

## 2003 National Secretaries Meeting

Landskrona, Sweden

August 2, 2003

Swedish National Secretary Mats Gothlin called the meeting to order at 8:00pm and welcomed everyone to Sweden for the World Championship. Those in attendance were: Commodore Brainard Cooper, Nationals Secretaries: Past Commodore Birger Jansen-Norway, Bill Welch-USA, Fernando Tajuelo-Spain, Kai Saarhelo-Finland, Rene LeBour-France, Bibi Juetz representing Brazil, Harri Palm representing Canada, Mariano Arroyo representing Argentina, Diogo Talone representing Portugal, Rules Chairman Giorgio Brezich representing Italy, Vice Commodore Jiro Yamamoto and Yutaka Tsukatani representing Japan, Andrey Astashev representing Russia, Ben VanCauwenberg and Thierry Den Hartigh representing Belgium, Wolfgang Gerz representing Germany, SCIRA Board member Cliff Browning and Executive Director Jerelyn Biehl.

Commodore Brainard Cooper also welcomed all National Secretaries to the Worlds and thanked Mats for his hospitality.

Bill Welch made a motion to approve the minutes from the 2001 National Secretaries meeting as printed in the Snipe Bulletin. Motion seconded by Giorgio Brezich and passed.

**European Report:** Gilles Boisaubert submitted the following report: The situation in Europe is highly contrasted; some countries have difficulties but always with assistance of the national secretary; some countries are growing as new or renewed; some countries have high activity. The first lesson it shows us, is that, good or difficult, a situation is never definitive. And therefore the work of each of us as Snipe Class members is important; SCIRA officers but perhaps specially the fleet captain and single Snipe member to show everybody how interesting it is to be a Snipe member. It's my first year as European General Secretary and I try to do my best to help you. And one way to help people who work "on-line" is to give them the means they need. We have no financial means but we can improve our communication then our organization and coordination. This is a part of my aim and the Euro Calendar is one of my targets. To improve our coordination too and to have a better idea of the situation in the different countries, I introduced a form of report for each National Secretary in Europe. I want this to be filled yearly. Such quantified reports with written comments will let us know what the trend is in a country, if promotion is effective...and not to know how many decals have been paid and to discover some day during a National Secretaries meeting nobody is sailing Snipe anymore. Of course all this shouldn't prevent members from paying their dues! Euro calendar and National Secretary reports are the two objectives of this year. I wish the Euro Calendar will be available before the end of 2003 and every European National Secretary will give me or send me the National Secretary form so I can prepare a synthesis. As for the next months many other yards are to be opened or reopened (brochure, help for sponsorship, measurement, relationship with new countries,...) And for that, some jobs are opened. We need a Vice Euro, measurers, ... Thank you everybody for working together for the Snipe.

### **National Secretary Reports**

**Belgium:** We are sailing regattas outside the country to improve our level of sailors. We have won almost every national championship we have attended. Our main purpose is to

increase the number of SCIRA members. We are also combining our regattas with youth regattas and encouraging the juniors to sail Snipes.

**Argentina:** Most of our sailors are juniors and youth. Our current economics are difficult, so we are refinishing older boats. Juniors go directly from the Opti to the Snipe. The Rosario fleet and some interior fleets are the strongest.

**Brazil:** Bids for the 2004 Western Hemisphere & Orient were handed out. Report submitted by Affonso Abreu: Despite the well known economic difficulties that Brazil and other SA countries have been facing, the Snipe remains one of the strongest and most organized classes. Brazil has a slow but steady growth with our Nationals attendance as follows: 2001:35; 2002: 40; 2003:65. Two main factors contribute to this: existence of a local builder with boats for a reasonable price; constant renewal of the Class with young people coming out of the Optimist and even Laser to crew with more experienced sailors and in 1-2 years becoming skippers or owners. We may soon also have another builder in Rio with the factory that used to produce the Thor.

**Canada:** We have 4 boats in the Guelph, Ontario fleet and the majority in Oakville. We are sending a junior team to the Jr. Worlds in Russia and are holding regattas that are attracting the US boats.

**Finland:** We have been working on promotion, our website, boats shows and brochures. Interest is growing but we need to entice our owners to race. We have increased activity at the fleet level and I am active on the Promotion Committee for SCIRA. We had 21 at our 2003 Nationals.

**France:** Our situation is stable. We have 80-90 members and 50-60 boats. Our nationals were held in May. We have activities with Belgium and the UK and we want to work more with Spain. We are working with the French Federation to identify the Snipe as the senior boat. The 2004 Europeans will be held in France. More fleets are developing in France.

**Germany:** Report from Gunther Hautman and Wolfgang Gerz: The German Snipe fleet is increasing slowly but surely. The number of boats is stable with 6 and 3 new members. The second German Open was a grand success with 40 boats on the starting line (this is up 60% from last year!) All participants were enthusiastic as well about the organizing on and off the water. We're hoping to entice other German sailors to attend Snipe events and hope the German fleet will increase member by member, Snipe for Snipe.

**Italy:** We are strong. Italy hosted the 2002 Europeans in Anzio and we saw increased activity afterwards. 2004 World Masters will be held on Lake Bracciano. The north and central parts of Italy. We have 28 active fleets and a ranking list with 200 boats sailing. 310 members. We will have 70 boats at our Nationals in Trieste. Attracting juniors is tough as the Federation pushes 420, 470, Laser and a new dinghy for 5 people. We will send 2 crews to Russia for the Junior Worlds.

**Japan:** We are submitting a bid to host the 2005 Worlds in Gamagori. Our numbers stand at 630 boats and 650 skippers, the same numbers as the years before. All classes are declining in Japan, but the Snipe keeps even. Our goal is to have attractive regattas and events for our members. We ask each fleet to have target goals and have a philosophy that each fleet should provide an active event for their members.

**Norway:** We continue to grow. We had 64 at our nationals and fleets in the south continue to grow. Next week we will have 30 in our women's nationals and will host the 2004 Women's Worlds.

**Portugal:** We are growing and continue to join regattas with other classes. The Iberian Championship was begun again with Spain. We have approx. 50 boats and 34 attended our nationals. The Snipe is the best non-Olympic class in Portugal. We have few juniors as we attract the after 20 sailor. We would like to host the 2007 Sr. and Jr. Worlds in Cascais and Tavira. We need to increase our presence in international events, as we are strong at national events.

**Russia:** Thanks to Japan for donating the boats that began the Snipe Class in Russia. Currently we have 1 fleet with 49 active boats, 24 which were built by a Russian builder. We are holding the Jr. Worlds and the European Ladies. East Europe has increased with Belarus and the Ukraine. In Russia there are 35 members and many juniors. The senior competition is organized. We are inviting other juniors from other countries. There were 21 in St. Petersburg for our Nationals. In 2002 the website was created. Rulebook has been translated into Russian and is free off our website to help attract more sailors. The Snipe is the most developing fleet in the post-Soviet era and we are also the youngest fleet. We are pleased to invite anyone to attend our regattas. Our regattas are supported by sponsors and our government.

**Spain:** After 1 year at the Secretariat, friendship within the Class shows to have been improving. Legendary skippers are leaving the Snipe or they do not sail Snipes often while new young people join us. These legends appear distant (and even selfish in some cases) to newer people, but now, the most experienced skippers keep close to the young. New skippers and crews are in the range of 10-20 years of age. We have a problem with juniors. We have only a few, we are trying to promote them by organizing a separate Jr. national championship so as Jr. crews can gather and take the helm of their usual skippers' Snipes. At Mallorca Island, in the Balearics District, junior teams are looked after especially, they are doing a good job with them. There is a lack of women in the class. We think it is good to have girls and women sailing. They make a lot for a comfortable atmosphere. We have a little number of feminine teams, while number of mixed teams (one boy, one girl) raises. We are promoting them by giving a prize for the first mixed team qualified in important regattas. We have 188 skippers, 77 crews and 213 boats registered for this year and more people are requesting to pay their dues. I still have to prepare a list of the last members to send to SCIRA and make the proper bank transfer. I wish to emphasize the improvement in friendship in the class, especially in the Northern districts (Galicia, Asturias and Cantabria) and at the Cadiz fleet, which is at the southwestern corner of Spain. We try to take care of an atmosphere of good friendship among Snipe sailors in preference to selfish champions. We have been 75 boats at Nationals and 59 at the Spanish Cup. People from the South find hard to go to the north, while teams from the North are never lazy to go to the Mediterranean. Work together with Portugal increases. We have recovered Iberic Championship this year, but with little number of boats (around 40). The relative little success is supposed to be in relation with exams of student. Next year, Porto will repeat in organizing this event, but we will choose a coincident holiday in both countries. Iberic Championship has no entry fee and lodging has to be provided by the organizer. In October, there is a mixed teams regatta at

Cascais, near Lisbon. Number of Spanish entries will rise from the past years. Also, two Portuguese teams came to the Spanish Cup on Gijon.

**Sweden:** We have 4 active places; south, west coast, middle, Stockholm. We have 60-70 registered boats but we need more activity. There are 4 teams actively competing, but Stockholm is stronger. Most of our great local activity is through 2 active people at the fleet level. We had 21 at our nationals.

**United Kingdom:** in the UK we are struggling to keep our numbers. This year has been more difficult than normal. The number of people traveling are quite low but racing is still very close and competitive. However, we did have a boat in the Wiibroe Cup and some in Le Havre. We also expect some people to travel to the Belgian Nationals and the third leg of the Yves LeBour trophy. We have very few junior Snipe sailors in the UK. They are more interested in sailing faster, lighter boats, that progress them through to the Olympic classes. However, the people sailing Snipes are still an enthusiastic group of people promoting the class well. We are hoping for a good Nationals later in August. But due to how close it is to the Worlds we are expecting very few people to make the journey from Europe, but it will still be classes as the European Cup.

**United States:** We had a committee to study the revamping of our Nationals and we had our first implementation at our recent nationals. We have done some progressive things: US Snipe page ([www.snipeus.org](http://www.snipeus.org)) is a dedicated page to the US Snipe sailors separate from the SCIRA Int. page. We have created an on-line newsletter, Snipe Droppings, which is electronically mailed to those who request it, and have advertising to help support our efforts and additional exposure. 57,000 hits in one day were recorded during the Winter Circuit. We held a winter US Board meeting where we reviewed marketing and financial plans. Scuttlebutt, the on-line sailing newsletter, carries ads for the Snipe Class and Sailing World magazine carried an article on Augie Diaz with many photos from our website. We have made membership the largest issue for this decade, since our efforts will determine the future of our organization. Our membership continues to decline despite all our efforts. The greatest loss has been the Midwest where traditionally we were the strongest. The Sepanski family has continued to be a candle of hope in the heartland; we should all look to them for insight in fleet building and thank them for their hard work. We may be looking at a US dues increase in the 2004 budget. We have few juniors, but those we have are strong. My term is up Dec. 2003.

**Western Hemisphere & Orient:** no report

**East European Secretary:** SCIRA Eastern Europe is comprised of Russia, Poland, Belarus and Ukraine. Belarusian and Ukrainian associations were attended to SCIRA of Eastern Europe in 2001. The other Eastern European countries – Moldova, Estonia and Latvia are also very interested in developing this class in their countries. Moldavian yachtsmen have taken parting the East European Championship and have been applied for Jr. Worlds. The East Europeans are held in Moscow every year since 2001, which is organized as the part of Moscow Traditional Regatta. The latter has become a truly traditional one. This year sportsmen from Estonia and Latvia are going to apply. We are very pleased to invite European sailors to this Open Championship next year. We will have a joint training with Polish sailors and we would like to provide exchange programs between Poland and Moscow. We would be very happy to closely collaborate with East European countries and will do our best in order to increase SCIRA expansion over the region of Easter Europe and Baltic.

**New Business:** Board member Cliff Browning passed out a survey and results regarding the membership cards and discussed his presentation to the Board of Governors.

**Rules Proposals:** Giorgio Brezich summarized the proposals being brought to the Board of Governors meeting:

- 1) allow borrowing of sails for Masters and women's events
- 2) discussion of mainsail headboard measurement
- 3) proposal of gates at windward mark
- 4) advertising
- 5) mainsail stop at band at top of mast
- 6) centerboard: add +/- to max width
- 7) max. charter boat fee

**Proposals:**

Advertising: the majority of NS would support Category C.

Event Schedules: Kai Saarhelo proposed to look at the scheduling of big events to possibly make them shorter to assist with travel time. Giorgio Brezich responded that the Rules Committee is proposing shorter courses which may eventually change the Deeds of Gift to allow shorter regattas.

Worlds quota system: a committee will most likely be formed to evaluate the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the new quota system.

Website: requests to make it more colorful and alive with more graphics and animation. Bill Welch motioned to adjourn, seconded by Giorgio Brezich at 10:10pm.