



EUROPEAN SOFTBALL FEDERATION

PRESIDENT'S NOTICE

QUARTER REPORT, ISSUE 9

September 1, 2019

TO: ESF National Federations

Dear friends,

As usually, I would like to take this opportunity to update you on our activities and operations with the intent to keep you informed of what is being done within the ESF.

European season 2019 overview:

Even though we still have two more ESF events to go this year – U18 Men's Qualifier and European Masters – I would like to give you a quick overview of the European season 2019.

I am very pleased when we have more and more teams entering our ESF competitions. We almost doubled the number of teams at Coed Slowpitch European Championship and I was glad to see that Italy and the Netherlands entered a team for the first time ever. All other competitions had the same number or more participants than the previous year. This gives a solid confirmation of the development and progress of softball in Europe.

However, the increasing number of participants brings difficulties to run these events and involves much higher requirements for organizers and ESF staff. Being realistic and true to our cause, I must say this year has not been excellent from our side and we feel that our level of accomplishment has stagnated or may I say dropped below our normal standards.

We had communication issues with the organizers of the CSPECh in Budapest and MESC in Nettuno. In both locations we almost had to cancel the events. We had some operational inconsistencies including inconsistent decisions, poor communication or no communication at all and this recurred in some of the events. The EC will review this past season carefully and we will have solutions for the next year.

New format of the Women's European Championship:

As we announced at our Congress 2018 in Paris and prior to the WECh in Ostrava the new format of the Women's European Championship will commence at the 2020 WECh edition. Top 8 teams from previous edition (WECh in Ostrava) will be qualified already for the Super round. Remaining entered teams will be drawn into 4 pools. Winners of these pools will be added into the Super round up to 12 teams selected into 2 pools per 6. The Super round will determine the final standing up to the 12th place and the rest of the teams will continue the games from 13th place on.

One of the main reasons as we have expressed in the past is to eliminate as many mercy rule games as possible which are not effective for any of the teams. Another reason is to decrease the number of the games in order to have a suitable event for all participants and for organizers.

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Foreign teams and players in Europe:

While I was in Ostrava, I was approached by many of you who had concerns about national teams using almost all players from the USA and asked if there was a solution with this issue.

I would like to say that a passport is a valid document for approval of nationality. Based on the Olympic Charter those players are eligible to play for such specific national teams. This phenomena is happening in all sports over the entire world and dual passport/citizenship is allowed. You must agree and understand we are not able to take any steps against the articles of Olympic Charter. The only thing that we can do with the intention to develop our sport is to establish standards of national competition, which should be done to be able to enter national team to play ECh. This topic will be discussed at the Congress 2020 in Vilnius.

Another issue is foreign players and foreign teams in Cup competitions. The discussion about Pick Up Players is a never ending story and it is clear that there is no solution which is best for all. However, I think we have found the definition, which is clear, enforceable and effective for the development of our players. In our Cup competitions the main objective has always been to improve European players as is stated in our Statutes. This is also the reason why we have opened our Cups to invite teams from overseas, which was approved by NFs at Congress in Dublin 2015. The foreign teams have a maximum 2 spots and I believe that playing these teams helps our teams in Europe by seeing these teams play and give them self-confidence for future games at the international level. Understandably there is a situation where a European team may finish below the Foreign team and there is some frustration with that , however, as mentioned at the Congress we are looking at the bigger picture and broader perspective with our main objective being the development of European softball and we believe that this helps us to reach that objective including a closer relationship and cooperation between the continents which is another benefit of building prestige of European Softball.

The Men's Super Cup has been running since 2012 with the goal of being the best Club / selection event in the world after ISC. During the event this year in Nettuno, Italy, we evaluated the existing format and conditions with managers of some of the participating teams and we all agreed to continue this event as is. Truthfully, when looking at the massive number of world class players who participate in our event, you realize that it is a World Class Tournament and brings the highest level of men's Fastpitch to Europe. This event assists us in growing the Men's fast pitch throughout Europe which can be seen by the increasing amount of Men's National Teams participating in our European Championships. However, there is a need to make sure that the facilities and venues for this event are at world class levels since we have seen a lower level of infrastructure of the Super Cup Men in the past 2 years.

Europe and WBSC events:

First, I would like to congratulate Italy on their success in being the Team representing Europe in Tokyo 2020. Italy was focused and pursued this goal after winning almost all women's ESF events during the past 2 years.

Europe, after five years again hosted a World Championship. The Men's World Championship came to Europe for the first time ever and the Czech Republic did an excellent job. Many have expressed that this event was the best Men's World Championship ever, and with that Europe gained more prestige. We must continue and host more world class events.

Europe was represented by 7 teams in total at 2 World championships this year. Only one team – the Czech Republic at MWC – progressed to the playoffs. We have to work hard with the goal to always have at least one European team in the playoffs at every World Cup.



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Future activities:

We still have 2 tournaments ahead of us. Four teams will play for two spots at U18 Men's World Cup and it will be the first time where a European tournament will be played in Israel. We finally have been successful with [Masters](#), with 15 teams (8 Men's and 7 Women's) entered for the inaugural event hosted by Spain in Barcelona.

ESCA 3 is called to Diessen since October 23 till October 27. More information about ESCA Training Camp 2019 [here](#),

Finally, a few important meetings are called for the autumn. WBSC Europe Meeting will be held on September 28 in Vilnius. WBSC Congress will be held in Osaka, Japan on November 21. Finally, EC ESF meeting will be held on November 30 and this meeting will evaluate 2019 season and will prepare all sport season 2020.

If you have any questions, suggestions, feel free to contact me anytime.

Best regards,

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