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*European Softball Federation  
Fédération Européenne Softball*



## **ESF 2006 President's Report:**

The year started with bad news. Immediately after our Congress in Sofia, which was itself a celebration of 30 years of the ESF hosted by the Bulgarian Federation, we learned that our first efforts to regain Olympic status were turned down by the IOC in Turin. This was despite great efforts by many ESF members, including the establishment of language – specific web appeal sites to support the efforts of the ISF in influencing IOC members. That negative decision has driven much of my agenda for the last 12 months and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

In the role of ISF VP for Europe I have worked with Jelena Cusack to represent ESF members' views at the World level, to influence future Olympic decisions and to contribute to debates on Finance, Administration and Strategy. I attended meetings with President Rogge in Lausanne and the EOC General Assembly in Brussels, and with Ruud van Zetten represented Softball at a meeting of European Sports bodies under the auspices of the European Commissioner for Sports. It was clear from my discussions at all these events that we still face a challenge in bringing Softball fully to the attention of international sporting decision makers.

I have also taken on the role of temporary Chair of the ISF Umpires Commission, charged with identifying, training and selecting Umpires for ISF events whilst Clovis Lodewyck recovers. This involved participating in the Women's World Championship in Beijing where Italy won the right to host the Euro-African Qualifier and Gianluca Magnani achieved the distinction of calling the Plate at the Grand Final game. A proud moment for him and for us all. In 2007 I will meet all the ISF Regional Umpire Commissioners, including Bob Milosavljevic representing European umpires, at their annual gathering in Plant City.

Playing plans for 2007 include several ISF events hosted in Europe.

The Czech Federation proposed and were granted sanction for an iSF Men's World Cup; Italy is to host the Olympic qualifier and (although as this is written the exact location is not determined) we are hopeful that the Junior Women's World Championships will also be based here with full European participation.

Other intended European involvement in the global scene has been less positive. Netherlands put in the first, and for some time the only, bid to host ISF Congress in early 2007. Their intention and hope was to bring a keynote global Softball event that would act as a forum to demonstrate the Global nature of our sport in a European environment, where a significant number of IOC members are resident. The ultimate decision to meet in Manila has regrettably denied them that chance.

Within Europe we enjoyed a full season of Competition, albeit with several events delayed because of difficulty obtaining host Clubs. The issue of balancing the responsibilities and costs associated with events between the ESF, the Teams and the Host continue to be debated. Several significant developments are scheduled to be discussed at the 2007 Congress in Zagreb.

Pavel Prachar completed another year as European Development Facilitator. We are grateful for the work he has done, including recent efforts to assist the Polish Federation in their preparations for the JWWC event. His activities and the continuation of the role, supported by the ISF, will also be reviewed at Congress; my hope is that we will be joined there by Dale McMann, ISF VP responsible for Development.

You will already be aware of issues within the governance and administration of the ESF itself. Several members of the Executive, myself included, faced family, health and other issues which distracted us, at least for periods of time, from constant activity on behalf of the ESF, and we have no doubt still to achieve many of the things we would have liked to complete during 2006. However, in the main honest efforts have been made and I remain grateful for all the time and energy invested by fellow members of the Executive and the supporting Commissions which have maintained our playing and development activity throughout the year.

We have however suffered significantly from a lack of efficiency, responsiveness and accountability as regards a critical area of activity, our finances. You, our Federation members, have yourselves been most aware of the impact of this situation, as members of the Finance Commission and others have had to deal with a significant number of your complaints and reminders throughout the year.

At the time of writing this report – so the situation may have been rectified by the time of Congress – no Audited Accounts or 2006 Actual / Budget analyses have been provided to the Finance or Executive Commissions for their review and approval, and therefore you have as yet had no financial reporting for the year which ended on September 30, 2006. You will recall that this year-end was changed at the Sofia Congress from October 31 to allow more time to close the books and prepare data in time for Congress. This intention has clearly not had the desired outcome. Members of the Executive have experienced considerable frustration and wasted many hours in coping with this situation and its continuing consequences: hopefully decision made at Congress will help to get us back on course early in 2007. One decision already made has been to appoint Eddy van Straelen as Accountant for the ESF, reporting to the FC and with the authority to issue invoices, receive payments and maintain accounting records.

This episode has highlighted for me how much all our Federations depend on the goodwill and time of volunteers. ESF Executive Officers hold other roles within our sport at local and national level as well as, in most cases, holding down full time employment as well. We therefore cannot demand performance, and I hope we are sympathetic to difficult situations and prepared to help out if colleagues need support in special circumstances. However, ultimately all members of the Executive have an overriding responsibility to the whole ESF and unwillingness or inability to perform must be addressed appropriately.

As to other contributions, Francesca Fabretto has, despite house, county and job moves, become more involved in helping the Secretary General and EC, particularly during our Autumn EC meeting which Patrice could not attend due to health issues, now at least partially resolved. We thank her and wish him a full and speedy recovery.

I am discussing changing some responsibilities within the Executive for the coming year to take account of personal preferences, new needs and recognising other demands on time. Apart from Development, Tournament and Technical issues which all receive specific debating time at Congress, I would mention that Ruud and Chiqui will be collaborating on a comprehensive update of Demographic data covering membership and numbers involved in our sport across Europe. This is essential for us to promote ourselves to the outside world and to key decision makers and I look to every member Federation to assist positively in this critical task. They are also keen to move the use of our website forward and I have committed to support these efforts as much as I can.

As mentioned in my introduction, I anticipate spending considerable time on International and Olympic efforts. This will not mean that I disregard internal issues, but I intend to set clearer strategic direction for EC activities and rely on our able and willing VPs to work with you to achieve our goals. I will always be available to you to listen to members Federations' views and comments, and to hear from you how well we perform against our targets!

I close with thanks to everyone who has worked for Softball across Europe and internationally during 2006, and particularly to those kind hosts who provided the venues we needed to run our events and then extended such generous hospitality to me and all visiting softball teams and officials this year.

I look forward to meeting many of you in Zagreb. My best wishes for 2007 to you and your families.

**Mike Jennings**



## **CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT THE MEMBERSHIP FEES SYSTEM**

### **INITIAL MEMO PRESENTED TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL IN 2004 :**

In the present situation membership fees for an Affiliated Federation are based on its number of Members (Membership Statistics).

If this has the advantage of taking into account the theoretical contributive potential of Federations, "big" or "rich" Federations paying more than "small" or "poor" ones, this also has two main disadvantages :

- a) membership statistics are not always easy to obtain, what obliges to administrative steps, follow-up, reminders, in a word to a significant workload;
- b) membership statistics, when available, do not always - to say the least - reflect the reality of thing, the intrinsic principle of the system - the more you declare, the more you pay - being not an encouragement to the sincerity of the declared figures ...

The perverse consequence of second disadvantage being that, as the total membership figures for the ESF are just the sum of understated individual figures, the membership statistics can not be used for development or promotion and marketing purposes.

If we wish to have realistic membership figures, the only solution is to separate them from the determination of fees, what brings to consider a new membership fees system : a flat rate of fee for all Federations.

In addition, the levying work would be reduced to a single standardized invoicing and reminding process.

Referring to the 2005 project of budget, the total budgeted incomes for affiliations are € 7,800, what represents, divided by 32 Affiliated Federations, € 243.75 per Federation.

The financial impact on Federations by category of fees would be the following :

Category	# Federations	2005 fee	option 1		option 2 (rounded)	
			flat fee	variance	flat fee	variance
A 0 to 100	5	150.00	243.75	93.75	250.00	100.00
B 101 to 500	9	200.00	243.75	43.75	250.00	50.00
C 501 to 2000	9	250.00	243.75	-6.25	250.00	0.00
D 2000 to 5000	2	350.00	243.75	-106.25	250.00	-100.00
E 5001 and more	3	550.00	243.75	-306.25	250.00	-300.00
statistics not available	4					

This could be proposed for the 2005 budget and implemented at the 2005 Congress.

Patrice BIENFAIT  
Secretary General



## UPDATED PROPOSAL TO CONGRESS 2007 ABOUT THE MEMBERSHIP FEES SYSTEM

Hereunder an updated sheet based on 2006 figures when available :

Category	# Federations	2 006,00	option 1		option 2 (rounded)	
			flat fee	variance	flat fee	variance
A 0 to 100	5	125,00	372,32	247,32	375,00	250,00
B 101 to 500	9	250,00	372,32	122,32	375,00	125,00
C 501 to 2000	9	400,00	372,32	-27,68	375,00	-25,00
D 2000 to 5000	2	550,00	372,32	-177,68	375,00	-175,00
E 5001 and more	3	950,00	372,32	-577,68	375,00	-575,00
statistics not available	4					

These fees would give a total income of  $375 \times 32 = 12,000$  €.

However, the budgeted income for 2006 affiliated fees was 6,725 € namely 56 % of the theoretical income. So if we set the fee at 56 % of the calculated one ( $375 \times 56 \% = 210$ ) the results would be the following :

Category	# Federations	2 006,00	option 3	
			flat fee	variance
A 0 to 100	5	125,00	210,00	85,00
B 101 to 500	9	250,00	210,00	-40,00
C 501 to 2000	9	400,00	210,00	-190,00
D 2000 to 5000	2	550,00	210,00	-340,00
E 5001 and more	3	950,00	210,00	-740,00
statistics not available	4			

At your disposal for any further information.

**Patrice BIENFAIT**  
Secretary General

# MOTIONS TO ESF CONGRESS 2007 FROM THE BRITISH SOFTBALL FEDERATION

Below are two motions that the BSF would like to put before the ESF Congress in February 2007.

## **Motion 1: Format of ESF Slowpitch Tournaments**

The British Softball Federation proposes that new regulations are written within the **Competition System** section of the **ESF Competitions Regulations** (particularly Section 10.02) regarding playing formats for ESF **Slowpitch** Championship or Cup competitions. The current Competition System is based on Fastpitch play with regard to the number of games that can be played per day and within a tournament as a whole; but the Slowpitch format allows and (we would argue) requires more games within shorter time frames in order to satisfactorily determine placings and give participating teams value for money.

Other aspects of ESF Slowpitch competition (particularly as it differs from Fastpitch) can also be considered at the time new regulations are written, based on the experience of the 2006 ESF Co-ed Slowpitch Championships in Slovenia.

The new regulations should be drafted by the ESF Technical Commission in consultation with appropriate representatives from Slowpitch-playing countries, and should be available for use by the time of any ESF Slowpitch Cup competition that may be held in 2007 and for Cup and Championship competitions in 2008.

**Reason for the Motion:** The current Competition System regulations were drafted with only Fastpitch in mind, and unnecessarily restrict the use of more appropriate formats and procedures for Slowpitch.

## **Motion 2: Procedures for Distributing Line-ups at ESF Tournaments**

The British Softball Federation proposes that in any ESF Cup or Championship competition, line-ups for each game are required to be handed in to the Official Scorer no less than 60 minutes before the scheduled start time, and that these line-ups are then posted or otherwise made available to team scorekeepers, media representatives and other relevant personnel at an identified place no less than 30 minutes before the scheduled start time.

Any changes made to the posted line-ups when line-ups are exchanged at the home plate meeting will be announced to scorers by the home plate umpire prior to the start of the game, in the same way as substitutions are announced during the game.

All line-ups need to be written legibly and include first and last names and uniform numbers of all players, including substitutes. The fielding position of starting players must also be indicated.

If this motion is passed, the ESF should recommend its adoption at other tournaments in Europe organised by national federations and/or clubs.

**Reason for the Motion:** Under current procedures, line-ups are not made available to team scorers and media until after the home plate meeting, with the game often starting almost immediately afterwards. This makes it very difficult for scorers to actually get the line-ups into their scorebooks accurately (remembering that names are by definition usually in a “foreign” language for most scorers) while trying to keep track of the game at the same time.

Since we are trying to make Softball as media-friendly as possible, the current system creates unnecessary hassle for scorekeepers that it would be better to avoid. The system proposed by the motion is used at many tournaments throughout the world without problems.

While it may seem self-evident that line-ups should include first and last names, numbers and positions, this is sadly not always the case!





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ESF

c/o Secretary General

November 1, 2006

## **ESF Congress 2007: Motion GER #2**

Art. 08.08 – 08.10 should be added to the Competitions Regulations as follows:



**Art. 08.08** Any teams which missed the deadline according to Art. 8.02 may still sign up for the competition if



- a) the duly completed and signed Entry Form is received by the ESF Secretary General before March 1st of the year in which the competition is held,
- b) in the case of Art. 08.03.01 the Entry Fee is completely received by the ESF Treasurer before March 1st, and
- c) and extra fine in the amount of the annual membership fee of the national federation the team represents is received by the ESF Treasurer before March 1st.

**Art. 08.09** Any team which enters the competition according to Art. 08.08 is considered to have subscribed for this competition with respect to Art. 09.02.04

**Art. 08.10** No late entries will be accepted after March 1st.

### **Reasoning:**

In recent years "late entries" have been accepted by the EC in order to give as much teams as possible the opportunity to play. However, this has had negative effects on the planning reliability for the organizers and other teams. In particular this had led to allocations to tournament groups, which do not reflect the outcome of the previous competition.



Thus, no late entries should be accepted after March 1st. In order to give teams, which have missed the first deadline, still the opportunity to play, a "grace period" of two months is introduced. This gives the opportunity to talk to the federations which have missed the deadline during the congress in order to clarify the situation.

However, in order to motivate the federations to meet the "normal" deadline, a fine is introduced for said late entries. In order to balance between "big" and "small" federations, this fine corresponds to the annual membership fees.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'FW', written in a cursive style.

GERMAN BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL FEDERATION  
**Frank Wagner**  
President



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November 1, 2006

### ESF Congress 2007: Motion GER #1

Art. 14.04.03 of the Competitions Regulations should read:

*The nationality of every player will be determined by the passport **or an I.D. card issued by a national authority of an ESF member country and giving proof of citizenship, which has to be** presented at the technical meeting, to the exclusion of any other document.*



### Reasoning:

National ID cards are accepted as proof of citizenship in the majority of ESF member countries. This includes but is not restricted to all EU members but includes additional countries as e.g. Croatia, Switzerland and Norway. Thus, no passport is necessary for travelling between these countries. This number will even increase with Bulgaria and Romania joining the EU in 2007. Thus the necessity to obtain and to present a passport for playing in a European tournament completely contradicts European practice and development in the last 50 years. Furthermore, passports have become much more expensive in recent years due to anti-terrorist measurements required by the US. Many players esp. of Junior Girls teams are not in possession of a passport and should not be obliged to get one only for playing Softball in Europe.

GERMAN BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL FEDERATION

**Frank Wagner**

President





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November 1, 2006

### **ESF Congress 2007: Motion GER #3**

The ESF President should have serious consultation with the President of C.E.B. in order to have the congresses of ESF and C.E.B. at the same place and at the same weekend again.



#### **Reasoning:**

Many European federations are joined federations of Baseball and Softball. Celebrating the congresses of ESF and C.E.B. together again would save a lot of travel expenses, which could be spend much better for the development of our sport than for airfares and hotel rooms.

GERMAN BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL FEDERATION  
**Frank Wagner**  
President



**MOTIONS TO  
2007 ESF CONGRESS**

**Proposed by the  
Israel Softball Association**

1. During the forthcoming ISF Congress, delegates may be asked to consider and vote on matters that have an impact on the ESF or on activities under the ESF's jurisdiction. All members of the ESF have a common interest in ensuring that their views on such matters are given sufficient importance and that, whenever possible, are supported by their votes. This Congress should adopt a resolution providing that, when points of unity or impact regarding ESF interests or matters arise at the ISF Congress, delegates from the ESF should ensure that they support fully such measures, by discussion and by vote. (This would not apply to ISF issues that have no direct bearing on the ESF, matters under its control or its members.)

We urge the VP's of the European region to confer with ESF members with the intent to bring forth all important issues that are being considered by the ISF agenda and the importance of a unified Europe.

2. Every ESF Commission and Committees shall produce and circulate quarterly reports to the ESF members, regardless of the presence or lack of activity.



*European Softball Federation  
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## **MOTION PROPOSED BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

**N° : EC1**

**Subject : ELITE CUP FOR NATIONS**

**Author : Competitions Commission**

The Elite Cup is proposed with the aim to play a softball competition at the top level in Europe.

The proposal is that the Elite Cup should be played by Nations. The first four teams ranked in the European Championship will play this competition in the same year of the Olympic Games or the World Cup. The system of this competition has to be studied, but it's clear since now this tournament is of no value for sport purposes (qualifier or others).

The Elite cup will be under the ESF's control, and the organization will be assigned to Federations (not Clubs) that will submit their nominations to the ESF.

The *ratio* of this competition is to allow the stronger European teams to develop high quality softball before important International competitions/cups.

It will be more difficult to suggest the same Elite Cup "by Clubs" cause to the high costs that an additional tournament requires, and furthermore because of a missing equal regulation that on the contrary already exists for the national teams.

Note: The organization of the Elite Cup should involve the Development and the Marketing Commissions as, if well done, it may become a good way of development and advertising for our sport.



## MOTION PROPOSED BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

N° : EC2

Subject : PREMIER CUP

Author : Technical Commission

### Proposal: Creation of Premier Cup competitions (starting in 2008)

In brief, this proposal creates a new level of Cup competition, the "Premier Cup", as the highest level of ESF club competition. consisting initially of the top 4 clubs from the current "A" Division, plus the defending champion. In subsequent years, the last-place finisher in the Premier Cup is relegated to the "A" Division, and the first-place finisher from the "A" Division is promoted to the Premier Division.

CR 09.00 (modified): "... *The Defending Champion is the Holder of the Title of the Premier Division in Cup Competitions.*"

CR 09.01.02 (modified table - see below):

Number of Teams Subscribing (excluding Premier Cup Defender)	4 to 7	8 to 16	17 to 24	25 to 32	33 to 40	41 to 48
Premier Cup	4 to 7 (plus DEF)	4 (plus DEF)	4 (plus DEF)	4 (plus DEF)	4 (plus DEF)	4 (plus DEF)
Cup "A"	N/A	4 to 12	8	8	8	8
Cup "B"	N/A	N/A	5 to 12	8	8	8
Cup "C"	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 to 12	8	8
Cup "D"	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 to 12	8
Cup "E"	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 to 12

CR 09.01.02.01 (modified): "If no fewer than four and no more than **seven** teams subscribe, not including the possible Defending Champion, these will be allocated in one Division: a **Premier Cup**, with all registered teams, plus the possible Defending Champion."

CR 09.01.02.02 (modified): "If **eight to sixteen** teams subscribe, not including the possible Defending Champion, these will be between two Divisions: a **Premier Cup**, with **four** teams, plus the possible Defending Champion, and a European Cup "A", with the remaining number of teams."

CR 09.01.02.03 (modified): "If **seventeen to twenty-four** teams subscribe, not including the possible Defending Champion, these will be among three Divisions: a **Premier Cup**, with **four** teams, plus the possible Defending Champion, a European Cup "A", with a maximum of **eight** teams, and a European Cup "B", with the remaining number of teams."

CR 09.02.02.04 through .07: modified as in above table.

CR 09.03.01 (modified): "For the **Premier** Division of Cup Competitions, the rank of a defending Champion is neutralized... he receives a **P0** rating... receives a **P1** rating as Winner... and a **P0** rating as the new defending Champion." Also, all notations in the two tables that follow 09.03.01 must be changed to reflect **Premier** Division name changes.

### **Rationale:**

Discussions that recently took place in the Player Eligibility Forum have prompted questions about the level of competitive balance in our Cup competitions. At the "A" level in particular, there is fairly strong evidence of the existence of a very large competitive gap between the top 4 clubs and the remaining clubs at the bottom of the "A" group.

This gap has raised the question of creating a "premier" level of Cup competition to be the highest level of ESF club competition. This premier level would normally be limited to 4 clubs, plus a defending champion. All remaining clubs would compete in the "A" or "B" levels (or lower, as necessitated by higher subscription levels), depending on the total number of clubs that subscribe. Thus, the new hierarchy of club competition would look like:

**Premier Cup** (and Cup Winners' Cup): 4 clubs, plus defending champion  
**"A" Cup** (and Cup Winners' Cup): up to 12 clubs (no defending champion)  
**"B" Cup** and below (and Cup Winner's Cup): as currently described in the Competitions Regulations.

In the first year of competition, the Premier Cup would consist of the top four clubs and defending champion from the previous year's "A" group. Each year thereafter, the last-place finisher is relegated to the "A" group, and the 1st-place finisher from the "A" group is promoted to the Premier group. Promotion from and relegation to groups below the "A" group remains unchanged from the current system.

The benefits of such a reorganization are as follows:

**1. More balanced competition.** There would be fewer games decided by the Run-Ahead Rule, making for more exciting and more interesting games. As a prime example, consider the 2006 Women's "A" Pool Cup competition (ECWA), which most observers will agree is the highest level of women's fastpitch club competition that we have in Europe. Looking at the data from ECWA 2006:

- \* There were 16 games between the top 4 finishers and the bottom 6 finishers.
- \* 9 of those 16 games (56%) were ended by the Run-Ahead Rule.
- \* There were 10 games that involved the top four finishers playing against each other.
- \* Only 1 of those 10 games was ended by the Run-Ahead Rule.

Similar results can be seen in the Winners' Cup competitions, as well as the Men's Cup competitions.

**2. Easier to organize.** Because of the smaller number of total games to be played, the Premier Cup competition could be scheduled to run 5 days, rather than the current 6 days that are needed. This lowers costs for the organizers, as well as for the competing clubs.

**3. Fewer problems finding organizers for "B"-level competitions.** Because there will be more (up to 12) clubs competing at the "A" level, a larger pool of potential organizers is available for "A" group tournaments. The resulting smaller "B"-level competitions (which will only be needed if the total number of clubs that subscribe to a Cup or Winners' Cup exceeds 16) will make it less difficult for organizers to come forward for those competitions, making it less likely that "B" competitions will have to be canceled for lack of an organizer.

**4. An Aid to Elite Player Development.** There is near universal agreement that players' skills improve most when exposed to higher levels of competition. By enabling our top club players to play more games against their elite counterparts from other countries, we strengthen Europe's top players and better prepare them for the highest levels of international competition such as World Championships and the Olympic Games.





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## MOTION PROPOSED BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

**N° : EC3**

**Subject : DEADLINE FOR ENTRY FORMS**

**Author : Technical Commission**

Proposal: Impose "absolute" deadline for submission of competition Entry Form (CR 08.02), and eliminate change in ratings resulting from late entry (CR 09.05.03)

Add to CR 08.02: "*Late submission of entry forms is subject to the assessment of a late-filing penalty, which amount is determined by the Executive Council of the ESF. In no case will entries be accepted after the final day of the ESF Congress.*"

Remove CR 09.05.03

Rationale: In general, submission of a Competition Entry Form does not immediately commit a club/team to any financial obligations. As such, there is no valid reason for the existence of late entries. These late entries create problems in many areas - for organizers trying to make plans for their competition, for the ESF UiC trying to appoint a sufficient number of umpires to cover the competition, for the TC trying to prepare a game schedule, etc. To discourage the increasing incidence of failure to observe entry deadlines by clubs and Federations, the imposition of a stiff financial penalty for late submission is warranted. In addition, an absolute deadline for entry (the final day of Congress) enables planning to begin immediately and prevents the disruption that results from late entries. (NOTE: the suggested penalty for late filing is included in the proposed changes to the Financial Appendix that are listed below.)

Late filing will not result in a team's losing its rating. Failure to meet the "absolute" filing deadline (i.e., the final day of Congress) results in disqualification of the team from the competition and hence necessitates the re-rating of all remaining teams.



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## MOTION PROPOSED BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

N° : EC4

Subject : LACK OF ORGANIZERS

Author : Technical Commission

### **Proposal: Dealing with lack of organizers for Cup competitions (CR Article 24).**

Add CR Article 24.xx.01: *"If any specific Cup competition is lacking an Organizer at the time of adjournment of the Congress, bids shall be accepted by the Executive Council until midnight CET on the last day in February of the year in which the Cup competition is to be conducted."*

Add CR Article 24.xx.02: *"If multiple bids to organize a Cup competition that lacks an Organizer are received before the deadline specified in Article 24.xx.01, the Executive Council shall make a choice from among the multiple bidders."*

Add CR Article 24.xx.03: *"If no bid to organize a specific Cup competition is received before the deadline specified in Article 24.xx.01, the Cup competition shall be canceled in the current year."*

Rationale: Late appointment of Organizers for Cup competitions causes major problems for all concerned parties: the organizers cannot properly prepare the organization of the event, clubs have insufficient time to commit to and plan their participation, players and ESF officials have insufficient time to arrange for time off from their jobs to participate, there is insufficient time to arrange for proper inspection of the playing facilities, and the UiC has insufficient time to arrange for an adequate number of umpires to cover the competition. All these factors contribute to the staging of sub-standard competitions. Clubs and organizers need to be encouraged to take more initiative to announce their willingness to organize Cup competitions as early as possible, to avoid the chaos that results from hasty, last-minute decisions.



## MOTION PROPOSED BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

**N° :** EC5  
**Subject :** FINANCIAL APPENDIX  
**Author :** Technical Commission

### **Proposal: Changes to the ESF Financial Appendix.**

Add to section IV - Penalties:

- k) Late submission of Application Form for Player Licences - Same as entry fee
- l) Late submission of Player Transfer Affidavit - 100 euros each instance
- m) Late submission of Player Eligibility Affidavit and supporting documentation - 100 euros each instance
- n) Late submission of club/team competition entry - Same as entry fee

Add new section V - Other Fees:

- a) Processing fee for non-domestic player - 50 euros per player

Rationale: Clubs and federations have routinely been ignoring various registration deadlines. This creates additional work for ESF administrators, places compliant clubs/teams at a disadvantage, and causes unnecessary and avoidable administrative problems during competitions. Assessment of substantial fines will encourage clubs and federations to make extra effort to comply with deadlines.

The new processing fee for non-domestic players reflects the additional work required to ensure compliance with eligibility regulations.

### **Editorial Corrections:**

1. The references in CR 09.04.02.03 must be corrected (they mistakenly refer to CR 03, rather than CR 09).
2. Statutes Article 1.5, "RESOURCES" is not spelled correctly.



*European Softball Federation*  
*Fédération Européenne Softball*



## **MOTION PROPOSED BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

**N° : EC6**

**Subject : NEUTRAL UMPIRES**

**Author : Technical Commission & Marketing Commission**

**Proposal: Rescind the mandate from last year's Congress regarding the use of neutral umpires in all ESF fastpitch competition.**

Rationale: The mandate has significantly complicated the UC's job of making individual game assignments. In addition, the umpires don't like the mandate because it often results in our stronger umpires being passed over for umpiring "better quality" games. Our UiC has expressed concerns that our stronger umpires will begin to withdraw from ESF competitions out of frustration and the lack of opportunity to work the better games - in fact, one umpire has already resigned, and several others will determine their future involvement with ESF competition based on the action that Congress takes on this proposal to rescind last year's mandate. Coaches have also expressed their dissatisfaction with the policy, which does not permit the use of the best available umpires, particularly in the later stages of a competition.

The current policy would, in theory, be effective if the skill level of all umpires at a given competition was more or less equal. That is far from the case today, which often results in weaker umpires working more important games. If last year's mandate is not overturned, the UiC has recommended that, in order to ensure the availability of stronger, neutral umpires at a competition, 25% more umpires be appointed to each competition, with the additional umpires coming from the ranks of the ESF's stronger umpires. This will result in increased costs for both the ESF (in the form of additional transportation costs for umpires) and tournament organizers (in the form of lodging and meals expenses for extra umpires).



## MOTION PROPOSED BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

**N° :** EC7  
**Subject :** PLAYERS CATEGORIES  
**Author :** Technical Commission

**Proposal #1: Define what a "club" is, as pertaining to ESF Cup competitions.**

CR Article 14.05.07 (new): "A *club* is defined as an entity that consists of a group of softball players, all of whom are citizens of ESF-member countries."

Rationale: The ESF recognizes that individual domestic federations are free to adopt regulations of their own choosing to govern the conduct of their national championship competitions. These regulations typically include some sort of limitation on the number of "foreign players" (i.e., non-citizens of the country) that are permitted on the rosters of individual clubs. Because these regulations vary widely from federation to federation, there is a need for a baseline definition that applies equally and consistently to all clubs that compete in ESF Cup competitions, which involve club teams from many federations. This definition is needed to "level the playing field" and to enable holding meaningful Cup competitions among teams that are organized in an equal and identical fashion. This definition eliminates the unfair advantage enjoyed by clubs that compete in federations with very liberal player eligibility regulations.

**Proposal #2: Define a new category of player for Cup competitions - the "Pick-Up" player, and eliminate the categories of Foreign and Assimilated Players.**

CR Article 14.05.08 (new): "For purposes of determining player eligibility in ESF Cup competitions, a *Pick-Up player* is defined to be a player who is not an otherwise bona fide member of a club that has qualified for participation in an ESF Cup competition."

CR Article 14.05.08.01 (new): "Notwithstanding the player restrictions imposed in the definition of a club, each club that qualifies for participation in an ESF Cup competition shall be entitled to include a **maximum of 3 (three) Pick-Up players** on its final competition roster for the Cup competition."

CR Article 14.05.08.02 (new): "There are no practical eligibility restrictions on *Pick-Up players* - they may come from another club within the same National Federation, from other ESF-affiliated federations, or from any other country in the world. The only restriction on their use is that they must be identified as *Pick-Up players* on the Application for Player Licenses that the club must submit to the ESF prior to the competition. To allow for possible injuries or other extenuating circumstances, there is no theoretical limit on the number of players that a club may identify as *Pick-Up players* on its Application for Player Licenses - the limit of three will apply to the final competition roster that is submitted during the ID Control."

Rationale: Nearly two-thirds of clubs that currently compete in Cup competitions use zero or one foreign player on their rosters. The clubs that use three or more foreign players represent a very small minority of clubs, which tend to be wealthier and stronger to begin with. This has created a significant competitive imbalance, which has resulted in more and more lopsided game results. Also, the cost of

bringing in foreign players draws resources away from programs and initiatives that are designed to develop domestic talent.

By eliminating the categories of foreign and assimilated players (see below) and replacing them with a small number of unrestricted Pick-Up players, the problem of validating player eligibility is virtually eliminated. In addition, the disadvantage that is suffered by the vast majority of clubs (in terms of their ability to afford foreign players under the current regulations) is equalized by enabling all clubs to recruit up to three players for the Cup competition at a minimal expense. An added benefit of this new category of player is that it will enhance player development by opening the door for participation in ESF competition by players on clubs that did not qualify for ESF Cup competition.

Eliminating the categories of Assimilated and Foreign Players will result in the deletion of CR Articles 14.06 and 14.04.01 in their entirety.

Rationale: There is no way to accurately and consistently verify a player's compliance with CR 14.06 and 14.04.01, which has resulted in abuse of the foreign and assimilated player provisions. In addition, reliance on foreign/assimilated players impedes the development of domestic players by denying them valuable playing opportunities. These two categories are replaced by the new category of Pick-Up player, on which there are no eligibility requirements or restrictions (other than the maximum number allowed - three).

These changes will go into effect for the 2007 competition season.



## MOTION PROPOSED BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

N° :           EC8

Subject :     PLAYERS LICENCES

Author :     Technical Commission

### **Proposal #1: Change deadline for Application Form for Submission of Membership Licences to April 1st. (Administration Regulations)**

Change AR Article 14.04 to read: "*The Federation or Club shall send the Application Form for Submission of Membership Licences, duly signed, to the ESF Licence Administrator no later than **April 1st** in the year of competition. Late submission of the Application Form is subject to assessment of a financial penalty, which amount is determined by the Executive Council of the ESF. No application for licenses shall be accepted after May 1st.*"

Rationale: The player lists for clubs and National Teams are almost invariably finalized by April 1st of each year. Submitting the lists to the ESF sooner enables more thorough verification of compliance with regulations. In addition, this will allow us to provide player lists to all competing clubs/teams prior to the start of competition, which will enable them to "police themselves" and discourage falsification of player eligibility. **Recommendation:** the amount of the fine for late submission should be equal to the entry fee for the competition.

This change will go into effect for the 2007 competition season.

### **Proposal #2: Provide clubs/teams with player lists 30 days prior to start of competition.**

Change CR Article 18.03 to read as follows: "*A copy of each team's Player Licence List shall be e-mailed by the ESF Licence Administrator to every other team participating in the Competition no later than 30 days prior to the start of the Competition. Protests relating to matters of player eligibility must be submitted to the Chair of the Technical Commission no later than **fourteen (14) days** before the start of the Competition.*"

Rationale: Providing the clubs with all player lists at an earlier date enables them to investigate and uncover possible eligibility violations much sooner. This will serve as an additional deterrent to the falsification of player eligibility. Also, it will simplify administration of the Competition by removing the onus for ruling on compliance from the Competition's Chief Technical Commissioner.

This change will go into effect for the 2007 competition season. effect for the 2007 competition season.



## MOTION PROPOSED BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

**N° : EC9**

**Subject : MOTION FOR THE REMOVAL OF AN OFFICER OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

**Author : Finances Commission**

The Executive Council of the ESF, in its meeting of November 18<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> 2006, has by a majority vote of 6 in favour and 1 abstention, issued a motion of non-confidence towards the Treasurer of the ESF in reason of repeated failures and anomalies in the accomplishment of his duties of Treasurer of the ESF and Chairman of the Finances Commission.

The Treasurer of the ESF has addressed the motion by issuing a “statement concerning the vote of no confidence” on December 17<sup>th</sup> 2006.

The Executive Council of the ESF after careful examination of the statement deemed itself not satisfied with the answers and explanations provided and found itself in the obligation, in order to guarantee the good running of the ESF, to implement, by a majority vote of 5 in favor, effected by electronic mail on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> 2007, the procedure of removal of an Officer of the Executive Council as contemplated in article 3.7.3 of the Statutes.

The Executive Council therefore deeply regrets to present to the General Congress the motion hereunder :

The Executive Council requests from the General Congress met in Zagreb the removal of the Treasurer in application of article 3.7.3 of the Statutes, for serious failures in the exercise and performance of his duties of Treasurer as follows :

- a) lack of performance in the exercise of the duties of Treasurer as defined in article 5.3.4 of the Statutes, and especially absence of periodical statements and reports to the Financial Commission and Executive Council.

**Examples:**

- 1 ) As Chairman of the Financial Commission, disregarding repeated requests from the Commission, to allow access to the records by a member nominated by the Commission. Early in 2006 the FC was concerned at the lack of financial information provided and requested that R Van Zetten should visit the Treasurer, with our Auditor in attendance, to receive assurance that our affairs were properly administered and our financial situation was satisfactory. This request was repeatedly ignored and delayed.



**MJ to F Steger, 2 March 2006:**

Fredy:

*Can I please ask for an update for the Finance Commission on the collection of the Accounts Receivable on our Balance Sheet. I understood at Sofia that we had then recovered about E15,000 of the year-end balance, but would like to know of progress since. NOT YET RECEIVED*

*Second, how do we stand with billing this year's amounts for membership and Competition entry and guarantee fees?*

*Thirdly, and here Bob may have to input as well, I want to chase the ISF for the airfares he incurred at last year's umpire Clinic, and need values and copy vouchers to submit the claim. Can either or both of you help: I'm going to an ISF meeting March 17 so should have the info by then please. NOT RECEIVED*

*Lastly, you may remember that I requested that you bring to Sofia the outline you presented at Frankfurt, detailing the various financial functions and their scheduling throughout the year. It was a useful summary of annual activity and I would like the FC members to have a copy each for reference. Thanks in anticipation. NOT YET RECEIVED*

*Regards to all*

*Mike*

**MJ to F Steger, 14 May, 2006:**

Fredy:

*I hope that the past two weeks have enabled you to address the accounts issues we discussed on April 30<sup>th</sup>, summarised in my note of May 4<sup>th</sup>.*

*As we agreed then, I have asked Ruud to find a day on which to visit you, to review progress on the outstanding accounts issues so he can report back to the Financial Commission.*

*He will now contact you to agree a convenient date, and you agreed to ensure that our auditor will also attend.*

*Please acknowledge this message on receipt, to ensure that your e-mail problems are now repaired.*

*Regards*

*Mike*

**MJ to F Steger, 9 June 2006:**

Fredy:

*I have this afternoon left messages on both house message tapes and your mobile to request the two earliest dates you can give Ruud so he can make the important visit required by the Financial Commission. It is imperative this happens before you go on holiday. I hope you have had the time to bring all mates up to date and look forward to Ruud reporting back positively.*

Regards

Mike

**MJ to F Steger: 12 June 2006:**

Fredy:

*You should be aware that I have asked repeatedly for you to supply two dates in the near future when it will be possible for Ruud to visit you and review with you and our Auditor the progress made on Financial matters on behalf of the Commission.*

*Unless I receive those dates by Tuesday June 13 I will ask the Financial Commission to take the next necessary steps. Please do not disregard this.*

Mike

*From Ruud:*

*Fredy,*

*This will be my second year in the ESF. And I never received any figures about our financials. In the Netherlands I am also treasurer and give every quarter our board members facts and figures. How is our balance, what is the forecast, what about payment our suppliers, our volunteers, how was our billing to clubs and are we still going alright in the budget, and so on.*

*And very important: how should other board members react with their portfolio if there is a lack of income or an income which will be there only in months.*

*I keep them informed with schedules, forecasts, spreadsheets, so nobody is surprised when things are not good or in time.*

*To be convinced that the financials are ok in the ESF, I like to see details of our financials, how far we are with our income and expenses, and how our forecast is.*

*The best thing to do so (and for the others) is to make a overall view, which will be standard in the near future and the best information tool for everybody, instead of saying "that everything is okay".*

*Please invite me for a visit soon, than we can make the best information together for all the board members.*

**24 September, 2006: From MJ**

Fredy:

*Now that vacations and the playing season are over, I'd like to organise Ruud's visit as discussed before. He prefers to travel at the end of a week, and needs to know the earliest dates available for you.*

*Please respond to him and me.*

Regards

Mike

5 Oct 2006: From MJ

Fredy:

*Since I wrote to you on September 24<sup>th</sup> regarding the visit by Ruud on behalf of the FC, and having left phone messages at each of your numbers, and a reminder on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, I have received no response. Please let us make clear that this visit needs to take place, and soon enough to allow Ruud to prepare his feedback before we meet with the whole EC in November. We make this last request that you specify what date(s) are convenient for you to meet him and our auditor.*

*Signed: FC Members: Mike Jennings, Ruud van Zetten, Bob Milosavljevic, Yuri Alkalay*

13/10/2006

Fredy,

*From May till now we are asking you to arrange a meeting to get a formal check up in the saison. As a member of the finance committee I was asked to do this. Since May you didn't respond and you made no efforts to meet me. Several times I asked fellow members what to do, but it ended always in the raison that you should make the mentioned appointment. Never the less, nothing came from Switzerland. During a tournament in Praque I should ask more than 5 participants for their entry fee. One paid Gabriel Wage. The rest had paid. Some at the begin of June, some later but at least in time for the tournament in Prague (weeks before). The information which I (we) got was not good or actual. You can imagine that federations don't understand our financial handlings and walk away with a big smile when this subject is mentioned.*

*Let me say in other words: I have only a little faith in your way of doing things. You keep financial information as the bank of Switserland to close to yourself, when we ask about it, you don't react. Please don't let it go sofar that a non confidence issue is coming up during the board meeting in november. Unless you don't matter ofcourse .....*

*R. van Zetten*

**2 ) At the meeting of the Executive Council in November the only financial information provided were the bank balances, with no amounts reported for Accounts Payable or Receivable. There were no Budget / Actual analyses available, so decisions on spending on Development, Umpire expenses, a proposed TC meeting, Web development and ESF apparel could not be made, neither could the EC consider or debate the 2007 Budget. This despite the ealier year-end, requested by the Treasurer and granted by Congress 2006, designed to give more time for the completion of Accounts in good time ahead of Congress 2007 and for proper discussion with the FC and the wider group of member Federations who contributed to the 2005 / 6 process.**

From Patrice Bienfait: Fredy responses, *in red*: 18 November : the morning of the meeting.

Dear Fredy,

For the EC meeting, can you make sure that we receive at least the following financial information :

Situation (balance) of ESF Bank accounts (in Switzerland and Germany)

*Balance Bank account Switzerland as per 30.09.2006: EUR 9'586.99*

*Balance Bank account Germany as per 30.09.2006: EUR 40'345.88*

Accounts payable

*Accounts payable are not yet closed, because several missing important expenses (due 31.10.06). I will send reminders this week-end. In addition, after that, I have to check the provisions for expenses with Bob. All accounts payable are paid this this week.*

Accounts receivable

*Accounts receivable are not yet closed, because of some missing statements about collected money at tournaments. And some credit notes are to establish and to book.*

Estimate of P&L

*Until now, I think that we are +/- in the budget. In tendency better.*

and General Balance

*I'll close the accounts in 2 week. I need about another one week to do all closing bookings (provisions etc.). After that I'm ready to start with the budget process.*

You can send it to me by fax or mail and I will transfer the Documents to the location of the meeting

**b) lack of reaction to requests and demands of Affiliated Federations concerning financial procedures and requirements, thus creating problematic situations for the Federations and their Members.**

**Examples:**

**1) The payment of the additional Team contributions made by participants in Cup competitions have been significantly delayed, despite promises to send the amounts within a month of the end of 2006 Competitions. This prejudices the financial standing of our Club event hosts and makes it less likely for them to undertake such commitments in future.**

*26 August, 2006:*

*Hello Mike*

*The organizers will receive ther EUR 250.—around end of month (we promised around 30 days after the tournament).*

*Kind regards*

*Fredy Steger*

*Fredy:*

*Ditto request for Blagoevgrad: Youri will be there end of week for Closing Ceremony: if there is any money to collect he can do it then.*

*Also, organisers want their E 250 contributions from teams: when do we expect to get the money to them? Can we let them know so they can budget for its arrival?*

*Thanks*

*Mike*

*20 December, 2006*

*Dear Mike,*

*Hope you are well. As the organizers of the ECWCMA2006 we can report that we have had no major injuries next to the usual stiff shoulders.*

*We have not yet received any payment from the ESF and would like to receive the payment as soon as possible*

*Happy holidays and look forward to meet in Haarlem for the European Cup Women A in Haarlem*

*Best regards,*

*Norman*

*Norman Ames*

**2 ) Despite many reminders from the Hungarian Federation their Fees etc were not received in the required form to allow for reclaiming from their Government. Eventually the General Secretary had to make good the situation.**

*From MJ, 2 March 2006, to F Steger:*

*Fredy:*

*I was approached at CEB, Stockholm, by the Hungarian Delegate who said he urgently needed an Invoice / receipt for his 2005 payments: without it he cannot recover the costs from the organization. He said he'd asked several times by e-mail last season, but with no response.*

*Can you please look after this now?*

*Thanks*

*Mike*

*From MJ, 6 April, 2006, to F Steger:*

*Fredy:*

*The message below is self-explanatory and needs an immediate response. This follows TWO notes from me since the FIBS Congress on this issue, including supplying his e-mail address.*

*This is copied to other members of the Financial Commission.*

*Mike*

*-----Original Message-----*

*From: vida péter [<mailto:baseball@chello.hu>]*

*Sent: 05 April 2006 23:09*

*To: J\_Mike\_Jennings@hotmail.com*

*Subject:*

*Dear Mr. Jennings,*

*I am still asking for your help concerning reaching Fredy Steger. The numerous e-mails I have sent him have remained unanswered.*

*We need an invoice about the sum paid during the last year's EC in Prague. I don't think it's a big deal for Fredy, but unable contact him.*

*Thak you for your help in advance.*

*Best regards, Peter Vida*



*European Softball Federation*  
*Fédération Européenne Softball*



## COMMENTS ON MOTIONS

- Motion GBR 1 :** To be presented to Technical/Competitions Congress Committee
- Motion GBR 2 :** To be presented to Technical/Competitions Congress Committee
- Motion GER 1 :** Addressed by a modification of Competitions Regulations
- Motion GER 2 :** To be presented to Technical/Competitions Congress Committee
- Motion GER 3 :** The Executive Council insists on the fact that, whatever is the outcome, sufficient time shall be reserved for purely Softball business to enable it to be properly completed.
- Motion EC1 to EC8 :** To be presented to Technical/Competitions Congress Committee
- Note :** Proposal of new Fees System to be presented to Finances Congress Committee

### **Comments by Legal Commission :**

All motions implying a change in writing of the Regulations subject to re-wording after approval.

New Fees System if approved will mean an amendment to article 2.3.2 of the ESF Statutes