

NEISA Strategic Planning Meeting  
 Roger Williams University – December 14, 2017

In attendance: Greg Wilkinson, John Mollicone, Chris Klevan, Brian Swingly, Skip Whyte, David Thompson, Mike O’Connor, Bern Noack, Ken Legler, Frank Pizzo, Justin Assad, Amanda Callahan

1. Update on umpires – send me your alumni contact information  
[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1NS8heFLfbagnh4eIIIG5Be28K93R1fF1dYaZkGQ6\\_ew/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1NS8heFLfbagnh4eIIIG5Be28K93R1fF1dYaZkGQ6_ew/edit?usp=sharing)

2. Women in Sailing – ask ICSA to pressure High School sailing to create more pathways for girls

3. SWOT analysis of NEISA

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b> (internal)</p> <p>Women’s sailing          # of Professional coaches in the conference          Location/geography/proximity of many colleges          3<sup>rd</sup> tier events=opportunities for smaller/developing teams          Venues with improved facilities (boat houses)/equipment (# of new fleets, and 2-fleet schools)          Institutional support at many institutions          Depth/# of teams within the conference          Leadership at the regional level (north, central, south) are good points of contact for developing teams</p>	<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b> (external)</p> <p>Women’s team racing NIT          Opportunities to experience different disciplines          - Offshore, match racing, team racing, singles          Utilizing depth (i.e. in the early fall schedule)          Creating regattas that require fewer sailors          Creating clinegattas with provided coaching to help teams bridge the team racing gap (2 v 2 and random pairs)          Identify teams with varsity, full-time coach potential and support them          Adding new teams (is 50 a good target?)          Formalize tiers (no consensus here)          Create/revamp NIT-type regatta (for teams ranked 20+)</p>
<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b> (internal)</p> <p>Smaller team development/commitment          Gap between bigger teams and smaller teams          Umpire pool          Budget/\$\$          Climate          Lack of professional race management for big events          Lack of female coaches          Governed by coaches (better than student government, but potential conflict of interest)          Team racing outside of Top 16          Disparity in recruiting</p>	<p><b>THREATS</b> (external)</p> <p>Type of equipment/boat          - Limited relevance to Olympic sailing          - Size limitations on both ends of the spectrum: big people, little people          - Relevance of laser: fleets and regattas are disappearing          Title IX          SW Ranking system          Laser Performance (2023 contract)          Sustainability of Nationals          TR Schedule/qualification system          Tiers may not be inclusive enough          Lack of focus regarding disciplines          Not enough media coverages          Taxes          Band-Aids we keep putting on the schedule</p>

#### 4. NEISA's long term goals (in no particular order)

- Hire a professional administrator for the conference
- Create Women's Team Racing series and championship
- Add more varsity programs
- Bring on more (professional) Race Officials (RC, Umpires) at big events
- Build a stronger media presence (Facebook, website updates)
- Increase more depth on the women's FR circuit (more than 18 teams)
- Unlink berths at nationals from # of teams in conference
- Work with ICSA to identify which disciplines we are good at and then do those better (doublehanded, singlehanded, match racing, team racing)
  - o Discussion: Are we trying to develop Olympic level sailors?
    - If so, are we using the right equipment?
    - If not, change the by-laws and take a critical look at our national championships
- Get compensation in line with other sports

#### 5. 2019 Nationals

- Dates: Women's May 21-24, Team Racing May 25-27, Dinghies May 28-31
- Where: NEISA to pay Sail Newport for facilities and boats and personnel, Hosted by Brown, and URI, and      (need firmed up commitments by other teams to help). Salve is not on board.
  - o Each team would be responsible for providing bodies both on and off the water, plus RC
  - o All NEISA teams may need to contribute boats?
- Boats (TBD pending conversation with LP's Bill Crane in Utah): Brown's 420s + Option 1: Salve's FJs, Option 2: LP supplied 2<sup>nd</sup> fleet, Option 3: Allow a Zim or Whitecap fleet
- Need to build in Race Management fees into budget (\$5K?)
  - o MOC will PRO one event for free!
- Still need to put the budget together

#### 6. Discussion about splitting the seasons

- See Ken's theoretical schedule attachment and pro's/con's list
- Why split? Is the problem team racing (TR) or our current Nationals format?
  - o Debating splitting the seasons for TR sake v.
  - o Pulling TR out of Nationals to make the whole Championship shorter v.
    - Move to weekend 14; maybe teams opt out ← good for NEISA, but is that good for the sport?
  - o Pulling Semifinals out
    - Keeping the Semis together at the same venue for Championship feel
  - o Is the spring schedule broken? (Yes! IMHO)
- Teams without depth have trouble developing
- Fleet racing (FR) is more inclusive
- Current schedule is okay for W's FR
- NE needs more legit ways and more teams to get to Nationals; need a better qualifying system
- Consideration of MAISA League, consider separating our league
- Effects ~32 teams nationwide
- Need to create entry points for lower ranked teams

- Alternating schedule (FR one wknd, TR next wknd) is better for majority of teams SW
- Current 6 week format is too short; not enough time to develop
- TR needs to be in the spring, you need the fall to develop new sailors
- National TR Tournament → qualifiers into Nationals
  - o Need to get away from the interconference model
- Long term if W's Nationals becomes a thing, it can't be tacked on to the current Nationals
  - o What will the W's TR season look like?
- Intermix more TRs in the fall schedule; more opportunity now with new fall schedule
- Perhaps create separate Fleet race and team race performance rankings
- Think about other sports that do different disciplines in different seasons
- Why are we sailing March 3-4 and not May 3-4? BN (exams?)
- Teams 16+ currently not sailing in the spring (needs to be fact checked), except for maybe the last 2-3 weekends
  - o Need more pathways for competing against like competition, utilizing fewer human resources (2 v. 2)

## 7. NEISA and ICSA Governance

### Problems with current governance

- LP Contract
- Compliance
- Lack of sponsorship
- Perceived closed network/influencers
- Book keeping
- Transparency
- Dissemination of information/communication

### Steps taken to date (Greg):

- NEISA recommendation to ICSA from Annual meeting for a 3 year roll out
- Hire an outside consultant (funded through the ICSA investment acct.) to look at executive structure and positions
  - o Evaluate the hiring of an Executive Director (the ED would execute day-to-day, BOD would set agenda/priorities)
  - o Hiring full times employee (health insurance + benefits) v. contractor
  - o Time line for consultant is unknown
- Term limits \_\_\_\_\_
  - o Conferences and teams have changed a ton, but ICSA hasn't changed at all
    - 2 ICSA Presidents in XX? years

### ICSA & NEISA need more \$\$

- ICSA collects dues from conferences
  - o There has been 1 dues increase in 40 years, that was 15 years ago
  - o NEISA pays \$140/full and associate member team, much less for provisional teams
  - o ICSA is losing \$ because of the new fall schedule
    - Changing prices structure for showcase events to make up the difference
  - o ICSA spent a lot of money on Techscore
- Conferences collect entry fees from teams

- NEISA is losing \$7K annually, mostly from paying umpires

#### Sponsorship

- Only \$ coming in comes from National Championship
- Should enhance the operating budget, but instead it is helping to sustain the budget
- NEISA targets for sponsors: SAP, Sailing industry partners (Zim, Whitecap, North, Quantum), Oracle, Gatorade, Nike, Adidas, Under Armour, Boathouse, Louis Dreyfus, Electric Boat/General Dynamics, Target, Gowrie Group, Pfizer, Bainbridge, Sperry, Patagonia, Hudson Trading, McKinsey, Bain, New Balance, **add more to this list**
  - Start by trying to find sponsors for our NE Championships
  - Explore other layers of sponsorship (stickers on every hull, on sails of high traffic schools)
- NEISA priorities for spending sponsorship dollars
  - NEISA Executive Director
  - Hired officials (RC/Umpires)
  - Coaching at Clinegattas for developing teams
  - Purchasing NEISA-owned equipment (sails)

#### 8. Experimental Rule, changing marks

- Thompson and Veitor will pilot this change this spring
  - Get the language from the Shell/Urn from two years ago
  - Consider not only different colors, but also different shapes.

#### 9. Continue using Skip's flag system at the start

#### To dos:

- Create job description and budget/salary for paid NEISA Administrator
- Create a marketing package, solicit sponsorships for NEISA - Amanda
- Survey NEISA sailors about split season/interest in team racing AND/OR
- Collect more data about 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> tier teams and how much they are actually sailing in the spring
- Find out how our entry fees and dues compare to other college sports entry fees and dues
- Identify programs that have varsity potential – MOC
- Quantify Facebook and website traffic
- Schedule another meeting for February