

Minutes of the Rules Commission meeting held in Lausanne 24th and 25th May 2003

Present were: Mr. S. Higginson (GBR), Chairman
Mr. J. Bukantz (USA)
Mr. A. di Blasi (ITA)
Mr. V. Kharkhaloup (RUS)
Mr. J. Meszaros (HUN)
Mr. H. Notter (SUI)
Mr. G. Rousseau (FRA)
Mrs. H. Smith (AUS)
Mr. J. Gonzalez Tirador (CUB)
Mr. M. Favia (MH), (ITA)
Mr. I. Pop (Directeur Technique of the FIE)

Also present on the morning of the 25th:
Mr. R. Roch (MH), President of the FIE
Mr. A. Cramer (BRA), Refereeing Commission.

Absent: Mr. W. Dieffenbach (MH) (GER)

The meeting was opened at 9.00 a.m.: the Chairman welcomed the members of the Commission and called for a minute's silence in memory of Mr. Carl Schwende, a former member of the Commission and its Chairman for 4 years, who had recently died.

He then brought to the attention of the meeting the project for the renumbering of the Rules proposed by Mr Cramer of the Refereeing Commission and suggested that the Commission should discuss it the following morning when everyone would have had a chance to study it.

The Commission then considered the other proposals concerning the Rules which have been presented for the Congress.

1. Proposal by the South African Federation

Proposal to add to the Anti-doping Code more precise details concerning the application of sanctions in cases of doping, in particular dealing with the timing of the application of the sanctions and what sanctions should apply in team competitions.

The Commission agreed entirely that, as soon as a positive result from the A sample is announced, the fencer in question should be suspended temporarily with effect from the competition at which the sample was taken. As far as any sanction applying to a team for which the fencer may have fenced is concerned, see below for the similar proposal made by the Executive Committee.

2. **Proposal 1 by the German Federation**

Proposal that the surface area available for publicity on the fencer's clothing should be increased to 125cm² and that the mask publicity on the mask should also be permitted.

The Commission is in favour of the proposal, on condition that publicity may never be positioned on a fencer's clothing in such a way that it could distract or be a nuisance to the opponent – and that any design on the mask, be it publicity or decorative, must beforehand be submitted for the approval of the Executive Committee.

3. **Proposal 2 by the German Federation**

Proposal that the fine to be paid by any federation which does not respect the quota of referees at World Cup competitions should be paid directly to the organising federation and not to the FIE.

The Commission agrees with this proposal.

4. **Proposal 1 by the Brazilian Federation**

Proposal that the Rules for Competitions should be renumbered so as to make them easier for the referees to use.

The Commission studied Mr. Cramer's proposed version, which he introduced in person; unanimously, the members of the Commission agreed that the principle suggested as valid but that the proliferation of multiple numbers (sometimes running to five or six figures), many of which were very similar, together with the excessive use of underlining, could make reading the text harder rather than easier. There are also many changes to the text, necessitated apparently by the restructuring of certain articles to allow the new presentation; as well there are changes and additions which are supposed to clarify certain points which present the referees with difficulties. However, the proposed revised version of Article t.120 was considered a great improvement.

It is absolutely necessary that the Commission should be able to study the new text in detail, particularly as far as the changes to the text are concerned, before being able to give a definitive opinion on Mr. Cramer's proposal.

5. **Various proposals by the Brazilian Federation**, concerned with clarifying some possible gaps in the Rules.

- i) **Article t.86:** that the same penalty should be applied to a fencer who fails to present himself on the piste when called during a pool or series of direct elimination bouts as at the beginning of the pool or direct elimination bouts.

The Commission agreed with this proposal.

- ii) **Article t.87:** What sanction should be applied if the winner of a direct elimination bout does not salute his opponent? Should the last hit be annulled? How often?

(This matter is also dealt with by a proposal by Mr. Peter Jacobs further on).

The Commission finds that, with the simplification of the article as proposed by Mr. Jacobs, there is no confusion: the hit is not annulled ('the points or titles already obtained at the moment the fault is committed remain valid') but the fencer is suspended for the remainder of the competition and for the next two FIE competitions at the same weapon.

The Commission also hopes that the referee, as he announces the winner, could remind him at the same time of his obligation to salute, which would allow one to distinguish between 'failure to salute' and 'refusal to salute'.

- iii) **Article t.87:** If there is a case of passivity established during the last minute of the official time in a bout in a pool or by direct elimination, applying the current rule tends to prolong the fight rather than shortening it. What should be done to remedy this? Proposal: that the current rule should be applied, but without the use of an additional minute, the fight finishing at the end of the official time.

By a majority, the Commission proposed the following solution:

If, during the last minute of official time, there is manifest passivity on the part of both fencers:-

- if the scores are not equal, the referee does not intervene;
- if the scores are equal, the referee announces that there will be a final minute, lots are drawn to establish priority, and the first hit then scored is decisive (sudden death).

The Commission also acknowledges the need to apply the rules concerning passivity to team matches – in cases of manifest passivity by both fencers, pass directly to the following relay.

- iv) **Article t.118:** concerning any person not on the piste disturbing the order, clarify that they should be shown a red card as a warning.

The Commission feels that the Rules are already quite clear on this matter and that it is merely a matter of 'dotting the i's' to insert the mention of the red card: moreover, since a red card signifies a penalty hit (which is not relevant in this case), it would anyway be more logical to refer to a yellow card...

- v) **Article t.36:** clarify at what times during a team match the arm-judges should change ends, suggesting that it should be after every second fight.

The Commission is quite happy to add this detail but suggests that it should be specified as 'after each fight': in direct elimination bouts, the judges change ends after each three minute period, which would thus be the same in the team matches.

- vi) **Article t.120:** There are situations when a fencer can score a valid hit and at the same time commit an offence which does not entail the annulment of the hit and therefore win a fight while committing an offence. Proposal – to annul any hit which may have been scored (by the offending fencer) when an offence is committed.

By a majority the Commission was in favour of the proposal, but could see no point in inserting the words 'preceding or simultaneous' (to qualify the offence): if the offence precedes the hit, the hit could not be given in any case.

- vii) A proposal to consider the occasions in the rules where an abstract term allows some subjectivity in interpretation by the fencers and, in particular, the referees. The one specific proposal for the moment is to replace the word 'collusion' by 'dishonest agreement'; as well as this example, there are others to be found where a less vague word should be used in the rules.

The Commission accepts the proposal to study the text and is not against this specific example – but would like to point out that a 'dishonest agreement' is as difficult to establish as 'collusion'...

6. **Proposals from the President, the Bureau and the Executive Committee.**

- i) and ii) **Articles o.42 o.48:** proposal to make changes to the text reflecting the intended use after 2004 of the Mixed Team formula at the Junior World Championships.

The Commission agrees that as soon as the principle of mixed teams is adopted by the FIE, these changes are both logical and necessary.

- iii) **Article o.54:** changes and additions to the texts for World Cup competitions:-
- recommending federations to send notice of their intention to take part at least three weeks before the competition;
 - making it obligatory to send the list of names 15 days before the competition, giving also the name of the leader of the delegation;
 - to make it compulsory for the organisers, on pain of a fine, to refuse entry to fencers not on the official entry lists, to all fencers not entered by a national federation and to all fencers and referees who do not hold a valid FIE licence.

The Commission agrees with all the texts proposed, with the only reservation that federations should be able to make modifications to the list of names up to midnight on the Tuesday preceding the competition.

- iv) **Article o.57:** Proposal to replace the final paragraph with a text defining in greater detail the composition and selection of the Directoire Technique.

The Commission approves the text unanimously.

- v) **Article o.58:** Proposal to define, in the first paragraph, the supervisory roles of the Observer at World Cup competitions and of the Bureau of the FIE at World Championships and the Olympic Games and to add a new paragraph **j**), making it obligatory for the Directoire Technique to inform the FIE of all black cards given in the course of the competitions.

The Commission approves the text unanimously.

- vi) **Article o.68:** Proposal concerning the costs and obligations of referees at World Championships.

The Commission approves the text unanimously.

- viii) **Article o.69:** Proposal concerning the obligations of countries organising World Championships.

The Commission approves the text unanimously.

- ix) **Article o.74, 2nd paragraph:** to be replaced by the following:-
In addition, the Congress will not accept candidacies for the organisation of the World Junior and World Cadet Championships which do not group them.

The Commission approves the text unanimously.

- xiii) **Article o.88:** Proposal concerning the quotas for referees obliged to accompany fencers to World Cup Competitions (reduction of the number of fencers who may compete without providing a referee to three) and defining the penalties to be applied if the quotas are not respected.

The Commission approves the text unanimously.

- xiv) **Article o.91, b):** Proposal to add a new paragraph concerning the multiplier to be applied to points at Grand Prix- Referee competitions (2) and World Championships (3).

The Commission approves the text unanimously.

- xv) **Article t.34:** Proposal specifying that referees may not combine their functions with any other activity.

The Commission approves the text unanimously.

- xviii) **Article t.129, Annexe 1:** Proposals concerning the penalties to be applied in cases of doping, specifying the application of the sanctions to the individual in question and to any team for which he might have fenced.

The Commission makes the following observations:-

- except at the Olympic Games, there is always a delay of up to two months between the taking of a specimen and the announcement of the results of the A Sample: it is right that any individual's results during that period should be annulled, but it seems rather hard to consider annulling the points of a team which, until the results of the A Sample are announced, have no reason not to select the fencer in question.
- the proposal to promote all the fencers or teams by one place following the annulment of the results of a guilty fencer is a very simple solution – but risks committing a certain injustice, in that a number of fencers or teams will benefit from points they have not earned, since most of them will have lost to 'legitimate' opponents (who have not taken drugs); perhaps it would be possible to consider promoting only those fencers or teams who lost against the guilty fencer, i.e. only those who were directly disadvantaged by the effects of the doping....

Proposals from the President, the Bureau and the Executive Committee to delete certain articles in the Rules and the Statutes which are merely repetitions and to move certain articles from the Rules to the Statutes or vice versa.

The Commission looked at all the proposed changes and approved all of them, particularly as none of them are changes to the Rules and are only a 'tidying up' of the text.

Proposals concerning foil and sabre which had been carried over.

In the absence of a report or any further information from the 'Ad hoc Commission', the Commission postponed all further discussion of these points until its next meeting.

7. **Proposals by the Spanish Fencing Federation.**

- i) Proposal that the tableau for World Cup Team competitions should be drawn up by drawing lots in groups of four for the

teams placed 5-8, 9-12 and 13-16 in the ranking, in order to avoid having the same matches occurring in every competition.

The Commission acknowledges that there is indeed a problem, but is only in favour of the proposal if the drawing of lots is in groups of two from the 3rd place on.

- ii) Proposal to draw up the tableau for the World Championships team events without drawing lots in groups of two so as to reflect the real strength of the teams.

The Commission is in favour of this proposal.

- iii)& iv) Proposals to fence off only the first 8 places in World Cup team competitions and only the first 16 places in World Championship team events.

The Commission is in favour of this proposal.

- v) Proposal that, if a member of a team receives a black card, the team should not be disqualified but should be allowed to continue to fence using the reserve.

The Commission is unanimously against this proposal.

- vi) Proposals concerning the World Cup and Grand Prix events and the World Championships:
 - a) that World Cup events points should have a coefficient of 1 and that the participation should be limited to 8 fencers per country with 15 for the organising country;
 - b) that there should be 4 individual and team Grand Prix events (per weapon) (2 in Europe, 1 in America and 1 in Asia), with the points having a coefficient of 3, participation to be limited to 6 fencers per country maximum and 10 for the organising country;
 - c) that fencers should be limited to a maximum of 8 World Cup events (plus the World Championships) in any one season;
 - d) that points for the World Championships individual and team events should have a coefficient of 5.

The Commission makes the following remarks:

Point a) – in favour;

Point b) - we cannot in the long term exclude Africa; it may be a good idea to limit the number of Grand Prix but 4 is too few, especially if we look ahead to having a Grand Prix in Africa. And it would be unwise to limit too severely the number of entries into what will be more expensive competitions to run!

Point c) – In favour of the principal to limit the number of events per fencer in a season, but we suggest 12 or 14 as a limit.

Point d) – the coefficient of 5 for the World Championships seems too high – we agree rather with the coefficients suggested by the Executive Committee.

8. Proposals by the French Fencing Federation.

- i) Proposal to limit to 12 the number of World Cup events at any one weapon.

The Commission is in favour of the principle of limiting the number of events but suggests a limit of 14 rather than 12.

- ii) Proposal to make it obligatory to take part in at least 2 World Cup events for any country wishing to enter the World Championship team events.

The Commission is unanimously against this proposal.

9. Proposal by the Great Britain Fencing Federation.

Proposal concerning hits scored at the same time as a fault is committed.

This proposal was discussed at the same time as a proposal on the same subject by the Brazilian Federation (see above). The majority of the Commission were in favour of the Brazilian proposal.

10. Proposals by the Hungarian Fencing Federation.

- iv) Proposal to limit the number of Category A (World Cup) events to 8 per weapon, of which 4 should be Grand Prix.

This question has already been discussed earlier (see proposals by the French Federation).

- vi) Proposal to introduce money prizes for the World Championships.

The Commission considers that this is a matter for the Publicity and Propaganda Commission.

- vii) **Article t.29**

Proposal to replace the current text with the following:

A fencer who crosses one of the limits because he is jostled by his opponent or for any accidental reason is not liable to penalisation.

The Commission finds it absolutely reasonable that a fencer should not be penalised for a 'fault' for which he is not himself responsible: it therefore approves this proposal.

11. Proposals by the Israel Fencing Federation.

- i) Proposal to allow the entering of 5 fencers for team events, thus allowing a choice between two reserves.
The Commission is against this proposal.
- ii) Proposal to allow the entering on the pool sheet, at World and Continental Championship team events, of a fencer 'not of the same sex'.

The Commission was unanimous in rejecting this proposal.

- iii) Proposal that every participant in World Cup competitions should receive a minimum of 0.1 point if they do not qualify within the current points system.

The Commission was not in favour of this proposal.

12. Proposals by Mr. Peter Jacobs, (GBR), MH.

- i) Proposal to enter into the Rules (**Articles t.43, t.44, t.45,3) and t.120**) a formal ban on any electronic apparatus in the mask which would allow a person off the piste from communicating with a fencer on the piste.

The Commission was unanimous in approving this proposal.

- ii) Proposal to spell out in **Article t.129, Annexe**, that the sanctions apply not only to the fencer at fault, but also, when appropriate, to an official, member of the support team or member(s) of the medical, pharmaceutical or related professions.

The Commission approves this proposal.

- iii) Proposal to add to the end of **Article t.45** the following paragraph:-

If a fencer presents himself on the piste for a bout (in a pool, direct elimination or team match) wearing clothing which does not satisfy the Rules in the following ways:

- *without having the fencer's name correctly printed on the back (application – all the official FIE competitions, at every stage ion the competition) **and/or***
- *without wearing his national colours (application- **all bouts** in the World Championships, World Junior and Cadet Championships and World Cup team events; **all***

bouts from the tableau of 64 in World Cup senior individual events), the referee will penalise him with a red card (Articles t.114, t.117, t.120, 2nd group). The fencer at fault has however the right to remain on the piste and fence the bout in question.

Add therefore to **Article t.120, 2nd group** the following:-
Absence of name on the back; absence of national colours when required.....t.45.

The Commission approves this proposal by a majority.

- iv) Proposal to penalise a fencer who does not present himself when called to fence **during** a pool, series of direct elimination bouts or team match in the same way as specified for the beginning of these bouts.

This question has already been dealt with – see the proposals of the Brazilian Federation.

- v) Proposal to correct the ambiguity in **Article t.87** concerning the fencer's salute at the beginning and end of each bout by **replacing** the 3rd paragraph with the following text and **deleting** the 5th paragraph:-

Before the bout commences, both fencers make the fencer's salute to their opponent, the referee and the public. Also, when the last hit has been scored, the bout is not finished until the two fencers have saluted their opponent, the referee and the public: for this reason they must remain motionless while the referee gives his decision and then proceed to the fencer's salute and shake their opponent's non-sword hand as soon as the decision has been given. If one or both of the fencers refuse to conform to this rule, the referee will suspend them for the remainder of the competition in progress and for the next two FIE competitions at the weapon concerned. (Cf. t.114, t.119, t.120). Points or titles already won at the moment the fault was committed remain valid.

The Commission approves this proposal unanimously.

13. **Proposal by the Rules Commission.**

Article t.120: Proposal to transfer the fault ' Hit deliberately scored not on the opponent' from the 1st group to the 2nd group.

Needless to say, the Commission approves its own proposal.....

14. **Proposal by the Refereeing Commission.**

The Refereeing Commission proposes to transfer all the referees on the official FIE list in Category C straight into Category B and to discontinue the Category C.

The Rules Commission considers that this question is outside its remit.