

Executive Board

Minutes

of the Executive Board Meeting of the International Table Tennis Federation, held on Friday 26th May 2000 at the Gran Hotel Renacimiento, Seville, Spain, at 14:30.

1 Roll Call

Present

Adham Sharara	President and CEO
Pierre Albertini	Deputy President
George Segun	Executive Vice-President
Nils Bergström	Executive Vice-President
Yang Shuan	Executive Vice-President
Han Sang Kook	Executive Vice-President (Finance)
M. C. Chowhan	Executive Vice-President (Asia)
Chérif Hajem	Executive Vice-President (Africa)
Miguel Delgado	Executive Vice-President (Latin America)
Neil Harwood	Executive Vice-President (Oceania)

Invited to participate

Claude Bergeret	Chairman Athletes' Commission
Colin Clemett	Chairman Rules Committee
André Damman	Chairman Ranking Committee
Rufford Harrison	Chairman Equipment Committee
Jean-François Kahn	Chairman Sports Science Committee
Yao Zhenxu	Chairman Technical Committee

In attendance

Eve Williams	Administration Director
Anders Thunström	Marketing Director
Jordi Serra	Technical Director
Lilamani de Soysa	Administrative and Project Co-ordinator
Christian Veronèse	ITTF Marketing Manager for Europe
Alan Ransome	Observer
Li Tiefeng	Interpreter

Excused

Stefano Bosi	Executive Vice-President (Europe)
Bruce Burton	Executive Vice-President (North America)
Yuri Posevin	Chairman Standing Orders Committee
Arne Madsen	Chairman Media Committee
Peter Jensen	ITTF Media & Communications Manager

2 President's opening remarks

Mr. Adham Sharara opened the session by announcing that the next EB meeting would take place in Sydney and subsequently a full meeting of the EB will be held in Yokohama in January 2001 to coincide with the Pro Tour Final. He then referred to the issues regarding the new 40mm ball. He reported that the new service rule was also being tried. He also announced that 5 out of the 6 Continental Development plans had already been signed.

Mr. Sharara thanked Mr. Han Sang Kook who presented him with a gift of a nameplate.

3 Minutes of previous meeting

3.1 Approval of minutes (Kuala Lumpur)

The Minutes of the two Executive Board Meetings held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on the 19th of February 2000 and on the 25th of February 2000, were signed by the President as a true record of the Meetings.

3.2 Business arising (not covered by Agenda)

No further business except that covered by the Agenda.

4 Olympic Games

4.1 Progress report

Mr. Neil Harwood reported that preparations were going very well, the stadium was being painted and the lights installed. The result system was being tested in Madrid the following week. Racket control was a concern and it was necessary to adopt very clear procedures.

4.2 Qualifications update

Mr. Jordi Serra reported that the tournament in Seville was the last step that would finalise the qualification process for Sydney. All existing problems concerning nationality of directly qualified players had been solved.

4.3 Accreditation and Accommodation

Mr. Jordi Serra also reported that accreditation and accommodation procedures were well under way and all matters arising should be resolved within the next two weeks.

Mr. Adham Sharara asked Mr. Jordi Serra to prepare responsibilities for all the staff that would be present in Sydney.

5 Olympic Revenue

Mr. Adham Sharara announced the good news that Olympic revenue was more substantial than expected. It was decided that the targeted 2.25 million would be put in the reserve fund as planned and the excess would be distributed proportionally among the Continents. This would provide the Continental federations with an additional US\$130,000 to be added to the previously approved amounts (Annex - 1)

6 Anti-Doping

6.1 Conclusion of Eindhoven case

Mr. Jean-François Kahn explained in detail why the doping case concerning a Chinese table tennis player had taken over eight months to be resolved. Both laboratories concerned came to the same result that the Carbon Isotope Ratio value indicated that the Epitestosterone was from natural production. The player had been advised to see a doctor and he would be checked regularly. Dr. Kahn said that he was preparing new regulations, which could be included in the ITTF Technical leaflet. Mr. Adham Sharara thanked the Chinese TTA for its full collaboration in this matter.

6.2 Anti-Doping Code amendment (OOCT)

Mr. Jean-François Kahn gave a detailed report of the latest anti-doping code amendment concerning "Out Of Competition Testing" (OOCT). It was reported that WADA would conduct OOCT in accordance with each IF's regulations. OOCT could be conducted by the ITTF, WADA or any organisation which has the authorisation of the ITTF or WADA, in any country at any time on any selected players from the top 200 men and women players on the ranking list. The banned substances would be those described in the current IOC list.

6.3 World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) update

It was reported that on March 22, 2000 WADA appointed the Drug-Free Sport Consortium (DFSC) to assist it in the delivery of OOCT. The DFSC consists of the Australian Sports Drug Agency (ASDA), the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES) and the Norwegian Confederations for Sports (NIF). In order to provide world-wide reach to all athletes the DFSC has partnered with International Doping Tests and Management (IDTM). WADA's intention is to control 2500 athletes before the Olympic Games, including 50 table tennis players without cost to the ITTF.

7 World Championships

7.1 2000 Kuala Lumpur Financial outcome

Mr. Nils Bergström reported that he had received a detailed report from Kuala Lumpur about the entire WTTC, which would be distributed to the EB. The ITTF had settled all its dues and the Kuala Lumpur Organising Committee made approximately US\$ 350,000 profit.

9.2 Counting system experiments

Ms. Claude Bergeret reported that the Italian and French Associations had agreed to organise their Pro Tour events with the new counting system according to ITTF directives. The Athletes' Commission proposed the following: 0-11 points, best of 7 sets, change every five services and change sides every 2 sets. For comparison, it was decided that at the Italian Open, players would change sides after every set and at the French Open after every two sets. The Pongus Cup (Denmark) organisers were also interested to try the new system. At the Japan Open games would be played normally but the last set, in case of a 2-2 tie, would be played up to 11 points. The EB requested that a member of the Athletes' Commission goes to both events and makes a report.

9.3 New service rule experiments

On Mr. Colin Clemett's proposal, it was decided to have the new service rule experiments at the Polish and Swedish Pro Tour events. Mr. Anders Thunström was requested to inform the organisers and ask them to insert the new service rule text in the Polish and Swedish entry forms.

9.4 2001 Plan and Management Group

Mr. Adham Sharara said that he would ask the Pro Tour Management Group to meet this summer, probably in Vienna, in order to study the current Pro Tour directives and prepare a document reshaping the Pro Tour for 2001 and beyond. It would also be necessary to group the smaller events and make them more attractive.

10 Men's and Women's World Club Championships

Mr. Yang Shuan gave a brief update on the Men's and Women's World Club Championships. It was reported that the Women's event had been very successful. The 8 teams present had created an exciting competition, which had been shown live on Chinese television. Mr. Anders Thunström reported that ESPN would also broadcast both Club Championships as well as the Asian Championships.

The Men's Club Championship was scheduled to take place in Tangshan, China from the 8-11th of June 2000. 5 European, 5 Asian, 1 African and 1 Latin American team would be participating. There would be live broadcasting by CCTV. Mr. Yang Shuan also informed the EB that a meeting of the Umpires and Referees Task Force would be held during this event.

11 Television coverage

11.1 Pro Tour

Mr. Anders Thunström reported that the ITTF was in the process of finalising two deals, which should increase its finances. "IEC in Sports" (Swedish Company) would buy television rights in Europe and in Latin America except Brazil. IEC would see to it that television coverage was perfectly done at all Pro Tour events and cover editing costs. A second deal was being negotiated at the moment with Pathé Sports, France. In Asia, ESPN was well in place but it was necessary to increase television coverage by soliciting other companies as well.

11.2 World Championships

Mr. Anders Thunström reported that sales had been very good and the ITTF had reached its target and the figures were satisfactory. The split championship was very advantageous from a television point of view. CCTV, China, alone had broadcast approximately 56 hours of Eindhoven and Kuala Lumpur and claimed that there had been more than one hundred million viewers watching the Kuala Lumpur finals. ESPN had also broadcast 50 to 60 hours. NHK will be the host broadcaster for Osaka, which would guarantee quality production.

11.3 Champions League

Mr. Anders Thunström said that live television coverage by Eurosport had been very good. 8 matches had been covered live as well as repeats. However, he said that the situation in Europe was not an easy one, as live broadcasting of table tennis did not obtain the viewership desired.

11.4 Other

New TV agreements were being explored and will be reported in due time.

12 Development Plan

12.1 Continental Agreements

Mr. Jordi Serra was glad to announce that 5 out of 6 Continental agreements had now been signed. All the agreements included equipment assistance, education and training, a development officer and ITTF training centres and they would be reviewed on a yearly basis. The agreement for North America would be initiated for 2001 according to the timelines of the plan.

7.2 2001 Osaka update

It was reported that Mr. Nils Bergström would be going to Osaka in June after the World Club Championship in China and a progress report would be made in due time.

7.3 Bids for 2003 and 2004

Mr. Adham Sharara reported that several countries had requested the bid document for WTTC 2003 (Brazil, Czech Republic, France, Israel, Kazakhstan, Senegal, Singapore) and 2004 (Brazil, Czech Republic, Germany, India, Israel, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Qatar, Singapore, Yugoslavia). It was said that the city of Changchun was also interested in holding a WTTC and Switzerland was interested in 2005. The deadline for applications is 1st October 2000.

7.4 Bid process and timelines

Mr. Adham Sharara reminded the EB that a selection committee would have to be formed which would receive the bids and make a recommendation to the EC for final selection. The General Meeting in Osaka would choose the successful candidate, by vote if necessary (if more than one candidate were presented by the EC). All bids for 2003 should be received by 1st October 2000, the selection process would take place from October to December and a final report would be submitted to the EC by the 15th of January. All bids for 2004 should be received by 1st December 2000. A final report would be submitted by April and both 2003 and 2004 could be approved at the Osaka AGM.

7.5 WTTC Selection Committee

The WTTC selection committee was formed as follows:

Nils Bergström (Chairman), George Segun, Yuri Posevin, Neil Harwood, Claude Diethelm, Alan Ransome and Jordi Serra.

7.6 Team competition system for 2001

Mr. Yao Zhenxu explained the document distributed to the EB comprising two proposals, which he said were simpler systems and easier to understand. Mr. Jordi Serra said that an interesting and comprehensive system had also been proposed by Mr. Graeme Ireland, which should be taken into consideration. It was decided that the three proposals together with a covering letter explaining the advantages and disadvantages of the systems would be sent to Council members as well as all National Associations asking for their opinion. The system for Osaka would be decided at the EB meeting in Sydney.

8 Men's and Women's World Cup

Mr. Yang Shuan reported that preparations for the Men's World Cup were well under way with IMG as the promoter. The event would be held in Yangzhou, close to Shanghai, from the 12th to the 15th of October 2000. It would be the first Men's World Cup to use the 40-mm balls. He said however that a sponsor for the Women's World Cup had still not been found and for this reason dates and venues could not be fixed. Mr. Adham Sharara thanked the CTTA for its efforts.

At this time the meeting was adjourned at 17:48. The meeting resumed at 09:00 on Friday 27 May 2000 with the President of the Spanish Federation, Mr. Manuel Núñez Pérez, welcoming the EB and wishing them a successful meeting in Seville. Mr. Adham Sharara thanked the Spanish Association for its hospitality and said he was looking forward to the official opening of the Table Tennis Centre in Seville.

9 Pro Tour

9.1 2000 Events and Finals

Mr. Anders Thunström gave a brief update on the 2000 Pro Tour programme reporting that two very successful events had already taken place, the Croatian Open and the China Open. He said that title sponsorship for the Grand Final had been confirmed with the Japanese company "Kenshoen". He also reported that the equipment contract with Tamasu had been renewed for three more years. He said that the Czech Open may have to be cancelled but would be replaced by the new Danish Open.

Mr. Adham Sharara said he was pleased to see that in five years the Pro Tour had reached the targeted standard. Sponsorship and TV had helped immensely to improve the image and the technical aspects were well controlled. However, he expressed concern over the attitude of the players who still did not seem to understand the "professional" role that they had to play. The many cancellations, withdrawals in the middle of a match or not showing up were detrimental to the image of the sport from a television point of view.

12.2 Women development programme (Deng Yaping)

Mr. Adham Sharara reported that there would be additional funding for this programme and that he would discuss with Ms. Anita de Frantz of the IOC to ask her for her views. In the meantime, the African Table Tennis Association was holding women's camp followed by a tournament, hosted by Tunisia, and Ms. Deng Yaping had accepted to be the Ambassador and head coach for this event. She would be seconded by the African Development Officer, Mr. Babatunde Obisanya.

13 International Training Centres

13.1 Seville

Mr. Jordi Serra announced that a new training hall would be opened in Seville the following day within the premises of the University "Pablo de Olavide". He said that a training camp had been held for the players attending the Qualification tournament and that two more camps conducted by Stellan Bengtsson would be held before the Portuguese Youth Open and the French and Italian Open.

13.2 Cairo

Mr. Jordi Serra reported that Mr. Roman Plece had been hired last November as coach of the training centre in Cairo. In Kuala Lumpur an international plan had been made and Mr. Plece had already made a trip to South Africa.

13.3 Brazil (new proposal)

Mr. Jordi Serra also reported that two more training centres were being planned. Several applications had been received, the best being the one from Brazil for Latin America.

14 ITTF President's Open Forum and official meetings

14.1 ASOIF

Mr. Adham Sharara gave a brief report of the ASOIF meeting he had attended in Lausanne. ASOIF now had a new President, Mr. Denis Oswald and ASOIF headquarters were moving to Lausanne. Under the new leadership the atmosphere had changed and the President's of IFs were able to express their views more freely. Mr. Sharara said that he would try and attend as many ASOIF meetings as possible.

14.2 ETTU (Bremen)

Mr. Adham Sharara said that he had had several meetings with the ETTU in Bremen regarding calendar problems, television coverage and the development plan. He said all official correspondence with the ETTU would be done in writing in order to avoid the many misunderstandings that seemed to have occurred.

14.3 ATTU (General meeting)

Mr. Adham Sharara said that he had attended the opening of the ATTU General Meeting and said he was happy about the very positive relationship that existed between the ITTF and ATTU.

14.4 European players training camps

It was reported that Ms. Claude Bergeret was organising two "President's Open Forum" sessions with the European players, one in Luxembourg and another in Heidelberg. The sessions would last 1 to 1 1/2 hours and the players would have the opportunity to ask questions.

14.5 Qatar (Association and press)

Mr. Adham Sharara reported that Qatar had organised an Open Forum for their officers and the press. Ten different newspapers and television had attended.

14.6 Italy (Provincial and regional representatives)

Mr. Adham Sharara said that he had conducted a very successful Open Forum in Italy, during the opening of the training centre in Terni.

15 Report on IOC Conference on Women and Sport

Ms. Claude Bergeret commented on the report on the IOC Conference on Women and Sport, which had been distributed beforehand, insisting on the importance of considering the IOC recommendation of at least 10% women in decision-making positions in international or national sports organisations.

16 Calendar and dates

The dates for the WTTC:

- 2003 - 7 days between the 19th and 30th of May
- 2004 - 7 or 8 days between the 15th of April and the 15th of May

It was reported that the Calendar Panel would very soon put out the dates for the next quadrennial calendar. Mr. Anders Thunström said that the Pro Tour calendar for the next 4 years would be ready by this summer, co-ordinated by Ms. Etsuko Enami in Canada under the direction of Ms. Judit Faragó. Mr. Alan Ransome said that with the yearly WTTC it was necessary to balance the calendar in a more equitable manner in order to avoid a very heavy first half of the year.

17 ITTF new Web sites

17.1 Worldsport.com

Mr. Adham Sharara said that the agreement with Worldsport had not been signed yet, as there were still some matters to clarify. However, the ITTF would be receiving the guaranteed US \$ 60,000 a year. In addition the ITTF is negotiating a yearly US \$ 40,000 agreement with Sportal for the ITTF Pro Tour website.

Mr. Christian Veronèse gave a detailed update of the new Worldsport websites, which could now be reached through www.tabletennis.worldsport.com and www.worldsport.org. He asked the EB to make their suggestions to improve the websites. He also explained his idea of electing a "Player of the Month" by implementing an online vote from January 2001. He also said that by the end of the year a document sharing tool would be available on the website, describing it as a huge secure library where an authorised person or group could enter and work on documents and send them to a member or the entire group.

17.2 Sportal

Mr. Christian Veronèse reported that the ITTF Pro Tour website could be reached through www.ittfprotour.com by the beginning of August where all previous updated results would also be available. Mr. Adham Sharara reported that the ATTU would like to be connected to the website. Mr. Christian Veronèse had proposed to Sportal Asia to manage the website for the ATTU on a cost-sharing basis. The proposal was added to the original ITTF contract and an answer from Sportal Asia was expected soon.

Mr. Christian Veronèse also gave a brief demonstration of the database he was developing for the ITTF.

18 Equipment

18.1 40 mm ball progress report

Mr. Rufford Harrison reported that more than 40 brands of new 40 mm balls had already been tested. He said that it had taken several years of development to bring the 38 mm ball to the quality it has today so the 40 mm ball will also take time and it was only natural if minor quality problems were experienced during this first year. The preliminary tests were done on balls, probably hand picked by the manufacturers; therefore it was also necessary to wait for the results of random tests which would be done later on.

18.2 Reduction in number of authorised racket coverings

Mr. Rufford Harrison reported that the Equipment Committee, as instructed by Council, had been working on this particular problem. He explained that there were several ways of reducing the number of authorised racket coverings, for example by putting an upper limit on certain properties of the rubber, resilience, rebound or elasticity but the difficult task was to find ways for a referee to control the rubber. It would also be possible to limit the types of rubbers that a manufacturer could produce and further charge a much higher approval fee. Mr. Adham Sharara advised him to consider the higher approval fee as an immediate solution and to continue to develop some measurable qualities that could be judged by a referee.

18.3 Racket testing procedures (pre- or post- match)

Following a lengthy discussion it was decided that, in Sydney, the majority of racket tests would be conducted after the match. The players would be selected completely at random by the referee and the players would have the option, from the quarterfinal stage, to have their racket tested before the match. If the racket is found to be illegal he/she could change rackets and it will be further tested after the match. If the racket were then found illegal the player would be disqualified. The procedure would be written clearly and precisely and provided to all participants and carefully explained to all delegates and referees in Sydney.

Mr. Neil Harwood distributed a document prepared by Mr. Noel Shorter who proposed a solution for eliminating regluing of table tennis rackets and getting rid of speed glue. Mr. Rufford Harrison said that by Osaka the Equipment Committee would have found a method of eliminating speed glues and would make a proposal to that effect.

19 ITTF new Constitution

Mr. Adham Sharara gave a brief progress report concerning the new Constitution and said that it would be lighter and easier to use. He was awaiting news from the lawyers concerning the obligations and flexibility of certain items to be reconsidered. The draft document would be sent to all National Associations for their input before adoption in Osaka.

20 Annual General Meetings

20.1 The next Annual General Meeting will take place in Osaka, 26 April 2001.

20.2 2002 – (Croatia?)

It was reported that the President has had discussions with the Croatian Association to hold the 2002 AGM during, or before, the European Championships in Croatia. It would be given due consideration once the official letter of invitation is received.

21 75th Anniversary – 2001

21.1 Progress report

Mr. Nils Bergström reported that he had met Mr. Zdenko Uzorinac whose book, *The Legends of Table Tennis*, was being published by the ITTF as part of the 75th Anniversary celebration activities. He said he was happy with the way the publication was progressing. Each Continent had also been asked to provide a historical description of each Continent to be added to the publication. Mr. Adham Sharara said that the JTTA was planning to invite all former Japanese World Champions to Osaka. Another idea was the possibility of having an exhibition of table tennis artefacts similar to the exhibitions staged at the World Championships in Dortmund (1989) and Chiba (1991).

21.2 Gurney collection and exhibition

Mr. Adham Sharara reported that Mr. Gurney wanted to exhibit his collection in Osaka. Mr. Gurney had also suggested donating it to the ITTF. Mr. Sharara said it could be a permanent exhibition housed close to Heathrow. Mr. Alan Ransome would try to find a suitable location.

Mr. Nils Bergström suggested that the Pro Tour could be used to celebrate the 75th anniversary and proposed the creation of a special logo.

22 Media and Communications Manager

Mr. Adham Sharara informed the EB that Mr. Peter Jensen, the new Media and Communications Manager could not be present in Seville. Mr. Sharara reported that the Media Manager in Osaka was a very experienced person but spoke only Japanese. To avoid language problems the JTTA was also hiring Mr. Christian Heyerdhal on a cost-shared basis with the ITTF to act as liaison with the ITTF and the foreign press. Mr. Peter Jensen will be in touch with him in due time.

23 Future meetings

The next EB meeting will be held in Sydney during the Olympic Games. The following meeting will be held in Yokohama between the 11 and 14 of January 2001.

24 Any Other Business

- Ms. Eve Williams reported that the EC confirmed Mr. Henrik Petersen would be the Technical Delegate to the 2000 University table tennis Championships in China. The Chairmen of the Technical Committee and Rules Committee would nominate a suitable person as Technical Delegate for the 2001 Universiade also to be held in China.
- Mr. André Damman reported that once again withdrawals had created numerous problems with the schedule at the European Championships. Mr. Adham Sharara stated that all entries received after the deadline and applications without fees would be rejected in Osaka and that the rule would be implemented very strictly.
- Mr. Neil Harwood informed the EB that the draw for Sydney would take place on the 14th of September 10:30 a.m.
- Mr. Yao Zhenxu pointed out that the PAC should be included in the new handbook.
- Mr. Miguel Delgado thanked the Chinese Association for the equipment it was sending to Latin America and Africa.

25 Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 16:30.

CONTINENTAL ALLOCATION		1996-1999	2000-2003		
	NOC	434,000	610,000	% increase	
Africa*	36	99,980	129,140	38	29.17%
Asia	40	109,884	141,129	42	28.43%
Europe	46	124,739	156,114	47	25.15%
Latin America**	18	55,415	111,158	32	100.59%
North America	3	18,278	24,241	3	32.63%
Oceania	6	25,705	48,218	11	87.58%
Total		434,000	610,000		

*Central Africa included

** Suriname and Bolivia included

2000-2003 Distribution		Split equally	% members	Total
		15%	85%	
Total amount		91,500	518,500	610,000
Africa*	38	15,250	113,890	129,140
Asia	42	15,250	125,879	141,129
Europe	47	15,250	140,864	156,114
Latin America**	32	15,250	95,908	111,158
North America	3	15,250	8,991	24,241
Oceania	11	15,250	32,968	48,218
Total		91,500	518,500	610,000

1996-1999 Distribution		Split equally	% members	Total
		15%	85%	
Total amount		65,100	368,900	434,000
Africa (36)		10,850	89,130	99,980
Asia (40)		10,850	99,034	109,884
Europe (46)		10,850	113,889	124,739
Latin America (18)		10,850	44,565	55,415
North America (3)		10,850	7,428	18,278
Oceania (6)		10,850	14,855	25,705
Total (149)		65,100	368,900	434,000