



EUROPEAN SOFTBALL FEDERATION

PRESIDENT'S NOTICE

QUARTER REPORT, ISSUE 4

March 14, 2018

TO: ESF National Federations

Dear friends,

I would like to take this opportunity to update you on our activities and operations on a quarterly basis with the intention to keep you informed of what is being done within the ESF.

ESF / CEB Congress in Paris:

The 2018 ESF General Congress took place in Paris, France, February 9 - 10. I would like to thank the delegates from the 28 affiliated national federations who participated at the General Congress and reviewed softball activities in Europe, as well as being part of planning our next season. All documents regarding the Congress are on the Congress section of the ESF website [here](#) with more details [here](#).

I would like to point out a few of the most important issues that came up at the Congress in Paris. A very important step for our future was the signing of the contract with OTT to implement the joint platform for streaming of all softball and baseball in Europe. This initiative will enhance the popularity and visibility of both softball and baseball throughout Europe with both live and on-demand broadcasts and video content available for fans. I personally am satisfied taking such a step to promote our sport. As you know the ESF has been streaming ESF events since 2014 and this joint platform is the step to move another level up / more about OTT platform [here](#). Another contract that was signed was with Teammate, who became a partner for the official ESF balls for 2019 – 2020 seasons.

WBSC Europe:

The most important and historical event at the Congress was establishing WBSC Europe. Delegates of 38 baseball, softball, and combined National European Federations unanimously approved the creation of the WBSC Europe at the special occasion of an annual congress of the two merging organizations – European Softball Federation (ESF) and Confederation of European Baseball (CEB). We all need to realize that we are a part of a large family. In the WBSC family, everyone has his own place, Regional federations and National federations. We are here to spread the knowledge of our sport to every corner of our continent. That's our goal. That's why we're here. That's why WBSC Europe – read more [here](#).

A lot of hard work is now ahead of us due to the fact, that the modus operandi of the implementation of the WBSC Europe will be the potential model used by the other continents. Our legal staff will be finalizing all legal issues with WBSC Legal Commission. The meeting of both European leaders, softball and baseball, will be held with the WBSC later this month. The main topics will be the definition of the roles of each bodies, conditions for being equally together.

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Competitions:

The final list of participants of the 2018 ESF competitions has been completed. Every year, on March 1st, the final entries for European championships and cups are confirmed. European Cup for U-13 players – EMRYT – is the only competition for which national or club teams can register until April 15. Record numbers of participating teams were broken in most of this year's competitions. The growth of softball in Europe is undeniable – more [here](#). The Inspection of the venue including game scheduling will be done by March and April.

ESF Director of Umpires:

At the Post Congress ESF Executive Board meeting it was decided who will be the new ESF Director of Umpires. Carolien Stadhouders, one of the most experienced softball umpires in Europe, was appointed to the position. She will be in charge of Umpires-in-Chief (UIC) development and assignments. One of her responsibilities will be managing exchange programs with other regional confederations. She will also be the liaison with the WBSC – more [here](#).

Blue Convention:

More than 70 umpires from all over Europe attended the 2nd Blue Convention held in Prague on March 9 – 11. The main topic of 2nd edition was Game Management. Bob Stanton, WBSC SD Director of Umpires, discussed new rules and ways of managing and leading games. We also were privy to the views from another continent, brought up by Geneviève Gaudreau from Canada. Ice Hockey referee Jan Hribik, who has recently returned from the Olympics, talked about this topic. Master of the Blue Convention, newly appointed UIC Development Raoul Machelet including Carolien Stadhouders and Mike Jennings prepared an intensive, but excellent program.

The special part of the Blue Convention was Saturday's Gala Dinner Blue Awards. I was proud to see the recognition of our European umpires at the world stage, when Gianluca Magnani and Galip Sönmez were appointed "behind the plate" at the Grand Final of World Cups over the past four years. Another two awards were presented to Rita Ceuppens and Franck Lautier for significant commitment to the sport as the most ESF competitions served over the past four years – more [here](#).

Future activities:

I will be attending the WBSC Meeting to be held in Paris on March 23 – 24. The Meeting will focus on completing the formats and schedules of the World Cups, which will have consequences to the ESF Schedule of European Championships as the qualifiers for World Cups. As mentioned before we will also be discussing the WBSC Europe structure.

USSSA Pride, one of the top teams of the National Pro Fastpitch (NPF, the professional league of women's fastpitch softball in the USA), will tour Europe thanks to a joint effort by WBSC and USSSA (United States Specialty Sport Association). The tour has been named the European Pro Softball Series and will see USSSA Pride play exhibition games against the National Teams of 3 European Power Houses: Italy, the Czech Republic and the Netherlands. The tour will end (Friday, 4 May) in France, where the USSSA Pride will hold a clinic at the Softball Academy of France in Boulouris, Côte d'Azur – more [here](#).

The Triple Ball will be held in Sofia during the last week of April as part of celebration of 30 years of Bulgarian Softball federation. ESF Executive Board will attend this celebration as the part of strategy of rotation of EB meetings in several countries to get a better understanding of needs of individual National Federations.

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

Best regards,



Gabriel Waage
ESF President