



Region EC Wakeboard Boat Council

EC Wakeboard Boat Council Meeting Minutes – London 12 / 13 November 2022

Present: Nuno Eca (POR), Linda Johnston (IRE), Colin Hart (GBR), Stefano Duranti (ITA),

1. Nuno welcomed all members to the EC Council meeting in London. Unfortunately, low numbers are represented at the meeting. We have a full agenda and plan for a productive meeting while trying to fully cover our extensive agenda.

Apologies: Maria Bulgakova (UKR), Paul Johnston (IRE), Alexey Philippov (RUS)

Agreed that exemptions apply to the circumstances of MB, PJ and AP

No apology or communication has been received from NS.

The bye laws were consulted regarding the number of meetings missed by a Council member.

Given that there has been no communication from NS, it was agreed that the Chair will write to NS to seek an explanation for his absence at the meeting. A response will be requested within 10 days.

2. Conflict of Interests
– None were declared

3. Minutes of the meeting in Frankfurt, April 2022, Germany were approved.

4. Admincom Report.

The report was circulated, agreed and submitted to Admincom by NE

5. Administration

Claims deadline - we need to apply strict rules to the management of the deadline for submission of claims – some claims remain outstanding from 2022.

NE proposed a tighter deadline of 2 weeks following any event with a warning that beyond that date, claims will not be paid. CH commented that LJ has issued all requests and reminders and has been pushing proactively the submission of claims. Officials will receive the claim form with their selection letter and will be informed regarding the deadline. A reminder will be issued following the event. No reimbursement will be made after the deadline has passed.

Officials were not fully reimbursed for the World Championships and those who attended the World Games received no expenses. They had been informed of this prior to agreeing to accepting the appointment. NE has asked for some form of financial help for the travel costs incurred, either partial or full assistance for the European officials that attended the event. The council has decided to wait until the beginning of 2023 where the possibility of covering the costs for those officials would be considered.

IWWF has established a working group to consider this issue and to bring forward recommendations as it is impacting on all disciplines. Hopefully in the future all events organized at a world level will be covered fully by IWWF and our council will not have to cover, even if partially, any costs incurred.

Correspondence –

- Letter of thanks to German Federation – hosts of the 2022 Seminar in Frankfurt, Germany.
- Letter of thanks to German Federation hosts of E&A Championships, Cologne Germany
- Letter of thanks to Laurent Vanneste – organizer and host of the Euro Tour Stop held in Belgium
- Invoices issued to Malibu – June 2022 - €10,000. July 2022 - €10,000
- Invoice issued re. Euro Tour Stop, BeAwake, Belgium September 2022 - €6,500
- All claims received have been submitted for payment. Some claims remain outstanding.
- General correspondence re emails – re EMS, IWWF

Action agreed – in early 2023 to write to all National Federations to request the dates of their National Competitions for 2023 and the composition of the official panel. This will allow us to ensure EMS is updated accordingly and to offer support where required. This letter will contain a reminder to all Federations regarding the importance of the use of the EMS for events and the uploading of results.

6. Seminars

- In April 2022 – a very successful seminar was hosted by the German Federation in Frankfurt. Good numbers of judges attended however we were disappointed with the numbers of calculators present. This was disappointing, despite the efforts made to reach out to encourage attendance especially from the local European countries.

- 2023 Judging Seminar – 5 countries have expressed an interest in hosting a seminar - Greece, Portugal, Ireland, Switzerland, UK

A template of the requirements and the responsibility for the costs has been pulled together. This was discussed and amended as required.

We agreed to reach out to all those who have expressed interest sharing the template and seeking a response with proposals and costs.

- 2023 Driving Seminar

It was agreed that it is necessary to hold a separate seminar for drivers and this needs to be a priority for 2023

NE – agreed to review and update the guidelines for National Drivers

NE - agreed to review and update the framework for International drivers

- Online Seminars

NE and AP continue to pursue a suitable platform for us to get this package online.

There are technical issues with the control of viewing the videos online – in order to prevent use of pause on the video while completing the exam.

We also need to future proof this by creating the tutor videos available on the platform.

Written exams to be completed online for 1*,2* and 3* judges.

The theory and examination will be backed up by some two hour live sessions - Q&A modules for dealing with explanations and questions from judges

NE – agreed to revisit the previous materials / scripts collated to update them.

7. Events

- 2022 E&A Championships, Cologne Germany

The Chief Judge report has been completed, submitted and circulated to Council.

The council would like to specially thank Stefano Duranti as Chief Judge for his work and managing the E&A Championships, the official team who responded to the presenting challenges and also to the German Federation for hosting the event and for working with the local organizer to resolve issues as they arose.

It was agreed that where there are delegation arrangements to a 3rd party organizer, this needs to be included in the LAO so every party involved knows exactly what each responsibilities, duties and obligations are.

A guidance checklist has been developed setting out each element of the event and who is responsible – this will also be issued to the organizer and the host Federation to enable clarity about the responsibility for provision of each element.

- 2022 Euro Tour Stop – Be Awake, Belgium

A very successful event was held in Kuurne, Belgium, hosted by Laurent Vanneste and his local team, supported by Malibu as part of our ongoing contract. It was recognised that significant work had gone into the set-up of the event site and it was attended by a number of invited VIP guests. This brought a new audience to our sport and the atmosphere was great. The event was attended by 16 athletes who all enjoyed the opportunity to compete for a cash prize. Cash prize fund - €6,000

It was recognised that competition fatigue was probably an issue due to the intensity of having both the World Championships and the Europe and Africa Championships.

- 2021 World Championships – Rieti, Italy

The event took place from 25 to 30 July 2022. The Italian Federation worked exceptionally hard to host an amazing event with super organisation.

The Chief Judge was Rob lacconi and some issues arose due to a particular way of managing his team, which resulted in some complaints from teams and athletes.

Regarding the European officials, the trust was re-established a week later at the European Championships.

While 160 riders participated, there was no doubt that the recent emergence from covid and the increased costs of travel impacted on the numbers and representation from countries, however the standard of riding was exceptional and the event was a success.

- 2022 World Games – Alabama, USA

Unfortunately, there were a number of withdrawals by riders and replacements were nominated. Some of these were very last minute.

European officials attended and were able to adapt to the environment and the event which ran smoothly.

European riders performed well - 2 Open men were on the podium and 4 out of the 6 Open Men finalists were European riders.

- 2023 Europe & Africa Championships

The proposed dates currently are 17 to 21 July OR 14 to 19 August in Bruges, however this has to be confirmed along with confirmation of the venue. This has been requested as a matter of urgency from the organiser.

We will also require a written bid to host the event from the Belgian Federation.

- 2023 European Malibu Tour Stops -

The proposed dates currently are

22/23 July - Lake Geneva, Switzerland

5/6 August OR 26/27 August – Cologne, Germany

16/17 September – tbc ? Spain, Italy, France

The format of the tour will be discussed further, as we can be flexible with these stops and test out new and more exciting formats for the riders and spectators.

- Other events

SD proposed a new format /style of event as an inter club / inter country competition to promote and ensure the engagement of riders at all levels in International competition. Some options were discussed and SD will bring forward a proposal for such an event.

8. Business

- Finance

Outstanding expenses will need to be cleared as soon as possible – 2 weeks deadline. CH will action

The costs are increasing significantly for travel and hosting events – this was considered in forward planning for the 2023 events budget.

- Cost projection/ Sponsorship/ Malibu Contract

The Malibu contract is with the US team for signature, it is hoped that this can be addressed as soon as possible.

The partnership relationship is working very well and planning into 2023 and 2024.

We will require a package for seeking additional sponsorship avenues. The footage of this season's events will now be available to use for promotion with potential sponsors. We may need to fund expertise for the creation of a promotional video

There was a significant discussion regarding the creation of a team required to support live streaming and the costs/ purchase of necessary equipment in order that we can manage this ourselves to ensure the standard is as we wish.

The IWWF Business Committee - CH has recently taken on the role of chair of this committee and will report back to Council

9. 2023 Rules

Although at the European Championships several teams and athletes said they would be proposing changes for the rules, there have only been 2 communications to Council regarding suggestions for the rules.

Council had a call with Enzo Molinari.

Each point was discussed in detail and largely the principles and communication

were accepted. However, while actions are required for the judging seminar and the Team Captains' meeting, this discussion did not result in written changes to the rules. In order to support the principles discussed there was agreement that the communication at the Team Captains' briefing is key and that there are a number of points for discussion to be raised with judges at the next international judging seminar, and at the judges meeting prior to events, especially in relation to the judging criteria adopted specifically for each event

An email was received from Hugo Charbit -
Agreed that for gated free ride and international titled events there will be a maximum of 5 tricks per pass. This will not necessarily apply to National events and at all age categories, as this would not be appropriate for the very junior riders.

It was agreed that we should find a way to experiment having 5 judges and losing both the top and the bottom score. Hopefully throughout 2023 season we will have the chance of trying this solution and see its advantages and disadvantages.

Allowance for officials – it was agreed that this would professionalise the officials and allow us to require more from them during events. The council will work towards having enough funds at international events to allow for this to happen.

It was agreed that the Chief Judge in agreement with the official team will always aim to accommodate the best conditions for the riders and will consider the venue and the weather to obtain the optimum conditions for the riders. This means adapting the schedule to try to have the best conditions possible, which is something all riders understand.

Official Familiarisation was discussed in depth further to the challenges faced at the World Championships in Italy. This had resulted in changes for the E&A Championships which were unpopular with the riders and Federations, due to lack of knowledge of those changes.

It was agreed that the Official Familiarisation will replicate the competition requirements and will therefore be 1 simulation pass including falls.

The cost of Official Familiarisation will need to be adjusted accordingly.

This will also enable better management / timing of the days of the competition

Competition Formats –

The goal is to have more flexibility to be added to the options governing the rules options for events. In order to achieve that, some new competition formats will be introduced for the next version of the rules, while still maintaining the possibility of homologating those events and have the points count towards the annual ranking. We will first introduce just a few new formats and variations of the existing format, so the change is not too drastic and allows for testing of those new formats.

The Heat System will be further enhanced and improved, so that it becomes even more fair in all situations, regarding seeding. Some variations will also be considered such as mixing our existing heat system with a head to head. Regarding the judging criteria, and connected to some of the new formats, for some events there may be the introduction of event specific criteria, such as mandatory tricks and families of tricks, or even the addition of other criteria.

10. Communication / PR

MB was unable to be present due to the increased conflict and travel issues in Ukraine and therefore no report was delivered
– to be carried forward

11. Social Media

MB was unable to be present due to the increased conflict and travel issues in Ukraine and therefore no report was delivered
– to be carried forward

12. Federations

SD reported that despite his efforts in contacting several federations where we haven't seen participation of riders at international events, not many have responded. Feedback from those who did is that there are not many people involved in the wakeboard boat scene. We need to keep on pushing by areas of Europe (North, Central, East – West and South are well represented), and keep on trying to find people willing to be more involved in their federations.

LJ will write to all Federations to request information regarding their nationals and support required with EMS and upload of results.

13. Legal

Nothing to report

14. Athletes Report

A report was submitted by PJ.

E&A Championships – overall a great success, enjoyed by the athletes in terms of the boat/ wake, location with perfect riding conditions. There was a good live stream set up, especially on Friday and Saturday enabling family and friends at home to watch the event. Further consideration for the athletes should have been given to the provision of shade particularly at the dock and water. Official Familiarisation was an issue, as the changes were made very close to the event and although this had been communicated to Federations, the change was not what the riders were expecting. This needs to be clearly set out in the rules and clearly communicated for the future. PJ joined the meeting for the discussion on this and regarding rules.

Euro Tour Stop, Belgium – Overall this event was very successful and enjoyed by the athlete who attended. Earlier notification of the date and bulletin would have helped better attendance. Athletes enjoyed the event, were more than happy with the boat/ wake and a good event was created by the organizer. The site was narrow and there were some issues with backwash. The narrow course added to the excitement for riders and spectators, however an additional couple of meters either side would have been ideal.

EMS – all riders had been registered and licenses purchased as per requirements for entering events.

Athletes Representative – PJ has been discussing with Massi the need to pass this role on to another rider and since Massi is interested and a name that has the approval of a vast majority of the riders, it makes sense to have a smooth transition of representative. PJ has been most honoured to have been elected by his peers and to have served on the EC for 4 years. He gave apologies for not being present at the

meeting in London, due to recent knee surgery following his injury at the E&A Championships. Council discussed this procedure and the role will be passed on at the E&A Championships in 2023. Although the process needs to be handled independently from the council or the official team at the European Championships. The council will provide guidance on the procedure and facilitate the election of the new Athletes Representative.

- Athletes of the Year – voting took place

Men – Stefano Commollo

Women – Chiara Virag

LJ will complete the nomination forms for admincom

15. IT

Web Portal – We will be making approaches to web developers in order to have a new web portal working for our discipline, similar to some other disciplines within the IWWF. AP will contact people who may be willing to help us either for free or for a small fee.

NE and AP to further develop the online platform (that will be integrated with our webportal) for the online seminars.

Judging app – After a meeting with the students working on this app, more requirements and specifications will be passed to them, so that we can have such an app developed in several stages, in which a first stage allows for input of scores, a second stage allows for input of the runs of the riders and a third stage will integrate some form of AI that will be able to predict the passes of the riders.

16. EMS

Ranking list has been completed and issued, however there are still some amendments required in order that it operates correctly.

Some further decisions are required about the coefficients for the ranking to ensure that the system works. It would seem that national events, apart from the national championships, will have their coefficient slightly reduced so that the importance of participating in international events remains higher than participation at several national events.

NE will work with AP to propose these changes and they will be reflected in the rules. These rules must be sent to Peter Frei as soon as possible to enable the EMS development team to integrate them in time before the season starts.

17. Relations with other Disciplines

NS was not present and there is no report

NE will pick this area up in NS absence

A document review will be undertaken to scope any areas to gain learning from the experience and rules of other disciplines.

Regarding Seminars – how are the other disciplines using technology and flexible options to run seminars and how can we learn from them.

18. Coaching / Schools

NS was not present and there is no report

Cesare had made a presentation to Council and he promotes a coaching framework used in Italy.

We will need to do further work to define baselines and 1* & 2* levels for coaches. It is however recognized that there are countries that already have frameworks issued by National Sports Governing bodies. It would be useful to get access to understand how the levels are structured and the syllabus for each of the levels, in order to share this knowledge with the Federations who do not have such a framework and to provide some consistency in availability and standards to all riders no matter where they live across Europe.