



COMINOFF MEETING MINUTES

Plenary Mid Term Meeting – Monaco
Saturday 23 April – Sunday 24 April 2016

PRESENT

Per Benson – President
Robert Wicks – Secretary

Cominoff Members:
Kathy van den Hende
Sid Bensalah
Alberto Pascali

Jussi Valtonen
Sebastiano Pellecchia
Gordon Sutherland
Jean-Marie van Lancker
Sijbrand Booij
Kimon Papachristopoulos

Jari Lehtonen
Ragesh Elayadeth
Mikael Lundblad
Harald Halvorsen
Bob Wartinger

Denis Dillon
Michaela Laut
Thomas Kurth
Tom Stanley
Daniel Dehaemers

APOLOGIES

Ahmed Alblooshi
John Muscat
Erik Christiansen

Harry Fabritius
Jeni Jelf

Emre Guler
Oivind Dreier Sivertsen

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

Cominoff President Per Benson opened the meeting at 09:00.

2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The meeting minutes from the 2015 UIM General Assembly held last October in Monaco were adopted and accepted.

Per Benson provided an update on matters since the GA as follows:

- The new Offshore 2016 rulebook was updated and corrected with decisions taken at the General Assembly in October 2015. This had been completed before the end of 2015, earlier than usual.
- Extensive work had been done on the X-Cat rules to get them approved for the new season but still work to be done.

- A new UIM website is under development.
- Safety reports from Tom Stanley and Bob Wartinger were now available on the UIM website.
- No calendar has been announced for Class One / V1. Per Benson explained there was possible reorganisation of the OPC to develop a calendar and get racing underway in 2016.
- The next UIM General Assembly will take place in Fujairah. The event will be based at the Novotel Hotel.
- The UIM has undertaken a survey with the national authorities but unfortunately only 15 NAs responded to the survey and this matter will be reviewed. Further input from the NAs is required to enhance the value of the survey.
- The forthcoming 'Goal and Vision' UIM Council meeting will be scheduled in the summer.

3. RULEBOOKS AND INTERPRETATION

Electronic Rulebook – Per Benson advised that the UIM rulebook will be converted into electronic format. Not having to print the rulebook will assist in getting the rules delivered earlier for the new season. Jean-Marie van Lancker advised that the UIM must keep accurate records of past rule books (whether in printed or electronic form) for reference purposes.

X-Cat Rules – Bob Wartinger provided a detailed presentation on recent findings.

There was however still considerable debate concerning the current status of the X-Cat rules which are in a transition phase, in particular issues surrounding head clearance requirements, crew ergonomics (seating position), helmet standards, head and neck restraints, seat restraints and build dimensions for new boats which were still to be agreed.

The rules that had been proof read were accepted and would need to be applied by the UIM office.

A working group would meet during the mid-term weekend to review and discuss the outstanding issues which were determined as follows.

XCAT new safety rules 2016

Supported by Cominoff 24 April 2016

Rule update	Implementation NEW boats	Implementation EXISTING boats
Min width, inside cockpit, 1300 mm	2016-06-01	Not applicable
Cockpit height 1,1 m	2016-06-01	Not applicable, however, minimum head clearance of 100 mm must be maintained as of Jan 1, 2017
Cockpit builder certified - test panel ok	2016-06-01	2016-10-01 for modifying existing cockpits
Hatch flange, min dimensions	2016-06-01	2017-01-01
Escape hatch dimensions	2016-06-01	Not applicable
Window flange, now boats: 50 + 17 mm	2016-06-01	50 mm required Jan 1, 2017
Helmet Snell - (FIA) standard, head & neck restraint	2016-01-01	2016-06-01
Overall, fire retardant and cut resistant	2016-06-01	2016-06-01
Support Pole Padding, 12 mm padding, SFI 45.2	2016.06.01	2016.06.01
Min. 6-Point Belts and Attachments	2016.06.01	2016.06.01
Lever latch Release	2016.06.01	2016.06.01
Life jacket/capsule jackets flotation	2016.06.01	2016.06.01
Mirrors	2016.06.01	2016.06.01
Seat Stiffnes, comparable to SFI 39.2	2016.06.01	2016.06.01

These proposed changes to the X-Cat rules must be presented to Council for approval before they can be valid and enforced.

Rules for title events (800.3, 800.3.1) – Per Benson explained the Offshore procedure followed by the UIM for awarding a World Championship and/or

Continental Event to a national authority. He stressed the need for an equal standard and that this would be proposed for all categories at the next General Assembly.

Criteria to qualify for World Record (601.04) – Per Benson explained the current rule situation. There were no objection from Cominoff to maintaining the current regulation.

Qualification of Driver (702.1) – The Committee debated how best to evaluate new drivers coming to the sport. Robert Wicks explained that P1 had a dedicated training officer who undertook an assessment of all drivers and navigators before they were able to gain a licence and start racing. Denis Dillon explained that a similar situation exists in Ireland.

4. CALENDAR & COMMISSIONERS 2016

Per Benson provided details of the 2016 calendar and a copy is attached as an Appendix with these minutes.

Powerboat P1 – Robert Wicks confirmed that the P1 USA races in Jacksonville (4 June 2016) and Sarasota (2/3 July 2016) would be staged as International Ordinary Events and that the relevant applications were underway via the APBA.

X-Cat / World 3D – Alberto Pascali identified that there was a clash between the proposed World 3D event in Italy and the X-Cat event in South Korea scheduled for 23-25 September. Italy enquired about the possibility of X-Cat changing its date but this was understandably declined. Pascali explained that the event in Italy was contracted but he was advised by Per Benson to see an alternative venue, alternative date or alternative title to award.

Venture Cup – there was uncertainty over the race as it did not currently appear on the UIM calendar of events for 2016 but it was later found listed under “Special Events”. Denis Dillon confirmed that the RYA had raised a number of queries with the organiser. The advanced programme and race instructions were still awaited. It was also unclear as to how many entries were confirmed, the expectation was 10 – 12 boats though there had been initial interest from around 18 teams. Gordon Sutherland, on behalf of the RYA (as Jeni Jelf was not present), mentioned that there were still payments due to the RYA. It was noted that the UIM had not authorised any title to the event. It was understood that it had been agreed to drop the ‘World Cup’ but that it was still in use based on recent correspondence seen by some delegates.

Class One / V1 – Jean Marie van Lancker enquired about the future of the Class One / V1 series. Thomas Kurth advised that one particular party was interested in developing the project and that presentations were imminent with a view to a series in 2017. He explained that despite not having a promoter, the UIM were looking at opportunities to stage two events in Europe (Italy and Malta) and three events in the UAE but that event operational costs were the stumbling block as there were not something that the UIM could consider covering.

Kurth also said that Abu Dhabi had expressed an interest in becoming the promoter but explained that this would only be explored further once the current negotiations were concluded. Van Lancker was doubtful the proposed level of funding could be raised and offered his services to ensure the continuation of the class based on his past experience.

5. Titles for 2017

It was confirmed that the UK had been awarded World 3A, 3B and European V24 championships. The request to upgrade the V24 event to a World Championship would be deferred as the class was going through a transition year with new engines and it was uncertain how many boats would be available to take part.

Italy was granted the 3C World Championship. Their request to stage the 3D World Championship remained under review for the time being.

6. Safety

Helmets – A proposal regarding helmets from Cominoff at the last General Assembly – in essence to follow the rules of Circuit Racing (based on SNELL, FIA or ECE standards) had been rejected. Sid Bensalah proposed that all helmets meet Snell 2015 standards. Alberto Pascali agreed with Sid and noted the fact that for the past four or five years in Italy drivers in canopied boats were required to wear homologated helmets (FIA or SNELL).

Boats faster than Cockpit strength – the rule 508 allows for reinforced cockpits where the designer designates the acceptable speed; further details to come from Michael Lundblad. Daniel Dehaemers suggested it would be important to see the builders' calculations as the data was largely theoretical rather than information based in specific studies and crash testing. During a break in proceedings, Jussi Valtonen presented details of a calculation to Daniel Dehaemers who found the calculation basic, but acceptable.

It was questioned if the present composition of Cominsafe was the best one as there were not that many safety experts in the Committee. It was proposed Cominoff to put forward suggestion for new safety committee structure with a clear focus on the pilot, the boat and the venue.

Super license requirement – the present rule requirement was discussed.

7. Cominoff Mission and Goals – Future Offshore

Robert Wicks made a presentation on how other niche sports have succeeded and the lessons that could be learnt for powerboat racing. The key ideas to emerge are as follows and these will be expanded upon as part of a wider strategy:

- Steady growth
- Technology
- Race formats
- Online TV strategy / social media
- Personalities
- Leadership
- Position as an alternative to motorsport

- YDP / Industry commitment
- Showcase venues
- Event experience and public satisfaction

Delegates discussed the urgent need to recruit and educate officials for the sport.

Sid Bensalah proposed the idea of a Race Officials Committee to deal with training and development of officials and suggested that this was proposed to UIM Council.

It was agreed that Robert Wicks, Per Benson, Jean-Marie van Lancker would develop key headline points based on:

- Develop training syllabus
- Work closely with other governing bodies like sailing and other motorsport
- Identify talent
- Incentives
- Procedures

Kimon Papachristopoulos said a seminar was needed for officials and that this should be arranged by the UIM, particularly in respect of the 400 Rules.

8. Cominoff Task list from last meeting

Closed cockpit registrations – Per Benson confirmed that the new system was working well and that there would be ongoing development and refinement of the system.

Digital logbook – Kathy van den Hende reported that there were still some outstanding issues that needed to be resolved but that the tool was proving to be very useful and she urged all classes to start making use it.

Sid Bensalah said concerns had emerged about the intellectual property rights about the system. Based on the minutes from meetings at the UIM General Assembly, he said everyone had been under the impression that the tool belonged to the UIM and had been sponsored by a third party. This matter needs clarification. Per Benson asked Laurie Brualla from the UIM office to check and report back to Cominoff.

Rulebook – Harald Halvorsen reported that he had seen a dramatic increase in the size of the printed rulebook. He also said many rules are duplicated and there was a need to rely more on the General Rules. It was agreed that certain classes should have their own standalone rules but where possible, the rulebook should be consolidated. Halvorsen asked for Cominoff approval to continue his efforts and this was granted unanimously. Sid Bensalah suggested he would engage both Halvorsen and van den Hende in the rewriting of the X-Cat rules.

Offshore Nations Report – Per Benson said this would continue as it was essential to understand the number of boats, classes and competitors at national level.

Championship Participation – Per Benson said a proposal would be put forward to try and create the same conditions for titled events across all UIM disciplines.

Insurance update – Robert Wicks provided an update on the insurance situation in the UK which has seen the RYA withdrawing the central insurance policy, with promoters and clubs now obliged to source their own insurance cover.

Offshore Classes – Halvorsen letter to Per about decline in UIM classes – UIM and Cominoff need to improve importance of UIM races. Decline of Class One; one thought was to look at areas of compatibility in certain class to consolidate. It was agreed that we need to increase the number of international offshore venues and to find possible new classes. Halvorsen will continue his study and Cominoff was asked to review the possibilities.

9. Engines & homologations

Two new engines have been homologated – the Mercury 115 4-stroke and new X-Cat 400 ROS engine. The homologation for the latter engine was only for the X-Cat class for the time being. Jean Marie van Lancker said there were a number of outdated engines included on the current homologation list. Per Benson said this was being cleared up and will be presented when the new UIM homepage will be released.

10. Proposals to GA

New classes – Robert Wicks provided an update on the proposed new P1 RIB class. He explained that the prototype vessel had gone through a rigorous testing programme and an initial production run of five boats had commenced in mid-April. The boat has a non-stepped hull and is designed to be easy and predictable to drive. Crew safety was enhanced through side impact protection and built-in roll cage.

He said the vessel was likely to achieve a maximum speed of 60 - 65mph and would be powered by the Evinrude G2 200HP engine. The boat would carry CE certification and was likely to be priced at around £45,000 including engine and trailer.

The 2016 schedule would consist of demonstration events in the UK and possibly also in Belgium as this was a key RIB market. An assessment of current UIM RIB rules was underway and proposals would be tabled at UIM GA in Fujairah.

11. Any other business

Benson said he had received a letter from the X-Cat driver's representative which included a statement from most of drivers in the class.

The communication referred to the fact that after some incidents at recent X-Cat rounds, there was a view from some drivers that penalties for on-course infractions in relation to "Rules of the Road/ Drivers Safety" were not severe enough to act as a deterrent and could create an added safety risk. Benson said Cominoff understood the intention from the drivers and supported the importance of enforcing the present rules and penalties for safer racing.

A request was made to consider whether it is possible to remove the anode on the base of the Mercury 400 ROS engine. Sid Bensalah responded that the intention with the concept of the new engine was to keep it stock and not allow any modifications from the manufacturer's specification.

12. Next meeting & closing this meeting

The meeting was formally closed at 12:00 on Sunday 24 April 2016.

OFFSHORE CALENDAR 2016

DISCIPLINE	CLASSES	COUNTRY	VENUE	DATE	DOCUMENTS
Offshore	World Offshore Class 3A	Norway	Tvedestrand	02 - 10 July 2016	Adv. Notice
Offshore	World Offshore Class 3D (To Be Confirmed)	Italy	Chioggia	21 - 25 September 2016	
Offshore	European Offshore Class 3A	Sweden	Nynashamn	18 - 20 August 2016	Adv. Notice
Offshore	European Offshore Cup Marathon class A - B- C	Norway	Tvedestrand	08 July 2016	Adv. Notice
Offshore	P1 SuperStock Offshore International Ordinary	United States	St Cloud	21 May 2016	
Offshore	European Offshore Class 3B	Sweden	Nynashamn	18 - 20 August 2016	Adv. Notice
Offshore	World Offshore Class 3B	Norway	Tvedestrand	02 - 10 July 2016	Adv. Notice
Offshore	European Offshore Class 3C	Sweden	Nynashamn	18 - 20 August 2016	Adv. Notice
Offshore	World Offshore Class 3C	Norway	Tvedestrand	02 - 10 July 2016	Adv. Notice
Offshore	World Offshore XCAT	United Arab Emirates	Fujairah	06 - 08 April 2016	Adv. Notice, Results, Adv. Prog.
Offshore	World Offshore XCAT	United Arab Emirates	Dubai	15 - 16 April 2016	Adv. Notice, Results, Adv. Prog.
Offshore	World Offshore XCAT	Switzerland	Lugano	04 - 05 June 2016	Adv. Prog.
Offshore	World Offshore XCAT	Asia	TBA	24 - 25 September 2016	
Offshore	World Offshore XCAT	Asia	TBA	08 - 09 October 2016	
Offshore	World Offshore XCAT	United Arab Emirates	Abu Dhabi	17 - 18 November 2016	
Offshore	World Offshore XCAT	United Arab Emirates	Dubai	02 - 03 December 2016	

Venture Cup

Ireland

11-19 June

**What can
powerboating learn
from successful
niche sports?**



RED BULL RACING
SPEED HUNTERS
Red Bull
Castrol
Nitro
SEBON
MOTUL
HUNTERS
TEN
K&N
Baseltech

DRIFTING

- **Realised they were too niche for regular mainstream TV**
- **Found significant audiences online – success of individual clips led to dedicated series on DailyMotion**
- **Positioned as a mix of motorsport and action sports**
- **Very short races – no longer than 45 seconds**
- **Commercial revenue from sponsored online content**
- **Social media growth: 20k to 3m Facebook followers**



TOUGH MUDDER

- **Endurance event series**
- **Generating GBP 1.5m in 2010, now GBP 70m**
- **More than 2m competitors**
- **Not about winning or losing – simply about finishing**
- **Aggressive use of social media**
- **Strong charity partners**
- **150 staff**
- **Repeat user base**



ULTIMATE FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIP

- **Started 1993**
- **Acquired for \$2m, now worth \$2.5bn**
- **Strong leadership**
- **Focus on personalities / stars**
- **Expanded women's division**
- **Focused on being strong alternative to boxing**
- **Ultimate Fighting reality TV show**
- **Major fights on PPV (pay-per-view)**



MOTOGP

- **Established series growing through youth development**
- **Searching for future stars**
- **Strong commercial partnership with Red Bull**
- **Working together in selection process for new talent search**
- **Major success: Pedrosa, Smith, Elias, Redding, Vinales, Stoner**



ESPN3.com

X GAMES

ESPN

ESPN2

ESPN 3D

BFGoodrich

BFGoodrich

BFGoodrich

BFGoodrich

SONY

NAVY NAVY

BFGoodrich

Mobil 1

X

Mobil 1

BFGoodrich

BFGoodrich

BFGoodrich

Ford

X

Ford

Drive one.

Drive one.

X GAMES

- **Global spotlight for stars – like skateboarder Tony Hawk**
- **Hawk has 2.8m Twitter followers**
- **Part of popular culture – included in the Simpsons & MTV**
- **Event success led to video games licences and movie deals for individual athletes**
- **Sponsors using athlete endorsements on products**
- **Niche athletes now household names**
- **Athletes can earn \$2-3m annually**

Virgin

money

TIMEX TIMEX TIMEX

9.37.31

Virgin money

Virgin money

Virgin money

Virgin money

Virgin



MARATHON RUNNING

- **47% increase in participants in past 5 years**
- **Running as a sport is essentially exactly the same activity at both elite and recreational levels**
- **Events showcase great cities – London, New York, Mumbai**
- **Growth of fun and charity runs**
- **Cap on number of entries**



CYCLING

- **More than 2m people in the UK cycle at least once a week**
- **People inspired by start of Tour de France in London, growing levels of congestion, 7/7 bombings, 2008 and 2012 Olympic success, government Cycle to Work scheme (tax free bicycles) and underlying focus on health and fitness**
- **Enjoyable and sociable**
- **Growth of technology in the cycling sector**
- **Described as “the new golf”**



WATERPILLAR

Pickles

DEWALT
GUARANTEED TOUGHED TOUGH

GAS

PRO BULL RIDERS

- **Simple beginnings – enthusiastic cowboys, limited funds**
- **Now 4 distinct tours across US and 300 events**
- **Exclusive deal with CBS Sports**
- **Recognised its market, understood its size**
- **Commercial model to monetise the tours**
- **Strictly focused on their specific demographic**
- **Slowly penetrated their niche**



SEAT

SEAT

SEAT auto emoción

RED BULL AIR RACE

- **Significant interest in action and extreme sports**
- **Diverse mix of competitors**
- **Successfully translated ultimate flying experience into ultimate viewing experience**
- **Racing format / eliminations / winner by a fraction of a second**
- **Significant investment in TV production and event experience**
- **Short race format**
- **Limited attention span for younger audience**