



International Sailing Federation

Media Guide



ISAF Media Guide

The following guide is designed to help ISAF Member National Authorities, ISAF Class Associations and event organizers maximise their publicity in the media.

1. Press Releases

Use plain and simple English throughout the article and highlight the main points of information that you want to tell.

By keeping copy simple and direct to the point editors are more likely to publish the article.

Remember to keep everything relevant.

1.1 Article Structure

Headline

The headline captures the reader's interest, engages them and is the first point of contact a reader will have with the story. The ISAF News Editor Inbox gets up to 200 emails a day – keep the headline simple, straight to the point and inviting

A headline should be under 140 characters so that it is short enough for a Twitter update including a tiny URL link.

For example:

1. *Perfect Start For Lijia Xu As ISAF World Cup Standings Take Shape* <http://bit.ly/zd8Ozw>
2. *Twelve For Women's Match Racing* <http://bit.ly/wy0pRb>
3. *Irina Konstantinova-Bontemps Set For Fourth Olympic Games* <http://bit.ly/x4sJ8M>

Followers know the key points already and editors know what the story is straight away when the release is found in their inbox or on their twitter feed.

Make sure that the start of each word is capitalized and that the correct event titles and relevant sponsor names are used. If it is not possible to include the sponsor name in the headline, make sure it is mentioned as soon as possible in the copy.

Sub Headline

Not essential to include, but consider the option of a sub headline to provide further context to the headline.

Opening paragraph

Summarise the story in the opening paragraph of the release and provide further detail later on in the copy. Aim for 25-30 words in the opening paragraph. Opening paragraphs often miss out key points. Keep it simple and try and stick to:

- **Who** is competing
- **What** is the regatta and class they are competing in
- **Where** is the regatta/event based
- **When** is it happening
- **How** did they do what they did

For example:

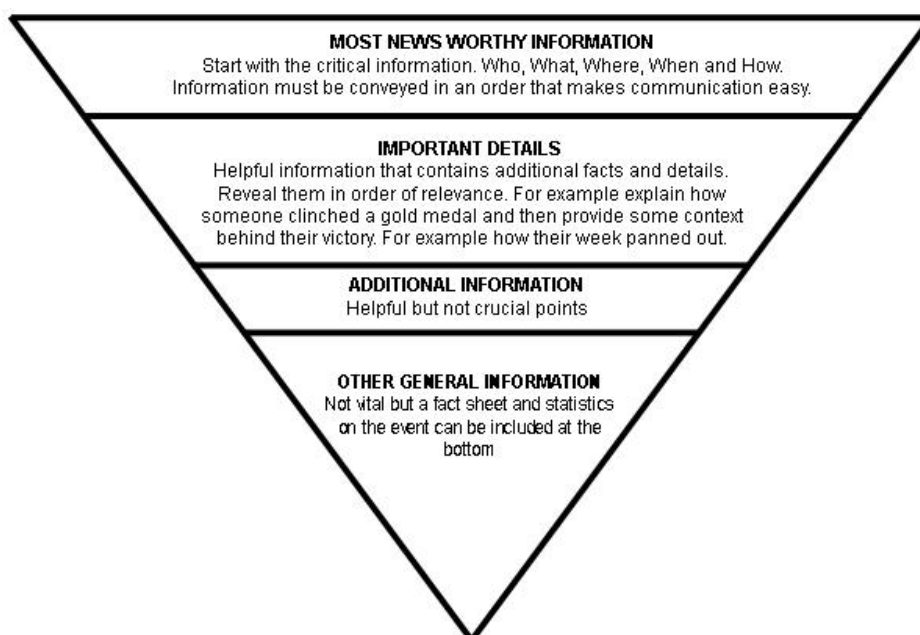


1. *The 2011-2012 ISAF Sailing World Cup Standings are starting to take shape after Sail Melbourne and US SAILING's Rolex Miami OCR, the opening two regattas in the seven series World Cup.*
2. *Denmark, Finland and Spain took the remaining Women's Match Racing spots for the London 2012 Olympic Sailing Competition after coming through a tough qualification regatta.*
3. *Bulgaria's Irina Konstantinova-Bontemps has been selected to sail at the London 2012 Olympic Sailing Competition after she was the only sailor from her nation to qualify at the Perth 2011 ISAF Sailing World Championships*

Article Content

Ensure that the article has a solid structure based on the inverted pyramid structure. Consider using key messages that a sponsor may wish to convey and how you will include these messages within the copy.

It may be necessary to produce two versions of copy for your event. One that focuses on local/national sailors and the other that focuses on the international story. When writing about international events avoid bias towards national sailors and teams. It is the responsibility of the sailors and teams to tell their own news so focus on the relevant stories.



Summarise and conclude

At the end of the article add a conclusion. This varies on the content of the article but this is the last chance to have a final say on the copy. Summarize the key points and leave a good impression.

Results

Include the top ten finishers at the bottom of the copy. Include full names, nationality, race finishes and final points. For example:

- 1) *Paul Goodison (GBRPG1) (15), 2, 15, 1, 9, 7, 1, 4, 6, 18 – 63pts*
- 2) *Vasilij Zbogor (SLOVZ) (24), 4, 14, 6, 2, 11, 18, 1, 11, 4 – 71pts*
- 3) *Diego Romero (ITADR4) 6, 3, 5, (36), 10, 15, 11, 9 10, 6 – 75pts*



Notes to Editors

This section is where you can add some background about what the event or company exactly is. The information doesn't necessarily have to relate to the main press release but can contain useful information and points that you may not have mentioned in the main content but can still be applied by a news editor.

1.2 Format

Make sure the content is easy for the media to use. If the media can reproduce your content quickly then they are more likely to use it. Over complicated formatting will discourage the media as time is required to re-work to their format.

By sticking to a consistent format the readers of the release know what to expect from your content which can go a long way in their choice of running with the release or ignoring it – sometimes regardless of the content!

Try to use:

- Font – Arial
- Size – 11
- Single line spacing
- Alignment left

1.3 Layout

It is important to also use a consistent layout. The standard ISAF layout is below:

International Sailing Federation (ISAF) Press Release

<INSERT DATE>

<HEADING>

<SUB HEADING>

Location: Southampton, Great Britain

<INSERT STORY>

<INSERT RESULTS>

ENDS

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1.4 Links

Ensure that the full URL is visible on the copy so the news editor knows where to go and can link appropriately online if they choose to.

Include links to social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and Flickr as footers so whoever reads the communication will know you are active in utilising social media and can follow updates.

1.5 Images

Include two or three high resolution images of the main sailors or class's mentioned throughout the press release. An ideal size of the image would be around 1,200 pixels with a file size of 1MB allowing editors freedom to crop the image to whatever size they wish.



Include a caption for each image naming the sailors and including copyright at the end of the text. Make sure all images have metadata included.

Include a link to find more images but the most relevant ones must be in the press release so editors don't have to filter through hundreds of images. Without an accessible image available on the press release an editor may choose not to run with the story as they have no image to support the content.

2. Submitting

There is no right or wrong way to submit a press release but consider that it is more likely an editor will publish your article if it is easy for them to do so.

Press releases submitted as plain text in an email are recommended as they can be viewed immediately upon opening and avoids any problems with format compatibility.

Avoid attaching pdf files as they cannot be easily copied and an editor will have to re-do any formatting you have included.

Ensure attachments do not exceed 5MB as they may be blocked by mail boxes.

2.1 Press List

Have a database or spreadsheet of the contacts who you will send the release to. Include their name, email address, publication or media outlet they work for and what their role is.

Create a mailing list on an email account and make sure you monitor the various news platforms that the recipients work for to see if your release has been covered.

2.2 Email signature

Ensure that you have an email signature at the end of your email so recipients know who the content is from. Have something along these lines:

John Smith

<INSERT YOUR ROLE HERE>

<INSERT YOUR EVENT/MNA/COMPANY HERE>

Phone: 07777 000 000

Email: John@smith.com

Website: <INSERT WEBSITE HERE>

3. Photography

Images are important for promoting the sport, the sailors, host venues and sponsors. Good photography adds value and gives the media an extra reason to use the story and showcase your event or announcement to the world.

Brief the photographer on what is expected of them before the regatta. As well as sailing shots, ask your photographer to capture sailor portraits on and off the water, the venue showing sponsor advertising, general views and beauty shots, opening and closing ceremonies, medal ceremonies, boat park preparation, social images, abstract sailing shots on and off the water and shots that reflect the essence of the sport and your event/sponsors.



Ensure your photographer has the capabilities and expertise to distribute images to key media markets to gain maximum exposure.

Be as broad as possible with photography. Ensure as many nations and sailors as possible are captured and not just the winners.

If there is limited sailing, your Photographer must use the opportunity for some on-shore work.

Include two or three pictures of the day in Press Releases that are clearly labelled, titled, edited and suitable for publication.

If a paid photographer is out of your budget, use a personal camera, invest in software such as Adobe Photoshop.

4. Video

Consider the use of video footage to provide highlights of a regatta or for interviews. Video will provide you with a dynamic exposure for your event, for the sponsors and for the sport.

If you are able to appoint a host broadcaster consider the output for the coverage when deciding on the type of programming you ask them to produce.

Footage can be filmed using a digital camera and can be edited with any software that the camera comes with. But if there is money to purchase an editing suite consider using Adobe Premiere Pro or Avid Editing Suite.

If you use video at your regatta contact the ISAF News Editor (newseditor@isaf.co.uk) about the possibility of getting the footage shown on the ISAF TV Player.

4.1 Online Coverage

The average sports video on YouTube is 3min 4sec and on the ISAF YouTube Channel analytics show that users drop off at 2min 30secs. Take this into consideration when producing video and make sure yours are not too long.

Have a basic introduction outlining what your video is. This can be created by simply inserting a title into the video using editor software

Process and publish your video as soon as possible. The content will lose its relevance if it is not uploaded as soon as possible. If you have the content to support a story – release it with the story and push viewers to go and view it.

Upload the content to a video platform such as YouTube and inform people on the website or on social networks that the video is available to view.

Have a balance of onshore and on water video. Video, interviews and sound bites are a good way to build up sailor personalities. To many shots of boats going round a mark can get dull even for die hard sailing fans.

If time and resources are limited do not make videos overly complicated. Keep them interesting and relevant and publish in a timely manner.

5. Audio

Audio clips and podcasts can be an effective way of promoting an event or announcement.

Laptops and desktop computers often come with inbuilt microphones so a voice recording can easily be made. If you do not have one built in they can be purchased at a good price and still have a high level of recording quality.



Software, such as Audacity, provide simple recording and editing facilities, is free to download [here](#) and is available for Windows, Mac OS X, Linux and BSD.

A recording can be played on an audio player on your website, added to YouTube, embedded on Facebook and pushed out through all the mediums that you use.

6. Website

Your website is a very effective means of communication and is the first place the media look to find out information.

It is important that your website is welcoming, appealing, informative, easy to navigate and up-to-date, if a visitor sees the website hasn't been updated for months or even years they are unlikely to visit again.

Provide a good set of links to sponsors, social media and related websites. Ask websites you link to to return the favour on their websites.

Add social feeds such as a Facebook Like Box on the website informing visitors to your site of your recent posts on Facebook. Twitter also allows you to add a feed and YouTube videos can be embedded on the page so visitors are immediately in touch with your wider social network.

Consider which sections on your website should be mobile enabled to allow users to access information on the go.

6.1 Regatta websites

To ensure the event is one they will cover, give them easy access to information that makes their job easier. With ease of access to information the probability of them covering the event is higher.

Ensure the results, news reports and photographs are simple to access.

Have a dedicated media section on your website that includes basic information such as accreditation process, facilities on and off shore (media centre hours, press boat access), travel and accommodation contacts, photography links and named media liaison with contact details.

7. Social Media

Social media platforms are excellent ways to keep your fans regularly updated with news and information.

If you use social media platforms at a regatta ensure that you develop a clear strategy and that you have enough personnel to service them all and your website properly.

7.1 Facebook

A Facebook page is a very good platform to keep fans regularly updated as they can 'Like' your page, interact with you and other users and access content.

Do not use Facebook just for news. Use it to engage in conversation with your audience using appropriate language and avoid being too sterile. Invite and encourage interaction by replying to comments.

Do not overuse Facebook as updates every few minutes will annoy users.



Facebook is free to use, allows publication of text, images, video content and can be linked with other social media platforms such as YouTube and Twitter.

Establish links and 'Like' other relevant Facebook Pages. You can do this by visiting other pages that relate to your page and adding them to your page's favourites.

A Facebook page is very simple to create and can be set up in a matter of minutes. For more information on how to get started go to www.facebook.com.

Each Facebook page allows the creator to add administrators who have the capability to post and upload content.

Apply security settings if you need to restrict particular age groups or block users from adding or interacting with content, block certain terms or phrases added on comments and direct users to a landing page when they click to view the page.

As well as YouTube and Twitter, other applications can be added to your page. If you have a budget, explore application providers and see what they can offer your page in terms of interactive content. 'Involver Fan Page Applications' are a good company and offer two free applications. (For example see ISAF Connect to Sailing Facebook [YouTube](#) and [Twitter](#))

Marketing – Facebook allows you to promote your page and posts via paid advertisements. You can target a desired demographic on the advertising page on Facebook and the tool will give you an estimated reach. But this comes at a variation of costs that's available to view on Facebook.

Insights – check your statistics and see where trends and patterns are occurring on the Page. This will show you the type of content your audience likes, interacts and engages in. It will also help you if you choose to advertise to a certain age group or nation and develop a strategy for future regattas or events.

7.2 Twitter

Twitter is a good tool to get information out into the public domain immediately. There is a 140 character limit so everything has to be kept short, straight to the point, useful, relevant and interesting

Have a standard twitter page and keep it simple

As with facebook – spread the word. Create relationships with other twitter users and key influencers that are relevant to what you want to achieve.

Be social with your audience and respond to their replies and direct messages.

Mobile – a large number of twitter users use the tool on their mobile. Download an application on your mobile so you can tweet whilst your on the go and upload photographs immediately. The official Twitter application and Uber Social are good applications but other good tweeting applications are available.

Security – your tweets can be protected and twitter users can request to view your tweets. The [@ISAFupdates](#) twitter account allows all users to freely view comments allowing communication to flow to anyone who comes across the feed.

7.3 YouTube

A YouTube channel is the perfect platform to promote and monitor videos.



Creating a YouTube channel is very simple and can be done by simply creating an account at www.youtube.com. You are able to add banners and headers to the channel which will make your page look attractive

Be sure to make the title of any content engaging and capitalise the start of every word. Ensure there is a brief description outlining what the video is showing and include a link to your website or accompanying news to keep the viewer interested in what you are saying.

Ensure you tag the video appropriately and include as many relevant tags as possible. Include the nation, event, class, the word 'sailing' and other words you see as relevant. A well tagged video will increase the number of views.

Promote links to your videos through other channels such as Facebook and Twitter.

7.4 Live Blogging

Live blogging is a great way to get your message out to your audience during a regatta as it is instant and allows followers to interact throughout the time the blog is live.

Cover it Live and Scribble Live are good examples of Live Blogging applications as they allow users to integrate content from other platforms such as YouTube, RSS feeds and Twitter into the main feed.

A Live Blog can be embedded into a website and also comes mobile enabled so followers can always know what's going on, wherever they are.

When using a blog to report racing action it is a good idea to have a host blogger who monitors the blog and manages the comments that come in. The host blogger can engage with the followers and add a personal edge to the blog.

To get the latest updates from the race course setting up 'Course Bloggers' with mobile devices is the most effective way. Setting them up with Twitter accounts and embedding these into the blog ensures that the very latest information is updated directly into the blog. Bloggers can be located on media boats, the committee boats or vantage points on land.

7.5 Flickr

Flickr is a good tool for hosting images and allows user to share and embed images.

It is an excellent platform for uploading high resolution images for the media to use if you don't have a dedicated online media centre or distribution service.

As with all social platforms Flickr can be connected to Facebook and an application can be added to a fan page.

Flickr also gives you the option of adding geolocations.

8. Magazine/Newsletter

An online or printed magazine or newsletter produced weekly, biweekly, monthly, quarterly or annually could be developed to communicate features, news up-dates and progress to your target audience.

Have a 'Sign Up To Our Newsletter' link on the homepage of a website, or informing users on social networks that a newsletter is available



9. Further Guidance

For further guidance and advice on the points in this document, as well as submission of news stories please contact the ISAF News Editor on newseditor@isaf.co.uk.