

Technical Delegate's Report 2016 Paralympic Sailing Competition

Initial Technical Visit to Rio di Janeiro – August 2014

The IFDS TD Team for the 2016 Paralympic Sailing Competition (David Staley & Wilfried Klein) made an initial technical site visit to Rio di Janeiro in August 2014 during the closing stages of the Olympic Sailing Test Event.

It provided the opportunity to see the Games venue in use and meet with a number of key Rio2016 and ISAF personnel.

Venue

Draft venue plans for 2016 include a major redevelopment of the existing pavilion at Marina di Gloria. This will be used for the 2016 Olympic Sailing Competition (OSC) and subsequently for the Paralympic Sailing Competition (PSC), hopefully with a minimum of modifications.

At the time, no planning had been undertaken for the floating marina or cranes that are required for the PSC. The marina has a 1.4m tidal range and has an existing floating pontoon system that is unsuitable for the PSC. The location and design of docks was discussed, including wheelchair accessibility, overall width, gradient of ramps at all tidal levels, capacity to fit hoists etc.

A draft "Requirements and Recommendations Document" has been produced for Rio2016 based on the ISAF OSC document that details venue specifications for classification, marina, cranes, physical access, accessible facilities, toilets etc. The infrastructure development timelines are yet to be advised by Rio2016.

Sailing Areas

It is proposed that all racing in the PSC be conducted within Guanabara Bay with the possibility that the Pao de Acucar (Sugarloaf) and Scuola Naval race areas may be augmented by another defined area within the outer Bay.

It was noted that August-September is a much drier time and therefore there should be reduced material and pollution in the water. The city and state governments have a significant program of improvements in place to reduce water hazards. Significant debris was nevertheless still experienced in the course areas during the test event.

Whilst the Sugarloaf area in particular is in a spectacular location and provides outstanding spectator opportunities from an attractive beach and parkland, the TDs noticed extremely variable velocity and direction in the south-east breeze on this course area. The Scuola Naval course has a channel running through it which has tidal flows up to 4 knots decreasing in shallower areas of the course. The racing areas are likely to be challenging.

Accommodation

Accommodation facilities for teams and officials are yet to be constructed but are to be located a significant distance from the sailing venue. Travel times in the range of 90-150 minutes have been suggested depending upon traffic conditions.

IFDS-ISAF Cooperation

The TDs have approached preparations for the 2016 Paralympic Sailing Competition with the aim of developing policies, processes & documentation that are consistent with the Olympic Sailing Competition. Discussions are ongoing with ISAF staff on a regular basis and new documentation, where possible, is based upon existing ISAF / Olympic templates.

John Doerr (IJ-GBR) has agreed to coordinate the race documentation for the OSC and PSC. The advice of the ISAF Event Appointments Working Party has been sought to inform the process of appointing officials. It is also important to ensure that officials for the PSC take on the ISAF Equipment Inspection Procedures and deliver a rigorous equipment inspection process.

2015 Test Event

A Paralympic Test Event will be held for the first time in Rio. It is proposed that the Paralympic Event be held sequentially after the Olympic Test Event rather than run concurrently as it would place too greater demand on organisation, facilities and race areas. The likely dates are early September 2015, similar to the PSC dates in 2016 but for a shorter period. It is also proposed that an IFDS Development Seminar be held in conjunction with the Test Event along with disability awareness training for NTOs and volunteers who will be involved in 2016.

2016 IFDS Combined World Championships

In conjunction with CBVA, visits were made to Clube Naval Charitas and late Club Rio di Janeiro as two potential host clubs for the 2016 IFDS Combined World Championships. It remains a possibility that Rio2016 could conduct this event at the venue although this is complicated by plans for a major redevelopment of the venue during early 2016. A briefing document for the 2016 IFDS Combined Worlds has been provided to CVBA and the TD's will liaise further with CVBA to progress planning for this event.

Summary

The 2014 Olympic Test Event demonstrated excellent organisation and a professional standard of delivery by Rio2016. The visit enabled a very good basis of communication and understanding to be established between the IFDS TDs, ISAF personnel and Rio2016 staff, who were found to be highly cooperative and helpful.

David Staley & Wilfried Klein

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