

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING, LAUSANNE, SWITZERLAND 08.02.2014

Present:

Ronald Kramer (NED), (President),
Ivo-Goran Munivrana (CRO), (Deputy President)
Nikolas Endal (CZE), Sonja Grefberg (FIN),
Veli Ozan Cakir (TUR), (Vice-Presidents),
Petr Korbel (CZE), (co-opted member)
Richard Scruton (Secretary General)
Pierre Kass (Deputy Secretary General)

Excused:

Dorte Darfelt (DEN), (Vice-President for Finances),
Heike Ahlert (GER), Roman Markov (RUS), (Vice-Presidents)

Welcome of the President

The President welcomed the Board members and Petr Korbel, Chair of the ETTU Athletes Commission, being a co-opted member of the EB, with no voting rights. Mr Kramer excused Mrs Darfelt who had a ITTF Para TT meeting, Mrs Ahlert (illness) and Mr Markov (family reasons).

1. Adoption of the agenda

Mr Cakir wished to have EC 2016 as a further item on the agenda.
The item was put under any other business.

2. Minutes of the meeting in Bratislava (12.12.2013)

The EB members can give their comments until the 15th of February 2014.

3. Report of President, Deputy President and Vice-Presidents

- Meeting ITTF OPC – Dubai (RK, RS)

The ETTU President is automatically member of the ITTF Olympic Para Commission (OPC). During the meeting in Dubai was held a vote on the qualification system for Rio with the outcome that Continental qualification tournaments will be held so that all European players will have to participate at the qualifying tournament.

The Secretary General was also present in this meeting. He was invited as being the technical delegate in Rio.

He informed that there will be no final world qualification and a further vote during the OPC meeting whether first singles and then team will be played in Rio. Decision: first team event then singles.

- Meeting ITTF DCC – Dubai (RK)

Mr. Kramer took part in the ITTF Development committee meeting. He will, if so requested, send the presentations to the EB. There was no decision taken during those meetings.

- Meeting TMS – Dubai (RK)

Mr Kramer, Mrs Darfelt and Mr Scruton had a meeting with TMS to discuss the ETTU events. They will first look on how to market the 2014 EC in Portugal. TMS needs more information from ETTU side.

- Meeting Asian TTU – Dubai (RK)

Mr Kramer reported about the meeting with the Asian TTU to discuss upon the Euro-Asia event. ETTU promised trying to help Asia to have an event in Asia in 2014. The Euro-Asia event is a nice event but creates a deficit at the European leg. In 2015 ETTU tries to organise it in Europe. Mr Scruton informed that some three weeks ago, ETTU had proposed the 23rd of June and 24th of November 2014 as possible dates for this event.

Mr Kramer will meet Mr Cai Zhenhua in Tokyo to discuss upon the event.

- Meeting Tibhar – Luxembourg (RK)

Mr Kramer reported about the meeting with ETTU's development partner Tibhar on the 6th of February in Luxembourg. According to the contract, some 35 tables are still available for ETTU but Tibhar may be ready to pay an equivalent sum to ETTU. Tibhar wants to organise a Eurokids camp in Saarbrücken during the fourth quarter of 2014.

- Correspondence Paul Schiltz (RK)

The letter from the URC Chairman was postponed to the next meeting due to the heavy agenda.

- Meeting Sportsman Media Group – Frankfurt (NE)

Mr Scruton and Mr Endal met Ms Dönhoff in Frankfurt on the 13th of January regarding contracts. Ms Dönhoff explained what the existing arrangements with ETTU were and she is more interested in TV rights of ECLM. She said that a group of ECL men's clubs had approached her last year to consider a proposal to take the TV rights.

Therefore a telephone conference was held with the sportsman, four club representatives, Mr Kramer, Mr Scruton and Mr Kass on Wednesday 5th of February and the outcome was that the sportsman group is going to make an offer for an agreement for the Champions League marketing rights.

It was agreed that the ECLM needs much more promotion, marketing, television, sponsor and prize money.

Mr Kramer said that the clubs were prior informing ETTU if we will not change anything, they would create something on their own. He explicitly has asked the sportsman group to make a proposal using the knowledge of the clubs.

Mr Scruton added that during the meeting in Frankfurt, they had a talk about the ETTU website and the sportsman group is interested in being ETTU's next website provider.

Mr Munivrana asked to send the sportsman proposal also to the event group.

Mr Scruton will contact Mrs Ahlert as the events group needs a meeting very soon.

- Any other relevant meetings (VPs, RS, PK)

Nil

4. Financial matters:

- Budget 2014, ballot result

The outcome of the vote:

30 votes in favour, 3 abstentions and 1 against

The 2014 budget has been adopted.

- Event contracts, EVTC ESP, EYC ITA, EC POR

All contracts are prepared and ready to be signed.

The organisers of the 2015 EVC and 2015 EC will be contacted in order to finalise those contracts as well.

DTTB is still negotiating with 3 different cities.

- Outstanding payments, POL, AND

The ETTU EB lifted the ban imposed towards Bosnia Herzegovina because they paid all outstanding amounts towards ETTU.

Poland paid their outstandings (2011 EC levy) according to the payment plan.

Andorra was already banned, they will receive a last reminder saying if they don't pay, the congress in Portugal will have to decide on a possible suspension.

- Triumph

ETTU had correspondence with DTTB who informed about bankruptcy of Triumph and after consultation with lawyers ETTU decided to no more spend any money and time with it.

- IR01, reimbursement travel expenses, 1.7

The EB members were requested to send their reimbursement claims within a month after the expenses occurred.

- Suppliers, i.a. Gerflor

ETTU received a letter from Gerflor in which they are withdrawing from the gentlemen's agreement with ETTU. They have no more used floor on stock to provide to the events' organisers.

Mr Munivrana said that it is no obligation for ETTU to provide the flooring to the organisers.

ETTU will check where it can help in providing with the flooring.
ETTU thanked Gerflor for their support in the past.

- Any other financial business

The President reported on behalf of the absent Vice-President for Finances.
The EB thanked the federations that they have agreed to the budget.
Mrs Darfelt, in her new position as VPF has much more to work than she has thought and therefore a part of it will be done by the secretariat.
She wished ITTF to pay their development funds to ETTU in quarters like they proposed.
Mrs Darfelt was thanking everybody involved in this work.

European Games in Baku 2015

ETTU received a letter from the EOC; as ETTU will have senior participants in the event, ETTU receives a base contribution and an additional one because ETTU will have the winners of Baku 2015 directly qualified for Rio.

The test event (Top 16) for Baku 2015 will be held during the first week in February 2015.

Ordinary ranking points will be added for the tournament but ETTU has to inform ITTF about it.

11:00 – 11.15 hrs – tea and coffee break

5. Development:

- Development programme 2014-2016 (IGM)

Mr Munivrana wished the EB to accept or at least come close to the decision. He pointed out that he has much more work than thought. The event group is taking care of the event organisation. A common opinion of the advisory coaches group is to take care of the calendar. At youth level there are too many events so the young players have no time for practice, this should be considered while issuing the calendar, in close co-operation with the ITTF calendar group and coaches should also be contacted because they know what the real problem regarding calendar is. The EB members received prior to the meeting Mr Munivrana's report from Frankfurt. He underlined important aspects from his letter; we should be aware that it is impossible to do it without the help and work of the coaches. The advisory group is consisted of the 6 top European coaches and they are all focused only on the best players. Main focus of ETTU is the development of young players, to raise their playing level. Europe cannot wait several years for an outcome but must act immediately. Part of the programme is focused on the players' development being under 21 years of age. ETTU's partner should be the national Associations. As ETTU is faced with financial problems, it could not propose the nomination of 1 development leader for a full time job. The idea of the advisory group is to have 2 coaches to deal on a daily basis and paid part time. The best possible program according to ETTU's financial situation will be created. Support will not only be provided to some selected associations but for all European players who could promise that Europe could raise the game.

The advisory coaches group proposed those guidelines to the EB even though, Mr Munivrana pointed out that the indicated deadlines are very strict and difficult to be fulfilled, and unfortunately ETTU cannot waste more time. Nearly all coaches expressed their willingness to contribute to the program. A clear job description must be proposed by the group and approved by the EB.

Mr Korbelt asked if it is necessary for so many coaches and proposed a further coach. Mrs Grefberg agreed to the proposal but said that most important is to know how much money could be spent. Mr Korbelt wished not to copy the Asians as he wanted the Europeans to keep playing their own way and told that in the 80's the Europeans were even a bit stronger than them. European players played with more tactics. Europe should come back to common work on how to beat the Asians again and he thought that the proposal is good.

Mrs Grefberg proposed to put more effort to the players being below 15 years of age. Mr Munivrana replied that this is the main focus. Mr Endal supported the proposal. Mr Kramer had remarks on the whole set up of the program and on how to organise it. He said the difficulty is how to organise it efficiently so that the national Associations, their trainers and coaches feel themselves supported by this program. Coaches can get better and then their players too because knowledge is exchanged on the highest level. His idea was to have a kind of European level saying if you want to be part of this program, you get information and assistance, there will be a coach coming every year or every 2 years to give a course for the coaches and players. He spoke about supporting the young players but also considering those being over 21 years of age being still able to improve. He pointed out that players need more practice than matches and said the most difficult thing is how to break through that players will not go to all money making events but take more time for training to become better. ETTU can support the national coaches that they share their knowledge. Also the Asians do think that for their market and for the global ITTF level it would be good to have also better European players, unfortunately it is not the goal for individual players.

Mr Kramer suggests it might help to make contracts with the parents, clubs and national federations stating that for players from 12 till 21 years, this is the program you're going to follow.

Mrs Grefberg said that the talented players from the smaller countries needs to have wealthy parents to get their support to be able to continue as those associations have not enough money. She continued that at the age of 17 or 18 they have to decide whether to continue with table tennis or going to study and to be able to decide for the first option, they need to be already on the top.

Mr Korbelt said that many parents tell their children to change to a more popular sport where they can earn more money. He told that ETTU could create a better commercial picture showing that the best TT players can earn much money as well.

Mr Cakir said that Turkish players start already at the age of 14 or 15 to think about continuing practising or going to study and having less practice. He said that the problem is related to the national policies.

Each national Association should nominate 1 responsible person being the contact to ETTU regarding the European development project.

Mr Munivrana said the EB should define the goal of ETTU and not the goal of the single players. He proposed to the board to engage somebody who takes care about it on a fulltime basis. He agreed with Mr Korbelt that the group of 6 is maybe too big but explained in detail why those 6 coaches are needed. He said that the job of the EB is to give guidelines, confidence and control and wished not to take care of players over 21, to take care of everybody is impossible.

Mr Kramer said as there exists no European selection, ETTU will have to start with a camp where all national member Associations can send their best players and then a selection of the best ones could be done. He wished trying not to neglect the players over 21.

Mr Munivrana replied that the system of pre selection is described in the letter. Mr Scruton said that he liked it very much and questioned what the financial resources ETTU will have for it.

Mr Kramer said that the general idea is acceptable and thanked Mr Munivrana for his efforts done. Everybody was in favour of the content. ETTU will have to find the means for the proper execution of this program and the decision relates to the money available. Mr Kramer stated that the EB first needs to say what is needed and then to find the money for it. The discussion about it should be done during the Tokyo congress so people can give their input and the final decision, also financial, should be taken at the congress in Lisbon in September. ETTU will have to ask each country to appoint a national ETTU development coordinator / coach.

Mrs Grefberg pointed out the need to give an approximate amount available for the program that they could prepare their plan accordingly.

The paid coaches should be coaching and managing.

The first 3 points of the proposal were agreed by the EB and the program can start.

- **Eurokids 2014**

Mr Scruton will email the report from Mr Ostermann to the EB. He went to the Eurokids camp in Luxembourg and thought that the offer from Tibhar to have a training camp in Saarbrücken should be inserted into the new development program. He informed that the gap between the players at Eurokids is too big.

Mr Munivrana said that this information should be delivered to the group and ETTU should not interfere.

Mr Kramer proposed this camp to be used for the players' selection as anyway a gathering camp will be needed.

Mr Scruton needed to know the future of Eurokids because there will be questions to him after his return in the office. He needs to contact the head coach. The name of Eurokids was discussed and will be changed.

13:00-14:00 lunch break

6. Report of Secretary General:

- Board of Justice (Chartres decision, vacancies)

Mr Scruton informed about an appeal from the French club of Chartres against the club competition official to the board of justice. The BoJ rejected their appeal. The club did not appeal to it.

The BoJ has not the needed 5 members at the moment, new elections will be held during the congress in Portugal.

- Staff (RP, MN, AA, contracts, service agreements)

Mr Scruton has been looking at the service agreements and will be meeting the press officer and marketing assistant.

He had regular communication with the competition manager, mostly about Baku 2015 and other inspection visits.

- EB attendance at ECL, ETTU Cup Finals

Mr Cakir will be the ETTU representative at ECL women second final match in Istanbul.

Mr. Kramer will be the ETTU representative at the ECL men second final match in Russia (will be in Orenburg or Verkhnyaya Pyshma).

Both ETTU Cup second finals were not yet known in which country they will be played and therefore no ETTU representative could be nominated yet.

- SVK player Bai He eligibility

Eligibility for the Slovakian player could not be granted because the condition of 5 years uninterrupted stay was not given.

- Extraordinary Congress, Tokyo JPN (Thursday 1st May), structure of meeting

The agenda will consist of:

A half yearly presidential report

Financial report

Presentation development program with the opportunity to break into small groups of delegates for discussion

Resolution from Romania: they asked about a debate about international eligibility. There will be no vote on it but a discussion.

Discussion about future of EC with the opportunity to break into small groups of delegates for discussion

The congress will start at 900 and end at 1600.

Mr Kramer will explain the change of character of the extraordinary congress.

The EB members were requested not to wait for long to book their flights.

- Dates of future EB meetings

Dates of the EB meetings in Tokyo were fixed to:

29th and 31st April

Dates of the EB meeting in Riva del Garda had been fixed to:

18th or 19th of July

- Rio 2016 Olympic Games

Item dealt with before.

- Calendar planning

Mr Munivrana informed that the advisory coaches group strongly recommended ETTU not to have any ETTU events planned during at least 3 weeks before major Championships.

- Review of regulations

The secretariat will make some propositions later this year.

7. Events:

- 2014 YOGQ – Hodonin CZE

Number of registrations: 21 boys and 18 girls. Regulations were based on 24 to 40 participants, therefore the playing system had to be adapted.

- 2014 EVTC – Almeria ESP, dates, entry fee

The competition manager had made an inspection visit in Almeria 1 week prior to this meeting and sent his report to the EB members. The organisers asked the dates to be pulled back by 1 day. ETTU had no other option than to agree. The EB agreed to 195 EUR entry fee per team.

- 2014 EYC – Riva del Garda ITA, i.a. use of celluloid ball

The 2014 EYC will be played with celluloid balls.

- 2014 EC – Lisbon POR, regulations, ballot result

The outcome of the vote:
21 votes in favour, 3 abstentions, 11 against
The 2014 EC regulations were adopted.

The Portuguese women's team may request to compete in the Championships division.

- 2014 Youth Top 10 – Tours FRA

Inspection visit will be done in March by the competition manager.

- 2014 Euro Asia – CHN

The players will be informed about the potential dates as soon as agreed with the Asians.

- 2015 Top 12/Europe Cup

Mr Scruton and Mr Plese will, together with the events group take care about the regulations. The best 15 teams will have entry possibility. The EB agreed to the following system of qualification: teams positioned 1-14 from EC Portugal plus number 17 (as promoted team).

The NOC decides which 2 out of the 3 nominated players will compete in the singles event.

- 2015 EVC – Tampere, FIN

The competition manager made an inspection visit in Tampere.

- 2015 EC – GER

Nil

- 2015 European Games – Baku AZE, CM, test event, qualification, competition format, schedule, ranking points

The test event should be played on 4 tables. Participation of 16 male and 16 female players. The events group needs to be involved. The EB prefer “Top Europe” as new name for the event.

Positions 13-16 will not be played.

- 2015 European Olympic Qualification

The planning will begin soon.

Date for event to be discussed in the next meeting.

- 2015 Euro Asia – feasibility of hosting in Europe

Item postponed

- 2015 Youth Top 10

Mr Scruton will open the bid soon.

- Other events

Mr Cakir informed about the new sport minister in Turkey. Turkey wants to bid for the EC 2016. They prefer organising a team event but will be prepared also for team and individual events.

tea and coffee break

8. Marketing:

- TMS

Mr Kramer had hoped to have a talk with Mr Thunström. They had a meeting in Dubai to see how to combine the Portuguese and the German EC in 1 package. TMS needs more information. Later on ETTU will have a talk with the sportsman group.

TMS is interested in ECL only if the competition will totally change.

The sportsman group is more interested in getting the marketing rights of the ECL.

- Sportsman Media Group

Item already discussed.

- Vitesse

The contract with Vitesse came to its end except the maintenance of the ETTU website is still done by them for a 4 month period.

- Website

Mr Scruton will check for a new website provider.

9. Athletes Commission:

Mr Korbelt informed that he had some E-mail exchange with his commission. He brought following items to the board:

- World ranking system: if a player loses a match against a lower ranked player, the player should be counted zero points instead of minus points for the world ranking, this in order that players are not afraid to compete. It is already reduced to half of the previous minus points.
As this is an ITTF matter, Mr Korbelt was asked to contact the ITTF AC.
- Different levels of hospitality: Players being not so wealthy would like to have cheaper hotels and more choice.
- Colours on Tshirts in doubles event: 2 players building up a doubles pair being from different associations and having a contract with different brands, have to play with two different brands of shirts. The colour of those shirts can have sometimes a small difference and referees do not always accept that. Mr Scruton will report back at the next meeting.
- Pro Tour: 8 doubles are seeded and they want to go up to 16 seeded doubles. As this is an ITTF matter, Mr Korbelt was asked to contact the ITTF AC.

Mr Kramer thanked Mr Korbelt for his comments.

10. Paralympic Table Tennis:

- 2015 European Championships – DEN

The next Para TT EC will be played in Denmark. ETTU has a Para TT Committee and Ms Barsai is the Chair. Soon the Para TT EC is under ETTU's responsibility which means a further event for ETTU.

- Rio 2016 Paralympic Games

The qualification has been agreed and visible on the ITTF website.

11. Any other business:

Mr Munivvana informed that players' lounge and umpires' lounge exists during ETTU events but nothing is foreseen for the coaches. The EB was in favour to reinstall a coaches' lounge at the EC.

Mr Scruton's main priority is given to marketing. He will be supporting the CM with all events. He will deal with staff matters and pointed out that later this year a third person in the office will be needed.

Mr Kass is dealing with financial matters in association with Mr Scruton and Mrs Darfelt. He is furthermore in charge of the club cup competition matters.

The secretariat will plan all arrangements for the congress and EB meetings in Tokyo.

Mr Kramer pointed out that the ITTF BoD consists of 8 European members whereof one of these eight was always the Deputy President.

The Continental President is ex officio a member. The EB was in favour to have the ETTU Deputy President in that board.

The President thanked all and closed the meeting.
