

Executive Board

Minutes

of the Executive Board Meeting of the International Table Tennis Federation, held on Friday 12th January 2001 at the Yokohama Grand Inter Continental Hotel, Yokohama, Japan, at 09:00 a.m.

1. Roll Call

Present

Adham Sharara
Pierre Albertini
George Segun
Nils Bergström
Yang Shuan
Han Sang Kook

President
Deputy President
Executive Vice-President
Executive Vice-President
Executive Vice-President
Executive Vice-President (Finance)

M. C. Chowhan
Stefano Bosi
Bruce Burton
Chérif Hajem
Neil Harwood

Continental Vice-President (Asia)
Continental Vice-President (Europe)
Continental Vice-President (North America)
Continental Vice-President (Africa)
Continental Vice-President (Oceania)

Invited to participate

Claude Bergeret
Colin Clemett
André Damman
Rufford Harrison
Jean-François Kahn
Arne Madsen
Yuri Posevin
Yao Zhenxu

Chairwoman Athletes' Commission
Chairman Rules Committee
Chairman Ranking Committee
Chairman Equipment Committee
Chairman Sports Science Committee
Chairman Media Committee
Chairman Standing Orders Committee
Chairman Technical Committee

In attendance

Zlatko Cordas
Lilamani de Soysa
Etsuko Enami
Peter Jensen
Li Tiefeng
Jordi Serra
Anders Thunström
Christian Véronèse

Competition Manager
Administrative and Project Co-ordinator
Office Manager and Assistant to the President
Media & Communications Manager
Interpreter
Executive Director
Marketing Director
Marketing Manager

Excused

Miguel Delgado
Yuri Posevin

Continental Vice-President (Latin America)
Chairman Standing Orders Committee (excused during the morning session)

2 President's opening remarks

Mr. Adham Sharara welcomed the Board members to Yokohama and thanked the Japan Table Tennis Association for its kind hospitality. Mr. Sharara requested all members to submit forthwith a list of the meetings they wished to hold in Osaka.

Mr. Sharara announced that Mr. Hugo Urchetti of Switzerland had been awarded the Olympic Order.

3. Approval of Agenda

The Agenda was approved as presented with the addition of the following item:

17.1 Reports from Committee Chairmen

4. Minutes

4.1 Approval of previous Minutes (September 2000, Sydney)

Mr. Rufford Harrison referred to item 5.6 of the previous Minutes saying that he agreed with Mr. Pierre Albertini's preoccupations about the VIP lounge at the Olympic Games. Mr. Adham Sharara said that recommendations had been made in the report to the IOC to improve the location, the accreditation and services provided by the VIP lounge at the Olympic Games.

The Minutes of the meetings held on the 16th of September 2000 in Sydney, Australia, were signed by the President as a true record of the meetings.

4.2 Business arising from the Minutes (not covered by Agenda)

No other business than that covered by the Agenda.

5. Hans Giesecke : « Umpires & Referees » Task Force Report

Mr. Hans Giesecke thanked the President for inviting him to Yokohama to present the final report of the Umpires & Referees Task Force. The report was the outcome of one year of work in answer to a mandate from the Executive Board to rethink the Rules Committee and to create a new Umpires and Referees Committee. It was decided to accept the report as presented and put forward all the proposals for consideration by the AGM. The recommended Constitutional changes, if accepted by the AGM, would be included in the New Constitution.

6. Athletes' Commission

6.1 Counting system report and proposal (Osaka)

Mrs. Claude Bergeret explained in detail the experiment carried out at the French Open Championship in Toulouse (1 – 5 November 2000) and thanked all those who had helped her to do so. The results showed that the majority were in favour of shortening the number of points in one game without necessarily shortening the length of the match. However, if the match went up to 11 points, it was also necessary to study how often the service should change. The Athletes' Commission thought it was necessary to have more experiments before making a definite proposal to the AGM. It was agreed that an 11-point game was the

direction that should be taken but additional experiments would be needed. The item was referred to the Executive Committee meeting in March where a decision would be made about the proposal to be made in Osaka based on the 11-point principle with a subsequent implementation date after further experimentation. Mrs. Claude Bergeret said that the Slovenian Open had been asked to experiment with the tie-break system but an answer had not been received so far. The Pongus Cup (Denmark) would be played with service change after every three points. Mr. Yao Zhenxu said that the Women's World Cup could be used for testing the point system at team events and Mr. Arne Madsen said that the Danish Open was also available for an experiment. Mr. Adham Sharara thanked Mrs. Claude Bergeret for the good work.

6.2 Olympic Games « fill-up quota » proposal

Mrs. Claude Bergeret explained the motivation behind the proposal from the Athletes' Commission, which stated that: *in order to respect the Continental quota, if a qualified player is not able to take part in the Olympic Games for any reason then the next player from the same Continent should fill the vacancy. In case this Continent is not able to fill the vacancy, then it shall be filled by the first reserve from the World Olympic Qualification.*

Mr. Adham Sharara said that the proposal should be accepted as presented with the attachment of a clause stipulating that the IOC must guarantee that if a player enters the Continental Qualification and wins he/she must be allowed to participate in the Games. Mr. Jordi Serra pointed out that this system of replacement should be used until the deadline date for NOCs to submit entries to the Organising Committee. After this date and till the day before the draw, the same system used in Sydney should be followed.

7. New service Rule update (proposal for Osaka)

Mr. Colin Clemett gave an update on the experiment carried out in Barcelona and commented on his draft proposition for a new service law. Everyone agreed with the concept, that the receiver should be able to see the ball at all times. It was decided that a proposition would be made to the AGM based on new wording to be proposed by Mr. Colin Clemett.

8. Olympic Games

8.1 Reports submitted

Mr. Adham Sharara said that all the reports requested by the IOC had been submitted and hopefully all the recommendations would be implemented in Athens.

8.2 Olympic Commission decisions

Mr. Adham Sharara explained that the Olympic Commission meeting scheduled for the next day was only a strategic one and not for making decisions. All decisions would be made in Osaka.

8.3 Mixed doubles update

Mr. Adham Sharara explained the situation regarding the mixed doubles at the Olympic Games saying that a detailed request had been submitted to the IOC

after discussion with Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch and Mr. Gilbert Felli. Three new sports had been confirmed to the Olympic Games, triathlon, taekwondo and softball while 14 new applications had been rejected. The table tennis mixed doubles event was still under consideration. He said that the ITTF had to make sure that the addition of the mixed doubles did not mean additional days, players, matches or officials. He said the IOC would be taking a decision sometime during the course of April 2001.

8.4 Athens update

Mr. Jordi Serra reported that the Sports Director for Athens had been appointed and the first schedule for the construction of the new venue had been received. Construction work would begin in April 2001 and end in February 2003. The Competition Manager for the table tennis event was Mr. Georgios Seliniotakis.

9. World Championships

9.1 Osaka update and inspection visits

Mr. Nils Bergström reported that he had visited Osaka twice and would be going again in a few days accompanied by three players. He said that the facilities and hospitality were excellent and the organisers well prepared. There were 3 playing halls, walking distance from each other, the main hall containing 6,000 seats. Breakfast and dinner would be served at the hotels and lunch in a special catering building in the proximity of the halls. However, there were still some issues to be settled such as the VIP lounge which only contained 18 seats. The facilities for the AGM, a special conference centre, were also excellent.

9.2 Meetings at Osaka Championships

Mr. Adham Sharara requested that the form, which had been prepared with meeting schedules, should be completed by Committee Chairmen and handed in forthwith to Ms. Etsuko Enami.

9.3 2003 & 2004 Bids and process

It was decided that both candidates Brazil and France, if they met the minimum requirements, would be put forward to the AGM for a final decision. The two Associations would have the opportunity, on the 25th of April in the morning, to present their bids to all the National Associations present. For 2004, Brazil, China and Qatar had presented bids. Mr. Nils Bergström had already visited France and would be visiting Brazil shortly. Qatar would also have to be inspected. China had not decided on the exact location. Shanghai was one of the cities proposed. Mr. Nils Bergström who had already been to Shanghai would not need to go again but if it were another city it would have to be inspected. The Executive Committee in March would decide, after receiving input from the selection committee, whether to put forward all 3 bids or only two to the AGM. Mr. Adham Sharara said that he was happy that there was such keen competition to organise the World Championship.

9.4 Team Playing System 2004+

Mr. Adham Sharara informed the Executive Board that the Technical Committee would be requested, after Osaka, to develop a completely new system of play for 2004 (team events) and after.

9.5 North-South Korea update

Mr. Adham Sharara said that a formal decision to present a joint team had not been taken yet and the deadline for North Korea to make such a decision was the 22nd of February. He said that the Executive Board would be kept updated regularly. Mr. André Damman said that in case a joint team was presented, the Ranking Committee would have to decide in which position they would play. He said that he would propose the same position as South Korea. If North Korea entered alone a new position would have to be found for them.

9.6 World Junior Championships

Mr. Adham Sharara explained that the ITTF had received a proposal from the Indian Federation to host a World Junior Championship. Before it would be decided to hold such an event it would also be important to make sure that there would be organisers for the event every year. Therefore, the item was referred to the AGM where other National Associations would be given the opportunity to bid. Mr. M. C. Chowhan further confirmed that India was very interested in holding this event and that the best times would be September 2002 or February 2003.

10. Research and Development

10.1 International Junior circuit

Mr. Sharara asked the Executive Board to think of ways to create a world junior circuit, which would include the junior events already in existence.

10.2 Youth (U-20) events in Pro Tour

Mr. Adham Sharara said that the Pro Tour in 2001 would include an additional event, a youth event or a ranking tournament. But as of 2002, it would have to be a youth event. This item would be discussed in detail at the Pro Tour Management Group (PTMG) meeting in two days time. It was decided to inform the PTMG that the Executive Board preferred the Under 21 age group for youth events.

10.3 Development Plans (2001, 2002-2004)

Mr. Jordi Serra said that the draft Continental development plans for 2001 were ready and that he would be discussing them in Yokohama with the Continental Vice-Presidents.

10.4 Development Manager position

Mr. Adham Sharara explained that Mr. Glenn Tepper had made a proposal for this position where he would be operating from Australia. He would in the meantime train 5 coaches who would take over from him in Oceania. It was decided to offer the position on a trial basis (8-10 months) to Mr. Glenn Tepper. It

was also decided to organise a seminar for the current Development Officers with Mr. Tepper in Osaka.

10.5 Development Officers

Mr. Adham Sharara said that it was now necessary to hire more development officers in Africa. Mr. Sharara said that the new ITTF Development Officer would try to train officers for Africa and Latin America in order to improve the development of table tennis in those Continents. He said that the Latin American Development Officer was doing very good work. He said it would be a possibility to have several Cuban coaches working in Latin America as development officers.

10.6 Agreement with Research Centre in Barcelona

Mr. George Segun who had visited the CAR (High performance and Research centre) in Barcelona said that he had signed the final co-operation agreement. He said the facilities there were very good and staff highly qualified. Mr. Adham Sharara asked the Board members to give any research ideas they had to Mr. Jordi Serra who would submit them to the Centre.

10.7 Long reach table tennis research project

Mr. George Segun said that work in South Africa would begin within the week and results could be expected by the end of February. The same parameters would be given to the Centre in Barcelona, which would enable the comparison of results.

10.8 Continental Olympic Grants

Mr. Jordi Serra said that the Olympic money had been received and the Continents could be paid their allocation for 2000 soon. He said that the IOC was expecting reports about the use of this money in the different Continents and asked the Continental Vice-Presidents to submit such a report to him.

11. Structure

11.1 Head Office transfer

Mr. Adham Sharara explained that Mr. Nils Bergström had spent a lot of time sorting the archives. He said that some of the equipment from the Hastings office had been given to the English Association, to some schools and charities. The transfer, he said, had been relatively smooth and that the staff at Hastings had co-operated very well. He said he had visited Hastings twice, together with Mr. Jordi Serra, also to inspect and dispatch the necessary material to Lausanne. As Hastings was not in operation anymore, he requested all communications to be sent to the Lausanne Office from now on. He expressed some disappointment with some tasks that were not completed in Hastings by the end of the year.

11.2 Professional staff update

Mr. Adham Sharara gave a brief update on the staff. Mr. Peter Jensen who had been hired in June 2000 has been very busy at all ITTF events. An evaluation of his work will be done shortly. Mr. Peter Jensen was working with Jean-Jacques Hubermann and Mr. Tim Gautreau on the database. Mr. Sharara said that Mr.

Jensen should be more involved in educational aspects and teach organisers of events how to set up and deal with the media. The Executive Committee had decided at its meeting the day before to formalise the contract with Mr. Christian Véronèse on a full-time employee basis. The contracts of Jordi Serra, Anders Thunström and Zlatko Cordas had been renewed. The Administrative and Project Co-ordinator's post would come up for evaluation at the end of April. Ms. Etsuko Enami had reorganised the Ottawa office and was of great help with all contacts with Osaka and Yokohama. A new Administrative Assistant, Ms. Roumiana de Siebenthal, had been hired recently in Lausanne. The Database Manager, Mr. Tim Gautreau, who was operating from Ottawa on a 4-day a week basis started on 15 October 2000. Mr. Mikael Andersson would continue to work on a course-per-course basis (ITTF High Performance Programme).

11.3 New Constitution update and procedures

Mr. Adham Sharara reported that Mr. Colin Clemett had prepared a draft of the new Constitution, which included a series of changes needed because of incorporation and the necessity to lighten the Constitution. It will soon be submitted to the Executive Committee for consideration as well as to the National Associations for their input. The ITTF was running late where the timelines for presenting the new Constitution were concerned and it would have to be decided in March whether it would be wise to present it in Osaka or wait until 2002.

11.4 Committees & Committee Chairmen for Osaka

Mr. Adham Sharara said that he had discussed this item with Mr. Colin Clemett who had proposed that each Continent should nominate one corresponding member per Continent. The Executive Committee will consider this proposal. All the Associations will be requested send their nominations beforehand and not during the AGM. Mr. Sharara said that the Executive Committee would assign Mr. Han Sang Kook, as the EC representative, to work with the Standing Orders Committee Chairman, Mr. Yuri Posevin, and the committee members.

11.5 Membership Fees (current and future)

It was decided that the only systematic way to collect membership fees was for the Continents to collect the fees and pay the ITTF (or deduct from the Olympic Grant) which then would pay the Continents their full Olympic grant. Mr. Jordi Serra was requested to send a letter to all Associations explaining this new manner of proceeding. The Continental Vice presidents accepted this procedure unanimously.

12. International Training Centres (ITC)

12.1 ITTF Recognition of Centres (ITC and CTC)

Mr. Jordi Serra explained the procedures for recognition of International Training Centres and Continental Training Centres.

CTC : Brazil

Mr. Adham Sharara said that Mr. Zlatko Cordas had visited the Centre in Brazil and that it did not as yet meet all ITTF criteria to be an International Training Centre. Therefore, until it does, it was agreed to recognise Brazil as a Continental Training Centre.

ITC : Egypt (Cairo), Spain (Barcelona & Seville), Italy (Terni) and for women in Hungary (Budapest) were all accepted by the EB.

12.2 New policies for 2001+

Mr. Jordi Serra presented a document outlining new policies for the recognition of ITCs and the kind of contribution offered by the ITTF. The policies were approved and will be implemented forthwith.

12.3 New applications

It was reported that there had been many requests but no formal written applications to date.

13. Equipment

13.1 888 Rubber issue – final decision

Mr. Rufford Harrison explained the situation with the 888 rubber, which had been regularly found to be too glossy. There had been a question of banning the rubber, but a visit to the manufacturer by Mr. Joachim Kühn showed that there was no problem with production but the glossy effect developed due to the packaging. The manufacturers were now trying to find ways to solve the problem. The Equipment Committee had requested the manufacturer to put a date code on all the new and improved rubbers. It was decided that the Equipment Committee would sample randomly in a few months time and if any rubbers with a date code were found to be too glossy, they would have the authority to withdraw it.

13.2 Non-approved equipment on market

Mr. Rufford Harrison remarked that the year 2000 had been the year of non-approved equipment with the ITTF logo! Two cases had been dealt with immediately with a fine, which had been promptly paid. However, there were several other cases of illegal use of the logo and it was necessary to find a systematic way of dealing with them – fines, withdrawal of approval etc. Mr. Adham Sharara said that if it were not possible to solve the problem with measures taken within the Committee then legal action would have to be taken.

13.3 Toxic Glue ban

Mr. Rufford Harrison said that the Equipment Committee were still looking for a solution regarding toxic glues and briefly explained the methods currently in use for detecting toxic glues (with Drager tubes) which he said were not infallible but were the cheapest and easiest methods that were available. He said that the Equipment Committee were in favour of banning fresh glue completely and the solution would be to continue the use of glues already available but they should be used within a certain time frame. This would also destroy the effect of speed

glue. It was also necessary to take the rubbers out of their plastic packaging at least 24 hours before use. This method however would not be completely eliminating but only reducing the hazards of toxic glue. The Equipment Committee would be making a proposal in this sense to the AGM.

13.4 Equipment approval fees

Mr. Adham Sharara said that Mr. Christian Véronèse had been asked to do a study about increasing approval fees. After discussion with Mr. Rufford Harrison, it would be presented in Osaka.

13.5 Reduction in number of approved Racket coverings

Mr. Rufford Harrison explained that the Equipment Committee had been mandated to find ways of reducing the number of racket coverings on the market (around 700) but that there was no easy way to do so and a suitable solution had not been found yet. Mr. Adham Sharara asked the Marketing Department also to think of ways of solving this problem. He suggested that a low approval fee be maintained for a certain number of rubbers per manufacturer and then a steep increase for any rubber above that limit.

13.6 Colour schemes research

Mr. Rufford Harrison said that this research needed more expertise and that it should be submitted to a research laboratory. Mr. Adham Sharara asked him to prepare the parameters needed for such a study so that the Lausanne office could contact the CAR (Barcelona) and Mr. Christian Véronèse could contact San-Ei and Taraflex to see if they wished to undertake the research as well.

13.7 Quality control

Mr. Adham Sharara explained that the ITTF Competition Manager had complained that the quality of table tennis tables in general was deteriorating. Skidding of the ball on the surface for example was one of the complaints often heard. He asked the Equipment Committee to start thinking of ways to test and control the tables in order to inform and advise the manufacturers.

Mr. Chérif Hajem complained that it was impossible to buy 40mm balls in Africa. Mr. Adham Sharara asked Mr. Rufford Harrison to find out from the manufacturers the reason for this.

14. Communications

14.1 Table Tennis Illustrated (TTI)

It was reported that Mr. Peter Jensen was now working in close collaboration with Mr. Ian Marshall. They had met in Lausanne together with Mr. Jordi Serra and discussed changes and improvements to the TTI.

14.2 Bulletin

It was reported that the Bulletin would be produced in Lausanne. A special effort will be made to avoid the duplication of information in the Bulletin and the TTI.

- 14.3 Handbook 2001-2002**
Mr. Adham Sharara said that Ms. Eve Williams had now declined the offer to continue with the Handbook. It will be done in the Ottawa office.
- 14.4 Web sites**
Mr. Adham Sharara said that he was very happy with the web sites, which had improved tremendously and with the income generated as a result. Statistics concerning the number of hits etc. will be provided in the near future. Mr. Sharara said that the possibility of selling ITTF pins, ties and other goods on-line was also being studied at the moment.
- 15. 75th Anniversary**
- 15.1 Book**
Mr. Nils Bergström said that the book based on Legends of Table Tennis by Zdenko Uzorinac was being finalised and that he would be going to Zagreb to meet the author and the printers.
- 15.2 Exhibit**
Mr. Nils Bergström reported that he would check with the Osaka organisers if there would be a space to house the Guernsey collection as part of the 75th Anniversary celebrations.
- 15.3 Logo**
Mr. Nils Bergström said that Mr. Christian Véronèse had prepared a special logo and that he would be discussing it with Mr. Adham Sharara shortly.
- 15.4 Memento**
Mr. Adham Sharara said that he had contacted several companies in order to develop a specific souvenir for the event and by March he would be able to present a few samples.
- 16. Information items**
- 16.1 Pro Tour**
Mr. Anders Thunström gave a brief update on the Pro Tour. He said 12 organisers had been found for 2001 but the finals had not been allocated yet. There was interest from Sweden, Germany, France and the company Kenshoen. In terms of sponsorship, the ITTF would like to get a title sponsor for the entire tour. The Marketing Department was also striving to sell more television rights. Mr. Thunström said that the Pro Tour concept was progressing fast and the events were running well. Mr. Adham Sharara said that the ITTF was targeting 2002 for a title sponsor. The prize money had gone up to US\$ 81,000 and if it could be increased to US\$ 100,000 the Pro Tour would be in the highest leagues. Mr. Zlatko Cordas' reports would be sent to all concerned within the next three weeks.

16.2 World Cup events

Mr. Adham Sharara announced that the ITTF had approached two sport promotion companies (IMG in Hong Kong and ISL in Switzerland) and were expecting their answer in March. Mr. Adham Sharara announced that there was a possibility of holding the Men's World Cup in Italy in place of the cancelled Pro Tour event. There was still no concrete option for the women except interest from Singapore for 2002 and maybe China in 2001. The Men World Club Championships will be held in Macao, thanks to arrangements made by the Chinese TTA, immediately before the China Open. The Women's Club Championships will be staged in China immediately after the China Open.

17. Any other business

17.1 Reports of Committee Chairmen

The EB members and the Committee Chairmen were requested to hand in their reports for the AGM to the Lausanne office by the 31st of January at the latest.

Mr. Adham Sharara said that within the Continental Development Programmes there was a women's development component, the Deng Yaping Development plan, which still had to be developed. He said a Task Force would be formed, composed of ITTF officials, expert professionals and help from the IOC, in order to produce a plan.

Mr. Chérif Hajem proposed that as part of the 75th anniversary celebrations the senior members of the ITTF should be recognised.

Mr. Pierre Albertini expressed his satisfaction with the way progress was made within the ITTF.

18. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 16:45 p.m.

Adham Sharara, President