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/1NS8heFLfbaghn4elllG5Be28K93R1f1dYaZkGQ6_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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>STRENGTHS (internal)</strong></th>
<th><strong>OPPORTUNITIES (external)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women’s sailing</td>
<td>Women’s team racing NIT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Professional coaches in the conference</td>
<td>Opportunities to experience different disciplines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location/geography/proximity of many colleges</td>
<td>- Offshore, match racing, team racing, singles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd tier events=opportunities for smaller/developing teams</td>
<td>Utilizing depth (i.e. in the early fall schedule)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venues with improved facilities (boat houses/equipment (# of new fleets, and 2-fleet schools)</td>
<td>Creating regattas that require fewer sailors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional support at many institutions</td>
<td>Creating clingattas with provided coaching to help teams bridge the team racing gap (2 v 2 and random pairs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depth/# of teams within the conference</td>
<td>Identify teams with varsity, full-time coach potential and support them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership at the regional level (north, central, south) are good points of contact for developing teams</td>
<td>Adding new teams (is 50 a good target?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formalize tiers (no consensus here)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create/revamp NIT-type regatta (for teams ranked 20+)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>WEAKNESSES (internal)</strong></th>
<th><strong>THREATS (external)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smaller team development/commitment</td>
<td>Type of equipment/boat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gap between bigger teams and smaller teams</td>
<td>- Limited relevance to Olympic sailing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umpire pool</td>
<td>- Size limitations on both ends of the spectrum: big people, little people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget/$$</td>
<td>- Relevance of laser: fleets and regattas are disappearing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate</td>
<td>Title IX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of professional race management for big events</td>
<td>SW Ranking system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of female coaches</td>
<td>Laser Performance (2023 contract)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governed by coaches (better than student government, but potential conflict of interest)</td>
<td>Sustainability of Nationals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team racing outside of Top 16</td>
<td>TR Schedule/qualification system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disparity in recruiting</td>
<td>Tiers may not be inclusive enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of focus regarding disciplines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not enough media coverages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Band-Aids we keep putting on the schedule</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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)
     - 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.
     - Each team would be responsible for providing bodies both on and off the water, plus RC
     - 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 2nd fleet, Option 3: Allow a Zim or Whitecap fleet
   - Need to build in Race Management fees into budget ($5K?)
     - 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?
     - Debating splitting the seasons for TR sake v.
     - 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?
     - Pulling Semifinals out
       - Keeping the Semis together at the same venue for Championship feel
       - 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
  - 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
  - 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
  - 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
  - Evaluate the hiring of an Executive Director (the ED would execute day-to-day, BOD would set agenda/priorities)
  - Hiring full times employee (health insurance + benefits) v. contractor
  - Time line for consultant is unknown
- Term limits __________
  - 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
  - There has been 1 dues increase in 40 years, that was 15 years ago
  - NEISA pays $140/full and associate member team, much less for provisional teams
  - ICSA is losing $ because of the new fall schedule
    - Changing prices structure for showcase events to make up the difference
  - 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/Us 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 2nd and 3rd 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