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ICF CANOE MARATHON COMMITTEE

PRESENTATION OF CANOE MARATHON AS AN OLYMPIC DISCIPLINE

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RATIONALE

The committee has been requested to present Canoe Marathon as an Olympic discipline. You will find our thoughts and ideas below.

We have not included any statistics as we have understood that the ICF Commission already has these details.

A video is part of this presentation and is supposed to be forwarded together with this document.

MARATHON AND THE OLYMPIC PROGRAMME

The Olympic Games produces a shop window for the world to see our sport of canoeing. One of the problems of presenting it is the large diversity with the many competitive disciplines. At the moment the public see only two of these disciplines and the consequence is that their assessment is very limited.

To increase the world's appreciation of the sport as a whole there is a need to add further diversity that is reflected in the world that the public see on a daily basis.

This is clearly seen in the world of athletics and cycling to name but two. Taking the world of athletics, their level of diversity is clear in their Olympic programme, with both short and long distance events. The Olympic running events include not only 100m and 200m events, but extend to 5000m, 10000m and the most watched event of all, the Marathon.

The history and basis of Canoe Marathon is founded in the roots of the Olympic tradition and closely follows that of the running marathon. The running marathon evokes the emotion and competitive spirit of millions of people who over the last 20 plus years have been encouraged and enthused to push themselves to the limit in local, national and international marathon races. The pinnacle of the elite marathon takes place at the Olympic Games. Almost every one of the spectators can see even just a little bit of themselves in the tactics, effort, strength and pain of the runners.

Marathon Canoeing events mirror these all of these emotions and interest, but on the water and not on the streets. This adds not only the dimension of the paddling techniques, but also emphasises the true spirit of racing thus following the basic maxim of the true Olympics, "Furthest, fastest, longest".

The basis of the race is not only to challenge the other competitors and their paddling techniques, but adds the further excitement of the portage where the paddlers have to get out of their boat and run round a land obstacle. This adds enormously to the skill levels, the tactics to be employed and the overall excitement of the race.

All of this spectacle can easily be seen with the concept of the course at the same regatta venue as the sprint events. It does however show the diversity of canoeing within the same arena whilst preserving all the values of canoeing as a whole sport.

The course concept envisaged will not only add the spectacle of the portage, but the new principle of enabling the paddlers to choose when to take their required number of portages.

By making the race able to operate on the Sprint Regatta course there is no extra cost for the organisers. The course concept has been carefully arranged to maximize the use of the existing facilities whilst retaining all of the main principles of Marathon.

‘Canoe Marathon has all; the close fight between paddlers and tight group racing, the very exiting portaging, and the endurance aspect and often even sprint finishing.’

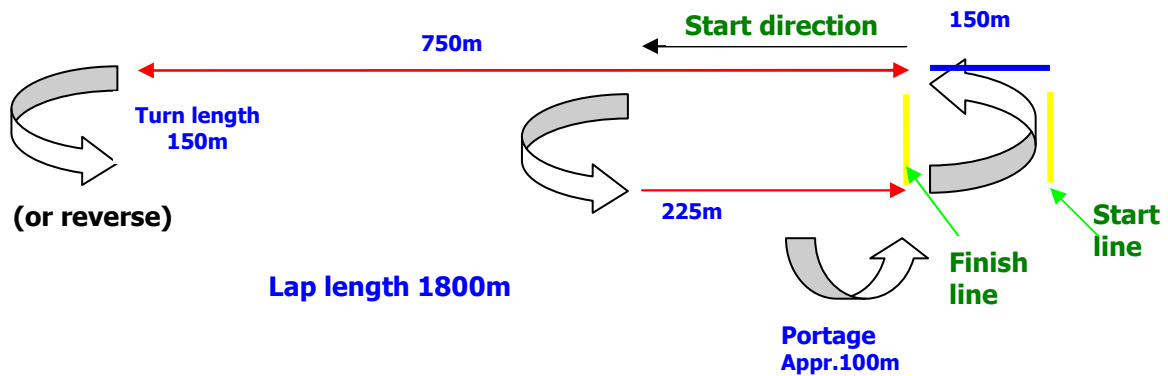
- Visually exciting close racing
- Easy to televise
- Portage action
- Race tactics that are easy to see and understand
- Endurance
- Paddling technique
- Because the races are so easy to arrange, on regatta courses, rivers, lakes, in fact anywhere where there is relatively flat water inclusion in the Olympic programme will lead to an extension of the international interest in the sport and move many people to enhance a healthy lifestyle in the same way as runners.
- The simplicity of the discipline will enable the competition format to be easily sustained with minimal cost as not only are few facilities needed, but the boat types are identical to those used in Sprint. This feature applies all over the world where Marathon can be practised with low cost simplicity that will be available to all people where there is flat water.

COURSE AND COMPETITION CONCEPT

We suggest the following course and competition concept;

1. K1 men and K1 women
2. Use the sprint venue
3. Lap course with portages with smaller laps than we normally have (see below)
4. Same distance, 15 km for men and women, which is shorter than we use in World Championships. This will give a competition time around 1 hour.
5. 1800m laps (8 laps)
6. Last small lap 600m
7. Portages

OLYMPIC GAMES COURSE



Big laps: $150\text{m} + 750\text{m} + 150\text{m} + 750\text{m} = 1800\text{m}$

Last small lap: $150\text{m} + 225\text{m} + 150\text{m} + 225\text{m} = 600\text{m}$

8 big laps $8 \times 1800\text{m} = 14400\text{m}$

1 small lap $= 600\text{m}$

Total length $= 15000\text{m}$

Start and finish line could be the same, then making the last small lap 150m longer.