Schriftwechsel zu Anträgen und Stellungnahmen des Ressorts Wildwasserrennsport des DKV an das ICF Wildwasserrennsport Komitee

Am 9. Februar 2020 an das ICF-WW-Komitee per Email:

Betreff: Proposals and positions of german wildwater racing

Dear members of the ICF Wildwater Committee,

I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our position on the latest rule changes and the ideas presented at the Nations Meeting in Seu. As far as I know, our head coach present had already voted accordingly.

This is not only my personal opinion, or only that of the national team coaches. The following explanations were discussed and unanimously evaluated by the wildwater racing department meeting. The department meeting is the highest wildwater specific organ in the German canoeing Federation. Therefore, there can be no more representative and serious voice for Germany.

Proposal: Withdrawal of the changes to 8.1.1: Minimum width of the hull.

Boat dimension should be the same for all kind of races. Minimum width of the hull should be kept 60cm, 70cm and 80cm.

We do not consider changes to the geometrical boat definition to be useful.

An increase in the minimum boat weights could be in the interest of sustainability and the development program, because used boats remain usable and competitive for longer. We expressly do not request this increase because we consider constancy in the regulations to be more important than this possible advantage.

Proposal: Withdrawal of the changes to 20.5 / 48.1: Course length and Mass start

Course length should be limited to 30 minutes. Mass starts (or Parallel starts) should not be part of wildwater racing in any way.

In our opinion, whitewater racing is a race of an athlete in his boat, with the river, against the clock. NOT against other athlets.

In the case of a mass start, we see an increased risk of boat damage and serious injuries. In our opinion, there is no way to completely control and judge a whitewater course to guarantee a fair race. We fear enmity rather than friendship between athletes in our whitewater family. The requirements of a reasonably fair mass start at a river limit the choice of competition venues even more.
This decision is based on experience with mass start races from the 90s to mid 2000s and the attempt to establish a parallel sprint in white water in Germany.

Mass start is already part of Canoe Sprint, Marathon and e.g. the Canoe Marathon Classic Series. Whitewater should stand out from the other disciplines (see especially the Marathon "short race") and define its niche even more. We believe that this is the only way we can stand up to the other disciplines within ICF in the long run.

Upcoming international events:

We are critical of the possibility of awarding further international events to China. So far, there have been international races in China in 2018 and the World Cup at the end of 2019. However, we are not aware of any ambitions from China to build up a whitewater racing team. A positive sign in this respect would be the participation of Chinese athletes in races outside of China. The awarding of international events should not be concentrated on individual nations in a short period. On the other hand, due to the high logistical and financial costs, we lose other nations and lose athletes due to individual political reservations.

We propose not to give any more races to nations that do not participate in international racing.

Number of Athletes in Final

We do not endorse any quota system for final participation in any way. As a competitive sport, participation in the finals, and therefore the chance of winning the title, must depend purely on sporting performance.

C2

Yes, we need an idea for the declining starting field in the C2 classes. However, we do not believe that C2mix is an appropriate response. With the introduction of C2mix instead of C2man and C2 woman, the abolition of C2 class would only be accelerated. Also in the restriction from C2 to Classic (or Sprint) we see no advantages.

Kind regards

Achim Overbeck

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Antwort von Tomislav Crnković, ICF Board Member und ICF WWC Chairman vom 2. März 2020

**Dear Achim,**

Many thanks for your very comprehensive feedback about rule changes and future international events as a result of the meeting in La Seu last year. The Wildwater committee met two weeks ago and was able to fully discuss all the points that you have raised.

We had a detailed review of your feedback informed by other nations feedback at last year’s meeting. In summary the committee agree with your proposals to maintain the number of athletes in the finals and to continue fully supporting C2’s as a class. This is fully in line with our objective to grow the sport at National, Regional and International Level and ensure Wildwater is Whitewater Competition whilst staying connected with nature and sustainability.

The committee’s other stated objectives, that we have shared in the Nations Meetings in Muota, Pau as well as in La Seu, are to increase the number of nations and move from being a largely European Sport to one with true Worldwide appeal and to make the rules more open to new race formats, innovation and new ideas. For this reason the committee are not in agreement with your other suggestions.

More comprehensive notes of the committee’s discussions are summarised below:

a) Withdrawal of the changes to 3.2: Hold the minimum width of the hull:

Committee don’t agree

This change has allowed to WWC to extend the idea with new boat shapes and to include all shapes of plastic boats as well especially for development of our discipline. There is no strategy to change or lose our usual boat shape as this has evolved over many years. We do want to keep encouraging innovation, as we have in the past.

b) Withdrawal of the changes to 8.2.2 / 5.2: Course length and Mass start:

Committee don’t agree

Mass start has developed widely over the years, first official World cup with mass start was last year in China which works well. Also in France and Great Britain there have been several mass start competitions without any issues. Committee agrees with the overall feedback from the nations meeting in La Seu that supported our recommendation to develop mass start events (level2-4) over the next 4 years. The aim is to review our experience and to define within that time rules for these events especially about the start procedure and the judging system to ensure fairness.

Course length is agreed for classic up to 60 min (fastest MK1) to give organiser more flexibility in finding proper courses.

c) Upcoming international events:

Committee don’t agree
We believe that by increasing the number of international competitions, new organizers are given the opportunity to popularize WWC and create preconditions for developing WWC where it was not present. As for China, we have to wait for the result, but we have every reason to believe that in the near future, the Chinese National team will compete in WWC international competitions. China is well on the way to develop a WW team, which is a long term project.

The goal remains to stay with championships in Europe for 2-3 years every Olympic cycle with a minimum of 1 championship outside Europe. The issue at present is to find organizers in Europe."

d) Number of Athletes in Final:

Committee agrees

This was also the result of a survey in the nations meeting in La Seu to allow the best athletes to compete in Finals

e) Keep C2:

Committee agrees

There are still big problems to hold validation of C-events as well as team-events and there need to be some changes. The hope is to bring more C1 and C2 boats into our Wildwater competitions and the committee are proposing a new rule to open C-category for Open Canoes as this is already popular on some continents.

Gender equity is very important for WWC, and the experience of C2 Mixed in CSL seems to show that it is not achieving the results we are aiming for. The committee believes that we should keep C2M and C2W, and find way to develop these two events.

I do hope this is clear. Your feedback is always very welcome and the support of the German Wildwater Committee is very much appreciated. We very much look forward to seeing you at this year’s international competitions. If you have any other points that you wish to raise please get in touch directly.

Yours in Sport,

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