



INTERNATIONAL VA'A FEDERATION (IVF)  
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23 August 2023

Dear IVF Member Federations,

On behalf of the IVF we would like to thank the Samoa Outrigger Canoe Association and the Local Organising Committee (LOC) for hosting a wonderful 3<sup>rd</sup> IVF World Distance Championship.

We would like to address some of the misinformation that has been circulated online by providing you with facts:

- V1 Canoes:** There were issues with some of the V1 canoes. On Day 2, the conditions in the ocean were very challenging, more challenging than our previous 2 World Distance Championships. This put stress on some of the canoes. Unfortunately, 2 canoes broke during the course of the race and some others suffered damage. This situation was managed by working closely with the LOC and adjusting the racing schedule to ensure that there were enough undamaged canoes for racing for the rest of the week. All V1 races from day 3 onwards took place in the harbour or inside the reef where the conditions were more suitable. Our Samoan event hosts have apologized for any issues with the canoes. We will work with the Federations who were impacted by the breakages. Moving forward the IVF will put in place a more robust inspection policy for all canoes being constructed for IVF World Championships.
- Protests:** During the course of the event, we had 37 races starting across multiple waves. We received 5 protests in total:
  - Day 3 race 1 V6 J19 Women
  - Day 3 race 1 V6 J19 Women (Counter Protest)
  - Day 3 race 1 V1 J19 Men
  - Day 4 race 1 V1 J16 Women
  - Day 4 race 2 V1 Master 70 Women

There was 1 turn infraction called from the water by the Race Director and Water Official on Day 4 race 1 J16 Women.

- Race Rules: Rule 17. Rounding Markers** - This is not a new rule. It has been in place, in its current form, since the first IVF World Distance Championship hosted by Tahiti in 2017. It was unchanged for 2019 in Mooloolaba, Australia and again unchanged for this event 2023 in Samoa. It has also been in place for the 2019 Pacific Games in Samoa and the 2022 Pacific Mini Games in Saipan.

The diagram that was sent out to all Member Federations prior to this event (on 9 July, 2023) was also sent out in 2019 to help countries to understand the turning overlap rule better. This rule was also demonstrated at the race briefings prior to the 2023 event starting and also discussed at pre-event Zooms with Area Coordinators that were present. It was also demonstrated at all further race briefings when requested by countries.

It is the responsibility of our Member Federations to ensure that their paddlers are provided with all the IVF race rules and information.

4. **Race Rule Change Process:** The Race Rule Committee and IVF have advised the process to suggest changes to race rules annually. This has been communicated to all Member Federations and all Member Federations have the opportunity to follow that process should they wish to make suggestions for race rule changes.
5. **Disciplinary Incident:** There were 4 Tahitian Junior boys caught and arrested for assaulting a New Zealand Junior boy and his parents on Friday evening after the closing ceremony. The parents of the NZ victim chose not press charges; however, the 4 Tahitian boys were all issued written warnings by the Samoa Police. The 4 Tahitian boys were made to give oral apologies to the NZ paddler, his parents and then event organisers. The IVF Board does not condone any type of violent behaviour and will be addressing this misconduct separately with the Tahitian Va'a Federation and other stakeholders.
6. **Cyber Bullying:** The IVF has zero tolerance for any form of cyber bullying or any form of bullying or intimidation. It goes against all of the values of our sport. Moving forward the IVF Board will address introducing social media policies and anti-bullying measures to help protect all our participants.

It is unfortunate that some of these incidents are overshadowing what was an awesome event and a great week for all those involved. It is the responsibility of our Member Federations to manage their contingents and supporters and ensure that everyone's actions are aligned with the values, spirit and culture of Va'a and most importantly; respect our hosts, their culture, their people and the land we are in.

We once again we thank our hosts - Samoa, Samoa Outrigger Canoe Association and the Event Local Organizing Committee for an incredible week and for reminding us that Va'a is more than just a sport.

We hope that you all had safe travels home and we look forward to seeing you all in Hilo, Hawai'i for the 2024 IVF World Sprint Championships and then in Brazil for the 2025 IVF World Distance Championships.

Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,  
The IVF Board of Directors

Lara Collins - President  
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