

# SNIFE CLASS INTERNATIONAL RACING ASSOCIATION

2009

## National Secretaries Meeting San Diego, California, USA San Diego Yacht Club

1. The meeting was called to order Saturday, September 5, 2009 at 9:20am at the San Diego Yacht Club by Commodore Pedro Garra. Those in attendance were: Luis Pessanha, Vice Commodore; Harri Palm, Canada; Alessandro Rodati, Italy; Dante Bianchi, Brazil; Jiro Yamamoto, Secretary; Christian Skjoldvang Andersen, Denmark; Don Hackbarth, USA; Gilles Boisaubert, France; Juha Lehtinen, Finland; Kenji Abe, Japan; Birger Jansen, Norway and Jerelyn Biehl, Executive Director. Observers included Gene Soltero and Mary Buckley, USA.
2. Greetings from US National Secretary Don Hackbarth. Don welcomed everyone to the US and commented on the long history of the Snipe in San Diego. He wished everyone an excellent time on and off the water.
3. Approval of minutes from 2007 National Secretaries meeting: Don Hackbarth motioned to accept as distributed. Harri Palm seconded. Motion passed.
4. National Secretaries Meeting  
**ARGENTINA:** A report was read by Commodore Garra from NS Pancho Agusti. ARG has 50-70 boats. Our calendar has 6 regattas held in different parts of the country and includes rankings to promote various championships. We promote our events and have a good relationship with the FAY. In 2009 we were happy with the return of our measurer Alejandro Viacava. We have slow and sustained growth and we have many junior crews. Suggestions: improve the number of junior competitors at the Junior Worlds. ARG approved organizing the Junior and Senior Worlds together – this helped in efficiency of organization, coaching, boats, etc.  
**BAHAMAS:** no report  
**BELGIUM:** SCIRA Belgium is in good shape. During the Championship we had 28 starters. We are now, apart from the Optimist, the biggest Racing class. This was confirmed by the Federation. We travel a lot through Europe to attend races. The only problem to grow is to find good priced second hand boats.  
**BRAZIL:** Dante Bianchi reported that Brazil is a big country and that 4-5 years ago there were only 2 big cities actively sailing: Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo. The Class has changed and we have been moving the Nationals to areas to grow fleets. Salvador was the latest venue and there are now 56 boats in the region. In the following years – 2010 and after we will go to southern Brazil to grow. Our new builder is strong and helps promote sailing Snipes. Junior – mostly from Optimist sailing, move to Snipes or Lasers. We will hold the Master Worlds in 2010 in Rio, Sept. 19-26 when there is not too much wind. Races will be held in the morning. We don't have many Master sailors in Brazil right now but many will come back to race. Clube dos Jangadeiros will host the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Worlds by holding a Masters event in October.  
**CANADA:** Harri Palm noted that most sailing is centered in Guelph on the Lake. We now have 12-13 boats with 12 at the Nationals. Many new sailors are coming to the Class. Some Star sailors are moving to the Class, but we need boats to grow the fleet. There are 17-20 boat and 20-30 members. We host 2 major regatta a year, our Spring event and nationals in the summer. The 2010 WH&O Championship will be held at Buffalo Canoe Club. Harri is working on getting younger sailors into the Snipe. Toronto has submitted a bid to host the 2015 Pan Am Games.  
**DENMARK:** Christian Anderson reported that the Class is status quo. Wiibro Cup is our main event and also serves as our Nationals. 12 boats sailed for Denmark in the Wiibro Cup. Our fleets are mainly Espergaerde and Faaborg.  
**FINLAND:** Juha Lehtinen reported that Finland has had 59 sailors in major regattas, with 29 boats registered in 6 active fleets: Helsinki, Lappeeranta, Turku, Pori, Tampere and Oulu. There were 22 boats at the Finnish Nationals in Tampere. Our ranking system has 6 regattas and 63 sailors participates. Ville Aalto-Stealla is our new Champion and he is sailing with his 12 year-old son. A discussion was held on the European Deed of Gift and age limits. Finland olds old timer Classic

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regattas with boats built in the 50-60s and 60-70s with an emphasis on Serious Fun. Finland had 1 competitor at the Winter Circuit and 1 in the Swedish Nationals and 2 boats at the Worlds.

**FRANCE:** Gilles Boisaubert reported that the situation in France both for Snipes and for other classes (with maybe the exception of the 505) is getting critical. At the beginning of the season, the number of entries in many races was dramatically low, hardly ever exceeding 6 boats at best. Even the events organized by the French sailing Federation, which should have been a highlight in the season, failed to attract more than 3 Snipes – this might prove very detrimental to the image of our Class. For the first time in 40 years the race at Audierne had to be cancelled. Only 2 races attracted more than 10 boats: The Le Havre competition in June and the Nationals in Lorient in July. This entails that some clubs are getting reluctant to organize races for such a poor attendance. Why such a low turnout? The calendar offers a nice variety of races but members seem to have other points of interest that keep them away from their boat. Clocking a whole weekend for a competition might look too much to some of them. Older members are getting older and younger ones have new families to keep them busy or houses to improve during their leisure time. The main point being that driving 600 km in the night to and from a race is not appealing to people any longer, not to mention the increased cost of such outings. The Annecy fleet has practically disappeared again but there is good hope of building a new one in the northwest of Paris where a sailor has moved. We can only hope that the last part of the season will be better with several races around Paris which usually draw a number of competitors. To finish on a brighter side, let's not forget we still have sailors who are very dedicated to the class and who keep going abroad (Belgium, Spain, Italy) and sail races where competition is high. We must also mention the website maintained by Gilles Boisaubert which is still very successful in and outside the class. It is very complete with information, a history of the class, the calendar, results, etc. The French Bulletin is published 3 times a year.

**GERMANY:** no report

**ITALY:** Alessandro Rodati reported that Italy is very strong with 160-170 boats. We have active fleets mostly in the Northern and middle of the country. We hold 4 National events, 1 National Championship and 1 medium event with 40 boats. The Piada Trophy, held in Cervia, is one of the most attractive events in Europe. Everyone is invited to participate and we stress Serious Fun with a go-kart race, pasta and wine. We'd like to extend this invitation to all and we will provide accommodation. We currently have 10 junior boats. In 2010 we are working on a Circuit from Cervia, Venice, Monfalcone and Croatia.

**JAPAN:** Kenji Abe reported that Japan has 1100 members. Japan has 10,000 sailors and SCIRA Japan has 10% of the Japanese sailing. We have 7 active fleets that hold local championships. Our Nationals had 65 boats. In 2008 we had many younger and experienced teams and the young team won. In 2008 we had 9 teams attend the WH&O Championship; 1 in the Piada Trophy and in 2009, 3 in the Worlds, 1 in Piada and 2 at the Junior Worlds. The economy has prevented us from sending full teams. The age increase of the Juniors has been very good for Japanese younger sailors who are much more active. SCIRA Japan has applied that ALL sailors must be members, not just from the Nationals up.

**NORWAY:** Birger Jansen reported that Norway is in a stable situation. There were 50-60 boats at the Nationals, spread across 4 active fleets. Many sailors travel around the world. It is difficult to purchase new boats in Norway.

**POLAND:** The following report was sent by Zbigniew Rakocy. Snipes in Poland are very successful. In 2007 we had 18 boats old and new. In the year 2008 arrived 3: 2 Skipper and 1 Persson. In 2009 as well we have 2 new Perssons. This represents an increase in the period between the Worlds (2007 & 2009) of 28%. I consider it a big success and I hope that it will continue to grow in Poland as dynamic as it is or better. Our competitors took part in many international events. We participated in the 2007 Worlds in Porto, the Jr. Worlds in Italy, European Championships in Las Palmas, Women's Worlds in Spain and the World Masters in Trieste. In addition, every year we take part in numerous regattas in Italy, Belgium and Benelux. Please note that Poland is in Eastern Europe and the minimum distance is 1200km. although with sponsors we can compete with the best in Europe and worldwide. We regret that we could not send a team to these Worlds. In Poland we annually conduct the Polish Championships with Primavera Polis Cup regatta. A combination of both can provide support from well-known beverage manufacturer San Benedetto. During the year we conduct a series of regattas for the Polish Cup. This is usually 10 regattas at various open expenses. Our best crew is two young guys – Piotr Manzak and Tomek Waszak. In 2009 we organized also the

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European Cup 2009 sponsored by San Pellegrino brand owned by Nestle Group. That event was a huge success with 26 crews of 4 countries. I would like to bring it up about sponsorship in the public of Snipe Class because my previous activities with sponsors led to development in Class in Poland and a very broad interest in sailors from other classes.

**PORTUGAL:** Luis Pessanha reported that activity in Portugal decreased after the Worlds in 2007, but in 2009 we saw many Olympic sailors coming to the Class. We have 30 boats and 60 members. We share our Champions with the Spanish in the North and South. Our fleets are in Oporto and Lisbon and we are building a fleet in the Algarve. We plan to catch junior sailors with a strategy with fleets and clubs. We have 3 masters crews which is new for our class.

**SPAIN:** Fernando Tajuelo submitted the following report: The generational change firstly announced at 2003 keeps on. At present there are a lot of young people around 20 years old. The number of juniors is increasing. The lack of girls is still observed, but more girls are sailing now, especially among the younger sailors. We have gathered around 880 boats at both qualifying regatta: Spanish Cup and National Championship. Although our Nationals continue to be closed, we admit up to 8 foreign teams as guests. We have applied for the 2011 Worlds and are interested in the 2012 Master Worlds.

**SWEDEN:** The Snipe situation in Sweden is as it has been for the last few years with about 50 boats and 80 members. The Swedish Championship was arranged by the new Snipe fleet in Vastervik. There were 23 boats starting, but the best thing was that we were 20 Swedish boats this time which is good compared with last year. During this season we have also launched a new website that has made it easier to update and to communicate with the members. Same web address as before but with a new look. We have also noticed more interest for the Snipe Class due to the fact that EC will be arranged in Norway 2010. Sweden will have 1 boat competing at this Worlds. We haven't had any junior teams competing this year. Hopefully the WC 2011 will be held in Denmark because we believe that is very positive for the Snipe Class in northern Europe.

**USA:** Don Hackbarth reported that USA membership and boat registration is struggling to maintain a level of 700 and boat registrations of 500. We expect to end up in 2009 with between 675 to 700 members and 485-500 boats. We have been maintaining a historically high number of juniors (approx. 8-100). Our Masters category is now over 50% of our membership and a much higher % of our boat owners. Numerous older fleets are dying out, largely on the inland lakes but several new fleets or revivals of previously dormant fleet is being experienced. This years registrations indicate a significant increase in the number of beginner sailors or people with a moderate amount of sailing experience but new to the Snipe. There has been a notable increase in the registration of older boats which have been dormant for several years. Also, at Jerelyn's suggestion, USA has been promoting the Classic/wooden Snipe. There appears to be a significant number of older/retired sailors out there that have strong emotion regarding their past years sailing Snipes and/or a keen interest in restoring wooden Snipes. John Rose is leading the charge to cultivate this market for membership and it is working but slowly. We will host a class Snipe rally in conjunction with the US Masters Championships. The finances remain quite adequate. We have not needed to raise our basic dues for the past 5 years. We are operating on a very tight, breakeven budget but at the same time funding several promotional and Class development projects. The factors in our ability to maintain financial strength have been 1) adoption 5 years ago of a volunteer based model; 30% of our membership pays a premium (voluntary) membership fee; a portion of our promotional expenses are funded by the earnings of a fund established by member donations and a donor who contributed to help fund clinics and other activities designed to recruit new members. Participation has been down at our major events however at the same time the events that are shorter and involve less travel time are seeing greater participation. USA introduced a new DVD "Tuning and Better Boat Handling" It is for sale on the USA website. US maintains its own database which contains much more information re our members than SCIRA Int. collects. From our database we not only mail our US Snipe Sailor but also send email communications to designated portions, or all of our membership. We have on our website a searchable pdf file of all our current members and registered boats. It is updated at least weekly and is available to any person managing/verifying registrations for events. We do not use the ODB for any purpose other than to provide the membership cards to our members attending international events. Our Board has formed a committee which has reviewed the USA database and the ODB and it has concluded that double direct entry of membership and boat data into a nations' database and the ODB is an inefficient use of the overall class resources. They strongly recommend

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that a method to download the information that SCIRA Int. wants from each nation's database be established immediately. USA has offered to help in its development and possibly its costs. USA also considers the rule re membership cards to be redundant and inefficient use of overall class resources when an ODB of members and boat registrations is being used. USA also requests that in the case where a nation has an administrator, in addition to a national secretary, that the Executive Director work more directly and effectively with the nation's administrator, while at the same time keeping the National Secretary informed of communications. Many US members were shocked to see the SCIRA Low Point scoring system dropped without extensive discussion at the national level. USA will be considering recommending to event organizers the modification of the SI's rules re: DNF, DNS and TLE to conform to the prior SCIRA Low Point approach.

**URUGUAY:** Pedro Garra read the report submitted by Maria. We started in 2008 with the preparation of WH&O in Punta del Este, an excellent championship which promoted the snipe sailing in Uruguay throughout the 2008. Unfortunately, this year the membership has decreased to 8 boats & 18 members, which represents a 34% decrease in comparison to 2008. Such situation is due to, on one hand, fewer places to classify for the World Championships and on the other, the appearance of 420, and laser as Olympic class for women, which are easier boats to get in Uruguay for sailors after Optimist. However, the Juniors sailors have gone on with the training for the world championship as well as the Seniors who classified. We are still looking forward to maintain the ranking system to attract sailors, encouraging juniors to sail with the seniors and sail with others fleets near Uruguay to increase our competency. For the next year, because of my duty as the new NS, the proposal is to motivate our fleet with championships like the South American and the WH&O, and show the Snipe to the Optimist sailors, who are our future.

5. European Report: Stefano Longhi submitted the following report:

The situation is stable even if some countries are growing up like Poland and Croatia and for some is impossible for me to contact the NS of Belarus, Russia and Ukraine so we cannot know the situation. It will be useful to control again if the email is correct. I ask to Zibi Rakocy, as East European Secretary, to contact them if possible. This year we had the first edition of Sergio Michel Trophy for the winning crew of the South European Championship held in Caldonazzo with 33 boats representing four nations Italy, Germany, Poland and Brazil. Rochelli-Semec won a very nice trophy made in wood from an artist from Trieste donated by Sergio Michel's family. This is a perpetual Trophy and next year the SE Championship will be held again, after many years, in Croatia.

This year we had again in Croatia a nice regatta in Omisalj (Krk Island) to test the race area for next year. The regatta was won by Rochelli-Semec and we hope Croatia will have an increase in the future because the NS Damir Vranic has a good Snipe spirit for "serious sailing but serious fun" and wants to organize events.

Poland organized the European Cup, the first regatta with money prizes, on Poznan lake where the first two places qualify for the next European Championship. There were on the water 26 boats representing 4 nations Belgium, Italy, Great Britain and Poland. All the regattas had won by Belgium teams and the overall winners were Jansen-Jacobs.

Italy organized for the third year the Piada Trophy where we had 60 boats from 11 countries, a little "World Championship", with teams of very high level like Augie Diaz or Bruno Bethlem. This is and will be in the future an international event very important to give possibility to the people can't be qualified for the Worlds or Europeans to sail with big champions and to have a great fun after regattas with all due respect of our motto "Serious sailing but serious fun". Bethlem-Paradedda won the regatta.

Denmark organized the Wibroe Cup, another "classic" regatta, with the participation of 51 boats from 6 countries. This is another international regatta that gives the opportunity to sail with the best snipe sailors. Hens-Michel won the regatta.

Spain organized the Copa de Espana in the Mar Menor with 86 boats and 3 countries represented.

Italy, in Sanremo, organized the Euro masters but unfortunately the title wasn't assigned because the number of countries represented wasn't sufficient.

Italy, in Trieste, organized the World Masters with 66 boats representing 14 countries. The event was very unlucky due to weather conditions with too much wind or no wind so only 1 race was sailed and wasn't possible to assign the Trophy entitled to Id Crook. Even if we had no races the organization in the 2 clubs STV and YCA was perfect with food, drink and parties every night.

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In Italy this year we had again the Junior Championship with 10 boats and also Spain had the Junior Championship with 26 boats. I haven't news about Junior Championship in other countries.

## Proposals

I have 2 proposals to change the DoG of Junior European and European Championship. I heard the owners (UK and Italy) before doing the proposals and they agreed with me. For the Juniors my idea is to delete all the limits in participation if we want to increase the junior sailing. I have also another suggestion to NS regarding the organization of Junior events. In Italy and Spain the organization of Junior event must be always few days before a national championship and with this system this is the fourth year, in Italy, we can have a junior championship.

The other change concerns the DoG of European Championship to delete the rule that the skipper and crew must be of the same country. In The Worlds and WH&O Championship only the skipper must be of the country he represents. I think the actual rule is also against the Bosman sentence where is written must be a free circulation of athletes in the countries of Europe and to equalize the European DoG with the others.

During the meeting in Oporto I was charged to study a system for an international ranking list. In these two years I studied many possibilities but it's not easy to have a fair system. The first problem is to decide a different weight for the score of different level regattas. The weight could be fixed (1 for Worlds, 0,8 for Europeans and WH&O, 0,6 for Nationals and International regattas) or, like tennis, depending who will race. This second idea has the problem to find a system to assign to every sailor a score (perhaps we can study the ISAF system but it's very plodding).

The second thing to decide is the number of regattas for the ranking list (Worlds or Continental, the Nationals and some international regattas, Wibroe, Piada, Copa de Espana o Campeonato Iberico) and the number of discards.

The third problem is to find an easy system for all the World to have the same software for the regatta results. The NS of the country where the regatta is held must be responsible to send to the coordinator of the ranking list the file in the right format.

The idea for the international ranking list was Belgian because at the time they had few regattas in Belgium and they wanted to have a system to reward who sails also in other countries.

If you want I can continue to study a system. I can be helped by Daniela Semec, wife of Fabio Rochelli.

## Future regattas

For next years we need from Europe bids for these regattas:

- 2011 Euro Master
- 2011 European Cup
- 2011 East Europeans
- 2011 Ladies Europeans
- 2012 Yamaguchi Women's Worlds (North Europe)
- 2012 Europeans (South Europe)

I need also to know where and when the Nordics will be held next year.

Lastly there is a possibility for next year to have a summer circuit in July, like the winter circuit in USA, in Italy and Croatia with Piada Trophy, a regatta in Trieste and the South European Championship in Croatia for 10 days. Alberto Perdisa and Pietro Fantoni are studying this opportunity

6. Western Hemisphere & Orient Report – no report

7. East European Report – no report

8. Championship Bids – confirmation of various events with approval at the Board meeting

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9. New Business – none

10. Old Business.

**Online Database:** the ODB is currently being used by just about all countries with success. Minor adjustments continue to be made to improve the usability and function.

**Rulebook:** The SCIRA Rulebook has not been printed to date as the Board of Governors voted to delay due to ISAF's requirement to conform our class rules to their template. The Rulebook in its current entirety is posted on the website for viewing and download or printing. The individual sections are also available in these formats. As soon as the Board, the Technical Committee and ISAF have a better idea on the timing, the members will be informed.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:40am