NEISA Executive Committee Conference Call Meeting Notes  
March 6th, 2019

Action Items

1. **NEISA Specific Action Items**
   a. Assad asks everyone look at Skip’s spreadsheet and think about the impact of the draft changes
   b. Assad to send an email asking teams to bring coach boats to Nationals
   c. Assad to check in with counsel that we are protected from liability when posting safety guidelines

2. **NEISA Action Items involving the ICSA**
   a. Assad to clarify what team race events will test use of red flags for protests
      i. **Answer:** Szambecki, Red Flags provided
   b. Assad to request clarification on the language regarding drone usage

3. **ICSA Action Items**

Motions

1. Motion to approve annual meeting minutes
   a. Passed unanimously

Next Call: Wednesday April 10th at 11am

Meeting Notes:

I. **Call to order**
   A. **Roll Call:** Justin Assad (Commissioner), Paige Clarke (President), Coleen Ross (Secretary), Frank Pizzo (Schedule Coordinator), Fran Charles (Boats & Safety), Brian Swingly (Special Projects, Jeff Bresnahan as proxy), Diana Weidenbacker (N. Region Rep), Mike O’Connor (C. Region Rep), John Mollicone (S. Region Graduate Rep), Matt Galbraith (S. Region Undergraduate Rep), Maia Agerup (At Large), Skip Whyte (URI), Dave White (SHU & FF), Jeff Bresnahan (Connecticut College), Eric Marshall (UMaine), Matt Linblad (MIT), Amanda Callahan (RWU), Taylor Martin (Maine Maritime)

II. **Commissioner’s Report - Justin Assad**
   A. **Start of Season - Off to a good start, things are going smoothly**
      1. Women’s Team Race: Good # of signups & participation, despite conditions on Saturday
      2. Big focus for me is preparing for Nationals- has been working w/ John, will go over this in detail during Old Business.
3. Also want to cover the ICSA Midwinter Meeting

B. Approval of Annual Meeting Minutes
   1. Mike O’Connor, Harvard: Second
   2. Passed unanimously
   3. Diana, UNH: I think I sent one correction, was that just about the RP?
      a) Assad: Yes, that’s just for rules & regs - next up on the docket. I forgot to make the change but I will do that.

C. Rules & Regs
   1. Diana sent a correction regarding trophy management - I will go back and make that correction.
   2. Any other comments? It is in effect for this spring.

D. Notes from Midwinter Meeting
   1. Thank you to Peter Lynn, who represented us at the meeting and assembled the report
   2. Results from strategic sports consulting agency
      a) Conclusion: we should move forward w/ an executive director
         (1) This was supported by the organization as a whole.
      b) Discussion around NCAA Status
         (1) The agency helped to present what the NCAA process would look like, the requirements, and it’s impact
         (2) The tone in the room was not supportive of going that direction as a whole.
   3. Change to procedural rule regarding substituting crews - Ultimately not passed
   4. Drone use at events
      a) Discussed the use of drones at events - eg. limiting number of drones that can follow a given race, sharing drone footage equally among everyone
   5. All-Academic Team
      a) Discussion around raising the all-academic team GPA threshold from 3.3 to 3.5. The committee is discussing next steps

E. Questions?
   1. Bresnahan, CC: Most of the districts came back with negative reports - smaller districts are struggling w/ membership while bigger districts are growing. The quicker we can get an executive director the quicker we can address some of these issues. My worry is that our exec committee is waiting too long to find a executive director - Do you have a timeline for when they will start doing that? What is the process, how can we help them move forward w/ the process?
2. Assad: I’ve reached out and tried to keep movement on this. I don’t have a current report, but the main thing is to be vocal at annual meetings and press for next steps. I’ll keep doing that.
   a) Bresnahan: I guess my worry is that we’re going to get to the annual meeting at Nationals and they’re going to give the same report you gave.
   b) Assad: Realistically I think it will look like a ICSA dues increase to help pay for the executive director, and a road map/timeline of how we transform to having this executive director position. I can help press them to try to get that timeline ready.

3. Matt Linblad, MIT: If that is the direction ICSA is going to go, wouldn’t there need to be a proposal on the agenda to increase dues? Someone needs to do that, right?
   a) Assad: Yes, and we (NEISA) could do that.

4. Diana: Will the process of the search and then the hiring be tied completely to the recommendations that would get rid of club teams? Or are we rejecting the notion of having to go NCAA (and therefore cutting out club teams).
   a) Assad: I don’t think cutting out the club teams is anyone’s goal. There is general agreement that we need more professional management structure, but from ICSA as opposed to the NCAA. The agency identified one of our core values to be the concept that everybody competes in one division. Because of this, their recommendation not to get rid of clubs or split up divisions. I think this speaks positively to what you’re talking about w/ the more exclusive regions/divisions. The first step will be to move toward an executive director, and see where it goes from there.

5. Amanda Callahan, RWU: What are the trial events that red flags will be used in? Where is the language on drone usage?
   a) Assad: I need to reach out about red flags again. It says in our write up that we are supposed to test them in two team race events; This spring there has been a request from umpires to use red flags again. I will put that on my todo list and get back to you.
   b) Assad, cont. regarding drone usage: We don’t have minutes from that meeting, so I don’t think we’ll have language for drones until we have those minutes. Anecdotally, the discussion was to have a maximum of 2 drones following any race, John Van Demark from Stanford discussed setting up a database so that the footage would be accessible by everyone, which I think sounds good. I’m not
going to worry about it until I see minutes from the meeting and it goes in the PRs.

6. Lindblad: Two drones is a direct violation of PR 15 in terms of equal access - Drones as a post-race debrief tool the database works for, but drones can provide real time information during races. If you watch a race with current it’s very obvious, and if some teams are able to watch the race from that perspective and some are not that is totally unfair.
   a) Bresnahan: I 100% disagree. Any team can buy a drone, it’s just like when cell phones came out and we were able to check scores - not everyone had phones. I think the interpretation of the drone violating PR 15 is false- All it is is a piece of technology that any team can go buy.
   b) Lindblad?: I agree, I was speaking more specifically to the fact that only two drones would be allowed per race (as in only two teams allowed to fly a drone per race).
   c) Bresnahan: I interpreted it as each race, not regatta.
   d) Assad: I think Matt was referencing the case of fleet races. I think this is a valid point we need to clarify.
   e) Bresnahan: I am just opposed to any drone limitation as it’s shortsighted. In this age that technology is available to everybody.

7. Assad: We couldn’t have 18 drones following a fleet race, so I think this is a valid point that needs to be narrowed down.

8. Matt Lindblad: I think we could have unlimited drones, just give them different altitudes to fly at.

9. Diana: With 18 drones, some are bound to collide and could impact sailors. If you want to limit drones, a solution could be that just a few drones are recording but the video from them is accessible to all teams. Then it equals the playing field and deals with the # of drones issue.
   a) Bresnahan: You want to limit the drones for sailors safety, but you want to add the drones for equal access?
   b) Diana: No - With 18 drones, some are bound to collide and could impact sailors. Instead of worrying about assigning altitudes or quadrants, we could make the video accessible to everyone - it doesn’t matter who is flying it.
   c) Zack Leonard Yale: That’s technologically impossible - the person who makes the video watches it on the screen as they make it.

10. Assad: I’ll circle back with ICSA to get the language nailed down and the technological capabilities sorted out. We won’t sort it out on this NEISA
call. I will bring this discussion and the concerns to the ICSA for further discussion.

III. Scheduling Coordinator’s Report - Frank Pizzo
   A. Not much new info. I’m going to call Ward Cromwell from CoC to think about how NEISA can potentially get more southern regattas in the month of March.
      1. This past weekend illustrates how we don’t get a lot of sailing in this time of year.
      2. Rudkin Team Race can no longer be a promotional event - need to figure out how that regatta can take place at Eckerd
      3. Sounds like there is interest from Eckerd & Tulane to host a team race regatta around spring break. Hopefully will have more info for the next call.
      4. The schedule is up and we have been adjusting it as needed; As usual, let me know when you want to do add/drops, etc.
   B. Assad: I forgot to mention, the winner of Women’s Team Race National Invite is going to represent the ICSA at the LP Collegiate Cup in Italy, as a suggestion from SEISA.

IV. Old Business
   A. 2019 Nationals in Newport - John Mollicone
      1. We have most of the logistical stuff put together. Currently we are over a little over budget, as it’s not cheap to host this event through SailNewport. Justin and I are working on trimming that down and maybe looking for some sponsors.
         a) Brown is primary host of women’s and dinghy champs (w/ help from URI & Dartmouth); Harvard is host of team racing (w/ help from Brown)
         b) Most teams are bringing a boat, but we may need a few more. Justin can you send another email asking for teams to bring them?
      2. Everyone should be aware of the extra charge for NEISA teams that qualify that will help to pay for the boats being shipped from Conn & Brown
         a) Assad: We talked about this in the fall. We looked at a # of different options but this seemed most efficient.
         b) We anticipate using $15,000 of NEISA money to cover costs at SailNewport (normally ~$8-10K cost to NEISA). This year it will be more expensive as we do not have the support of NYYC.
We anticipate a $400 per berth fee for Nationals - between all 22 berths, women’s (~10), coed (~8), team racing (~4). Just want everyone to be aware

3. Amanda Callahan: Normally its $350 - is that just an extra $150 or is it like $700?
   a) Assad: Likely on top of the normal $350 - we still need look into seeing if we can raise the base fee around the conference to lower cost to NEISA teams. So yes, an additional $450 - It’s expensive, there’s no getting around it.
   b) Mollicone: NYYC subsidized everything over our budget the last two times we hosted. So, it’s expensive hosting at SailNewport, but it’s the only way we’re making it work. We’re bringing 2 fleets of boats there, and they’re charging us for everything.
      (1) If you think you’re qualifying, please help us out and bring a powerboat. SailNewport is being charging us $350 a day for using their powerboats.
      (2) Assad: We’re paying to use the facility because we weren’t able to host at one of ours, so we all have to chip in to use a private facility. We want to be totally transparent about the expenses.
   c) Lindblad: Why not use RWU boats?
      (1) Mollicone: We have to use LP boats.
      (2) Matt?: So why doesn’t LP help pay for this?
   d) Assad: I wish it were part of the sponsorship package, but it’s just not part of the contract. Wish it was better for us.

(1) Fran Charles, MIT: And no one can see the contract either.

B. Assad: Good news, we think the regatta will be awesome! All of the logistics work is in progress; Amanda has done a great job recruiting umpires & finding housing. We are feeling great about the quality of this regatta.

C. Pizzo: Question about host teams - how do practice limitations work w/ multiple co-hosts?
   1. Assad: There is an exemption for people who move their boats. If you move your boats you can practice, but otherwise you can’t practice there (unless it is your home facility).
   2. Taylor Martin: Is there any consideration on when the boats will be moved?
   3. Assad: They will be moved around May 13th, so it shouldn’t be an issue.

V. New Business
   A. Report of Boats and Safety Committee - Fran Charles
1. Three docs on the [NEISA website](https://www.neisa.org) for committee to review - they are guidelines for safety boat considerations at events, when to implement the wetsuit/drysuit rule, and at what temperature we should not be sailing anymore. We hope to distribute to sailors after discussion.

2. Safety Boat Considerations & Temperature minimums
   a) No sail temperatures: We could not come to a conclusion on a wind chill number, but agreed on a number for air temperature. I think we should revisit it after this season, but our recommendation is that there should be no racing when the air temp is under 26 degrees F, and drysuits/wetsuits should be mandatory with water temps under 40 degrees F.
   b) There are guidelines, legislation might come later after experimentation

3. Thoughts & Comments?
   a) Diana: I love the description for why to wear certain things and all of the recommendations. It’s stuff we tell our teams all the time, but it is nice to see it in print and the justifications for it. The temp guidelines are great as well - I’m interested in this as I do not want to make egregious errors
   b) Callahan: Guidelines are good - For the people at the Friis last year, we were definitely on the edge of the threshold. As a host it’s nice to have a rule or baseline to make decisions off of.
   c) Assad: Agreed. I think it’s great that the committee worked on this - this is why we made the 6PM on Saturday rule. It’s easy for us all to appeal to common sense until we are the one making decisions. Guidelines makes this a much easier process.

4. Fran Charles: we will have a 4th document coming out in the next day or two that outlines the recommended frequency of warm-ups for competitors and water/bathroom breaks dependent on windchill
   a) Taylor Martin, MMA: That is the one that Steve (BC trainer) and I worked on. It’s important to note that there are different considerations for temp between places that have an indoor place to warm up and ones that don’t. We’re probably 50/50 or 60/40 on venues that have a indoor warm up facility vs those that don’t.

5. Assad: I’m planning to check in with council that we are not exposing ourselves to liability when we expose this. I’m really thankful to Fran for putting everything together - Fran, comments on windchill discussion?

6. Fran Charles: We could not agree on a windchill #. It was frustrating, we kept going back to air temp because everyone understands it but almost all
other conferences and leagues center around wind chill. I think we should get back to wind chill - It does involve looking at a table & a graph and figuring out what it is, which is hard when you’re hosting an event. It is the only way to make our conference in line with other sports conferences out there - we should not be an anomaly in using air temp.

a) Taylor: Would be curious to see what other schools and conferences cutoffs are, and also whether it’s real feel, wind chill, etc.

7. Fran Charles: I think an EOY survey about what we’ve done and where to go from here would be helpful.

a) Assad: We could collect a lot of that info pretty quickly and easily.

B. Report of Draft Committee - Skip Whyte

1. Other members of the committee: Mike O’Conner, Frank Pizzo, David Thompson

2. This is a proposal. We want to get the subject out there so people can discuss it and we have a chance to explain the reasons why it is appropriate to change the draft for our schedule.

3. Email shows that with the addition of the new fall schedule & introduction of new team race draft, the # of berths in the respective drafts have changed dramatically

   a) 2017 co-ed draft: 132 berths available
   b) 2019 coed: 78 41% decrease
   c) 2017 Out of Conference: 54 events, 13 TR events
   d) 2018 Out of Conference: 18
   e) 2017 Women’s: 28
   f) 2019 Women’s: 17
   g) 2017 TR: 13 berths
   h) 2019 TR (combined): 113 berths - massive increase

4. In the past, drafts provided qualitative & quantitative advantages for top ranked teams. The drafts were designed to give a fair distribution between the top 13-14 NEISA teams, because there were enough berths in the draft that lower ranked teams would get some berths that were meaningful.

   a) With the reduction in the number of berths, a lot of the lower ranked teams fall off the radar or aren’t even close.
   b) Regarding the women’s draft, there are only three events people are trying to draft with the old order. Only five teams were able to draft all of the events (which didn’t seem too fair).

5. Excel sheet on the NEISA website has 4 tabs (Combined in-conference & out of conference draft on page, analysis on page 2, team racing on page
3, womens on page 4. We want this to be easy to understand so we can have a more substantial conversation during the April call.

a) Thesis: We have to do something because the # of berths is so different. We need some qualitative reward for top ranked teams but qualitative reward for all teams across NEISA.

6. Proposed combined draft (page 1)
   a) Highlighted in yellow is total # of berths in draft: 112 (doesn’t always work exactly this way)
   b) Scrolling down is the 2019 for the in-conference draft results (current schedule). Highlighted in green are alternate spots taken fairly early
      (1) Last spot #94 - there was nothing really draftable after that
   c) Scrolling down again is the 2019 for the out of conference draft results: Only some events were selected. Some events (Navy Spring) conflict w/ so many NEISA events that no one takes them
   d) Scrolling down again, you see the proposed new draft order - you can see where the picks would fall for a combined draft.
      (1) Teams that are most affected by this proposal are teams 17 & 18 (MSM and MMA) - using the old draft they don’t get to draft anything.

7. Combined IC & OOC analysis (page 2)
   a) 112 available berths, 65 “popular” berths (Nickerson & Morris not that popular). That # is reduced somewhat by host berths (58). If you’re not a host, you have to be in the top 58 or you’re not going to get any of those better events
   b) Narrower spread on the berths because there are not as many segments in the progression. The extra picks for top teams go away after first round. As a consequence, teams like MSM and MMA can get picks well outside of popular berths, but still get something.
   c) After scrolling to the right, columns T through AA show how the draft proposal changes things for teams ranked 14-18, comparing first draft pick 2019 to proposed first draft pick
      (1) Teams get first pick earlier; UVM & NU number of picks stays the same; gets a little bit better for Salve, MSM, and MMA

8. Team Racing (page 3)
   a) 2019 TR selections - top teams are drafting a lot of alternate spots early, indicating they really only want the top events. The last spot
without alternates is 113. Teams below 16 were not able to get anything, really weren’t including the draft at all

(1) Some teams at the bottom don’t team race, but these changes could provide incentivise them to get into the game

b) New order - because it doesn’t repeat the advantages for top teams, the spread across top is smaller and bottom ranked teams have a shot at getting into some low level events if they want to.

c) Scrolling to the right, the number of non-alt berths selected in 2019 vs the number of non-alt berths under the new draft does not change significantly for top teams.

9. Women’s (page 4)

a) 2019 W selections: Very few teams were able to draft much of anything at all.

b) New draft order proposes that only the #1 team gets second pick, then the order just goes down the list. Given there are so little picks, this distributes opportunity.

10. Questions?

a) Assad: Thanks for doing all of this work - Did you look at how the sail-in berths factor into the total berths?

b) Skip Whyte: The number of drafted berths didn’t change- they are unchanged between the old & new.

c) Assad: It does make sense to combine in conference & out of conference as the out of conference draft has gotten pretty small.

(1) Skip: The women’s as well as there are so few events.

d) Skip: There are a few low level TR events, though not well populated. We’re not sure if those low level teams are ready yet, but this system would give them the opportunity to dabble in it.

e) Assad: MSM hosts the Great Herring Pond TR event for this reason - did you factor that in the count here?

f) Skip: I might’ve neglected to identify their host berth there - usually that is the only way they get in (is if they are a host)

11. Pizzo: I think the challenging thing is how many teams want to team race, not just conceptually - how many are actually going to do it. It has a relatively big impact, especially considering allocations for other events (eg. Staake)

a) Skip: I dont understand - if people don’t take a berth it goes to the next person. The Fowle and Marchiando berths are not counted in this distribution because they are guaranteed to the top teams.
b) Assad: Taylor do you feel like your team is not getting the TR opportunities it needs?

c) Taylor Martin: Before this, I felt that the change allowing automatic berths to the top teams in the district moved towards this anyway (including those who are on that cusp). Next year we’ll be a little shocked if we don’t get the opportunity, but also we turned down some berths we could have drafted this Spring - The opportunity is there for these events, just not necessarily in the draft.

d) Assad: I think Frank what you were saying before is that your concern is in the future teams might aspirationally draft those spots but ultimately not fill them. It would then be harder for those bigger, more competitive teams to fill those vacant spots as they have a more complex schedule to work around.

e) Pizzo: This was originally created off of what teams were actually doing - 16 teams that competing in the team racing discipline. If we had 18 team racing teams, we would need to make the Staake include 8 teams to follow through with what we do for our other disciplines. I think there is a feasibility issue with it as well. If all 18 teams are TR, we would need to provide the opportunities, but realistically some years we struggle to hit 16.

(1) My question is do people conceptually or realistically want to do this?

VI. Closing

A. Assad: Everyone spend some time to digest Skip’s spreadsheet and think about the impact it will have. I encourage everyone to reach out to Skip with questions or comments. Thank you for your work on it Skip. We’ll have further discussion in April.

B. The next call will be April 10th at 11am.

VII. Meeting Adjourned