

UMPIRES AND REFEREES COMMITTEE

REPORT TO THE 20100 CONGRESS in Ostrava

Committee composition 2008/09 and 2009/10

The Executive Board appointed the following members and functions in St Petersburg: Chairman: Paul Schiltz LUX. Deputy chairman: Gerhard Schnabel GER. Full members: Bernard Barbier FRA, Andreas Georgiou CYP, Petr Bohumsky CZE, Pedrag Colovic MKD, Federico Lineros ESP. Corresponding members: Svetozar Davidovic SRB, Josef Golan SVK, Mick Strode ENG, Nicolas Tereshkin RUS, Gaj Vidmar SVN.

Terms of reference

According to the General regulation B.4.6.1, the Umpire and Referees Committee is in charge of matters concerning the appointment of referees and umpires in events and the improvement of the European referees and umpires, and its chairman regularly reports on the Committee's work and activities.

Meetings, discussions, projects and action plan

During the EB meeting of September 18, the chairman submitted the following points to EB in order to get a principle decision which may orientate the reflections and work of ETTU URC: Coaches and match officials, Email and Web Site, Application of ITTF programs inside ETTU, Improvement of the standard of officiating of the European umpires, Racket control, Umpire teams at European League matches, Duty and rights of referees, ETTU competition manager and Tournament director, Competition regulations.

The following members of the Committee met on September 19, 2009 during the European Championships in Stuttgart: Paul Schiltz, Gerhard Schnabel, Mick Strode, Andreas Georgiu, Petr Bohumsky (Federico Lineros unfortunately was not directed to the right room). The detailed minutes of the discussions and conclusions are published under URC at the ETTU web site.

The chairman met the ETTU President twice (September 2009 and February 2010) and submitted to him the reflections of the Committee and listened to his comments. He had also one meeting with ETTU deputy chairman and general secretary in Trier (May 2010) about match officials.

In June 2010 the chairman, on behalf of the referee, proceeded to the draw of the team event of the European Youth Championships and attended the meeting of all teams participating to the European Champions league (both meetings in Luxembourg). Through its chairman and vice-chairman, the committee cooperates regularly with the ETTU staff.

The chairman participated actively to the most interesting ETTU coaches' seminar in Zagreb (November 2009) and submitted a well received contribution including a longer debate about "Match conduct and coaches' expectations".

The chairman and vice-chairman had an informal meeting in Linz (April 2010) with Cindy Leung and Werner Thury about referee restructure in ITTF; an ETTU document was worked out and a written advice was elaborated: the ETTU URC especially welcomes the idea of national and regional referees, but would like to first have a compulsory continuous formation program and an assessment scheme of the referees' performance before considering a higher level for referees (as BB for umpires).

During the World Championships (Moscow May 2010) the chairman had several meetings with the chairman of ITTF URC discussing all common and separate matters in a fruitful way: the base was a letter addressed to ITTF URC about important and outstanding questions related especially to situations or problems inside ETTU, among them the most important item of more referees in the north-eastern part of Europe, and also in the south eastern part of Europe.

The chairman met some umpires, referees and Committee members in Berlin (March 2010) and Düsseldorf (February 2010)

Achievements and Topics discussed inside ETTU – URC

- Propositions submitted to ETTU – EB (see next paragraph)
- Appointment of referee teams for Super Cup, European Youth Championships, European Mixed Championships, European Championships, ETTU Top 12 and Top 10, Euro-Asia event etc, In general the proposition and appointments for referees went well and on time. Unfortunately some by the national associations agreed nominations were finally cancelled, which created trouble because it was not easy or even impossible to have a last-minute replacement.
- Agreement of umpire crew for the European Super Cup, for the European Youth Championships and for the European Top 12. The ETTU procedure on this behalf must become harmonized: the different systems of recruitment or appointment cannot go on. Clear responsibilities must be agreed and published and observed by all.
- Following the good example of the DTTB making best efforts for a consistent (and finally very successful) match officiating at the European Championships in Stuttgart, the ETTU URC, together with referee Schnabel, organized a seminar for the local umpires and the day before for all other umpires at Istanbul. Reportedly it was highly appreciated, but of doubtful success because of questionable organizing circumstances. The ETTU URC would like to have such preparation work done for all European Championships: the players deserve a consistently fair and good umpiring.
- A list of the email addresses of national associations and URC is published at the ETTU URC web page. Unfortunately several associations never replied to the numerous letters of ETTU URC. They are not listed and no direct communication is possible. Others never ask to correct their data published.
- A list of active ETTU referees is published at the ETTU URC web page. Unfortunately several associations never replied to the numerous letters of ETTU URC. Their referees are not listed, no direct communication is possible and no appointments of their referees is possible at ETTU events.
- A document about how ETTU URC proceeds for the appointment of referees has been worked out and is published on the ETTU URC web page.
- A referee report has been implemented and a feed back paper about match officials' has been used a first time at the EYC in Istanbul. Lessons will be learnt about the final draft and from the feed back.

Written propositions have been submitted or will be to the EB about:

- Travelling costs, Allowances and Hospitality for referees and umpires. A final decision must be taken. The ETTU URC propositions do not increase any expense on charge of ETTU, even reduce them by introducing a stand-by deputy-referee for "lighter" events, but shall create a more correct allowance for the European League, but also a fair system for the costs to be supported by each club.
- Referee/Umpire teams for latest stages of the European League and Cup matches shall include one IR or BB umpire. The proposals must be agreed and implemented.
- Agreement with ITTF policies (IR formation and assessment, Blue badge programme, Training for IU) also at events controlled by ETTU and of selection criteria for referees and umpires at ITTF events (as long as ETTU has not developed own criteria).
- Racket control at ETTU events. The present situation is not satisfying, because of individualized approaches and no consistency. As the ITTF policy clearly intends to have umpires educated and doing the job (for financial and skill reasons), the question shall be asked again: will this job be included to ETTU URC or will ETTU EB appoint one supervisor.

The action plan for the next year(s) includes:

- Lists of active umpires in cooperation with NAs
- Collection of data of appointments of European referees and umpires at highly ranked events in the last 4 to 10 years in order to establish transparent rules for their selection also at ITTF events
- Performance criteria and assessment of referee/umpire teams at European League/Cup matches.
- Electronic Information Bulletin
- Improving changes of the ETTU Regulations related to competitions, referees and umpires
- Further and continuous improvement of quality of umpiring and refereeing in Europe; agreement about blue badge evaluations
- Promotion of recruitment and training of young umpires
- Advertisements on umpire and referee uniforms.
- Document about shared duties of referees, ETTU competition manager and organizing tournament director
- Sanctions for obviously bad behaviour or performance of match officials.

In order to achieve its targets, ETTU-URC urgently needs

- An email address receiving and sending emails, all archived automatically, and being accessed by all members of ETTU-URC.
- Technical, logistic and human-power help from outside ETTU – URC for the management of a web site, a mailbox, various tasks of the activity plan.
- More members willing to take up one of the concrete tasks and jobs of the ETTU URC

The action plan described in my first report to the Congress 2009 was too optimistic: several jobs, reflections and preparation works are done, more need to be achieved. I hope that the ETTU URC crew of the next 2 years will provide the best possible service to our sport.