

**IFDS Coaches Commission**

Akis Tsarouchis GRE and Altman Israel ISR have joined the Coaches Commission. Current members also include, Betsy Alison (Chair), Mark Rushall (GBR) and Brian Todd (CAN) (who we resign at the end of this year).

During this past 12 months, the coaches have continued to discuss concerns of athletes and their respective participation at international events where many topics of common concern have been discussed. Much conversation has to do with invitations to Paralympic classes to participate on the restructured ISAF Sailing World Cup circuit (final schedule yet to be posted), the affordability of attendance at multiple events for teams, the availability of and inconsistencies in SKUD18 equipment (particularly sails), and what we can do as coaches to increase and promote more participation.

The continuation of informal "coaches regattas" prior to the ISAF Sailing World Cup events has proved to be highly successful and much appreciated by the sailors. This cooperation by coaches in the various fleets allows the sailors to train more effectively in a race environment prior to the big events. It is anticipated that it will continue at World Cup events during the 2013-16 quadrennial.

Due to the good work of our IFDS Executive Committee and IFDS Committee Chairs at the 2011 AGM, it appears that ISAF has agreed to permit the event organizers of the 2013+ ISAF Sailing World Cup Events to invite the Paralympic Classes at their pleasure. Once ISAF has announced the full schedule of World Cup events, all coaches and athletes will need to be notified of which events will include one or more of the Paralympic boats. The coaches believe that IFDS needs to continue to foster a positive relationship with ISAF and push for inclusion in large international events that already have Olympic classes at them.

Many countries still are faced with limited financial resources and this definitely limits participation at some events. Any country that needs to ship equipment long distances (i.e. cannot drive there) must make choices on which events to attend. Communication needs to continue between coaches and athletes of each of the disciplines to try to coordinate which events sailors should focus on to get the most participation and best sailing. Also, it would be helpful if sailors/coaches from the countries that are holding World Cup events help post and circulate information as to accessible and affordable housing options and the availability of charter boats.

Also concerns have been expressed by coaches of various nations about the inconsistencies in sails that are being produced by a single manufacturer in the SKUD18 class. There have been issues with some sails (tape tensions, seam smoothness, etc) so much so that several SKUD18 spinnakers needed to be recut at the Games. Sailors/coaches that have the ability to go to the manufacturer and look through groups of sails and select the ones they prefer have a decided advantage over countries that have sails pulled from the shelf and sent directly. Additionally, the cost of shipping and hassles with customs pose some other concerns. Perhaps it is time to look at multiple suppliers to reduce the hassles and costs.

One past concern that has been resolved is the collection of information by the classifiers of existing adaptive equipment that is being used by the sailors. I believe that this information once compiled will be posted on-line and updated periodically. Many thanks to the IFDS Classifiers!

Concerns continue with regard to the interpretation of Class rules and violations of the same. There were too many issues at the Paralympic Games that arose from inconsistent interpretations or non-action at prior events. These concerns need to be further evaluated and reviewed and a consistent policy established to prevent further issues as this new quad begins.

To address the concern of how to get more information by IFDS directly to coaches, as opposed to RNA officials, a spread sheet with contact information for many international coaches has been compiled. Hopefully this will help solve the lack of communication or filter down of information by RNA representatives to the coaches and athletes. It is our hope that this list can somehow be posted on-line and that coaches can somehow input updated contact information into the list.

The Commission continues to sit at the pleasure of the IFDS Executive Committee and is happy to address any concerns or issues presented.

Respectfully submitted

Betsy Alison

Chair, IFDS Coaches Commission