



ESF 1st VP report

Dear Members, I would like to submit to you my yearly report which consists of three parts, a general overview, managing report and a review of our 2015 ESF competitions by ESF Technical Director Mike Jennings.

General overview

European Softball is growing. From ESF official Championships and Cups, to regional tournaments or activities such as the Baltic Open, Balkan Cup, Triple Ball and Interleague tournaments completes the whole picture of softball in Europe.

ESF supervision, support, and EC representatives present at the venues allow these events to be recognized as important events on the calendar. I personally visited the Balkan Slowpitch Cup held in Belgrade and met with several representatives of the Serbian political and sport agencies. These meetings are very important in order to bring more knowledge to the politicians of our member federations.

Another important aspect of European political engagement is our close co-operation with the world level of softball on the field and off of it. Europe as a continent has the largest number of member countries playing softball and there is a need for us to be active at world softball meetings.

I had the opportunity with several others to participate at the ISF Strategic Planning Meeting held in San Francisco in February and be a part of the discussions about the future of world softball. This meeting, participation at the World Championships and the ISF Congress allows us to implement our ESF ideas and strategies. ESF is a strong organization, and as I mentioned we run several tournaments and events every year but in order to be stronger and more successful we need to continue on the road to being a more unified Europe.

We have expanded our outreach and have opened the door for world class players, coaches and teams to be a part of our growth. Michele Smith, providing clinics for players and coaches at our European Women's Championship in Rosmalen, the Jr. Black Sox National Team participating at the European Men's Super Cup in Prague are just a few of the things that brings world level of softball to Europe and creates the bridge for more success on the field.

One of the most significant advancements this year was our major efforts in the advertisement and promotion of our sport. We established the position of ESF Communication Director, which brought social media to the foreground. We also **live streamed a total of 55 games from 6 ESF tournaments**. Fans, parents could see incredible softball, including interviews from players, officials, organizers and fans. The mandatory implementation of the Play By Play for all ESF competitions since 2011 one a big step and the use of live streaming in 2015 took us even further into the future and giving our ESF Competitions a high world level standard.



Managing report

The main task of the ESF Competitions and Technical managing structure was working through the commissions needed for operating our ESF competitions. From the TC / UIC meeting in Rome in 2013, we established the different technical commissions who worked endlessly on their specific tasks in order to run our ESF competitions successfully.

Umpire activities included the ESF Basic Umpire clinics for Fast Pitch and foreign exchange of umpires.

We established a close cooperation with the World Baseball and Softball Confederation Softball Division (WBSC SD) as with non-European federations especially at the Women's World Championships in Haarlem. We will continue to try and assist in the implementation of running ESF and ISF competitions with good procedures and find the way how to open some of our ESF tournaments to non-European teams (ESCM, ESCJW).

ESF Competitions and Technical organization structure:

The ESF Competitions and Technical organizational structure in 2015 continued with the same team as in the previous year: **Technical Commission** headed by ESF Technical Director Mike Jennings, **Umpire Committee** headed by ESF Director of Umpires Andrea Marcon, **Competition Committee** headed by Cornelia Chwojka and **Scoring Committee** headed by Dennis Duin.

The fourth edition of the ESF's [TC and UIC Meeting](#) was held in Rome in the middle of March. The first session was led by ESF Technical Director Mike Jennings and the second session was broken down into UICs headed by Director of Umpires Andrea Marcon and TCs headed by Mike Jennings. These groups discussed many different issues, including the question of scouting from behind backstops, which is now prohibited. The final session reviewed the conclusions reached on the topics discussed, and set out the final assignment of TCs and UICs to ESF tournaments and locations that need to be inspected. This meeting, which is running every two years, has been very successful for all parties and has led to more professionally-run ESF competitions

Also structuring of ESF Regulations in the two parts brought more understanding to these. **General Regulations** contents from Administration Regulations (relations between parties, duties and obligations), Competition Regulations (general regulations for participants), Technical Regulations (general regulations for organizers) and Financial Appendix.

Specific Regulations are bringing specifics to several kinds of the tournaments as Youth, Slowpitch, Super Cup Men, Super Cup Junior Women and newly Masters. Integral part of this is Appendix with game formats.



Umpires:

2015 has been a very crowded year for umpires in ESF, considering that a tournament has been added to the already packed calendar that European softball has.

A Fast Pitch Basic Clinic has been held in Collecchio during the Massimo Romeo Trophy in the middle of August. Hans Hornstra, Carolien Stadhouders and Bert Loggen were the instructors.

For the third year in a row, an umpire exchange has been done with Canada Federation. One fastpitch and one slowpitch ESF umpire had the chance to umpire tournaments in Canada, while in EChW and European Coed Slowpitch Championship we hosted umpires from Canada. This exchange was for sure a very important moment for ESF development, and will continue for the 2016 season. In this sense, Canada Federation, through their UIC **Jeff Whipple** has already confirmed their will in keeping the experience alive. For EPCW and ESCM we had the honor to host an umpire from Australian Federation.

European umpires were also presented at all three World Championships. Europe was presented with 5 umpires at JWWC, with 2 umpires at MWC and with 2 umpires at World Slowpitch Cup.

Final words:

Finally let me thank all of our organizers who hosted our ESF tournaments in 2015. It is very important to have you, because this is the place for the games of our players. Thank you so much for hosting!

Also thank to all of the officials – TC's, UIC's, SIC's, EC's, umpires, scorers, locals and so many volunteers – for you assists at ESF tournaments in 2015! Your work is invaluable!

Gabriel Waage
ESF 1st VP



Report by ESF TC Director

This Report is compiled from detailed TC Reports, separately available to all EC members, and from observations and recommendations by TC members in attendance at events throughout the 2015 season.

ESF 2015 Season:

Competition	Location	Teams	Games	Injury	Eject
			Planned / Played		
EChCG	Nuoro, ITA	6	20	0	0
EChJM	Most, CZE	6	20	0	0
EChW	Rosmalen, NED	20	90 / 88	2	3
EChCS	Dupnitsa, BUL	6	35 / 31	0	0
ESCJW	Ostrava, CZE	7	28	0	0
EMRYT	Colleccchio, ITA	10	37	4	0
EPCW	Prague, CZE	9	40 / 26	0	0
ECW	Dupnitsa, BUL	6	20	1	0
ECWCW	Prague, CZE	13	51 / 42	0	0
ESCM	Prague, CZE	23	97	1	0
10 Events	TOTALS	106	438 / 409	8	3
<i>9 Events</i>	<i>2014 Comparisons</i>	<i>91</i>	<i>390</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>2</i>



2015 Season Overview:

26 Member Federations entered 106 teams in 10 events and there was a marked reduction in late withdrawals from events, 2 against 6 last year (but UKR's withdrawal from EChCG was regarded as under very special circumstances).

Significant weather impact was experienced in two events in particular: in the same week in the same city, between the **EPCW** and **ECWCW**, 23 games had to be cancelled.

The average length of games varied from 89 minutes for EChCG to 110 minutes for ESCJW and EChW. In total, across all games, approximately 39,000 spectators were recorded.

Not only did we have more Injuries this year, but half occurred at **EMRYT**, our most junior competition. No serious long-term injuries were reported, but all four were briefly hospitalised as a precaution.

EChCG was initially indicated as a 12-team competition, as in 2013, but a combination of circumstances reduced this to 6 for the event itself.

EChJM was hosted by a new organiser, using for the first time a field which was incomplete even during the pre-inspection. Despite this, all promises made were met and the event was a great success. Particularly of note was the involvement of local contacts and resources, providing cultural experiences for the young players as well as sporting challenge.

EChW involved 20 countries / teams, (22 if BEL and BUL had not withdrawn) but had the luxury of one integrated location. IRL appeared in ESF Fast-Pitch competition for the first time. With the anticipated return of our sport to the Olympics, this Championship will take on even more significance as the apex of female athletes' aspiration in ESF Softball.

EChCS welcomed Lithuania to ESF Slow-Pitch competition for the first time, but regretted the withdrawal of SLO. This was prompted, at least in part, by the difficulties (particularly for the female players) of devoting vacation time and financial resources to several competitions in one season. This is a problem that will have even more impact in future as the ESF expands the number of playing opportunities available to our athletes. Bad weather late in the tournament required the TC to abandon some Page games: during this process some differences were found between the advice provided by ISF and ESF documentation. TC will propose a clarification of this issue.

ESCJW was played for the first time, extending the EMRYT experience for younger female players within the Super-Cup format pioneered so successfully by the Men's competition. The compact two-field location proved a very suitable venue.



ECW was hosted by BSC Devils in Dupnitsa, BUL, just two weeks after the EChCS. Their unfailing hospitality was much appreciated by all the teams from both events.

ESCM was the most complex event staged, with 3 locations, 4 fields and 23 participating teams including the visiting Juniors from New Zealand. The schedule was complex but achievable. The teams provided their own vehicles: indeed the event could not have been efficiently or economically executed if the organisers had to provide transportation. Our experience at this multi-location event leads us to recommend that TCs assigned to such events should remain with one field throughout, providing consistency at each location for the duration of the competition. The TC office became unavailable late in the evening, inconvenient for the SiC and those assigned to the last game under lights on the field.

OVERALL COMMENTS

The TCs' describe overwhelming appreciation of the efforts of **organisers** to respond to teams' and TCs' needs and requests, and very few adverse comments concerning food or the occasional transportation problem.

It continues to be important that the **TC** at an event should be the one who inspects (if an inspection is required) and also that the organiser himself hosts the inspection and is then responsible for all commitments to be delivered at the event itself.

Player Licences / DoB lists were provided in good time to the TC Chair for each event: no issues arose during Passport Controls.

Within the TC team, the role of the **UIC** and their crew remains crucial. In 2015 umpire numbers at many events dictated a very heavy work-load for those assigned.

Scorers contributed again to the quality of ESF events by providing reliable and timely information for teams and TC. Scorers' efforts were sometimes compromised by unreliable internet connectivity. TC agrees that fuller documentation of Wi-Fi provision is defined and recorded more comprehensively at Inspection, and is then monitored and delivered. This should also include planning for web-streaming services.

Team Feedback Forms should be distributed at all events, followed up by an umpire nominated for the task, with Forms returned to the TC of the event. Performance of this procedure in 2015 was variable, as was the performance of EC members in collecting and reporting back on the feedback received. Without feedback our opportunity to identify and correct issues is compromised. Requesting and receiving feedback and not using it is a waste of everyone's time.



Following new Tournament Regulations relating to **protective covering** against rain, many fields were equipped with tarpaulins. These proved useful in returning fields to play more quickly after brief rainfall: they proved less so in the face of thunder-storms or two days of continuous rain!

Delays and cancellations were the inevitable consequence of appalling weather and in each case the TC teams **re-scheduled** fixtures and games timings to ensure an optimum result for each event. In order to assist future TCs to recover from such setbacks, contingency plans should be considered for each event, for example by having additional or alternative fields available in case of need to 'catch up' on missed games. Teams may need to be reminded that ISF rules dictate when games may or may not be continued after rain delays etc.

Coin flips were used at many competitions, with generally positive feedback from teams, who appreciated the ability to choose Home or Visitor status rather than being assigned the position. Despite this, it was also noted that in several instances the teams involved did not turn up for the coin-flip session.

We need to make more progress in providing **communications** between all TC members during competitions, particularly multi-location events. Walkie-talkies proved useful in maintaining contact between remote points on two large venues: intra-location contact still relied on TC members' own mobile phones.

The occasion of injuries on the field referred to earlier in this report highlighted the importance of **First Aid personnel** assigned to our competitions, and gives rise to some questions and suggestions. Although ESF Regulations specify qualified First Aid attendance at and during every game, it is not always clear what level of qualification is required for such a role. Different countries no doubt have different qualifying organisations (for example, Red Cross, St John's Ambulance etc), and may specify different types of training or competencies. TC will explore how we may ensure that all events are appropriately and consistently served. Clearly identifying the Medic's location and having them wear a distinctive 'uniform' or tabard was also recommended.

In conclusion, we record our great appreciation of the efforts of all ESF volunteer officials who have contributed their time and expertise during the 2015 season. With more events potentially now to be added to our programme next year we will not only need more organisers, but will also have to consider additional provision for trained scorers and umpires and certainly more active recruitment to the TC ranks.

That is our challenge for 2016

JM Jennings

ESF Technical Director



Motion proposed by the ESF Executive Council – Nr. 1 For Congress, 12-14 February 2016

Subject: Modification/Addition of ESF Statutes Article 1.4

Author: Executive Council

Present writing :

1.4.11. to cooperate, within the International European framework, with the Olympic Movement, the International Sports Organizations and the International Softball Federation to promote, implement and achieve the objectives, and preserve and guarantee the interests of the ESF and its Members;

1.4.12. to collaborate with the International Softball Federation in order to coordinate and assist the actions of the International Softball Federation in the Jurisdiction of the ESF and within the International European framework, and to seek and obtain full recognition by the International Softball Federation of the objectives and actions of the ESF ;

Proposed writing (or New writing):

1.4.11. to cooperate, within the International European framework, with the Olympic Movement, the International Sports Organizations and the **World Baseball and Softball Confederation (WBSC) and the World Baseball and Softball Confederation Softball Division (WBSC SD) also known as the International Softball Federation (ISF)** to promote, implement and achieve the objectives, and preserve and guarantee the interests of the ESF and its Members;

1.4.12. to collaborate with the **WBSC, and the WBSC SD (ISF)** in order to coordinate and assist the actions of **the WBSC and the WBSC SD (ISF)** in the Jurisdiction of the ESF and within the International European framework, and to seek and obtain full recognition by the **WBSC, and the WBSC SD (ISF)** of the objectives and actions of the ESF ;

Reasons for change

To add the WBSC to the relevant articles within the objectives of the ESF

Date of effect

Immediately at the end of the Congress.



Motion proposed by the ESF Executive Council – Nr. 2 For Congress, 12-14 February 2016

Subject: Modification/Addition of ESF Statutes Article 1.9

Author: Executive Council

Present writing :

none

Proposed writing (or New writing):

1.9 add definitions :

“WBSC”	the World Baseball Softball Confederation, governed by its “Confederation Constitution”.
"WBSC Softball Division"	the division of the World Baseball and Softball Confederation (WBSC) , recognized as the official entity for Softball is appointed to and claims jurisdiction over every form of softball

Reasons for change

To add the WBSC to the definitions of the ESF

Date of effect

Immediately at the end of the Congress.



Motion proposed by the ESF Executive Council – Nr. 3 For Congress, 12-14 February 2016

Subject: Modification/Addition of ESF Statutes Article 3.2

Author: Executive Council

Present writing :

3.2.1 - DATE AND LOCATION

3.2.1.1. The General Congress shall meet every year as the Annual General Congress in the first full week-end of February at the location decided by the previous Annual General Congress.

3.2.1.2. Under special circumstances the Annual General Congress may decide other dates for its next meeting.

3.2.1.3. If special circumstances require it, the Executive Council may modify the date and location of the next Annual General Congress.

3.2.2 - AGENDA

3.2.2.5. The Agenda of the Annual General Congress, together with the Role of accredited Delegates and the documents subject to approval or vote, is sent by the Secretary General to the Affiliated Federations at least 30 days before the date of the Annual General Congress, and shall include the following matters, in that order :

3.2.2.5.1. Roll Call and certification of Eligible Affiliated Federations

3.2.2.5.2. Approval of the minutes of previous Congress

3.2.2.5.3. Admission of new Affiliated Federations

3.2.2.5.4. Suspension or exclusion of Affiliated Federations

3.2.2.5.5. Approval of the annual activities report

3.2.2.5.6. Approval of the annual financial report

3.2.2.5.7. Approval of the annual budget

3.2.2.5.8. Appointment of the Auditor

3.2.2.5.9. Amount of the annual membership fee and any special contributions

3.2.2.5.10. Approval of activities to be carried out

3.2.2.5.11. Amendments to the Statutes



3.2.2.5.12. Motions and other matters proposed by the Executive Council and by Affiliated Federations

3.2.2.5.13. Appointment of Organizers of ESF Competitions

3.2.2.5.14. Election of the Executive Council

3.2.2.5.15. Place of next Congress

3.2.2.5.16. Various information

Proposed writing (or New writing):

3.2 - ANNUAL GENERAL CONGRESS

3.2.1 - DATE AND LOCATION

3.2.1.1. The General Congress shall meet every year as the Annual General Congress in the first full week-end of February at the location decided by the previous Annual General Congress.

3.2.1.2 *If the General Congress shall be a Joint ESF and Confederation of European Baseball (CEB) Congress, the decision of location of the Congress in even years shall be that of the CEB and the odd years that of the ESF. The date shall not be later than the second full weekend of February.*

3.2.1.23. Under special circumstances the Annual General Congress may decide other dates for its next meeting.

3.2.1.34. If special circumstances require it, the Executive Council may modify the date and location of the next Annual General Congress.

3.2.2.5. The Agenda of the Annual General Congress, together with the Role of accredited Delegates and the documents subject to approval or vote, is sent by the Secretary General to the Affiliated Federations at least 30 days before the date of the Annual General Congress, and shall include the following matters, in that order :

3.2.2.5.1. Roll Call and certification of Eligible Affiliated Federations

3.2.2.5.2. Approval of the minutes of previous Congress

3.2.2.5.3. Admission of new Affiliated Federations

3.2.2.5.4. Suspension or exclusion of Affiliated Federations

3.2.2.5.5. *Approval of the annual activities report*

3.2.2.5.6. Approval of the annual financial report



3.2.2.5.7. Approval of the annual budget

3.2.2.5.8. Appointment of the Auditor

3.2.2.5.9. Amount of the annual membership fee and any special contributions

3.2.2.5.10. ~~Approval of activities to be carried out~~

3.2.2.5.11. Amendments to the Statutes

3.2.2.5.12. Motions and other matters proposed by the Executive Council and by Affiliated Federations

3.2.2.5.13. Appointment of Organizers of ESF Competitions

3.2.2.5.14. Election of the Executive Council

3.2.2.5.15. Place of next Congress

3.2.2.5.16. Various information

Reasons for change

To add the WBSC to the definitions of the ESF

Date of effect

Immediately at the end of the Congress.



Motion proposed by the ESF Executive Council – Nr. 4 For Congress, 12-14 February 2016

Subject: Modification/Addition of ESF Statutes Article 4.1

Author: Executive Council

Present writing :

None

Proposed writing (or New writing):

4.1.1.6. *Immediate Past President*

Reasons for change

To add the immediate past president to the Executive (no vote) and will enable continuity, experience and assistance as an advisory position for one term (see next motion)

Date of effect

Immediately at the end of the Congress.



Motion proposed by the ESF Executive Council – Nr. 5 For Congress, 12-14 February 2016

Subject: Modification/Addition of ESF Statutes Article 4.12

Author: Executive Council

Present writing :

4.1.2. The Officers of the ESF are elected by the General Congress for a four year term. They may be re-elected with no limit on the number of terms, with the exception of the President who can not be elected for more than two consecutive full terms.

Proposed writing (or New writing):

4.1.2. The Officers **with the exception of the immediate past President** of the ESF are elected by the General Congress for a four year term. **The immediate past President is not elected and has no vote on the Executive Council.** The **Officers** may be re-elected with no limit on the number of terms, with the exception of the President who cannot be elected for more than two consecutive full terms **and the immediate past President who shall serve one term only.**

Reasons for change

To add the immediate past president to the Executive (no vote) and will enable continuity, experience and assistance as an advisory position for one term

Date of effect

Immediately at the end of the Congress.



Motion proposed by the ESF Executive Council – Nr. 6 For Congress, 12-14 February 2016

Subject: Modification/Addition of ESF Statutes Article 5.1.2

Author: Executive Council

Present writing :

5.1.2. The President is the Legal Official representative of the ESF in all public matters. He represents the ESF in the international sporting organizations and notwithstanding Art. 4.03 (a) of the International Softball Federation Constitution, shall be one of the Vice Presidents of the International Softball Federation. He calls and chairs the General Congress and the Executive Council.

Proposed writing (or New writing):

5.1.2. The President is the Legal Official representative of the ESF in all public matters. He represents the ESF in the international sporting organizations and notwithstanding Art. 4.03 (a) of the **WBSC SD (ISF)** shall be one of the Vice Presidents of the **WBSC SD (ISF)**. He calls and chairs the General Congress and the Executive Council.

Reasons for change

Adding the WBSC name in the statutes

Date of effect

Immediately at the end of the Congress.