

Commodore Luis Soubié
2020-2022

Dec 31 2022
Mendoza, Argentina

12 years ago, I was just like any other Snipe sailor with over 20 years of experience.

I sailed a lot, I traveled to most major events, but I did not participate or contribute in any way to the Class organization, nationally or internationally, besides expressing my discontent, loudly occasionally with the decisions made.

In 2011 I decided to take a step forward in my country and was elected National Secretary and later in 2014 I was invited to join the SCIRA Board as Secretary of WH&O (now WH&A).

The years went by quickly and in 2018 I was elected Vice Commodore. I remember now Commodore Rakocy congratulating me saying "Luis, you are going to be the next Commodore." It sounded weird and was a surprise for me. Never did I think about that, and I was unaware of the Class tradition with the Vice Commodore stepping up and being Commodore, and since I am not what you would call "an ambassador", I never imagined people voting me for that position. It wasn't my goal at all and I wasn't sure I even wanted that. But I had 2 years to get used to the idea and I was not going to refuse such a great honor to my Class, so in 2020 I became your Commodore.

I am not a politician and this type of position requires skills in diplomacy that you know I lack, but I tried to make up for it with work and love for the Class.

The beginning couldn't have been worse. COVID began as soon as January and by March we were in a nightmare. The first Board decision with myself as Commodore was to cancel the Masters Worlds, and the second was to stop all events on the calendar. Not the start I nor the Board dreamed. Good for me I was not a politician and I didn't care much about what people would say on our backs at that time! Sailors and friends were calling from all the countries without a hard lockdown, complaining and defending to keep sailing. Things happened so fast! I remember I called for a meeting, it was a Friday and the Board had strong doubts about what to decide. When the meeting took place the following Wednesday, it became very clear and that it was irresponsible to continue racing. We were the first Class in the world to stop our major events, in one week 25 more Classes followed, in one month all sports world-wide stopped.

Everything was canceled. It was very tough, but the Board spent 2020 and 2021 planning for the future and making a financial plan to survive some years without sailing and therefore without the possibility of collecting dues—our main revenue resource. We had to cancel the deep change in our data base that I wanted to do. Canceling and rescheduling event after event, knowing that it was going to be almost impossible to hold them, but with the help of the hosts, we all worked to be ready when the right time would come. Finally, in 2021 we held the Europeans and the WH&A, even when many sailors were not able to travel from the lockdown in their countries, the Class started to go back to a more normal condition.

This last year we finally held the Words at Portugal after canceling the ones at Japan. Due to my country's lockdown, I wasn't able to travel to any event during 2021. When I qualified as national Champion, I decided not to participate as a sailor at the Worlds in order to be there as the SCIRA Representative for the sailors without being a competitor. It was a bitter sweet travel. I enjoyed the events very much but my father died the day before I jumped on the plane for the Junior Worlds, so I am not exaggerating when I say that the family of the Class healed me in that hard time.

So, today is my last day as your Commodore after these 3 intense years.

It has been the honor of my life to lead my beloved Snipe class during this period.

In all this years, Board after Board, with people going in and out, I found in the Board a group of fellow sailors who's only purpose was to have a better Class. I can assure you that the Class is in the best hands with the upcoming Board taking office in January 1st.

I know that many of you do not agree with some of the decisions the Board takes. Remember that the Board is a group of sailors just like you who dedicate their time to organize the Class for you, they are not focused on personal convenience but in the Class's best interests, and most of the time they have much more information about an issue, we exchange opinions for a long period of time, and they are 7 people from 7 countries exchanging their views to arrive at the best decision. And no matter what we do, no decision will satisfy everybody. The way to contact the Board is not writing on social media or sending private emails to Board members, but by contacting your National Secretary who will inform the Class Executive Officer.

Just as I did, remember that if you want to change things, you are more than welcome to get involved any time, in fact, the Board needs you very much!

A few days ago a friend asked me what was the best and worst about being on the Board. I didn't hesitate. The best was the way we exchanged views and opinions, having hard disagreements many times, voting for a majority, and after that voting always having the 100% of the Board supporting the decision made by the majority, even when in disagreement. I saw Board members voting against their own country when thinking the best option for the Class was other, and never ever did I see personal convenience mixed with the opinion expressed. The worst was people expressing their views complaining without respect, in an aggressive and ironic way, most of the time with no, few, twisted or wrong information, expressing personal opinions as facts and doing so on social media instead of writing to the Class through their National Secretary as they should.

I cannot be more proud of the group of people I led these past 3 years and the ones before this one, and I can only say to you, members of the Board and our beloved Jerelyn, THANK YOU for your hard work !

I already miss you guys !
Luis Soubie
Commodore 2020-21-22



Commodore Zbigniew Rakocy
2023-2024

As of January 1, 2023, I will be the new Commodore of SCIRA. I accept this honourable position for the term of 2 years (2023-2024) with respect and responsibility to all members of our organisation.

I have been an active member of the SCIRA Board for many years. First, as General Secretary Europe (6 yrs.), then as Secretary of SCIRA (2 yrs.), and more recently as Vice Commodore (3 yrs. due to COVID-19).

I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who voted for me and have put their trust in me. I would like to give special thanks to past Commodores that I have worked with: Luis Soubie, Pietro Fantoni, Gweneth Crook, Ricardo Labato, and Don Bedford. It has been an honour for me to have worked with them and my aim is to keep running the Snipe class as they did before me.

Today, I believe we have a strong Board who I have been working with for many years and I know very well. Together, I am confident we will achieve the goals that are ahead of us, with the main objective always being to benefit the Snipe Class.

Over the years, during my time on the SCIRA Board, the world has changed and so has sailing. However, I will strive to make our white Snipe sails visible on many waters and at events around the world.

I know that some of you have already met me, but many haven't. I am from Poland and have been sailing the Snipe for 22 years.

Poland has, more recently, managed to build a very good system of support for regatta sailing which, after several years, brings results. We have very successful Polish sailors competing in other sailing classes in many prestigious regattas such as the Olympics, World Championships, and the European Championships. I would like to look at some of these positive strategies used to find out if they can be implemented to SCIRA's benefit.

One area I would particularly like to focus on during my time as Commodore is promotion. I believe there are areas for both improvement and development. One area I feel needs more time and consideration is sponsorship. I would like to find a strategic sponsor for the Snipe class worldwide. Another area I would like to develop is our use of media. SCIRA is in the possession of some amazing photos (thanks to Matias Capizzano) but in my opinion, they are insufficiently used. I would like to see more short films from our regattas, which feature young sailors and our motto " Serious Sailing - Serious Fun". A short film will offer much more for promotion than text and photos. Should you have any ideas on this subject, they will be welcomed and considered.

Last year, we celebrated the 90th anniversary of our beloved boat. After the difficulties during Covid-19 time, it was a good year for our class; we held the Senior World Championships in Cascais delayed by a year and the Junior World Championships in Porto. As far as organization and sports aspects are concerned, I consider these events were both excellent and very successful. Special thanks go to Portugal for their ability to prepare and organise such great events at short notice.

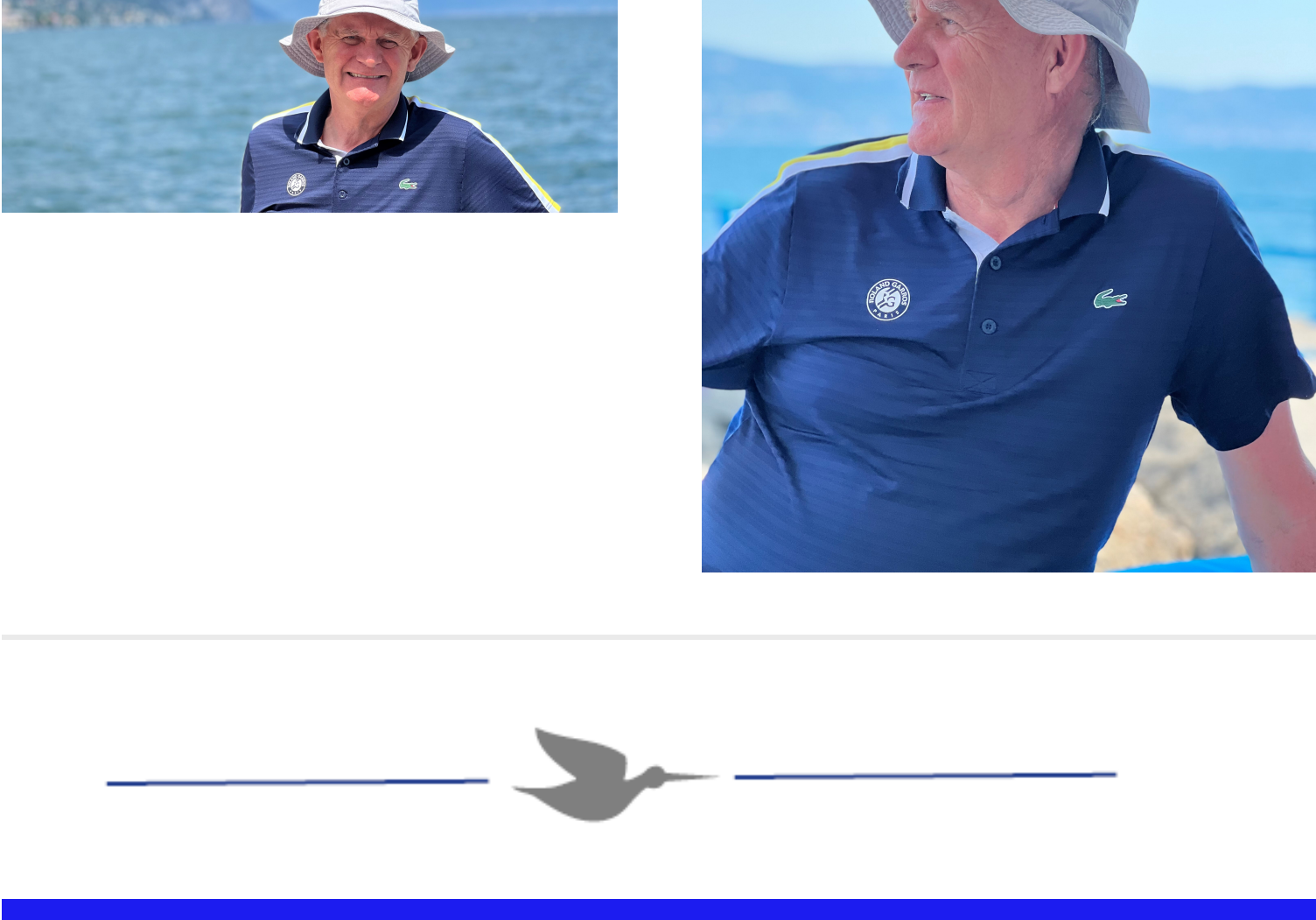
In the first year of my term (2023) there will be some major regattas taking place, including the following: 14th-17th March - Western Hemisphere and Asia (Algaprobo CHI), 21st-27th August - Open European in Gargnano (Lake Garda ITA), 3rd-8th October - Women's World (RCN Valencia ESP) and 18th-22nd October - World Masters (Cadiz ESP). As Commodore, I would like to attend as many of these regattas as I am able to and where I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible.

The Snipe class, with a 90-year history, is still vibrant and developing. I would like to continue to grow the class and I am there for you, as your Commodore, to listen and hear your thoughts on how together we can ensure our Snipe class remains strong and exciting. Both myself and the Board will consider any suggestions received via email office@snipe.org and respond accordingly.

I very much look forward to seeing you at the great regattas planned during 2023.

May there always be fair winds in your sails!

Zbi



SCIRA Board of Governors 2023			
Commodore	Zbigniew Rakocy	2023-2024	
Vice Commodore	Martin Bermudez	2023-2024	
Secretary	Reino Suonsilta	2023-2024	
Treasurer	Sue Roberts	2023-2026	
Technical Committee Chm	Gus Wirth	2021-2024	
General Sec – Europe	Daniela Semec	2023	
General Sec – WH&A	Paola Prada	2022-2023	
Chief Measurer	Luis Gonzalez	2021-2024	
Appointed			
Legal Counsel	Lugh Savage		
Chief Info Officer	Don Bedford	2013	
Executive Director	Jerelyn Bishl	1993	
Vice Chairman, Rules	Shinichi Uchida	2022	

2023 Major Regatta Schedule

Worlds	dates	venue
Women's	Oct 3-8	Valencia, ESP
Masters	Oct 18-22	Puerto Sherry, ESP
Hemisphere		
So Americans	April 5-9	Montevideo, URU
WH&Asia	March 14-19	Algarrobo, CHI
Europeans	Aug 21-27	Gargnano, ITA
N. Americans	TBC	Norfolk, VA, USA