

Report CAM for XL ICF Congress Antalya, Turkiye, November 2024

Chairman Marathon Committee	: Ruud Heijseelaar	(NED)
Member	: Stien Verlinden	(BEL)
Member	: Tim Cornish	(RSA)
Member	: Brian Chapman	(GBR)
Member	: Andras Faludy	(HUN)
Advisor	: Stefan Gustafsson	(SWE)
Advisor	: Sergio Ferreira	(POR)
Regional Advisor Asia	: Miki Bando	(JPN)
Regional Advisor Oceania	: Jerry Dunn	(AUS)
Regional Advisor America	: Maurix Caffa	(ARG)

Activities 2023-2024:

Objectives after congress 2022: (main topics)

- Webinar education, distance education and important to train more ITOs from continents with fewer ITOs, which also benefits marathon on their continent.
- Development marathon outside of Europe
- To achieve better participation in the C boats better participation
- Increase public interest.
- To follow the paddlers who have participated in the TIP programme and helping these paddlers and coaches to further develop marathon sport in their countries
- Refinement of sports presentation. As we (have to) become more of a spectator sport, it is important that all aspects of sports presentation are brought to a higher level. Importantly (to ensure) that development does not stand still.
- Together with the Para Committee further implement the Para in marathon so that a fullfledged World Championships can be paddled.

- Combine the World Marathon Championships with other disciplines, The priority of the program should be to continually entertain the public with exciting races.
- It is important to ensure that the initiatives in marathon sport (non-Olympic) keep quality high and cost low for the athletes and development in all continents.



**BIGGEST MARATHON IN THE WORLD WITH MORE THAN
1000 PARTICIPANTS IN RACING BOATS AND 100.000
SPECTATORS**

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Activities Chairman CAM + Committee

January 2023 ---

- First inspection World Championships course 2024 Metkovic
- CAM meeting Ruse (Bulgaria) 27 – 29 January
 - Main topics; Evaluation World Championships masters and elite 2023, rule changings, ITO assignments World Cup and World Championships, World Series. Inspection course World Cup 2023 Ruse, Sponsoring.

February 2023 –

- Attend the Sprint Committee meeting (1-19 February)
 - Main topics, discussion to compromise about boat weight for sprint and marathon
 - Combine Championships
 - Races with portage and explain who to make the portage.

April 2023

- Inspection course World Championships 2023 Vejen Denmark (12-13 April)
- Inspection and venue plan World Cup (Ruse -Bulgaria) (24-26 April)
- Board meeting Budapest and watching a national marathon in

May 2023

- Last venue inspection and course World Cup Ruse (17-19 May)
- **World Cup Ruse (29 May-June 5).**
 - Number of entries : 148
 - Number of nations : 14
 - Number of continents : 02
 - Level of organisation and races : High
 - A fantastic layout of the venue and course. An international marathon in Bulgaria for the first time and an impressive organisation, the city of Ruse and the Bulgarian Canoe Federation were of World Championship level and did their best to make it the best World Cup ever. With help from the Bulgarian army, a fantastic portage was made. Sponsorship and help from the federation made it possible to invite the best athletes in the World, which gave the race a higher level and more publicity.

June 2023

• **Seminar Thailand. 13 June – 18 June**

- Together with Miki bando, technical delegate for marathon in Asia, organised a seminar and ITO exam for Asia with 15 participants from Hong Kong, Japan and Thailand. It was and is nice to visit another continent where they are also enthusiastic about marathon and canoeing. Really enthusiastic candidates who all did their best and could also put their theory into practice at the Asian Championships in Phang Na. They all passed and it is great to welcome these new ITOs to our ITO group. It is certainly important that we get more well-trained ITOs in those continents where there are still few marathon ITOs.

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August 2023

- **Visit Sella Descent, to support marathon race as a non-concept marathon**
- **World Championships marathon in Vejen Denmark**
 - Number of entries : 412
 - Number of nations : 35
 - Number of continents : 05
 - Level of organisation and races : High number of entries with new countries like Moldova and Thailand. The organisation of this event was professional and the venue itself was transformed into a good place for everyone's entertainment, making it attractive for the public to come to this venue. The venue was quite far from the major cities, but the Danish Federation clearly showed that they did not let that stop them from making it a great event. We will return to Denmark in 2027 and then at a different venue and that will certainly be just as high quality an event organisationally. The only drawback is that accommodation in Denmark is quite pricey, which does not make it easy for a non-Olympic discipline, as often all costs are for most athletes. For the first time, we had 1 expert and 1 professional commentator to commentate on the live stream, and the reactions from the home audience were very positive.

Oktober 2023

- The Chairman combined Freestyle in Columbus as a judge with a visit to Sarasota to talk about the 2024 and 2026 World Championships. It will be a challenge to hold this event, but if we can hold it in the same period as the juniors and under 23 (which will also be sailed in Sarasota in 2026), it is definitely a win-win situation for both disciplines. It is important that we have a good line-up from the US itself in 2026. The 2024 World Cup was not possible because of the number of events scheduled for marathon in 2024 and America's expected participation.
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- **Competition manager meeting World Games Chengdu.(24/25 October)**
 - This meeting was meant to get acquainted with the venues of the 35 sports and for marathon, initially there was not really a place where we could attract the audience and we agreed during this meeting to have marathon on the same lake as dragon boat, which is a good situation for marathon, dragon boat is terribly popular in China and after many meetings, dragon boat and marathon were able to put together a joint schedule and so that we can have our competition on the same days, 9 and 10 August 2025.

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December 2023

- **Meeting with the HOC World Championships 2024**

January 2024

- **CAM meeting Budapest**

- **The following topics discussed.**
- Survey team leaders elite and masters regarding WCH 23
- Boat weight
- Rule Changings for decision Congress Antalya
- Relays races as test event World Cup Brandenburg
- Distances of races
- World Cup Brandenburg and World Championships Metkovic 2024
- ITO nominations World Cup and World Championships
- Talent Indification Programme 2024 (other way of approaching)
- Education and exams ITO's
- Assessments of bids Bascov (Romania), Banyoles (Spain) and Portugal
- Plan for sponsoring World Cup and World Championships
- Heat plan

February 2024

- **Inspection bid Bascov**

March 2024

- **Inspection bid Banyoles**
- **Visit Argentina and Uruguay**

It is good to talk personally with people who have been participating in major events within Canoe Marathon for a long time and it is important to help them with the development of the discipline in that area.

In Argentina, there was time to visit the National Championships and to have a personal conversation with Mauricio Caffa, Pan American Canoe Federation's Technical Delegate for Canoe Marathon. The technical delegates from continents are important for Canoe Marathon. They are the point of contact for us in the continents and then being able to speak to them in person is a plus.

Because of the presence in Argentina, the idea arose to do a seminar for continental representatives in Spanish together with Cecilia Farias and concluding with an exam for the candidates, It was very much appreciated and also to see that many discussions on the facets that come up as an official are very useful.

Afterwards, the Chair visited the regatta course in Montevideo with Uruguay Canoe Federation Vice President Fredy de los Santos. The federation is interested in holding a Canoe Marathon World Cup in Uruguay and that will be interesting in a part of the world where we have never had a Canoe Marathon World Cup before. In both countries the hospitality was great and the way the races are held there bodes well for the future, although it is financially difficult to raise money, as a non-Olympic discipline, to participate in the World Championships but then it is useful to go in that direction with a major race. We really hope we can organise a World Cup or even a World Championship in this part of the world and a global competition will then give more paddlers a chance to showcase themselves internationally.



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April 2024

- **Visit to Rheine to meet with IMAS, which provided race control, GPS and live streaming for the World Cup marathon in Brandenburg.**
- **Site visit with event manager Balint Vekassy, World Championships 2024 Metkovic**
- **Visit Chengdu with Dragon Boat Chair dr. Luk, World Games location Chengdu**

In 2025, The World Games will be paddled on August 9 and 10, a major event for non-Olympic sports with 35 sports and 5,000 participants. Canoe Marathon and Dragon boat will paddle on the same course and have a joint schedule, so both disciplines will get full attention.

For both Dragon Boat and Canoe Marathon, it is important to pull together and make sure that given the current times, that the aspects of sustainability are taken into account, especially using the same facilities. During the visit, Dragon Boat and Canoe Marathon held discussions with the organisation to go through all the facilities of Canoe Marathon and Dragon Boat and coordinate as much as possible. The schedule is discussed in detail with Dragon Boat giving us an interesting programme for both disciplines. I think we can succeed well in this and the communication with the

organisation in Chengdu is good and they are doing their utmost to make sure that everything is done according to the requirements.



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The trip to Chengdu was combined with a visit to Shaoxing, which will have a ICF Canoe Marathon World Cup in 2025. The course will then take place not on Didang Lake - where the 2019 World Championships took place - but on the canal where the 2017 World Cup was held, admittedly in a different place but it can certainly meet our requirements for a World Cup. If there is another Super Cup next year, the plan is then to hold the World Cup in Shaoxing after it. Shaoxing is a one-and-a-half hour drive from Hangzhou where the Super Cup will be paddled.

May 2024

- Visit venue World Championships marathon 2025 in Győr.

Inspection was done during the national championships and that was a great event, where with more than 2500 entries and that was certainly a good test for the marathon World Championships, at least the talks with the organization give a good impression what we can expect in 2025.

- **World Cup Brandenburg**

- Number of entries : 291
- Number of nations : 23
- Number of continents : 02
- Level of organisation and races : High

The ICF Canoe Marathon World Cup in Brandenburg was designated as the last race where invitations could still be earned for the Super Cup in Hangzhou. There were 23 countries in Brandenburg with great participation in all classes and categories. World Cups are widely used in marathon to test new elements in our sport but also to give the athletes a chance to see how far they are, and or what they still need to do to get better. For the ICF Canoe Marathon Committee, it was a great opportunity to do a different form of short distance race and introduce the mixed relay. Our preference was clearly to involve all age groups so that we could shape the team spirit feeling as a junior got the chance to paddle together with their national idol. The format we opted for was to have one junior men, one junior woman, one senior men and one senior woman compete together with each 1.2km lap including a portage. It was a test and it was not clear beforehand whether it would be a success, but it was a success. A total of 11 teams made it a real celebration and were cheered loudly in the stands. We can conclude that it is necessary to have more tests and we will now look at how to develop further in the coming years.

August 2024

- Visit Sella descent/see also 2023

September 2024

Such an event as the ICF Canoe Marathon World Championships has a long run-up. Preparations for Metkovic, Croatia started after winning the bid and many technical meetings have taken place before the real build-up happens. For a race where not all facilities are available, everything has to be built, including the portage, finish tower, starting line etc. With volunteers and residents of Metkovic, an enthusiastic National Federation was then able to carry it out. This year's World Championships was a qualifier for The World Games 2025 in Chengdu, making it even more important for the K1 men's and K1 women's seniors.

The masters paddle prior to this World Championships and there was a high participation. The marathon world has seen great competitions in Para as well. We also hope that this was the last demonstration race for the Para and that the Congress decides from next year onwards to let it become a World Championships. It was a fantastic organisation and the Croatian Canoe Federation, in the person of Branko Lovric and Ivana Sundov, Metkovic Town Hall and the Metkovic rowing club made this one of the best events ever.

Number of entries	:	532 (best ever) include masters : 832
Number of nations	:	40 (best ever) include masters : 45
Number of Continents	:	05
Level of organisation and races	:	High



C- sit down boats

There are many C2 sit-down boats (other size C class ICF) Canoe Marathon races being paddled in America and it is very popular on this continent with many races. For us, it is important to have contact with this group and with the help of COPAC Technical Delegate Maurix Caffa, Don Stoneman of United States Canoe Association and Suzanne Britt of American Canoe Association, we are doing our best to make contact with these paddlers so that hopefully we can organise a side event during (as a first step) the ICF Canoe Marathon World Championships to be held in Sarasota, Florida in 2026 or a World Cup in America. There is certainly a long way to go, but we are confident it will work out.

Key achievements:

- Theoretical examination online.
- Development marathon outside of Europe by visit continents.
- More C boats in World Cup and World Championships.
- Start with following the TIP athletes, will be continued by our TIP coach Bert Onnekes with help of Andy Birkett.
- Finetuned Para demonstration marathon races, to make ready for a full World Championships in coming years with help of Para committee and Chair marathon
- Personal contacts in the continents and all interested stakeholders. These contacts will also intensify to promote Canoe Marathon worldwide.
- Implemented Para in marathon
- More C boats in World Cup and World Championships
- Contact with our stakeholders (athletes and team leaders) in marathon.
- That the marathon is intelligibly conveyed to the audience in the stands as at home, and that the commentators are of high quality by having 1 expert and 1 professional commentator during livestreaming. This manifested itself in a high number of views during the 2023 World Championships and in 2024. In 2023 we had many viewers but in 2024 we already had 4 times more than 2023.

Strategic plans for future implementation:

- To take care to increase the number of entries in C classes
- To give more attention to the marathon races which are not in the concept of World Championships or World Cup
- To continue to help all continents to develop marathon
 - Education World wide of NTO's in all continents.
 - To increase the number of ITO in continents who are not are main goal only in those continents with a low number of ITO's
- Establish and promote a "Marathon Paddling World Tour" consisting of all types of marathon races paddled on rivers, lakes and canals.
- Implement relay races into the World Championships schedule
- Fine-tuning the program to make it even more interesting for the audience in the stands as at home.
- To continue working with 1 Expert and 1 Professional Commentator during livestreaming at World Cup and World Championship.
- Continue to develop marathon masters competition at the World Championships.
- We will continue to monitor the paddlers who have been part of the Talent Identification Plan (TIP) in the coming years and help them and their coaches by continuing to develop as marathon paddlers/coaches
- Working closely with the ICF staff, athlete committee and the other flatwater committees to make our sport of canoeing better
- Continue to add all canoe disciplines to our program, but also focus on Sit Down C1/C2 and Intellectual Disability (Special Olympics) races and children's races.
- Close cooperation with other disciplines to further develop the sport of canoeing.
- Making it clear to audiences in the stands as well as at home, what our sport is and continuing what we started with, 1 expert and 1 professional commentator, but also making sure that the footage properly reflects what is happening during races.



We would like to thank the ICF staff for always the pleasant cooperation during the last years, without them it is impossible to carry out our task as a committee.

Chair marathon committee ICF

Ruud Heijselaar

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