

## REPORT ON SPORTACCORD 2018 – BANGKOK, THAILAND

The SportAccord Convention was held over the period 15-20 April 2018 in Bangkok, Thailand. The Convention once again coincided with a number of annual general meetings of the various multi-sport bodies including that of GAISF, the umbrella sporting body itself under the theme of: “United through Sport”.

A number of workshops and meetings on focussed items were also held and attended. About 1,850 delegates from 831 organisations including 109 IF’s attended the week.

The venue/dates of the 2019 Convention has not been finalised and will be communicated soon.

Herewith a summary of the most important meetings attended and matters observed during the SportAccord week:

### 1. International World Games Association (IWGA)

- All 37 of the 37 members were present;
- IWGA have been re-branded under the logo:



- The legal entity will however remain as IWGA – International World Games Association – and registered in Lausanne, Switzerland;
- A new Board have been elected for the next 4 years:
  - President – Jose Perurena (ESP)
  - Vice-President – Max Bishop (GBR)
  - Treasurer – Lucas Hinder (SUI)
  - Members – Anna Arshanova (RUS); Volker Binardi (GER); Antonio Espinós (ESP); Jan Fransoo (NED)
- Audited report, financial statements and 2018 budget adopted and approved;
- A new MoU signed with the IOC with close collaboration continuing and building ion synergies between the 2 bodies;
- MoU includes a clause in which NOC’s are encouraged to support WG sports;
- TWIF is 1 of 63 IF’s that have signed an agreement with the Olympic Channel:
  - This partnership should contribute towards better visibility for tug of war on global sport channels and social media;
  - Services includes an archive of digital material;
  - Working towards a sports databases; and
  - Better linkages with social media.
- IWGA archive/database as from 1981 now available – we need to explore linkage to our own archive.
- World Games 2017 – Wroclaw, Poland:
  - Regarded as the best ever with 3,292 athletes/officials participating in 31 sports;
  - Attendance in excess of 240,000 spectators;
  - Media exposure – 94 million viewers
  - Anti-Doping: 389 samples, 4 ADRV’s (tug of war = nil).

- World Games 2021 – Birmingham, USA (15-21 July 2021):



- All 37 members applied for inclusion on the programme;
- Only 30 disciplines were approved for the programme of which tug of war is one;
- This decision was based on the feedback from spectators, the media and an independent evaluation committee which reviewed amongst others the level of performance, spectator satisfaction and media appeal;
- Tug of war is delivering on this, but we need to work even harder in the future to ensure we retain our spot on the programme;
- A number of issues still need to be clarified - This includes the weight classes (all outdoor), format and the number of participants;
- More information on this will be shared at TWIF congress in Ireland;
- The programme will also for the first time include events for athletes with disabilities.
- World Games 2025:
  - A number of interested cities with bidding closing end July 2018;
  - Bid evaluation 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2018;
  - Recommendation of preferred host city by January 2019;
  - Ratification at AGM in 2019.
- A number of challenges have been raised which will be addressed shortly:
  - New membership and their inclusion on the TWG programme;
  - Gender/Female participation;
  - Doping compliance (see also Anti-Doping/WADA section).

## 2. Association of IOC Recognised International Sport Federations (ARISF)

- 33 of the 38 members attended (23 IF's are members of both IWGA & ARISF);
- The Universities Sport Federation obtained IOC recognition in the past year and attended for the 1<sup>st</sup> time;
- A new Sec General (Riccardo Fraccarri – Italy) and an additional Council member (Tom Hollowell – USA) was elected;
- ARISF's main objective is to strengthen the relationship with the IOC through 4 strategic goals:
  - To expand the scope, reach and recognition of ARISF and its IF's in the Olympic movement;
  - To engage with and service the recognised IF's;
  - To create a sustainable business and governance model; and
  - To sustain and increase the growth of ARISF and its members.
- ARISF still reviewing opportunities for more multi-sports events, eg Urban/Mind/Beach Games within the GAISF structure;
- The parallel between sport and entertainment for both participants and spectators have been stressed;

- ARISF finances remain problematic but progress has been made with via a new MoU with the IOC through which:
  - The IOC development contributions will in future be provided directly to the IF's with less red tape and will be increased to US\$32,000; and
  - Administrative capacity and over-head costs relating to IF support, will be provided by the IOC.
- This contribution has become a vital element in the TWIF budget and is mainly directed to the anti-doping programme (OOCT) and development courses.

A joint IOC/ARISF workshop was also held. The following points should be noted from this discussion:

- Development support to non-Olympic IF's will be aligned via a framework of Co-operation which will clarify membership requirements/procedures for recognition in context of the Olympic Charter committing to "Credibility, Sustainability & Youth";
- Sustainable sport development within a "legacy" philosophy is being embraced as a strategic intent going forward with a focus on ongoing utilisation of infrastructure and continued participation after global events (more active schools/youth specifically);
- Athlete support via the "365" initiative focussing on a Charter of Rights & Responsibilities including the safeguarding of individuals through the prevention of harassment and abuse in sport and the implementation of relevant policies and procedures. See <https://www.olympic.org/athlete365/library/safe-sport> for more information.
- Gender equality recommendations will follow.  
Note: Show-casing and visibility of different/unique development initiatives – specifically focussed on the youth – will be explored in a more generic sense, i.e. to enhance participation and physically active communities/lifestyles and not only to increase numbers/attract youth/enhance performance in individual sports specifically.

### 3. Anti-doping/WADA

- Continued fight to ensure "Fair Play" with Russia and a few "rogue" sports in the limelight ;
- Focus remain to move away from rule compliance to programme compliance with focus on:
  - Code compliance by IF's;
  - Continued consultation and harmonisation of rules;
  - Audit, Independent Investigations, Intelligence & Whistle Blower programmes (even at Interpol level in some cases);
  - Awareness/education/information sharing, support and capacity building (incl an eLearning platform);
  - It development and next generation of ADAMS with easier/new functionalities;
  - Governance, testing and re-testing;
  - Accreditation and monitoring of laboratories;
  - Scientific Research & Development.
- Continued recognition status of TWIF and participation in multi-sports events such as TWG, are totally DEPENDENT on compliance;
- In this regard TWIF have a number of challenges that was highlighted via a compliance review programme which started last year – mainly related to administrative matters that is receiving attention, but also some challenges relating the ADAMS, the number of In and Out of Competition testing and the cost thereof;

- A one to one meeting was also held with WADA's IF Relations Manager. A number of concerns were raised flowing from the compliance review process. Some options wrt a risk based and a phased approach relating to the testing/whereabouts pool in ADAMS, number of OOCT's, HG tests, TUE's and possible administration support from the ITA (International Testing Authority) will be explored, but a lot of hard work and attention to administration and related reporting detail will be required;
- Bottom-line is that any non-compliances will dis-qualify TWIF from future IOC funding support, future multi-sport events and even our own events could come under the spotlight;
- Awareness and education within our IF's need to be sharpened up.

#### **4. Meeting with IOC Sport Department**

A meeting was held with Mr Mike Joyce of the IOC Sport Department and Mr Rohit Sharma, office manager of ARISF. The following aspects were highlighted:

- Our continued development programme for global development
- Focus on youth and gender development – they were very impressed with the proposal that mixed event will be included in next World Games
- Format and presentation of the sport to media and spectators
- Communication, information exchange and use of the Olympic Channel
- Utilisation of multi-sports events such as the Commonwealth Games, the Youth Olympic Games, as well as the Beach and Urban Games as stepping stones into the IOC programme
- The IOC will increase its support to recognised IF's, but it is clear that the Olympic programme will remain very rigid with limited opportunity to include new sports onto the programme.
- We need to continue with innovative ways to link to the programme via host cities before and after Olympics to capitalise on our status as a recognised IF.

As was indicated above, the IOC's has increased their annual financial development contributions to Recognised IF's to US\$32,000 pa. This will in future be paid as a single sum and hopefully with less paper work directly by the IOC. At least a 3<sup>rd</sup> of this must be used for the anti-doping programme.

#### **5. GAISF (Global Association of International Sports Federations) General Assembly**

- 79 (of 94) members were in attendance – this includes members of the Summer & Winter Olympics, ARISF, AIMS, etc.
- 133 Sport Organisations applied for membership after the GAISF – 1 applicant (World Arm Wrestling Federation) were put forward for full membership and 8 for observer status – there are 122 others pending/in process, but much duplication and/or derivatives and/or hybrids of existing sporting codes.
- GAISF have signed a 50:50 agreement with ANOC (Association of National Olympic Committees) wrt to the establishment of a company to arrange World Beach Games after 2019 with 2 year intervals.
- A range of other multi-sports events either exist or are in the process of being initiated in which GAISF will play a leading role – this includes Urban, Mind, Combat, Artistic and the Youth Olympics.

- For me it is clear that we should explore participation on one or more of these platforms as stepping stones to our ultimate ideal of getting back on the Olympics as we must be realistic on timelines for this happening, whilst providing new opportunities for our athletes. For this we will have to think “outside the box” and be flexible/innovative relating to format, numbers and duration of pulls balanced with the dimensions of gender/mix, fun, development and performance whilst showcasing our sport to new audiences/sponsors.
- A meeting on the initiation of and Urban Games was also attended:
  - More detail will be shared shortly, but will possibly kick off in 2019 with 8 sporting codes in 14 disciplines (1,000 athletes and officials);
  - Focus on innovation, fun and festival type approaches required – numbers count against us, so options to explore include 4x4; 2+2 mixed, age limits and pulling distances/time limits, etc to showcase and introduce sports to a new audiences;
  - The first host city will be announced in July of this year.
- GAISF have also managed to reserve the “.sport” domain name. IF’s will get the acronym and discipline (ie. twif.sport & tugofwar.sport) for future use. Further services and other support would be provided for a set fee – more detail on this will be available in September 2018.
- The new EU regulation (GDPR – General Data Protection Regulation) was also highlighted:
  - This comes into force on 25 May 2018;
  - Huge fines can be
  - This will not only have a direct impact on our EU members, but also have implications on how TWIF deals with personal information relating to event registrations, the retention of such data and even archiving of results;
  - More formal and appropriate procedures/policy relating to consent, retention and deleting of personal information will be required which TWIF will have to develop.
- GAISF focus this past year was on creating institutional stability, excellence and capacity. The focus on the next year will be on:
  - Developing more service to its members;
  - Further focus on governance and the establishment of best practices and procedures;
  - Sports development, especially in the Asian region;
  - A presence at IF events and championships.
- Annual report, 2017 financials statements and 2018 budget was approved.

#### **6. Meeting with FICS (Brian Nook/Simon Lawson/Charlotte Davis)**

- Agreed that the umbrella MOU signed between the parties will be reviewed to ensure it is still aligned with current policies and procedures;
- Schedule of future events have been provided to FICS;
- FICS will send an “Event Application Form” to TWIF in order for specific events to be scheduled and agreed;
- FICS will provide TWIF with a report on common tug of war injuries and proposed training regime/exercises to prevent such injuries
- FICS keen to get involved in the proposed weight-loss study – Their reps in Cape Town will be included in discussions with experts on this.

## **7. Other Matters/Observations/Quotes:**

- Host cities: The Future of Major Events – The big challenge will be to engage new, young audiences, resolve and address governance and integrity issues; and to manage the transition from traditional broadcasting revenue to digital media;
- The nature of sports sponsorship is changing, with technology and data helping to drive an evolution in how deals are struck and activated for maximum benefit for sponsors;
- The establishment of mutually beneficial and sustainable relationships between host cities and IF's is required – this needs to include both social and environmental dimensions;
- The issue of good governance linked to ethics, integrity and “clean” sports is more real and relevant than ever – TWIF need to look into developing a formal Code of Ethics (for further discussion);
- Engaging young people is a challenge that every IF need to address in an era of increasingly squeezed attention spans;
- Embrace change!

Further detail and explanations will be provided during the TWIF Congress, 28 April 2018, in Cork, Ireland.

Anton Rabe  
PRESIDENT: TWIF

20 April 2018