



International Rafting Federation  
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# International Rafting Federation

On the 8th September 1997 the International Rafting Federation held a meeting at Victoria Falls Zimbabwe. Delegates from various countries were present and a number of apologies were read out from countries that could not make it. Some countries' delegates were absent due to training for the event starting the next day.

## **PRESENT:**

**Members of Executive Committee:** Rafa Gallo - Costa Rica; Peter Micheler - Germany; Glenn Lewman - USA; Zeljko Kelemen - Croatia; Willy Baxter - UK, Tony Hansen, Sue Liell-Cock - South Africa.

Oleg Grigoriev - Russia; Vladimir Polivanov - Dir of Republican Toruist Club, Kazakstan; Colette Campbell - South Africa; Belo Molnar - Pres. Free Canoe & Rafting Union Slovakia; John McCrossin - Australian Rafting Federation; Bevin Cavey - New Zealand Rafting Association represenattave; Thomas Koppelmans - Netherlands; Erik Berman - Vice Pres. Latvian Canoe Fed; Yuri Berman - Israel Canoe Fed; Milan Lovrencic - Pres. Slovenian Rafting Federation; Zdenka Dufkova - Czech Rep.; Isabel Kroger - Spain.

## **APOLOGIES:**

Peru, Mexico, Argentina, India, Belgium, Chile, El Salvador, Panama, Honduras, Columbia, Bosnia, Herzegovinia, Austria, Brazil.

## **AGENDA**

1. Introduction
2. Committees Election
3. Membership
4. Competitions
5. Future, Rafting Festival
6. Forum - General Points
7. Next Meeting

## **1. INTRODUCTION:**

BOD handed out a copy of the Statutes and a stitched IRF emblem to all the nations present.

### **1. Meeting in Germany:**

Over the past few years there has been a growing need and demand for an official body that can represent and unite the Rafting communities of the World. In May this year, a group of people met in Germany to form the International Rafting Federation. A Declaration was written, Statutes and By-Laws were created and an Initial Board of Directors and Executive Committee was set up. The purpose of the IRF is to unify rafting communities and all aspects of rafting from around the world. These range from Sport and Recreation to Tourism to Conservation to Education and Training.

### **2. Brief History of rafting**

A brief discussion of the history of rafting was lead by Raffael. The history of commercial rafting is known to have started on the Grand Canyon in early 1950's and the growth has been more apparent in the U.S. Commercial rafting is now conducted all around the world. The concept of rafting though started ever since rivers have existed. Especially when logging began and the rivers where used for transporting the wood. The definition of rafting according to several books was defined.

### **3. History and reasons for IRF forming**

Project Rafts were discussed in their role of bringing rafters of the world together and creating the first forums for international rafting. Right from the early stages there was a keenness to form an IRF. This keenness developed over the years at the various rafting festivals and competitions. At one of these events Lee Porter was appointed to get the basis of an IRF going. Lee proceeded to work on the theory side as well as to motivate the rafters into forming the IRF. Due to the increasing demand and need for a body to represent the rafters a group of people (including Lee) decided it was time to make it happen and met in Germany in May of this year. The IRF was dually formed and BOD and HOC's elected.

## **2. COMMITTEES ELECTION**

This was delayed until the 11th by which time more discussion would have been had and more representatives would be present.

## **3. MEMBERSHIP**

Rafa suggested a fee of US\$500. Accepted by the majority. Fund raising was then discussed. Belo Molnar suggested US\$2000. The majority refused this.

## **4. COMPETITIONS**

### **1. Olympics**

- The IRF has made a donation of AUS \$1000 to the Australian Olympics to assist in covering costs for the kayak slalom which has now been re-introduced into the 2000 Olympics. This decision is a positive change on the Olympic Committees part. Peter has sent bronze plaques as a gesture from the IRF as Vice - President.
- Johnny Mac suggested that a proposal was put to the Sydney Olympics that a demonstration rafting event was done on the slalom course. This was seconded by Peter. Johnny will look into it.

### **2. Camel Challenge**

- Tony spoke about the present situation with Camel and World Rafting Champs. There is the concern of the effect of tobacco and sport which will come into play more and more in the upcoming years. Tony laid out the present proposal which Camel is keen to sponsor of somewhere in the USA (Gauley, Ottawa, Ikes, Kicking Horse, etc) or Costa Rica in May-June 1998, and on the Futualefu in Feb 1999. Concerns were voiced about doing two selections and a world Champs between now and Feb 1999. The event would be called the World Rafting Championships. The IRF would have to look into regional selections to select 20 or so teams.
- Final decision as to which river it will be next year will be sent to everyone by mid Nov.

### **3. Official Race Structure**

- Willy proposed that Sprint, Downriver and Slalom be the official events for IRF. Seconded by Glenn and Peter.

## **5. FUTURE, RAFTING FESTIVAL**

- Glenn spoke about the need for a river festival which is not only for top teams, as many teams for a country can enter, events include orienteering, river rescue. It was agreed it was needed and ways to develop and sponsor this would be looked at.

## **6. FORUM - GENERAL POINTS**

### **1. Emblem**

- The emblem proposed by Peter was unanimously accepted.

### **2. Doping**

- Control of this was discussed and would be considered further down the line.

## **7. NEXT MEETING**

- Another meeting will be held on the 11 September, in the same venue, to discuss the sub-committees.

