



MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE PROMOTION (P.P.) COMMISSION

Lausanne, September 04th - 5th, 2010

Present:

Frantisek JANDA (CZE)	President of the Promotion Commission
Velichka HRISTEVA (BUL)	Representative of the Executive Committee
Kimmo PENTIKÄINEN (FIN)	Secretary of the Promotion Commission
Gholamhossein ASGARI (IRI)	
Erika AZE (LAT)	
Cécile FAYE (SEN)	
Victor Sergio GROUPIERRE (ARG)	
John MAKELA (CAN)	
Nikolay MATEEV (ISL)	
Sabirjan RUZIEV (UZB)	

Marcos Lorenzo

FIE Head Press

Absent:

Nahedh AL-MURDHI (KUW)

OPENING OF THE MEETING

President of the commission Mr. Janda welcomed all participants and opened the meeting.

I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1. Approval of the minutes from the previous meeting and evaluation of the tasks.
2. Discussion about the proposals for the changes of rules, which the FIE COMEX gave to the individual Commissions for the evaluation.
3. Discussion about the usage of new communication technologies for the promotion of fencing:
 - Formulation of the common position of all continents on the development of the common strategy for fencing promotion;
 - Discussion about the creation of "the internet television;"
 - Formulation of the proposal for the FIE.
4. Various.

The agenda was approved unanimously.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND EVALUATION OF THE TASKS

The Commission unanimously approved the minutes from the previous meeting.

Evaluation of the tasks:

Mr. Janda informed that the recommendations proposed by the commission for the executive committee during the last meeting were not accepted by the executive committee. The situation with the enforcement of commission's ideas will improve now as the president of the commission is also the president of the zonal confederation and the member of the FIE COMEX.

The commission discussed the new concept of escrime magazine. Mr. Janda said that the new escrime magazine has improved thanks to the effort of Mr. Lorenzo. The commission encouraged that the electronic version should be better promoted in the fencing community.

Mr. Janda stated the competition calendar confirmed at the General Assembly included major changes. It has some problems especially with women's epee calendar which has too tight schedule of competitions in four weeks period in different continents.

Ms. Aze stated that the present calendar with extensive travelling is expensive for fencers.

Mr. Janda stated that the problem does not concern only the finance. The healing period for athletes is intolerable with such extensive travelling. Another problem concerns the organizers of the big competitions. On one hand, it is our interest that the organizer would fulfil his role on 100% and the annulment of the competitions would not appear. On the other hand, such events as the World Cup or Grand Prix are the perfect opportunities to promote our sport. Due to the reductions of the calendar, the amount of these events significantly decreased. It would be helpful to prepare the proposal which would allow for each season and for each weapon to have one flexible date – this would allow having one tournament in various places. Several European federations are willing to organize good competitions - but not every year. It has been proposed that there should be the circulating model of the competitions, i.e. the competitions would be organized at the same date of the year but in different countries. For instance, one season in Sydney and another in Havana.

Mr. Janda noted that the new calendar will be fixed minimum for the next two seasons. We cannot change the system during the qualification season. The present calendar was a difficult decision and the result is a compromise between different points of views. But we could use this time to find better variants.

Mr. Janda stated that the reports of the observers are crucial to evaluate the level of competitions. If the observer's report says that the competition is fine, despite the competitors and coaches do not agree with it, it would be difficult to make any changes.

III. DISCUSSION ABOUT THE PROPOSALS FOR THE CHANGES OF RULES, WHICH THE FIE COMEX GAVE TO THE INDIVIDUAL COMMISSIONS FOR THE EVALUATION

III.1 GERMAN FENCING FEDERATION PROPOSAL

Delete the obligation to use the transparent visor mask for all weapons

Argument:

The mentioned mask was created with the goal to offer more emotions of the fencer for the audience. After several discussions, tests, expert opinions, labels, essays of the producers and incidents over past years, we have a situation, which is absolutely not satisfied.

On the one hand is the effect of the visor in a controversial position to judge. On the other hand, we have had some grave incidents, which only with a lot of luck did not create a human catastrophe. Despite of all well-meant recommendations and all good will and attention of the fencers during the handling of the mask nobody can absolutely secure the necessary mechanical and chemical conditions for the visor. This opinion is meanwhile shared by the great majority of manufacturers who are worried, that a grave incident can destroy partly the base of their business.

In weighing the advantage and the fundamental risks for our sport we have made our proposal.

In the same context we propose that the goal to offer more emotions during the competitions have to be maintained. The way can be to make a fresh attempt over an adjusted interpretation of several articles of the regulation which permit that fencers and officials can move from sterile constraint behaviour to more emotional and spontaneous actions still respecting the regulation. The Rules- Referees- and Promotion Commission should make recommendations for certain articles of our regulation.

Opinion of the Executive Committee: to be submitted to the Rules, SEMI, Promotion and Medical Commissions. The Executive Committee thinks that sabre should not be included in this proposal and wishes a complete study to be done by the SEMI Commission, on the German proposal.

Opinion of the Promotion Commission: in favour.

The decision was agreed unanimously.

Discussion

Mr. Janda stated that we are aware about at least 4-5 transparent mask accidents. There was a serious accident during European Juniors Championships. The plastic visor was broken in foil competition to Latvian fencer. The mask was inspected by a laboratory. The report stated that the plastic was not Lexan as it should have been. Since we cannot guarantee 100% safety, thus we cannot have the masks obligatory. Secondly, the transparent mask is extremely unpopular among fencers. We would need the mask for the cameras to have eye contact to transfer the moment. It is a good idea but as we cannot 100% guarantee safety we cannot have it as obligatory. I agree with the proposal.

Mr. Makela stated that he agree with the proposal. We have to support SEMI commission's opinion because they are experts in this field. Personally, I have not liked it and fencers do not like it as well. It can create an accident also with sabre. The armourer cannot test whether the plastic is in proper condition and it has been produced by a right producer.

Mr. Mateev noted that everybody agree at the commission that transparent mask should not be used in epee or foil, but what about sabre? Should it be allowed for one year more that the manufacturers can develop it further?

Mr. Janda stated that we want to cancel the obligation to use these masks. However, if the sabre fencers want to use them, they can.

III.2. RULES COMMISSION PROPOSALS

4. When both fencers make clear their unwillingness to fight, the Referee will immediately call 'Halt!'

Clear unwillingness to fight (non-combativity)

~~If two of the criteria below are combined, there is unwillingness to fight:~~

~~1. criterion of time : one minute of fencing without a hit~~

~~2. absence of blade contact~~

~~3. excessive distance (greater than the distance of a step-forward-lunge).~~

If one of the two criteria below is present, there is unwillingness to fight:

1. criterion of time : one minute of fencing without a hit

2. absence of blade contact or excessive distance (greater than the distance of a step-forward-lunge) during 15 seconds.

5. Individual events

a) If during the two first periods of a direct elimination bout both fencers make clear their unwillingness to fight, the Referee ~~will award a warning (yellow card) against each of the two fencers and~~ will proceed to the next period, without the minute rest.

~~b) If the offence is repeated, the Referee will each time award a penalty hit (red card) against each of the two fencers and will proceed to the next period, without the minute rest.~~

b) c) When both fencers make clear their unwillingness to fight during the **third period** of a direct elimination bout, **the Referee will proceed to a last minute of fencing.** This last minute, which will be fenced in its entirety, will be decisive and will be preceded by a drawing of lots to decide the winner should the scores be equal at the end of the minute.

~~i) if there has been no occurrence of the offence during the preceding periods, the Referee will award a warning (yellow card) against each fencer, and will proceed to a last minute of fencing;~~

~~ii) if the offence has already been committed during the course of the preceding periods, the Referee will award a penalty hit (red card) against each of the fencers, and will proceed to a last minute of fencing;~~

6. Team events

a) If both teams make clear their **unwillingness to fight** during a team match, the Referee ~~will award a warning (yellow card) against each of the two teams and~~ will proceed to the next bout.

~~b) If the offence is repeated, the Referee will each time award a penalty hit (red card) against each of the teams and will proceed to the next bout, and so on up to the last bout.~~

b) c) If both teams make clear their **unwillingness to fight** during **the last bout**, **the Referee will proceed to a last minute of fencing.** This last minute, which will be fenced in its entirety, will be decisive and will be preceded by a drawing of lots to decide the winner should the scores be equal at the end of the minute.

~~i) if there has been no occurrence of the offence during the preceding bouts, the Referee will award a warning (yellow card) against each of the teams, and will proceed to a last minute of fencing;~~

~~ii) if the offence has already been committed during the preceding bouts, the Referee will award a penalty hit (red card) against each of the teams, and will proceed to a last minute of fencing;~~

Modify article t.120 accordingly.

Motivation : The Commission believes that we should return to the original position adopted, i.e.: - that non-combativity should not be penalized with yellow/red cards, that if it occurs, the referee stops the fight and moves on to the next phase of a direct elimination bout, without the minute rest, or to the next relay in a team match.

The Commission also discussed the definition of non-combativity. While it is true that a good referee "knows" when there is non-combativity, we are not happy with the fact that two of the criteria (being out of distance and having no blade contact) are likely to be essentially the same, which means that the referee could ignore the time criterion (1 minute with no hit) and declare non-combativity far too subjectively.

We therefore suggest the addition of a time element to the second criterion ('if there is no blade contact and/or excessive distance during 15 seconds); this should prevent unduly idiosyncratic application by the referee.

Opinion of the Executive Committee : the Executive Committee is in favour of the proposal. To be submitted to the Rules, Refereeing and Promotion Commissions.

Opinion of the Promotion Commission: in favour.

The commission proposes the following adjustment to the text:

"2. absence of blade contact or excessive distance (greater than the distance of a step-forward-lunge) during a minimum of 15 seconds.

The decision was agreed unanimously.

Discussion

Mr. Janda stated that referees had to have the feeling when the fencers do not want to fence.

Mr. Mateev stated that he also agree with the proposal. In Leipzig, there were too many matches which had no action for a long time.

Mr. Makela proposed that the proposal should be rephrased that absence of blade contact or excessive distance (greater than the distance of a step-forward-lunge) during a minimum of 15 seconds. Mr. Makela stated that the obligation to have blade contact and/or excessive distance will inform fencers that they are obligated to have action. The proposal was agreed unanimously.

IV. DISCUSSION ABOUT THE USAGE OF NEW COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES FOR THE PROMOTION OF FENCING

Formulation of the proposal for the FIE

The Commission supports EFC initiative to move forward on creating an internet television.

The decision was agreed unanimously.

Discussion

Mr. Janda informed that during European Championships in Leipzig, the EFC started pilot live video broadcasting through the internet. The competition included 40 European countries and 416 fencers altogether. 112 journalists from all European countries have been accredited. There was also live TV broadcasting to Russia, France, Switzerland, Italy and also Germany. ZDF Sport Channel rating was 10,2% (great number when considering Tour de France and British Open in Golf, which took place at the same time). The result of video broadcasting was brilliant: 18 million accesses to the websites. We must use the new technologies to promote fencing. Compared to the traditional TV broadcasting, the watching of the videos of the internet broadcasting is not dependent on location. The live broadcasting of the competition was provided with a commentary of the ex-Olympic winner Claudia Bokel. It is obvious that this is brilliant media to promote our sport.

The European continent organizes the majority of FIE competitions. During these competitions we can usually use the signal from the referee's video cameras. We have tapes from each match from the table 32 onwards. We can publish the videos also without commentators and also we want to create the video archive of the competitions. For the organizers of Grand Prix, the broadcasting does not increase their costs. There are only the costs for signal processing and transmission. Technically it is possible to organize live broadcasting from all FIE competitions on the European continent.

Europe is coming with new activity and it needs support from other continents. The EFC website is a good way to access the fencing videos on the internet. It is also important to know that each weekend there are over 200 fencing competitions of all levels on the European continent. These include from small competitions to Grand Prix competitions. It is important for our sport to highlight this fact. Advertisers should be aware of the opportunity.

Ms. Faye stated that she agrees with the idea of an internet television. During the Olympic Games we had wonderful opportunity to see the fencing competitions live. Nevertheless, considering the Africa it is crucial to have more awareness of fencing and to have more competitions on this continent. We need support from FIE. We are not against the live broadcasting on the internet but it is not a top priority for the African countries. The basic development of fencing as the sport still remains the biggest problem of the African continent.

Mr. Makela stated that people are looking for this. Advertisers are looking for the media on the internet.

Mr. Mateev proposed that the broadcasting of fencing tournaments on the internet should be one of our goals for the future.

Mr. Pentikäinen supported Mr. Mateev's proposal and rephrased it as follows: "the promotion commission proposes that the strategic focus area of promoting for the season 2010/2011 will be in the internet broadcasting of fencing tournaments."

Mr. Makela said that we have high class product which we can sell. There is no reason why we could not promote fencing more. Our mission is to promote fencing. Live broadcasting is the best media to use on the internet.

Mr. Pentikäinen requested that we should gather more detailed estimate of the value of the income from selling the advertisements on the internet.

Mr. Lorenzo noted that Tissot is the only sponsor at the moment. This company pays 400.000 CHF per year. It is a fixed contract. Compared to other sports, we are behind in many aspects.

Mr. Pentikäinen proposed the following: commission's opinion is that fencing has great opportunities as a sport but we are losing the momentum of media attention which can be dangerous for the future of the fencing.

Mr. Janda stated that we have to make changes in the strategy of promoting fencing.

BREAK

Mr. Janda asked the members of the commission whether they will support the idea of an internet television. He stated that it is absolutely necessary for our sport. Sponsoring and advertising should be opened for our sport. The internet as a communication tool is used by younger generation. This idea is important for all continents.

Ms. Faye agreed that it is important, but there are other more important issues to develop fencing than media promotion. Nevertheless, it is important to have a TV internet but it is not the priority for the African continent.

Mr. Makela proposed the following: the commission supports creating of the internet television broadcasting of fencing events. Reasoning: this will increase our profile on the internet. It will open up fencing to worldwide audience. It will increase our promotion and marketing possibilities and will be a tool to secure sponsor increase and revenues. This revenue can be used to further promotion of fencing globally.

Mr. Janda inquired from the members of the commission whether they will support the EFC activity to create internet television broadcasting from the FIE competitions held in Europe. To execute this plan, EFC will need financial support from FIE. We will create a databank of all matches and videos from the World Cups.

Mr. Pentikäinen presented an estimation of possible revenues from online advertising based on statistics at the European Championship Competitions. It is necessary to say that this number is the total of all accesses of four portals which broadcasted the competitions.:

Average price for a click on the banner	0,15 Euro
European Championships	18 000 000 pages hits
Estimate	0,1 visitors will hit a banner
Revenue	270 000 Euro
Sales costs	-30 %
Profit	189 000 Euro

Mr. Janda proposed the following decision: the Commission supports EFC initiative to move forward with the creation of the internet television. The proposal was agreed unanimously.

Mr. Makela proposed that it would be beneficial for our objectives to have the commission's meetings during major competitions. It will give an opportunity to review the level of promotion at the competition.

Mr. Asgari stated that FIE will have great opportunities to find sponsors for fencing and more efforts should be done in this field.

V. VARIOUS

The Commission requests that Executive Committee will give a written response if it does not accept a proposition of the Commission.

The commission will request FIE office to have available observer's reports for the members of the commission. Before each meeting of the commission the FIE office should prepare statistic information from the reports that the commission can follow the development of promotion activities.

Decisions were agreed unanimously.