



EUROPEAN SOFTBALL FEDERATION

PRESIDENT'S NOTICE

QUARTER REPORT, ISSUE 3

December 18, 2017

TO: ESF National Federations

Dear friends,

2017 is coming to a close and I would like to thank all of you for all your efforts in promoting, developing and making Softball a top priority in your Country.

WBSC Congress in Botswana:

The WBSC Congress in Botswana provided us with a crucial decision for the future – the approval of the new Statutes. The main question and my main concern was what is the new situation? The answer was very clear, it is the position of the Regional Confederations, which are now described as the Continental Associations. They are now a structural and integral part of the whole organization. The role description of the Continental Associations was the main focus of our proposals to the new Statutes. During the Congress I asked for a meeting with the WBSC Legal Commission in order for them to present to all our Delegates the changes that were to be made based on our recommendations.

I am satisfied that most of our proposals were recognized as correct and logical and were finally recommended by the WBSC Legal Commission for an approval by the Congress. I would like to thank our ESF Legal Commission and EC for the efforts in preparing these recommendations.

The Congress also elected a new leadership of the WBSC Softball Division. If our efforts in the new statutes are considered a success than regarding the elections, we certainly failed. Our plan was to elect at least one European candidate from seven elective positions. Even though we were encouraged by the WBSC leadership, we couldn't form an agreement in Europe. We were divided in the overall concept of representation on the WBSC SD and personal interest seemed to take preference. Other continents, although less organized than Europe, were able to unify their final decisions and elected their officials to the WBSC Board. Europe was inconsistent with their priorities and the result is that I am the only European representative on a 12-member board. Although I plan on being very active, I am sorry to say that the European voice will not be as strong like for example the Americas, who have in total 5 members on the board. I know we are stronger and I know we will overcome our differences and Europe will unify as I will explain later in my review.

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ESCA Camp:

The first ever ESCA Camp took place in Diessen, Netherlands, October [18 – 22](#) and [25 – 29](#). Players and coaches from twelve different European countries stayed at one facility, and they not only trained together, but also attended workshops, and socialized during their free time. The internationality of the training camp was the reason why working together, learning and inspiring each other to grow, was even more beneficial than a regular softball clinic. This was not just a clinic this was a five-day non-stop experience.

I would like to thank Development Commission for creating ESCA, which lead into this incredible experience of the ESCA camp. A huge thanks to all the coaches and instructors headed by Craig Montvidas for the perfect program. Thanks to Communications Director, Helena Novotna for the excellent promotion and thanks to our treasurer, Eddy Van Straelen for the financial arrangement, which was not an easy task.

President's Meetings:

The General Assembly of Association of National Olympic Committees, "ANOC" was held in Prague and I was able to arrange a meeting with WBSC President Riccardo Fraccari and WBSC SG Beng Choo Low and together we all had a very good meeting with our Czech NOC President Jiri Kejval, a future IOC member.

Newly appointed WBSC Softball Division Executive Director Michael Schmidt visited Prague and we spent the day discussing a variety of topics such as WBSC branding and consequences dealing with the Continental Associations, potential structure of the World Championships, Olympic Qualifier, upcoming world events in Europe such as the NPF Tour, Intercontinental Cup and MWC 2019. We also discussed the timing of the world events based on Olympic Games and World Games. It was a very productive meeting and all planned changes will be on the Agenda of the next WBSC SD meeting to be held on the last weekend of January in Rome.

WBSC Europe:

As you were informed in a separate letter, the joint ESF-CEB Commission met on December 2 in Paris and completed the initial objectives set forth for this Commission. I would like to thank our ESF members of joint Commission – Mette Nissen Jakobsen, Youri Alkalay and Ami Baran as well as their counterparts in CEB, Roderick Balk, Marco Mannucci and Petr Dietrich, for their work on this Commission. CEB President Didier Seminet has been a perfect partner in all our deliberations with assistance from Francois Collet, Lars Sundin and Colum Lavery while preparing for the Paris meeting which dealt mainly with the WBSC Europe initial Statutes.

Other and future activities:

The Joint ESF-CEB Marketing Media meeting, held on December 11 in Vienna, has prepared a joint workshop for the Congress in Paris. Communications Director Helena Novotna, attended the meeting and will assist VP John Austin in preparing for the workshop.

The game of softball continuously develops, rules change, habits and emotions come into play. The time has come to refresh our minds utilizing one of our important members, the ESF umpiring family. It is time to unify the "blue view" of the game, time to get a detailed understanding of the new rules, time for discussions on game management and trends. The [Blue Convention](#) will welcome all ESF licensed umpires and will be held on March 9 – 11, 2018 in Prague.

Another future activity is the Player Forum. Some European players already have played in professional leagues throughout the world. In 2016, Britt Vonk played in the NPF for Scrap Yard Dawgs. In 2017, [Veronika Peckova](#) played TPSL for Ceasar Park, and now [Eva Voortman](#) is the first European player to play in Japan's top softball league. She has signed a one-year contract with Ogaki Minamo Softball Club. These are our top tier players, however, many other European players are looking for different clubs, different experiences and their voices should be heard. This is the reason why Daniela Castellani, former elite pitcher of the Italian National Team, is preparing the Project Forum of Players. More information will be provided at the Congress in Paris.



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ESF+CEB Congress in Paris:

The Joint ESF+CEB Congress in Paris is just around the corner. Let me invite you to join us and share with us ideas and be part of the creation of our future. We will have a lot of interesting issues as mentioned like the Marketing Workshop, WBSC Europe, future of our competitions.

One more subject that might be of interest to you and has to do with our pinnacle event, the European Championship Women. After four editions with the full open format, we will bring to the table the restructuring of this event. We have evaluated the current format and VP Petra Arends who has taken the lead on this evaluation process, will bring a new format of the WECh, for discussion at the Congress. This is yet another reason to be there and be part of our great community.

At the end let me wish to all of you Merry Xmas, Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year.

Best regards

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