** Competitor’s Corner**

**Info - News Bulletin : 1/2016**

**Competitors Meeting**

Please see below a brief summary of the August 2016 Competitor’s meeting held in Krems – Austria

**Attendees** : Ewald Wisman (NL),Bas Hagenbeek (NL), Henny Klarenbeek (NL), Ernst Ortlieb (AT), Bianca Bastin (AT), Kathrin Ortlieb (AT-Team Captain), Frank Meirsman (BE), Tim Lisens (BE),Eric Verdickt (BE), Dominique Gathy (BE-Team Captain), Peter Swinnen (BE),Nico Bertels (BE),Jonas Garcia (ES-Team Captain), Angela Montanes-Verdaguer (ES), Karen Brooks (GB-Team Captain), Alfredo Alongi (GB)? Barry Clapson (GB), Kurt Brooks (GB)

Chris Rydl re-elected as Athlete’s rep. welcomes all attendees.

**EC Krems**

Group discussion on the Krems situation (financial disaster). The group expressed their gratitude to the organizers (Georg Forstl and his team) for putting up a great event (despite the financial set back).

Taking this EC as an example and considering the enormous financial burden/impact, we fear that unless we find ways to bring down the cost, this could possibly be the last EC.

The group suggested that spreading an EC over 4 different weekends could bring a cost spread and hence be a possible solution. For this, we need to work out a fixed cost scenario throughout Europe. First step will be to go through the current list of obligations and see where we can cut costs/red tape and rework the obligations. From there we can ask each country to come back with an estimated cost for organization. This information will then be the basis to explore possible new concepts.

**Future/challenges of our sport:**

* **Environmental**: In many locations Waterski racing is not welcome, due to clash with the “environmental geeks”, venues become limited. Ybbs cannot get the license due to noise pollution, Krems also got many complaints on the noise level during races…. In this respect it is of utmost importance that our DB output does not exceed the limits (105 DB is ground for disqualification). However last couple of years teams have been ignoring this rule.
* **Cost**: some believe that the cost is the main reason racing is losing teams/athletes and suggest that limiting the horse power in F1 to 700 could be a solution. Fear is that IWWF will not be willing to consider (voting powers at IWWF need to be reviewed). The group then expressed that we should look closer to home and do what is needed and show IWWF that we can revive the sport, make it work. If this is a success they may even follow.
* **Racing is boring**: to make it more interesting (at the same time less expensive-fuel)

Some believe that bringing the race time to 35 + 1 lap is a good idea. Majority of the attendees voted pro 35+1 lap. Kurt Brooks expressed his views/concerns and feels that racing should remain and endurance sport. In Kurt’s opinion the shorter race time will certainly not prepare skiers for the WC and the gap between Australia and Europe will only become bigger. Moreover shorter race time will result in higher speed, more risk…. Hence safety of the skiers could become compromised …??

**EC Podium**

It was brought to the attention that a separate podium for Extra-European skiers needs to be honored (as mentioned in the rules)

**Category hopping**

Category changes should follow IWWF – where a skier can only go down 1 category per championship (and not per year/as is now). Champions cannot go down and need to defend their title at the next Championships ???

Yours in Water-ski Racing

Chris RYDL