National Federations:
 - a. Budget for 2015 = this was accepted unanimously
 - b. Membership fee structure for 2015:
 - i. There were a number of questions asked and it seems some people were not understanding exactly how it would work. Joe and Sue explained in more detail how it would work and why this method was chosen. The priority being to increase the fees that the IRF desperately needs without making it unaffordable for our members.
 - ii. Eric asked why a set fee could not be requested from every member. Sue explained that it was important to keep our membership numbers up as we are hoping to join the Sport Accord and we only have just the right number of active members at this stage. If we put a set fee in some of our members who are only active through Guide Training side of things would not be able to afford or be interested in it as they get too little out of the IRF at this stage.
 - iii. It was also explained that the Established Membership fee was going to be put up to \$750 per year but instead this sliding scale version has been chosen so as to keep the less active Established Members.
 - iv. The new proposed fee structure was then accepted unanimously.

- c. World Rafting Champs 2016 and the future schedule of A and B level events
 - i. Suggestion was made to hold the A and B level events as follows: WRC R6, WRC R4, Continental Champs, WRC R6, WRC R4, Continental Champs. This would hopefully reduce the high costs of travel for the teams having to go to a WRC every year and sometimes to a Continental Champs as well in one year.
 - ii. Non-Euro countries said that the cost for them to go to Continentals is as high as getting to WRCs so Continentals hold no interest for them.
 - iii. Some countries, like the USA, said they needed a WRC every year so as to ensure they can keep their sponsors happy, otherwise they have to rebuild the relationship each year.
 - iv. Consensus amongst everyone was that a WRC is needed every year.
 - v. Consensus was also that Youth should be held together with Open and Masters where possible to reduce the number of days that the event extends over. 2 weeks is way too long for the Judges to be there – taking off work for that long and working solidly. It is also way too long for the organisers. This can only work well when there are suitable options for Youth and Open as Youth cannot go on Class 4/5.
 - vi. Euro Champs – general consensus was that it best to hold the same as what the WRC is – so in WRC R4 year to do Euro R4. This was generally preferred than having a combined R4 and R6 and splitting Youth/Juniors into a different event.
 - vii. It was also concluded that we could be looking at too many teams at Euro Champs. Dropping one age group or reducing each country to only send one team were put forward as options.
 - viii. Would also be good to reduce divisions as too many medals and medal ceremonies and it is making the events too big to handle.
 - ix. The conclusion for Euro Champs is that the Euro Committee/countries need to get together and discuss these options.

- d. U19 and U23 – future
 - i. Unanimous that U23 is not a proper division and that it must be dropped.
 - ii. Discussions then were had about whether an U21 division should be created or to only have U19. Pros and cons for each. Uros said his team who were nearly all about 19 had proven that men in that age category are quite capable of competing at a top level against the older teams.
 - iii. About 15 people felt that it should only be U21, 3 felt it should only be U19, about 2 felt it should be both categories.

- iv. Pros and cons:
 - 1. Some countries do not recognise the U21 group as youth and so will not support it financially.
 - 2. Some countries do recognise and support U21.
 - 3. If we only have U19 then there is a gap from when a person turns 18 to when they may be physically strong enough to compete against open aged paddlers.
 - v. It was decided that everyone would get their federations thinking and looking into the best options and that we would discuss this further in the coming months. Any changes would only come into effect in 2016 though as there is too much commitment already from federations for the set up as it is – unless there was a near unanimous decision to make the changes earlier. The decisions being - U23 to be kept for 2015? Or make it U21? Or drop it entirely?
 - e. Guide Training & Education and river safety – the importance of each federation being supportive of it and growing it.
 - i. Joe spoke about the importance of the GT&E Scheme and how it works and why it is important for more federations to be supporting it.
 - ii. There were a number of questions about it and a better understanding of how the scheme works meant that more countries were interested in it. The understanding that it is not compulsory to do an IRF guide course and that the scheme is actually an Assessment and not a course.
4. Any other business:
- a. Slovenia – bidding for 2016 ERC
 - b. R6 ERC 2015 will be 18 to 24 May
5. The Congress was then closed
6. Sue would like to thank all who attended for a very constructive meeting – although there were plenty of differing opinions everyone was prepared to listen and consider other's input and so consensus was easy to reach. Some great discussions were had and some good points of view were aired.