

REPORTING COMMITTEE – EVENTS

OTHER COMMITTEE – SAILING

Selection of Equipment for the Olympic Regatta

A submission from the International Snipe Class

PROPOSAL:

Submission to ISAF by Snipe Class International Racing Association (SCIRA) requesting selection of the Snipe as equipment for the men's dinghy event in the 2008 Olympics in Beijing China.

CURRENT POSITION:

REASON:

The SNIPE is a 15-1/2 foot (4.7 meters), 2 person, and one-design racing dinghy with a rich history. The SNIPE has evolved into a modern, tactical racing dinghy with fleets around the world. Although the SNIPE CLASS has some of the best competition in the world, the CLASS has not lost sight of the importance of the social aspects of our sport. The essence of the CLASS is summed up by its motto: "Serious Sailing, Serious Fun. ®"

Designed by William Crosby in 1931, the SNIPE plans were first published in Rudder Magazine. The SNIPE was originally designed to be built out of wood planks of 16 feet length. Modern construction techniques, including fibreglass, have been fully implemented in SNIPEs since 1964. Over 30,000 SNIPEs have been built in 73 years.

Competition in SNIPEs grew rapidly on a local level and exploded at the international level. The first World Championship was held in 1934. The first World Championship outside the US was held in Switzerland in 1947. The SNIPE CLASS has World Championships (qualification is required) every odd year in different regions of the world on a rotating basis. During the even years, there are hemisphere championships, which qualify the winners for the Worlds. Women, Master, and junior championships are held in alternating years. In the 2003 Worlds, there were 57 competitors representing 19 countries.

The CLASS Constitution was approved and ratified in 1932, and except for revisions duly debated and approved by the Board for modernization, the Constitution has provided stability, and it remains the rock upon which SNIPE sailing has its foundation. Measurement is strictly enforced at all levels of racing: International, Regional, and local. A Commodore (President) with a one-year term having previously served on the Board for two years and a Board of Directors that has term limits lead the CLASS. The International SNIPE CLASS has a paid Executive Director. A National Secretary leads each country, and a Fleet Captain leads each fleet.

There are over 1,500 SNIPEs actively racing in the world. There are over 3,000 registered juniors, Masters, Women, and seniors in 872-chartered fleets. The following table summarizes Class membership per country.

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Country	Total Class Members
Argentina	77
Bahamas	15
Belarus	5
Belgium	30
Bermuda	4
Brazil	164
Canada	19
Chile	12
Colombia	54
Cuba	8
Denmark	35
Finland	64
France	83
Germany	9
India	5

Country	Total Class Members
Italy	276
Japan	717
Korea	1
Norway	163
Paraguay	6
Poland	27
Portugal	94
Russia	64
Spain	261
Sweden	65
Ukraine	6
United Kingdom	33
United States	689
Uruguay	36
Total	3,022

With fleets in many countries, the SNIPE is available worldwide. There are SNIPE builders throughout the world: two in North America, 2 in South America, 3 in Spain, 1 in Denmark, 1 in Sweden, 4 in Italy, 3 in Japan and 1 in Russia. In addition, an average of 150 new SNIPEs *per year* have been built in the past 10 years, and the SNIPE Class is a non-manufacturer's class. Comparing double-handed International Class dinghies, the SNIPE remains one of the strongest in terms of new boats built each year.

The SNIPE is sailed worldwide by crews of all ages and sizes. The SNIPE is suitable for average physiques and has a wide range of competitive crew weights from 270 lbs (122 kg) to 345 lbs (156 kg). The boat responds to crew work, and although physically demanding, it is not destructive and does not exclude older competitors. It requires athleticism and that crews be in good physical shape.

The SNIPE is affordable, economical, and durable. A SNIPE can be obtained for US \$8,000 and lasts for approximately 8 years. Used boats can be sold for US \$3,000, resulting in a cost of US \$625 per year. Due to the cost of the boats, countries with limited budgets for athletics can compete and win. Cuba won the 1999 Worlds and the Pan American Games in 3 straight quadrennials. Few dinghies can claim such low annual cost and lifetime competitiveness. Sails can be obtained for only US \$ 900 and a mast for US \$ 800.

Due to 73 years of effort, the boat has evolved into a perfect blend of hull shape, weight, mast bend, and sophisticated rigging. The boats have proven seaworthy in the windiest of conditions, and in the case of a capsize, the SNIPE is easily righted and sailed away

without assistance. With a loose jib halyard, hankless jib, and boom-launched whisker pole, the SNIPE has characteristics of the asymmetrical spinnaker carrying classes in medium to strong winds. With the pole length adjustable, the downwind legs are open to more tactical opportunities.

Many consider the SNIPE to be the preferred training boat. Over the years, eventual and past champions in other classes – Felix Gancedo, Jorg Bruder, Mark Reynolds, Torben Grael, Alexandre Paradede, Mauricio Santa Cruz, Santiago Lange, John Shadden, Allison Jolly and Lynn Jewell Shore (who chose sailing the SNIPE Winter Circuit over competing and training in the 470 in Europe before winning the US trials and ultimately sailing for Olympic gold in 1988), Miyuki Kai, Ted Wells, Paul Elvstrom, Peter Commette, Paul Foerster, Carol Cronin/Liz Filter/Nancy Haberland (2004 US Olympians in the Yngling), etc. – all have developed the skills required for Olympic Sailing while racing the SNIPE.

The emphasis in SNIPE sailing is tactical with speed differentials between properly prepared boats minimal. It is easy to learn to sail, but still provides challenges for Olympic class sailors. Rig tuning, trimming of sails, subtle weight adjustment, and shifting gears during racing are easy to accomplish, but all are required to maintain optimum performance.

ISAF's requirements for boat selection emphasize sailor's physical diversity and equipment availability. Specifically as stated in 16.1.4 (a), ISAF's criteria for selecting Events & Equipment shall be that the equipment,

Must allow athletes around the world, male, female and of different size and weight, to participate

Must achieve the current IOC objective of the minimum level of participation for women

Must give the best sailors in each country the opportunity to participate in readily accessible equipment

Must combine both traditional and modern events and classes, to reflect, display, and promote competitive sailing.

The SNIPE fulfils the 16.1.4. (a) Criteria required by ISAF because:

Persons of any size or age can be competitive in SNIPES.

The SNIPE is economical and readily available worldwide. Fleets exist throughout the world.

The SNIPE CLASS holds a variety of events in different venues, rotating across the continents.

The SNIPE is a traditional design that has evolved into an exciting, modern race boat.

For the reasons outlined above, SCIRA requests and thanks ISAF for the consideration of the SNIPE for the men's dinghy event in 2008.