

WBSC Europe Softball Commission Meeting

Crowne Plaza Hotel, Belgrade, Serbia

Friday February 10, 2023, 10 am

Attendance

Gabriel WAAGE, WBSC Europe Softball Vice President (GW)
John Michael JENNINGS, WBSC Europe Softball Commission Member (MJ)
Cornelia CHWOJKA, WBSC Europe Softball Commission Member (CC)
Petra ČIZMIĆ POKRAJAC, WBSC Europe Softball Commission Member (PCP)
Sophie KHIDASHELI, WBSC Europe Softball Commission Member (SK)
Konstis LIAROMMATIS, WBSC Europe Softball Commission Member (KL)
Nacho PARDO, WBSC Europe Softball Director of Umpires (NP)
Kruno KARIN, WBSC Europe President (KK)
Eddy VAN STRAELEN, WBSC Europe Treasurer (EvS)
Youri ALKALAY, WBSC Europe Member at Large (YA)
Kristian PÄLVIÄ, WBSC Europe Member at Large (KP)
Mette NISSEN JAKOBSEN, WBSC Europe Member at Large (MNJ)
Martina LACKNER-KEIL, WBSC Europe Athlete Representative (MLK)

Riccardo FRACCARI, WBSC President (RF)
Craig CRESS, WBSC Softball Division Chairman (CrC)
Michael SCHMIDT, WBSC Executive Director (MS)
Marco IENNA, WBSC Chief Operations Officer (MI)

Notes by Elda GHILARDI (EG)

1. Welcome

- Welcome by WBSC Europe Vice-President

GW: Welcome all. Thank you for being here.

- Welcome by WBSC SD Chairman Craig Cress and WBSC Executive Director Michael Schmidt

CC: Thank you for your dedication to softball.

MS: thank you for the invitation.

Clarification of sanctioning of international games between NFs from the same continent. This is the authority of the Continental Association. Forms + informing WBSC. Ranking points can be allocated.

2. Minutes

- Minutes from SE Meeting on October 27 – see attachment
- Outcome from the Minutes

APPROVED

a) CR changes for 2023, other technical issues for 2023

GW: Competitions 2023 will be presented by CC at softball window.
2023-2026: explanation

3. SE Competitions 2023 – 2026

- Softball Europe Competitions 2023 – 2026 – see attachment (will be updated by February 9 as there are vacancies pertaining to hosting events 2023)

- a) Review newly received bids
- b) Lack of organizers – future steps
- c) EMRYT and MASTERS 2023 – 2025
- d) Availability of officials for 2023
- e) Final entries after February 1 – see attachment
- f) Bidding Procedure and consequences to CR
- g) Large European championships (16 teams and over) – solving the scheduling

GW: We are facing difficulties with hosts for our tournaments

MJ: We demand a lot from host

CC: maybe increasing the contribution fee could be an idea

MJ: reduce the requirements such as a 2 man umpire system in slowpitch

GW: EMRYT and Masters, development events. EMRYT, FIBS, WBSC Europe reached an agreement to have EMRYT in Collecchio, Italy, for three more years (until 2025).

MNJ: For the Masters we are working on it. Spanish NF cannot support the event, therefore we are working with local clubs in the Barcelona area.

CC: Southern Europe is good for Masters.

GW: update on the bids from the Technical commission

CC: Fields in Dublin (IRL), London (GBR) and Pamplona (ESP) have not been seen. Dublin and Pamplona are fields that need to be built.

NP: I believe in ESP the field will be built. But we need three fields.

CC: Women's competition bids need three fields + a fourth one. Junior competitions are becoming bigger and bigger. Organizers need to be aware that the events are becoming big.

GW: We have an unprecedented situation: more bids for three years in advance, coed slowpitch ECh 2026 for CSPECh and MSPECh. The procedure will be decided here and seek approval at the congress.

MJ: indicative vote from NFs should be important but TC should have last word.

KP: I agree: the ones who play shall decide.

GW: decided for vote.

Presentation for hosts and vote for the last participants.

KK: Thank you for your hard work. I am proud of softball. I loved being at the softball events, Barcelona was a great experience, joyful. Changes might happen, one umbrella one look. We need to unify. Baseball has 12 tournaments in 11 countries, softball might think to set qualifiers, instead of open tournaments. We need more presence in the continent.

KK left - EvS entered

GW: big tournaments for funding, for experience, limits though.

MS: European quality is lower and it shows by the results at WC which are not the brightest.

MJ: If we were to host more events, we would need more weeks and also more officials.

CC: We need to face schedules with many games, and many officials. NFs work cannot be stopped but we need teams to play more. Need probably A and B pools but there should be possibility to go up and down (maybe 2 up and 2 down). There are three levels in Europe.

MJ: Hosting small events is very difficult.

Sophie: Do a survey for NFs to understand the issues and then we can make a strategic plan.

PCP: Some clubs are interested in hosting but NF might not collaborate.

GW: Club events and championships are different.

GW: The quality of the beginners are getting better but good teams are not competitive on a world level. We need to define a target. At the beginning we wanted more teams. We achieved it. Now maybe we should work on quality. I think NFs should work on playing more games internationally.

KP: 1) we need top teams to play more internationally 2) we need middle level teams to better.

MNJ: we need to understand NFs positions.

MLK: I agree NFs should invest in top level games, either travelling or having teams travelling to Europe, even helped by WBSC Europe. Middle level teams did not have chances in the top8 system, as just one day to define top12. Implementing to youth could work, but adults in the middle teams don't have much competitiveness. Top- and low-level teams love the system. Not middle teams.

EvS: we should have one responsible person for each level groups and establish communication. Help NFs and let them understand what to work on.

NP: WECh 2022 was exhausting for umpires. Three games by day in summer is difficult.

MJ: finding TCs is also not easy for some events. Also finding scorers is not always easy.

MS: you also need to think about fans, set a product.

GW: main target for this year.

Bidding procedures

GW: can we have bids for SP 2 years in advance.

RF and MI walked in

4. Umpires activities

- Blue Convention
- SE Fast pitch Clinic 2023, regional clinics
- Assignments, cooperation with WBSC

Umpires

NP: Blue convention, clinics and certification, exchange program with Canada.

Need to increase the umpires and UiCs.

5. Finance

- Final report 2022
- How to work in 2023

Finance

GW: during softball window we will officially close ESF.

6. Development

- ESCA Camp 2023
- Regional competitions, events

Development

RF: Empower Continental Association. Development money will be allocated to continent rather than to NFs directly from WBSC.

Following WBSC Developing rules and report to WBSC. Next WBSC EB will define the amounts.

PCP: ESCA training camp came back in 2022. 60 players and coaches.

Promotion was difficult. We need bigger ESCA Training camp to have bigger funds.

NFs need to participate even as national teams.

EvS: ESCA training camp was supposed to be self supporting. Also, NF not paying fee to become ESCA and NFCA membership. Maybe it's not understood.

PCP: difficult to work with NFs, not cooperative to grow if NFs do not share to their members.

KP: ESCA training satellite camp is good idea with shared events.

RF and MI left

PCP: Euroleague same teams, similar to 2022. For 2024 GER club might join.

GW: also Nordic countries are working on it.

PCP: NFCA convention some coaches are available to share knowledge with Europe. Working on it.

7. SE Window session

- SE Window session – program
- Responsibilities at this meeting