

# SCIRA COMMODORE - REPORT 2018 - 2019

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SCIRA Commodore

Ilhabela, Brazil, October 11, 2019



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## **1. SCIRA Officers and Standing Committees**

At the beginning of 2018 the new SCIRA officers, the Long Range Planning Committee, and the Promotion Committee were appointed. The Nominating Committee was appointed in August 2019.

### **SCIRA Board:**

#### **Voting Members:**

- Commodore Pietro Fantoni, ITA (2018-2019)
- Vice Commodore: Luis Soubie, ARG (2018-2019)
- Secretary: Zbigniew Rakocy, POL (2018-2019)
- Treasurer: Sue Roberts, GBR (2018-2021)
- Rules Chairman: Antonio Bari, ITA (2017-2020)
- General Secretary - Europe: Martin Bermudez, ESP (2017-2018) – Martin was confirmed also for 2019-2020
- General Secretary - WH&O: Raul Rios, PUR (2017-2018)-Gweneth Crook was elected for 2019-2020

#### **Non-Voting:**

- Chief Measurer: Luis Gonzalez Alvarez, ESP (2018-2020)
- Legal Counsel: Leigh Savage, USA
- Chief Information Officer: Don Bedford, USA
- Vice Rules Chairman, Gus Wirth, USA
- Executive Director, Jerelyn Biehl, USA

#### **Technical Committee:**

- Chairman: Antonio Bari, Italy
- Vice Chairman: Gus Wirth, USA
- Chief Measurer: Luis Gonzalez, Spain
- Vice Chairman, Rules Committee: Gus Wirth, USA
- Member: Luis Soubie, Argentina
- Member: Mario Eugenio Tavares, Brazil
- Member: Arild Figenschou, Norway
- Member: Nobuhiko Kudara, Japan
- Chief Information Officer: Harry Levinson, USA

#### **Long Range Planning Committee**

- Chairman: Don Bedford
- Gweneth Crook
- Ricardo Lobato

All are past Commodores of SCIRA. I suggested they discuss 3 topics:

1. Direct payment of SCIRA Dues
2. Mixed World Championship
3. SCIRA and World Sailing

#### **Promotion Committee**

The 2018-2019 Promotion Committee was appointed by the Commodore:

- Chairman: Luis Soubie



# SNIPES CLASS INTERNATIONAL RACING ASSOCIATION

- Shinichi Uchida - JPN
- Reino Suonsilta - FIN
- Zbigniew Rakocy - POL
- Fernando Celdran - ESP
- Nikola Deskovic - CRO

## **Nominating Committee**

I appointed in August the Nominating Committee:

- Chairman: Luis Pessanha
- Ricardo Lobato
- John Rose
- Andre Callot

## **2. Board Meetings and Skype Conferences**

According to the “new” Section 23.3 of the Constitution, “The Commodore, even when petitioned by another member of the Board of Governors, can call a meeting of the Board of Governors through tele-conferencing or video conferencing.”

We have had 7 Board conferences via Skype in 2018 and 2019. Agendas and minutes are available from the SCIRA office.

## **3. Rules Approved and Rule Changes Proposals**

### **SCIRA Rules Approved for 2018-2020**

World Sailing approved the Snipe Class Rules, in effect January 1, 2018 through 2020.

Thanks to the many people involved: GIORGIO BREZICH, ANTONIO ESPADA, ANTONIO BARI

The Digital Snipe Rulebook is available and also updated since 2018.

**Constitution, By-Laws, Rules of Conduct, Deeds of Gift, Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions Templates** were also checked and amended. Thanks to Antonio Bari.

### **Amendments of Class Rules Approved by WS (effective from 26/7/19)**

[https://snipe.org/images/2019/CRC\\_Snipe\\_2019-2607\\_002.pdf](https://snipe.org/images/2019/CRC_Snipe_2019-2607_002.pdf)

### **Rule Changes Proposals**

In 2018, 6 proposals were submitted and 3 passed (amendments to Constitution, By Laws, and Rules of Conduct)

In 2019, 8 proposals were submitted. During July's tele-conference, the Board decided to examine these proposals at the October Board Meeting in Ilhabela.

<https://snipe.org/class/rules-proposals>

### **Rule 42 Guidelines for Snipes**

In August 2018 the SCIRA Board adopted Rule 42 jury guidelines. This document is intended as a guide to both judges and sailors, and it is based on World Sailing Rule 42 documents and the experience of world-class Snipe sailors and Judges.

The next step will be producing a video to explain both legal and illegal actions.

## **4. Other Board Decisions**

### **Increase in Sail Royalties & Hull Number Fees**

The SCIRA Board of Governors voted to increase the sail royalty labels and new hull numbers as of January 1, 2018.

Sail Royalty: The fees were increased from \$15 to \$25

Hull Numbers: The fees were increased from \$50 to \$100

### **Digital Snipe Bulletin**

During the Board of Governors meeting held in September 2017 in La Coruna, Spain, the SCIRA Board made the difficult decision to cease printing and mailing the SNIPE BULLETIN and to move to an all-digital version. The main goal was to reduce the costs of printing and mailing, which was a significant portion of the Class budget. In this way, some of the funds saved can be used for promotion and other projects.

The history of the SNIPE BULLETIN is the history of the class, the link that holds the family together. It grew out of Bill Crosby's JIB SHEET, which took over Snipe News from RUDDER magazine in 1945. The JIB SHEET had one other editor, Chet Miller, SCIRA'S 1942-43 Commodore. For most of its 30-year history the BULLETIN was a monthly publication, with a few combined issues. In 1999 the Board of Governors voted to decrease the BULLETIN from monthly to quarterly, and it has been a full color, quarterly publication since 2006.

In recent years, class communication has increasingly transitioned to the internet (e-mails, electronic newsletters, websites, social media, skype ...). But the only official source of information is the SNIPE BULLETIN. Beginning with the Winter 2018 issue, the Bulletin moved to its current digital format.

### **Direct Dues Payment and Registration**

At the end of 2018, the Board of Governors approved that direct registration and payment of SCIRA dues would start in January 2019. The new system helps especially the countries in South America with weak currencies, high inflation rates, and very restricted regulations about payments abroad.

Spain, Portugal, USA, and Italy opted for the "old system". i.e. registration and payment through the National Secretary.



## 5. Problems and Tasks

### Membership – Problems in Some Countries

I wrote to the National Secretaries many times on the subject of membership (January and June 2018, and again in January and August 2019). It is very important that the Board check and monitor monthly the membership and the trends of registration. We always have to encourage and push the National Secretaries (and the sailors) to respect our rules about membership.

2018 finished with good numbers, showing an increase in both sailors and boats registered with SCIRA. Sailors: 2,530, boats: 1,745; SCIRA Countries: 32.

This year we updated the SCIRA database and the system to register and pay SCIRA dues. Each country chose its preferred method of registration and payment (directly by the members, or through their National Secretaries). Our Executive Director Jerelyn Biehl has helped the NSs and answered questions relating to the new system.

Right now the “numbers” are lower than at the same time in 2018.

Some NSs understand the importance of encouraging sailors to register with the class. Some countries have already registered more boats and sailors than last year. This is a great result. But according to the international class database, there are several countries where not all competitors or boats are registered. It is with great disappointment that we note that, at some regattas (including a few very important events), only half of the fleet was in good standing with SCIRA.

I believe that this is the biggest problem the class needs to address going forward. We have to work hard to change the mentality of the sailors and convince the NSs to work harder for the class, defeating this bad behavior of the sailors who don't pay their dues.

### Boats without MDS

Every single boat must be measured and have an MDS. Only this will ensure that our class is truly one design. Unfortunately, in 2018 we discovered a serious problem: there was a long list of new boats built between 2015 and 2018 without an MDS that were currently racing at a local or national level. This was unfair.

### Updated MDS - to be used from February 26, 2019

In January 2019, the SCIRA Rules Committee approved the latest version of the MDS (Measurement Data Sheet) to be used beginning February 26, 2019. It includes additional measurements to record tolerances missing from the previous version.

After reading the annual report by Jerelyn Biehl, the Board investigated the causes of this situation. The most common problem was a lack of trained measurers, especially in countries with a high production of new Snipes. This caused a huge effort for the measurers, who typically go to the boat builder's and measure several boats in a bunch, sending the completed MDS to the SCIRA Office once a year... meanwhile sending the necessary data for issuing a Measurement Certificate to the National Secretary.

After this discovery, the Board sent a letter to measurers, boat builders, and National Secretaries, advising them to follow the Class Rules and the Builders' Certification Rule when delivering a boat or issuing a new Measurement Certificate. A deadline was established to deliver all the missing MDS and no new numbers were issued to those builders not complying until all the MDS were sent in and recorded.

Thanks to the hard work of Antonio Bari (he also went to Japan to visit local boat builders and instructed measurers), we can say now that 99 per cent of the boats now have an MDS. Those still missing are in the process of being measured, and new numbers are issued again to all boatbuilders.

## 6. Past and Future Events

### Past Events

I have tried to be present at many regattas as possible. I attended both as a sailor and as Commodore the Master Worlds in Vilamoura, Portugal, the Europeans in Pori Finland, and the Master Europeans in Valencia, Spain. As Commodore, I attended the WH&O in Olivos, Argentina and the Women's Europeans in Antwerp, Belgium. They were all very well organized events.

It is important to start well in advance of the regatta a good dialogue with the organizers, to finalize the N.o.R., Sailing Instructions, registrations, logistics, charter boats, and facilities for our media team. I strongly suggest organizing a group for circulating emails and also a Skype conference a month before the event to facilitate communication. Also a meeting the day before the events is great for meeting people and for trying to solve any issues.

I also attended local or national regattas in the US, Poland, Croatia, and Austria. Sailors like to meet Board members to talk about the Class and share ideas.

It is sad that 2 very important regattas disappeared in 2018: the Snipe Midwinter Championship in Clearwater, Florida, USA (one of the oldest and most prestigious Snipe regattas), and the Campionato dell'Adriatico in Chioggia, Italy. I hope that these regattas can be revitalized very soon.

### Future Events

For future championships, it is hard to find countries able to submit a bid. I have noticed that it is better for us (experienced sailors and Board members) to identify a country, a fleet, or a group of enthusiastic sailors and try to convince them to host a regatta. Their energies can overtake any kind of problems. I am proud to say that one of the best regattas I attended as Commodore was the Women's Europeans in Belgium. They were skeptical when I first asked them, but in the end they did an incredible job with sponsors, volunteers, the club, charter boats, etc (BTW I think they should organize the next edition).

So it is important to work together from the beginning with the NSs, with the fleets, with the sailors, and with the clubs, encouraging and monitoring their work step by step.

Also it is important for the future to check the charter boats fees. Very often what it is declared and promised in the bid (which is a contract) is not respected by the private owners when they charter their boats. The bid very often has charter fees that don't reflect the reality. Someone on the Board should check the charter fees proposed in the submitted bid, and when the bid is approved, check that the fees are as promised. Also, transportation cost should be specified. It should be clear that a country that wants to submit a bid cannot promise what it cannot deliver, and it cannot indicate a price if it doesn't have any idea of the transportation or charter costs that a company like Zeltic or DB Marine will charge.



## SNIPE CLASS INTERNATIONAL RACING ASSOCIATION

In the case of a major event, a division of tasks among the members of the Board could be:

- Commodore and Executive Director: coordination and supervision of the event, communications with the National Secretary of the host country and the organizing club;
- Vice Commodore: control of compliance with the bid contract (in particular, entry fee, charter fees, socials);
- Executive Director: registration, website, membership control, schedule specifics including measurement, races, socials, and meeting;
- Chairman of the Rules Committee, Executive Director and SCIRA representative (may be the Commodore or the General Secretary of the Hemisphere, as appropriate): work with the Club to produce Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions;
- Executive Director and SCIRA rep: identification, selection, and appointment of the Jury and the Race Committee (black list control) together with the club;
- Executive Director: asks organizers for accommodations for ED, SCIRA rep, photographer, media person and helps coordinate protocol, logistics, trophies;
- Chairman of the Rules Committee and Chief Measurer: Measurement planning and organization;
- Executive Director and SCIRA rep: contacts with photographer and with SCIRA media person; ask the organizers about details like media room, fast internet connection, RIB;
- Executive Director and SCIRA rep: dates and agenda for Board, NSs meetings and Sailors' Forum.

### Major Regattas Rotation Grid

It is a hard decision for the Board if it is better for the class to respect the rotation grid for our major events or hold championships in a big country. Generally speaking, of course we should respect the rotation grid, BUT ...

... a continental regatta or a world championship in a small country or an isolated location can result in poor participation. It could be hard for the competitors to reach the location. A small fleet means few charter boats. Transportation/traveling and accommodation costs can be very high, and charters could also be expensive.

On the other hand, we want to give every country with Snipe sailors the opportunity to organize a big regatta. If there is a small group of sailors that attends all the international events, it is great to give them the opportunity to organize a regatta on their home turf. In my experience there is no doubt that they can organize a great event. They know how to do it, and they really want a major event.

But if we want regattas with great participation, a high number of charter boats, and relatively cheap costs for traveling and accommodations, there are only a few countries that can host. Proof is in the numbers from the 2015 and 2017 Worlds, 2016 Open Europeans (109 boats!), 2018 Master Worlds, and 2019 Open Master Europeans. All these regattas were in southern Europe. And it is better promotion for the class to show to the sailing world a big championship with a higher number of boats.

During the National Secretaries Meeting in Olivos, SCIRA Cuba expressed its willingness to organize an international event in the future. The main problem is that there are not enough charter boats. Therefore, to organize such an event it is necessary to have the support of interested boat owners from other countries. Given the political and economic situation, it would be difficult to organize the transportation of boats (for example from Florida). However, it would be interesting to study whether there is the possibility of organizing a Snipe regatta in Cuba.

## 7. National Secretary Meetings at the Europeans in Pori and at the Western Hemisphere and Orient in Olivos

I personally attended a meeting in Pori and in Olivos. It is important for Board members and in particular for the Commodore to attend these meetings, in order to maintain good communications with the National Secretaries, understand the problems, and hear suggestions from specific nations.

## 8. New SCIRA Countries

**Switzerland:** A new fleet 901 has been created on Lago di Lugano, bringing the Swiss back to the Snipe class. Marcel Fux is the Fleet Captain and National Secretary.

**Guatemala:** Fleet 902 in Amatitlan joined SCIRA in 2018, with Jose Hernandez as the National Secretary.

**Lithuania:** Lithuania also joined the Snipe family in 2018, with Fleet 903 Kaunas and Gintare Scheidt as NS.

Recently we discovered that a fleet is still active in **Russia**. We need to study which are the most appropriate and effective tools for bringing these sailors into SCIRA.

## 9. Promotion Initiatives

### World Snipe Days in 2018-2019

Class promotion is one of the most important aspects to work on and fleet activity is the hub. A lively fleet promotes events, regattas, clinics, training sessions, and parties among its members, but it should also attract attention from sailors outside the fleet. The aim is to attract new people to our class by helping them discover our wonderful boat. In 2018 and 2019, the Board encouraged fleets in all countries to organize a World Snipe Day, at the best time of year for such activities in their region. With the commitment of passionate Snipe sailors, it is possible to reinvigorate fleets and regions, which will help attract a new generation of sailors. Communication to the outside and the promotional activities of individual fleets is a fundamental aspect for this effort. The first step is to introduce and allow potentially interested sailors to sail the Snipe.

### SCIRA Coaching Program

In 2018 SCIRA supported a clinic run by Damian Borrás in Belgium and in 2019, there were clinics in Croatia and Spain.

### Star Sailors League – Ranking and Future Projects

In January 2019, the Snipe Class was included in the Star Sailors League international ranking. I am very proud of being the first class added to this prestigious circuit. The SSL is now a very well-known brand in the sailing community, and this is a great opportunity for us to be recognised as one of the most popular classes with a strong international presence.

I personally met many times the SSL team in Switzerland for discussions about sailing promotion and to promote our Class.



## SNIPE CLASS INTERNATIONAL RACING ASSOCIATION

Recently I was involved with them in a bigger project for promoting the sailors of small boats and inshore racing. Now, the SSL is providing bibs for each sailor at the Senior Worlds in Ilhabela.

My idea is to include the Snipe Class in future SSL Finals. The SSL Finals (every December in Nassau, Bahamas) are currently only open to men (top sailors selected from the SSL ranking and VIP sailors as Olympic or America's Cup champions) and are sailed in Stars. The audience of this regatta is big and WS recognized it as one of their main events (alongside the Olympic Games, America's Cup, and The Ocean Race). Using the Snipe as the female boat for the SSL Finals (including Olympic champions, VIPs, and Snipe class sailors) would be a great promotion for the class and a fantastic opportunity for SSL to include women.

### Media and Communication

In 2018 and 2019 we invested in communication with press releases and photos sent to the main sailing magazines and sailing media. These days, a sporting event doesn't exist without media and communication. You can have the best regatta ever, but if people don't find timely news and photos online, nobody knows about it. It is also important that you share the news on the most popular sailing websites and social media pages.

We had excellent media coverage at these events:

- 2018 Master Worlds: local photographer and Rachele Vitello (SCIRA Media person for 2018 and 2019);
- 2018 European Championship: Matias Capizzano as photographer and Rachele Vitello as media officer;
- 2018 WH&O Championship: Matias Capizzano as photographer and Rachele Vitello as media officer;
- 2019 Master Europeans: local photographer Guillermo Baixauli (paid by the Club) and Rachele Vitello as media officer;
- 2019 Worlds: Matias Capizzano as photographer and Rachele Vitello as media officer.

Matias and Rachele are both well known for their professional activity at top events (World Championships, Olympic Games, TP52 circuit, America's Cup, SSL). Their CVs are impressive.

Also, in other cases, we had articles and photos published about the 2018 South Europeans, 2018 Women's Worlds, 2019 start of the SSL Ranking, 2019 Women's Europeans, 2019 Italian and USA Nationals, thanks to the help – for free in these cases – of Kathleen Tocke, Carol Cronin, Kim Couranz, and Rachele Vitello.

It is important before the events to organize Skype conference calls with the organizers and the media person well in advance to learn what is needed for press releases.

I believe the results have been excellent. This is the way to gain recognition for our class and I hope that the future Board will continue on this path.

## 10. Other Initiatives

### Bibi Juetz Perpetual Trophy

The SCIRA Board of Governors approved a new perpetual trophy, named after Bibi Juetz, that will be presented at the 2019 World Championship in Ilhabela, Brazil. The trophy will be presented to the highest

placing mixed team at the World Championship. The trophy was presented by the Rio de Janeiro fleet 159 in honor of Bibi, who has been one of the most decorated female skippers of the Snipe class. Bibi always sails a mixed boat and won the Snipe World Masters in 1998 as skipper. It will be an honor to have Bibi present this trophy at the Worlds this year.

There are already many mixed teams competing in Snipe regattas (and at the Pan American Games the Snipe is the mixed doublehanded dinghy). This is the future for our class.

### **Snipe Class Hall of Fame**

Another 2019 initiative was creating the Snipe Class Hall of Fame. The Snipe class has a longer history than most other classes. It is a history of people, sailors, champions, enthusiasts, promoters, sailmakers, builders, and organizers. And that past is strongly linked to the present: of all the people who helped to promote and grow our class in many countries and continents, many are still strongly linked to the class. It is a large family, the Snipe Family, from great-grandparents to grandchildren.

Hall of Fame Categories:

- Sailing: achievements on the water by a sailor
- Technical/Design: Significantly contributed to technical aspects as a builder, sailmaker
- Contributors: made significant contributions to the Snipe Class such as a coach, administrator, officer, promoter, or organizer.

### **Protocol for Prizegiving at Major Championships**

In 2019, a protocol paper was created to assist the organizers with prizegivings at major championships. Prizegivings are special events that leave strong memories. There is a lot of tradition associated to these events, where old, beautiful, and coveted trophies are awarded. These solemn moments should not be debased: we must honor the winners of yesterday along with those of today. To ensure consistency at all SCIRA major event ceremonies, and guarantee that minimum standards of dignity and protocol are adhered to, a standard format for Awards Ceremonies at SCIRA major events has been agreed; it can be downloaded from the rules page of snipe.org. <https://snipe.org/class/rules>

### **Dialogue with the sailors and the Members**

At the Europeans in Pori and at the WH&O in Olivos, we had a Sailors' Meeting and discussed many topics.

Sailors' Forum in Pori:

#### 1. Number of races per day

The discussion was really wide with many different proposals, some of them "interconnected" like the duration of the races; upwind or downwind finishes; number of days at a major event, spare day, etc. Three "conclusions" could be summarized as follows:

1. No change (max 3 races, 60-75min)
2. Two races, third race only to recover lost races



# SNIPE CLASS INTERNATIONAL RACING ASSOCIATION

3. Maximum number of races (related to the number of days of the regatta): 2 days-5 races; 3 days-7 races; 4 days-9 races; 5 days-11 races (at the Europeans we had 10 races per 4 days)

## 2. Snipe Junior Europeans

Three options: different venues and different dates, same venue with different dates (before or after the open championship), or combined championship (junior+senior). Sailors discussed pros and cons for each option.

The most interesting idea was the proposal to raise the minimum age of juniors to 25 years, as already happened in the 470. The Commodore will submit this proposal to the Board for a vote next year.

## 3. Digital rule book

The proposal to not have a printed version, but to keep only the digital version, was unanimous

At the end of the Sailors' Forum, Marko Marinovic previewed the 2020 European Championship venue of Split, Croatia, with the aid of slides and photos. The sailors were very excited.

Sailors Forum in Olivos:

Same topics were discussed in Olivos.

After the Sailors' Forum during the last Europeans in Pori, Finland, the Board decided to send a questionnaire to the participants ("Snipe Europeans 2018 Survey") to learn their opinions regarding many issues.

The same questionnaire was sent to the competitors who sailed the Western Hemisphere and Orient Championship in Olivos, Buenos Aires Argentina ("Snipe WH&O 2018 Survey").

It is interesting to see that the 2 hemispheres have different opinions on many topics.

<http://www.snipetoday.org/articles/exchange-views/snipe-wh-o-2018-survey-vs-snipe-europeans-2018-survey/>

## Online Surveys

In the last 2 years we used the Monkey Survey on many occasions: Sailor of the Year, Hall of Fame, questionnaire after the Worlds in La Coruna, after the Europeans, and after the WH&O Championship.

It is a very useful tool for asking the sailors or the members their opinions.

## Letters to the National Secretaries

I have sent letters to the National Secretaries about many topics:

- January 2018: 2018 Calendar, SCIRA membership, International Ranking and SSL
- February 2018: Promotion and World Snipe Days
- June 2018: SCIRA membership
- September 2018: Participation at Snipe Nationals
- November 2018: 2019 Worlds Allocations Dates
- December 2018: SCIRA and SSL, information for sailors 'profiles

- January 2019: 2019 Calendar
- January 2019: 2019 World Snipe Days
- August 2019: SCIRA membership

Ilhabela, Brazil, October 11, 2019

Pietro Fantoni

SCIRA Commodore