

# ACA Competition Council

## Ocean Racing Committee Meeting Agenda

### Thursday, January 25, 2024

Last Revised: January 26, 2024

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#### Conference Call Information - Microsoft Teams:

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*Note: There was no official ORC meeting held between November 24 and January 25th.*

## 1. Session Commencement

- a. Time 6:05pm Eastern / 3:05pm Pacific
- b. Attendance
  - i. Geoff Pearson
  - ii. Greg Barton
  - iii. Jesse Lishchuk
  - iv. Matt Drayer
- c. Pre-Read Materials / Homework
  - i.  2024 ACA USA Canoe Ocean Racing Member Benefits Package (WIIFM)
  - ii.  2024 ACA USA Canoe Ocean Racing National Development Program
  - iii.  2024 ACA ICF COR USA National Team Participation Requirements
  - iv.  2024 ACA ICF COR World Championships Qualifying Race List
  - v. Existing ACA Donation Fund Programs Review
    1. Public Page: <https://americancanoe.org/donate/>
    2. Member Page: <https://www.americancanoe.org/donations/>
  - vi. Website Review: <https://www.usasurfski.com>
- d. [November Meeting Minutes](#)
- e. Call for [Additional Topics](#)

## 2. Session Goals

- a. Assign ORC member names to work open WIIFM items
- b. Approve USA-COR NDP Draft for initial public review
- c. Approve ORC donation fund name/purpose

### 3. Current Initiatives

#### a. Community Representation

##### i. Organizational Representation

###### 1. International / ICF

###### a. New Connections

- i. Matt: Connected with Ben Edom, British ocean racing coach/organizer and member of British Canoeing's Ocean Racing Working Group – ORWG is interested in our NDP
- ii. Matt: Connected with Aaron Osborne, CRNZ Project Manager re: coach development
- iii. Greg: Any valuable connections made in Perth?
  1. No new connections – did connect w/ Colin and Michèle

###### b. ICF

- i. Discovered a line in a [November 2019 BoD meeting minutes document](#) stating “Among other topics, the presentation showed how the ICF could reinforce its branding, including a recommendation of renaming the federation to World Paddling.”
- ii. Found a second line in a [March 2021 BoD meeting minutes document](#) stating “A survey of national federations has shown 60 percent supported a change of name for the ICF. World Paddling was the [m]ost popular new name put forward. BoD agreed to further advance the work with a professional agency to have further discussion at the ICF Congress.”
- iii. British Canoeing rebranding to “Paddle UK”

###### c. ICF ORC

- i. November Action: Greg to meet w/ Colin Simpkins and Michèle Eray in Perth, re: 2024 plans for ocean racing
  1. Connected with both – not much to report, everyone was focused on the competition experience, vs. sport governance

###### 2. Continental / COPAC

###### a. New Connections

- i. Wyatt Wong ([Swelldone](#), Ontario)

###### b. COPAC Congress

- i. ACA's Suz Britt is the 2024 Treasurer – close friend of Risa Shimoda
- ii. [Extraordinary Assembly](#) scheduled for February 17, 2024
- iii. 1st Vice President (female) position is open, nominations must be submitted by January 15, 2024

###### c. COPAC ORC

- i. Ocean Racing Committee member candidates + chairperson nominations deadline was January 15, 2024
- ii. Committee is now vacant – no candidates were nominated by January 15th:  
<https://copaconline.com/news/65a8198ef908c0ec0346b852>

- iii. Matt sent URL to several LatAm contacts via Instagram and YouTube
  - iv. Unsure what this means for 2024 Pan American (Continental) COR Championships.
3. National / ACA
- a. New Connections
    - i. Jed Hinkley, ACA Competition Director
    - ii. Zsolt Szadovszki, ACA Coach
    - iii. Andrew Surles, ACA Coach
    - iv. Matt Murphy, SEIC Surfski (resurfaced)
  - b. ACA
    - i. [Kayak angling market opportunity](#) and what it means.
  - c. [ACA Regional Activity Council](#)
    - i. Matt connected with Ryan Pepper on 12/22, re: Great Lakes competitions, Ryan to follow up with details/leads.
    - ii. Possibility that Competition Council will begin using ClubExpress a la RAC
  - d. [ACA Paddle America Club](#)
    - i. 2024 club drive
      - 1. [List of clubs with COR programs/coaches](#)
      - 2. Offer WIIFM, marketing, support to clubs willing to participate in NDP
      - 3. Brendan Nelson (RAC Affiliate Club Representative) provided ORC with a list of email addresses to connect with. **Matt to send initial outreach communication.**
  - e. ACA Competition Council
    - i. Competition Council “reboot” meeting held on November 27th
      - 1. Representation from many committees (but not all)
      - 2. Similar problems cited across the board – dwindling numbers, lack of promotional/logistical support from ACA
      - 3. Next quarterly session February 26th
    - ii. Discussion w/ Jed Hinkley and ORC on December 4th
      - 1. Good, wide-ranging discussion
      - 2. Actions/takeaways included
        - a. ORC: Touch base with committee members re: 2024 strategic plan and report to Jed in January [this meeting]
        - b. JED: Share National Development Program Plan draft: Expected by 1/5 (still pending, Matt has shared [USA COR NDP draft](#))
        - c. JED: Post [Ocean Racing ACA page updates](#) (results, website links, sport info, events. etc.) [done (Kaycee)]
        - d. MATT: Share Greg Leshner's contact information [done]

- e. JED: Touch base with Anna Levesque to get the conversation going about adding competition/coaching to SEIC [update pending]
    - f. JED: Ryan from RAC to have a call about competition [pinged 1/9, response pending]
    - g. ORC: Compile list of races that would be part of criteria for attending Worlds [done, for now]
    - h. ORC: Work on email list [in progress]
  - iii. Discussion w/ Jed Hinkley and Austin Kieffer on January 3rd
    - 1. General meet-and-greet session w/ Austin (30 mins)
    - 2. Discussed ideas re: national series (Austin), national championships (Jed), national development program (Matt)
    - 3. Stayed on w/ Jed, discussed coaching situation, training center ideas
    - 4. Interesting follow-up mail thread w/ Jed re: ACA training facility concept (Hood River) – just dreaming?
  - iv. 2024 ACA Webinar Series
    - 1. February 28th: Competition Council Panel Discussion
      - a. Risa coordinating
      - b. Matt volunteered to participate
      - c. [Slides](#) shared Sunday evening, 1/21, being submitted to Beth for approval on Friday 1/26 – quickly working out audience + message + materials
  - v. Matt reached out to Sprint + Wildwater committees soliciting collaboration interest (limited Sprint response, no response from Wildwater), Outrigger + SUP likely next (after we decide on our initial approach)
- ii. Individual Representation
  - 1. [ACA Competition Members](#)
    - a. Identification (note: possible to tag as primary + secondary)
      - i. 81 “ocean racing” competition members
        - 1. [27 tagged as primary](#) (down from 28)
        - 2. [58 tagged as secondary](#) (up from 53)
      - ii. 21 “ocean racing” coaches
        - 1. [3 primary tagged as coach](#) (down from 4)
        - 2. [19 secondary tagged as coach](#) (up from 17)
      - iii. Makes sense to start keeping track of actual names for 2024
      - iv. **Matt**: Start up yet another Google document
    - b. Communication
      - i. One-Way Communications
        - 1. [ORC Email #3](#): Aiming for end of January (85 people)
          - a. 2023 recap
          - b. 2024 programming
            - i. Competitions

- ii. National Development Program
  - iii. ICF World Championships
- c. Draft has been submitted to Kaycee for distribution
- 2. [USASurfski.com](#)
  - a. Website has been further revised to reflect relationship with ACA
  - b. List of qualifying races has been posted on calendar page
  - c. Mailing list currently has five subscribers – still unclear how to grow this list as ACA ORC – just letting it grow organically for now
  - d. Email to be sent at some point this winter, likely end of February
    - i. Welcome, USA COR Community
    - ii. National Development Program Update
- 3. [www.usasurfski.info](#) (Michèle Eray personal site)
  - a. Messaging appears to have been revised (no mention of USA team, world championships, etc.)
- 4. [ACA Ocean Racing Page](#)
  - a. [Website copy revisions](#) submitted to Kaycee Maas [published]
  - b. 2024 USORT Eligibility Criteria has been posted
    - i. ACA requirements
    - ii. ICF requirements
    - iii. Qualifying races
- 5. Social
  - a. [USA Surfski Facebook Page](#)
    - i. 30 followers so far (tell all yer friends)
    - ii. List of qualifying races has been added as events
    - iii. QR events have been shared with FB group
    - iv. Several page updates have been posted
  - b. [USA Surfski Community Facebook Group](#)
    - i. Owned by USA Surfski page
    - ii. Private/Closed group, but discoverable by public
    - iii. Some easy screening questions to keep out spammers, bots, etc.
  - c. [SurfSki USA Facebook Group](#) (124 members)
    - i. “About” messaging appears to have been revised – no more mention of USA people interested in World Championships
- ii. Two-Way Communications

1. Google Group(s) for 2024 ACA Ocean Racing members? (athletes, coaches, organizers)
2. How do the cool people prefer to connect these days? Discord? WhatsApp? Groups.io? Email groups are easy, but oldskool...
3. **Matt:** Look into Groups.io (sounds similar to Google Groups, maybe better-received since not Google)

c. Generation

i. Discipline branding

1. Leaning toward "USA COR"
2. Aligns with CSP (Sprint), CSL (Slalom)
3. Unsure about other disciplines
4. ORC decision: Go with USA COR

ii. 2024 athlete drive

1. Finalized [WIIFM](#) benefits list for USA COR members
2. Sent list to Jed on January 9th

iii. 2024 coach drive

1. Connect with coaches who train COR athletes
  - a. Andrew Surles: Keen on NDP (rankings, classifications) – would like promotional support to encourage more people (eg, aging-out CSP/CSL paddlers) to participate in ocean racing.
  - b. Zsolt Szadovszki: keen on NDP concept, feels like this is an opportune time to kickstart things
2. Offer WIIFM, marketing, support, NDP influence
3. Status: Matt sent message to SCA list and a few individual coaches. Three have responded so far.
4. Side thought: How do we campaign to get an [ICF ocean racing coach](#) development program going?
  - a. Greg: Sprint has clubs, with coaches – surfski is scattered at present – opportunities for crossover (eg, Tod Cole)
  - b. A good topic to discuss w/ Michèle at some point.

iv. 2024 club drive

1. Connect with clubs (PACs) located in areas with access to open water
2. See previous comment re: Brendan Nelson

2. USA Ocean Racing / Surfski Community:

a. New Connections

- i. Andrew Surles (GA, [Southeast Paddle Sports](#))
- ii. Austin Kieffer (CA, [SDCKT](#))
- iii. Chad DeSatnick (NJ, [Around the Cape](#))
- iv. Dan Van Dyck (CA, [Hanohano](#))
- v. Jim Foti (HI, [KIRA](#))

- vi. Kelly Schwartz (CA, NAC/[Wild Buffalo](#))
- vii. Nick Murray (MI, [TC Surfski](#))
- viii. Tod Cole (WA, [GHCKRT](#))
- ix. Zsolt Szadovszki (GA, ACA/Lake Lanier)

## b. Competition Promotion

- i. Competition Organizers: “WIIFM?”
  - 1. Inclusion on ACA competition calendar
  - 2. Inclusion on list of 2024 ICF COR WC qualifying (sanctioned?) races
    - a. Geoff: Concern about liability for recommending qualifier races
    - b. Matt: Suggest pushing to discussion about NDP later in session
  - 3. Inclusion in email newsletter publications
  - 4. USA Surfski website/social postings/mentions
  - 5. Event production/sanctioning guidelines/recommendations, upon request
- ii. 2024 Ocean Racing Competition Calendar
  - 1. [2024 ICF Competition Calendar](#) (5 competitions)
    - a. [European Continental Championships](#), Azores, April 2024
    - b. [Naxos Cup](#), Italy, May 2024
    - c. [Allwave Cup](#), Italy, September 2024
    - d. [Forza Paris Cup](#), Italy, September 2024
    - e. Matt: Several more have been posted at this point as well – all are “Level 4 / Basic international race” category. Sort of like Europe’s ACA competition calendar.
    - f. [World Championships](#), Madeira, October 2024
  - 2. [2024 COPAC Competition Calendar](#)
    - a. No 2024 COR competitions currently scheduled (no COPAC ORC members at present)
  - 3. [2024 ACA Competition Calendar](#)
    - a. No 2024 COR competitions (national cup series, national championships) currently scheduled
    - b. Lots of community competitions now listed (more to come)
    - c. [2024 ICF Canoe Ocean Racing World Championships Qualifying Race...](#)
  - 4. Additional Domestic Races
    - a. [PaddleGuru](#): 10 COR competitions currently listed (up from 8)
    - b. [SurfskiRacing.com](#): No COR competitions currently listed
    - c. [NewEnglandSurfski.com](#): 13 COR competitions currently listed
- iii. 2024 State Games of America Partnership
  - 1. [State Games of America](#) / [National Congress of State Games](#)
    - a. Jesse working to schedule call w/ John Edwards of Sunshine State Games (FL) for January
    - b. Matt submitted “new sport application” for Bay State Games (MA) paddling race (no response – will follow up next week)

## c. Athlete Qualification

- i. 2024 World Championships Qualifying (Sanctioned? Recognized?) Competitions
  - 1. 16 competitions/organizers have signed on to-date

- a. [2024 ICF Canoe Ocean Racing World Championships Qualifying Race...](#)
- 2. Regional Representation
  - a. New England
  - b. Mid-Atlantic
  - c. West Coast / SoCal
  - d. Hawaii
- 3. Missing/Outstanding
  - a. Great Lakes
    - i. Matt connected with Nick Murray, discussed [Paddle45](#)
  - b. Florida
    - i. Jesse connected with John Edwards – update?
    - ii. Meeting to be scheduled re: [Sunshine State Games?](#)
    - iii. Geoff starting up ECSC race again! October 19th (September for 2025 -> WC Qualifier)
  - c. Gulf Coast
    - i. TCKRA Open Water State Championships is held in October
    - ii. Matt sent inquiry to Matt Murphy re: additional COR competitions (no good fits)
  - d. PacNW
    - i. Identified several races (Bainbridge, Lake Whatcom, etc.) but none determined to be qualification-worthy
    - ii. Need to connect with Carter Johnson re: Gorge competition
      - 1. Update from Greg: Carter is in, as are several other organizers
- ii. 2024 Planning
  - 1. Need to finalize [ACA ORC 2024 ICF Competition Qualification Process](#)
    - a. Geoff: People going to international events need some sort of fraternal item – hat, jacket, etc.
    - b. Jesse: Sprint has a vendor that they use (Nike) – there is a template – they just order however many are needed.
    - c. Greg: 2019 WC's @ Quiberon did have uniforms – race top, shorts, jacket
    - d. We could use the new donation fund for this
    - e. Jesse: Pretty typical – “I made the National Sprint team and I got a bill for the t-shirt”
    - f. **Matt:** Follow up w/ Jed on this topic
  - 2. Need to determine primary committee objective for 2024
    - a. [2024 ACA USA Canoe Ocean Racing National Development Program](#)
      - i. Matt has begun moving forward with this initiative
      - ii. Requesting feedback from athletes, coaches, organizers
    - b. NDP draft review
      - i. Need to approve sections for public review/commentary
      - ii. Athlete Benefits section: Approved
      - iii. Athlete Requirements section: Approved
      - iv. Coach Benefits section: Approved

- v. Coach Requirements section: Approved
  - vi. Club Benefits section: Approved
  - vii. Club Requirements section: Approved
  - viii. Competition Organizer Benefits section: Approved
  - ix. Competition Organizer Requirements section: Approved
  - x. National Ranking Points System: Approved
  - xi. Athletic Competency Classification System: Rejected
    - 1. Moved to separate working/proposal document
    - 2. Continue to track/pilot internally throughout 2024 season
    - 3. Slated for 2025 adoption, based on internal pilot outcome
- c. **Matt:** Publish PDF version on ORC page and request community review/feedback.

#### d. Athlete Facilitation

- i. Recap: [2023 ICF Ocean Racing World Championships @ Perth, Australia](#) (November 30 - December 3)
  - 1. 12 participants (0 Junior, 2 Espoir, 2 Senior, 8 Masters)
  - 2. Ana Swetish, 2nd Place Female Espoir U23
  - 3. Michèle Eray, 1st Place Female Masters 40-44
  - 4.  2023 ICF Canoe Ocean Racing World Championships USA Team Participant ...
- ii. 2024 ICF COR World Championships @ Madeira, Portugal (September 30 - October 6)
  - 1.  2024 ACA USA Canoe Ocean Racing National Team Participation Requirements
  - 2. Matt reached out to Carl Slifer, an American expat living in Madeira who participated in 2023 Madeira Ocean Challenge – proposed a liaison role (response pending)
  - 3. Matt is working on booking his accommodations/travel (Matt + wife)
  - 4. Logistical support
    - a. Transportation
      - i. Flights are relatively inexpensive! (\$600 RT @ Priceline, Expedia)
    - b. Accommodation
      - i. Lots of VRBO/AirBnB rentals in Funchal available right now, quite inexpensive
      - ii. Plenty of inexpensive hotel reservations as well
      - iii. Is there precedent for ACA VRBO'ing a house for 8-10 people? How does this work?
  - c. Equipment
    - i. Matt sent inquiries to all major surfski manufacturers
      - 1. **Nelo** – André Santos responded affirmatively, said reservations via <https://nelorentals.com> begin March 2024, expect cost to be ~350 euros
      - 2. **Carbonology Sport** - Hein van Rooyen responded affirmatively – rentals to open later this year, expect cost to be 300-400 euros.
      - 3. **Elio/Mazu** – Eugénia Barbosa responded affirmatively, more details to be shared soon

4. **NK** - Doreen responded affirmatively, needs to know how many USA boats
  5. **Fenn** - Fenn France (covers Portugal) will be making boats available for rental, more details to be shared soon.
  6. Stellar – Dave Thomas responded questionably, unsure of logistics/expenses, and thus commitment
  7. Epic – Alessia Faverio forwarded to proper contact — unsure right now, logistics are difficult/expensive, waiting for ARCM to provide information
  8. **Vajda** - Nina Csonková (Account Manager) responded, not planning to participate
  9. Allwave - no response (email)
  10. Kai Wa'a - no response (email)
- ii. Additional companies/orgs to contact
    1. Matt: [Associação Regional de Canoagem da Madeira](#) (ARCM)
5. ORC Donation Fund
    - a. The financial vehicle is ready.
    - b. What is the purpose of the fund?
      - i. Support ocean racers (athletes)
        1. Uniforms, travel expenses, etc.
      - ii. National Development Program management, growing the sport
      - iii. Finalized definition: “The USA Ocean Racing National Development Fund is dedicated to advancing the sport of ocean racing by supporting athlete training, competition expenses, introductory programs, coaching education, and competition production throughout our country. Please consider contributing to the growth of ocean racing!”
    - c. What is the name of the fund?
      - i. ACA Ocean Racing
      - ii. Greg: Something more exciting
        1. USA Ocean Racing Development Fund
        2. Downwind Extreme Fund
        3. Open Water Racing Fund
        4. Downwind Racing Fund
        5. USA Ocean Racing National Development Fund
          - a. THIS IS IT!
    - d. **Matt** to share name/description with Jed.
    - e. References:
      - i. ACA Donation Funds Public Page: <https://americancanoe.org/donate/>
      - ii. ACA Donation Funds Member Portal Page: <https://www.americancanoe.org/donations/>
6. ACA Membership Grants
    - a. ACA does not give free memberships

- b. ORC can gift memberships – work with Michelle to set people up, receive invoice
- c. ORC can pay gift membership invoice via new shiny donation fund (when it gets some funds)

#### 4. Additional Topics

- a. No additional topics, we are WAY over time, but we had two months of stuff to chew through!

#### 5. January Actions Recap

- a. **Matt: Send initial outreach communication to clubs re: ocean racing program interest.**
- b. **Matt: Explore Groups.io, decide on that or Google Groups for community discussion tool**
- c. **Matt: Follow up w/ Jed regarding Team USA uniforms / spirit wear / competition wear**
- d. **Matt: Revise 2024 NDP per ORC [Done]**
- e. **Matt: Revise 2024 NRP tracking/totals per algorithm revision [Done]**
- f. **Matt: Publish revised NDP to ACA site for community review/feedback**
- g. **Matt: Share donation fund name/description w/ Jed [Done]**
- h. **Matt: Start document to track ocean racing primary/secondary members [Done]**
- i. **Matt: Follow up w/ Bay State Games re: “new sport application” for paddling race.**
- j. **Jesse: Follow up w/ Sunshine State Games (John Edwards) re: paddling race.**
- k. **Jesse: Review [Athlete WIIFM](#) and add name to line items.**
- l. **Geoff: Review [Athlete WIIFM](#) and add name to line items.**
- m. **Greg: Review [Athlete WIIFM](#) and add name to line items.**

#### 6. Next Session

- a. Friday, Feb 23 2024

#### 7. Session Adjournment

- a. Time (Eastern/Pacific): 8:35pm ET / 5:35pm PT