

IFDS Sailor Forum

Royal Perth Yacht Club, March 19, 2011

Attendance: IFDS Events & Scheduling Commission members David Staley (AUS) & Giulio Comboni (ITA) plus 31 sailors, coaches and officials. AUS, ESP, FRA, GBR, ITA, NZL.

Introduction

David Staley introduced Giulio Comboni as a new member of the Events Committee with experience in blind fleet and match racing. The structure, roles and responsibilities of IFDS, along with its relationships with ISAF and IPC was outlined.

IFDS Proposals for Future Paralympic Sailing Events

A brief recent history of IFDS proposal to introduce a Blind Sailing event into the Paralympic Sailing Competition was provided. It was noted that while the sailors share IFDS' disappointment that introduction in 2016 was not possible, IPC have encouraged IFDS to resubmit the application for commencement in 2020. It was advised that IFDS would like to take advantage of the additional time to further develop the Blind Sailing pathway by growing participation in fleet racing and also refining the proposed Blind Match Racing discipline.

Questions & Open Forum

- There was discussion about how to get more countries involved.
- Suggested that future events be held in a country where they are not participating in blind sailing but have the capacity to build activity. France?
- Noted that ITA, GBR, USA & NZL have strong national programs. It was asked how we can develop that in other nations. Noted that neighbouring countries can get involved in activities in those programs, learn from the experience, develop their core sailor group and then develop their own programs from there.
- It was suggested that GBR could potentially run a training camp and competition to enable other countries to participate.
- It was also seen as important to encourage ISR, SUI, USA and CAN to become actively involved as they have participated in blind match racing in the past.
- There were questions about how to obtain funding. IFDS does not have any surplus funds that can be made available to develop programs and this appears to be best done at a program or national level.
- It was noted that sailors can provide input to Giulio and David or via IFDS Secretariat.
- There was discussion during and after the Forum regarding a future calendar of blind match racing events. Suggested program is:
 - May 2012 – Cowes GBR (UKSA). Lucy Hodges to progress
 - 2013 - Antibes FRA (AMRA). Founette Pauthier & David Staley to progress
 - 2014 – Auckland NZL? (BSNZ / RNZYS?). Garry Smith to investigate
 - Other proposals / suggestions would be welcomed
 - All IFDS World or International Championships require an event application to be submitted to IFDS
 - National regattas to be organised annually wherever possible and international teams invited. IFDS can assist with publicity through the Bulletin and website

Forum closed