

EUROPEAN LACROSSE FEDERATION



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING GRAND HOTEL LAHTI FINLAND 11th August 2008

6.15pm Mr Peter Mundy the President of the International Lacrosse Federation declared the meeting open and welcomed all the delegates from every member nation in attendance. He stated that he was delighted that the meeting coincided with the 2008 European Lacrosse Championships for men and women. The largest event to date. He thanked the Finnish Lacrosse Association for hosting the games.

He observed that as a relatively new body it was encouraging to see the development, which had occurred, however every action required effort such as forming the federation but more effort was required in respect of training and encouraging more referees, but it was the chicken and egg situation. Which comes first playing lacrosse or gaining more European referees? This was a matter for delegates to consider later as an agenda item.

The President outlined the voting procedure and reminded delegates that each country had two votes. Observers and others were welcome to the meeting but they should not enter into discussion when, matters were raised or vote on any issue.

Item 1. To confirm the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 26th May 2007 in Aachen, Germany.

The President requested all present to verify that they had received a copy of the minutes which had been previously circulated for their perusal and that they had read them. Those present confirmed that they had received a copy of the minutes.

The President asked if any person wished to correct alter or add any thing to the minutes. Those present indicated they did not wish to do so. He then requested they be moved for acceptance.

Germany moved acceptance to the proposition, which was seconded by Italy. A vote ensued which unanimously accepted the proposition. Accordingly the minutes were accepted as true and accurate record of the meeting **and they were confirmed.**

Item 2. Matters Arising From the Last Minutes:

The President indicated that the matter of increasing the numbers of referees in Europe was an agenda item at 11, as was eligibility criteria at 12. Additionally he reported that the Federation now had a Bank Account at Lloyds TSB Pall Mall London. This enables fees, dues and income to be banked in Euros or GBP.

He was pleased that a motion from the floor at the last meeting meant an increase in subscriptions to ELF. New Nations would receive membership free their first year, recognising the financial difficulties that Nations experienced when starting up. The following 3 years would be at a rate of 50 Euros and thereafter 100 Euros per annum.

Item 3 Hon Secretary's report

The President informed the meeting that Hon Secretary Michael Hoeck was unable to attend the meeting; neither was he able to undertake any further duties as the secretary therefore a vacancy arises as an agenda item. Consequently Raj Rant would read the report.

Raj Rout reported as an overview the progress that had been made in the decision-making process, administration and communication. He outlined the monthly telephone conference with the executive committee, which had proved very successful. The equipment donation policy had also worked very well.

A significant step forward for the ELF was the appointment on February the 1st of an Intern to assist with the organisation and administration of the Federation. Among her tasks was to work out concepts for the marketing of lacrosse in Europe.

The Championship rules may also require review.

The Friends of ELF continue to grow in number and all are encouraged to join the friends and promote the benefit of membership to others.

The current European Championship is the biggest ever with 18 Nations competing.

It was noted that Bermuda who were not currently eligible to participate in the current championship had requested consideration for membership.

It had been identified that there was need for a lead 'Technical Director'

Sponsorship continues to be challenge for the Federation and it was regrettable that Eurosport did not wish to televise any of the games at Lahti.

The European Lacrosse Magazine is growing in popularity and delegates are requested to submit articles/photographs of interest.

At the conclusion of the report the President expressed his thanks to Raj and also to Michael Hoeck for the report and his efforts as Hon Secretary.

Item 4 Hon Treasurer's report

The President informed the delegates that Florian Muth had been the Treasurer for the past 12 years. He was unable to continue due to pressures of work and family commitments. There was a vacancy and in the absence of any other nomination Mr John Debnam had been nominated for the position.

The President requested Mr Debnam to provide a brief outline of his background and professional experience. Mr. Debnam did so and delegates readily accepted his input.

The President requested the delegates to accept the proposal that Mr Debnam undertake the Treasurers duties. Kristiasn Gotsch seconded this proposition. **A vote ensued which was unanimous.**

The Treasurer then provided copies of the financial report to the delegates. He then gave an informative explanation of the accounts. It was noted that England, Slovenia and Norway had not paid their subscriptions to the ELF.

Ron Balls England proposed a vote of thanks to Florian for his hard work over many years. The President stated that Florians contribution as Treasurer had been unstinting and the ELF had derived a great deal of benefit from his efforts and subject to the approval of the delegates a suitable gift would be obtained for presentation to Florian in recognition of his significant involvement.

Gordon Shumack Wales. Stated that non-paying nations should be excluded from future competition, as technically they are not members of the Federation. Ron Balls England assured delegates that invoices were paid on receipt so he did not understand why this occurred. Discussion ensued, which resulted in a recommendation that non-payers be allowed to continue in the current competition. Invoices to be acknowledged by ELF. If postal voting becomes permissible that a rule change regarding non-payers be formulated. (GFS)

The President asked if any other person had any questions before moving on.

Madge Corbitt Wales, enquired the date of the financial year-end, it was stated that it is a moveable date due to the flexible dates of the Annual meeting. The Treasurer noted it would be desirable for a fixed year-end and he would review this.

Item 5 To receive a report on current development work in Europe

It was reported that development had been going very well in Poland with games taking place between Potsdam, Mettin and Stetin. Warsaw had expressed an interest and it was very encouraging.

Queensborough was proving challenging as the student union was not receptive to Lacrosse, but local representatives will persist.

The President had met with lacrosse players in Budapest Hungary and that work is ongoing.

Kristain Gotsch stated that the Ukraine, Russia, Romania and Iceland are all areas which can be developed and that will hopefully occur in due course but there is nothing concrete at this time. It is gaining ground slowly but it happen with focussed effort.

Belgium has a number of youth teams and is a good prospect.

Discussion ensued as to the best way to get lacrosse started. Pop lacrosse (Intercrosse) had been very popular in Wales where the development officer had trained teachers in primary schools who could then coach 7 -to 11 year olds in school. England had similar schemes.

The Netherlands were congratulated on their effort which resulted in 12 teams of 6/7 year olds playing lacrosse.

It was resolved that the President would collate best practice from Countries that had successfully introduced lacrosse particularly to younger children as this is where lacrosse can take hold. In due course he would circulate a number of the methods used to all Nations requiring assistance. The individual Nation could then adopt the option, which was appropriate for their circumstances.

Item 6 To receive a report from the Austrian Lacrosse Federation on the upcoming European Box Lacrosse Championships 2009

It was stated by the President that Lacrosse in all its forms is to be encouraged but box lacrosse is not widely played. The delegate from Austria indicated that they would be pleased to host a box event. Although it may not be possible to do so in 2009 but they would endeavour to do so sometime in the near future. It was noted that the Czech Republic and the Netherlands had successfully introduced box lacrosse and further Nations participating in was to be welcomed.

Discussion occurred and it was suggested that 2009 would be a good time to hold a box event and any nation could apply to hold the championship. It was again recommended that more referees would be required from Europe as importing referees as vital as they have been, would be very expensive.

Item 7 To receive application(s) for membership of the ELF, from Poland and Bermuda.

The President outlined to the meeting the very promising and important start that Poland had made. It was very pleasing that the Polish delegates present had been able to maintain steady progress resulting in lacrosse being played in three areas of the Country. They had also submitted a written report to support their application.

The President invited the Polish delegate to address the meeting, Tomos stated that Poland were very appreciative of the support they had received from the President personally and the ELF. Poland wished to continue to develop lacrosse and their wish was to participate in a future ELF event.

The President stated that it was clear that they are suitable candidates for membership of the Federation and he proposed they be accepted as a member.

Kristian Gotsch seconded this and after a vote there was unanimous agreement. **The proposition was carried.** The President welcomed Poland as members. Tomos thanked ELF for their acceptance of Poland.

The President then stated that Bermuda Lacrosse had submitted a 17-page document in which they outlined the reasons why they believed they should be admitted as members. Other sports were used as examples why an exception to their geographical location and its proximity to Europe should be made in their case.

The Faroe Islands and Surinam were quoted as examples where football players from those locations had been allowed to play in South America. If admitted this could set a precedent allowing other Nations with tenuous links to Europe to also apply for membership.

Discussion was invited, from which it was evident that Bermuda had strong links with England and they were already members of the former ILF. This was entirely appropriate as this was a worldwide body and was not European in nature.

Ron Balls England stated that Bermuda had applied to play in the British National Championships and they had been refused entry. If Bermuda were admitted to ELF it would pose a difficulty for the UK with future events of a similar nature.

The ELF officers were asked for their opinion, their response was that it believed that ELF could not support them as Bermuda was a long way from Europe, but it was a matter for the delegates to decide.

Richie Moran Ireland stated that Bermuda had competed in the 2006 World Championships and travelling and expense did not appear to be a problem for them. Delegates indicated that whilst not a problem for Bermuda it would be a problem for many of them to travel to Bermuda, if they became members and held an event.

The President requested the delegates to consider the application and to indicate by a vote whether Bermuda should be accepted. This was achieved with 2 votes for acceptance being noted with 18 against. Accordingly Bermuda was not accepted as a member.

Item 8 To receive a report on the development of a European Club Championship competition.

The President invited Gordon Shumack to read an e-mail report recently received in respect of this event.

It was outlined that the first annual ELF champion's cup of men's lacrosse would occur on the 3rd, 4th and 5th of October in Hamburg. Where the very best of European club lacrosse will meet. The President and the European Lacrosse Federation and executive had given consent for the event to be recognised as an ELF event. Eligibility criteria was not outlined but believed to be as existing.

The reasons for choosing the particular teams was outlined they were listed as follows:

England (north) - Wilmslow
England (south) - Hampstead
Germany - hthc Hamburg
Czech republic - lc jizni mesto
Netherlands - Rotterdam
Sweden - FOC
Denmark - KFB raiders

Further explanation was provided and in view of the length of the verbal report, the minute taker undertook to circulate the details to all members.

The President urged those invited to participate to contact Ken Gallucio to convey their intentions, to participate or not as the event was not far away. He thanked Ken and the Hamburg Club for their continuing and valuable support of ELF

Item 9 To receive a report on the Friends of the ELF.

The President advised the delegates of the reason that the 'Friends' were created. This included vital fundraising, which assisted to purchase much needed equipment for potential start up Nations and provide other resources for new members. It was an excellent scheme to support the ELF objectives.

Each friend on joining for just a minimum of 40 Euros would receive a silk tie or scarf depending upon their gender. Additionally they would receive the European Lacrosse Magazine published quarterly. They also had the satisfaction of knowing that donations/subscriptions would further enhance the development of lacrosse in Europe. Delegates were requested to support the friends. The facility of on line payment made it easy to do. The existing friends were thanked for their generosity and the funding already received.

Item 10 To consider the development of Junior Lacrosse in Europe.

The President stated that junior development was going slower than ELF would have wished. It was critical to successful development that schools should be involved and the younger children 7 to 12 year old were ideal prospects for lacrosse. It was an inclusive game where girls and boys could play mixed lacrosse. Hamburg, England Scotland and Wales had all been successful in this area of development.

The Czech Republic reported that they had an under 19 league in Prague and under 16 girls with 4 or 5 teams playing. The President stated that this was to be applauded but there was still a need for much younger children to be involved. It was questioned as to how that was to be achieved as communication sometimes proved difficult and IFLWA states it was a matter for each country how lacrosse was developed.

Ron Balls England informed the delegates that there was strong development in England through Universities and 94 schools were playing lacrosse and there had been similar success in Wales.

Gordon Shumack Wales stated that the lacrosse development officer had taught primary school teachers to coach lacrosse. This was a recognised and accredited national qualification.

Discussion ensued in respect of how development could occur and some countries reported difficulties in engaging schools in pop lacrosse (Intercrosse). Obtaining equipment had also proved troublesome.

Latvia reported that they had started lacrosse in schools and through ELF there was a need for common ways to do this. Hamburg Warriors had also had a very good schools programme.

The President stated that he had already agreed to assemble the best practice from those countries, which had been successful. Countries could apply to ELF for assistance for equipment/finance.

Item 11 To discuss the development of Referee training and a requirement that whenever possible only Referees resident in mainland Europe should be asked to referee games in member countries.

The President opened the debate of this matter by stressing that the important words in this issue were "*wherever possible*" On a recent visit to Holland speaking with European referees it was apparent to him that the organisers of the 2008 championships were having difficulty in obtaining the number of referees required. He stated that each country should encourage growth in the numbers of referees and observed that the current 'pool' of referees are getting older. The ELF will do all it could to assist by organising camps and training. When attending events their accommodation and meals would be paid for. Discussion was requested.

Ritchie Moran Ireland encouraged all who wished to qualify as a referee to attend a camp. It was a very good method of training and the philosophy was excellent.

Sweden suggested such camps could run at the same time as an ELF lacrosse event. Delegates thought this a very good idea as referees in training could put into practice the theory taught.

England suggests that the principle is very good as is the proposal, some of the detail was in the proposal but there was a need for greater detail. It was believed ELF would still need referees from the US Canada and other non European Countries for some time to come.

Czech Republic stated that referees from every country were important and ELF should maintain links so they do not become forbidden.

The President reminded delegates that it was not intended to forbid or exclude any referees from outside Europe as earlier stated, but that it should occur "*wherever possible*" that European referees should be used.

Germany Matthias the RIC for the current event reinforced the position that this is not intended to exclude referees from other countries. In the longer term Europe would be more self-reliant and if we have 3, 4 or 5 division referees it can only get better.

Wales Madge Corbitt stated that she had attended a recent event in Prague and an umpire's clinic was running at the same time, with umpires tutoring in experienced umpires. It works and is excellent.

Netherlands added that the camps were important to those had passed the examination and referees going to the next level need camps. To encourage this we need to keep using the same referees so they get better and also encourage others. A central point of contact at ELF would be good.

England Ron Balls stated that we all accept the need for more referees in Europe. Perhaps ELF could task the referee coordinators to form the point of contact.

The President observed that everyone appeared to be in agreement. He requested delegates to consider the proposal; ELF would endeavour to hold as many camps as possible. He asked for a vote on the proposal from England which was seconded by Wales. This occurred and the proposition received **unanimous acceptance**.

Item 12 To discuss amending the ELF Championship Rules by requiring that all players representing their country shall have resided in their country for at least 5 years out of the previous 10 years, subject to the retention of the concession whereby up to 4 non-resident players may be included in each team providing the 4 players conform with the current Passport, Parent, Grandparent and marriage requirements.

Kristian Gotsch spoke to this item and outlined the rationale for discussion. There had been past agreements and disagreements each of which had specific points and general points. Following this championships ELF require feedback from participating countries to assist future clarification with suggestions to improve. Timing of such events was a complex situation, as we could not please every country.

It was stated that eligibility is a touchy subject and as an example footballers could play for a country not having lived there at any time.

The president indicated that this matter was for discussion and was intended to encourage individuals to get onto their own National teams. A number of countries have already achieved this without being detrimental to those from outside their country who have assisted them in the past. Local players have been greatly upset when non-resident players have taken their team places. Unless such suggested restrictions are in place National teams will face similar problems.

Madge Corbitt Wales asked did the suggested changes apply to men and women, as if residency applied to women this would result in Wales women not being able to field a women's team. She enquired if ELF were seeking to include or exclude.

The President replied that ELF was a very inclusive body and did not seek to exclude anyone, but each country should play national players and not rely on imported players as this did little to develop home grown players and clubs. National players living in their own country have done so much to expand lacrosse in Europe.

Madge Corbitt Wales observed that it was difficult to compete in World events and European events, as rules were different.

Scotland stated it would be preferable if one set of rules covered both FIL and ELF.

England Ron Balls states changes were made in Prague by the then ILF when it was proposed by Scotland that neither ILF nor ELF could change rules 10 months before a championship.

Italy stated that players could spend years playing and practising only for their place to be taken by an imported player. This was wrong.

Netherlands informed delegates that they had 7 eligible to play and the remainder were resident players with only two years experience. These local players already love the game and they want to play as a truly National team. The delegate explained that "We want to look in the mirror and see Netherlands National players it is very important to learn to compete and develop as our own Country."

Further discussion ensued with contributions from Spain, Austria, Italy, Netherlands, Scotland, England and the Czech Republic. All of who had points for and against the suggested criteria.

The President reminded everyone that it was their choice to change or not. He asked if everyone who wished to speak on the matter had done so. This was affirmed and the delegates were then asked to vote. This resulted in 29 against and 4 for the suggested change to the rule. **The proposal was not accepted.**

**Item 13 to elect the following officers,
President, Men's Vice President, Ladies Vice President, Honorary Secretary
Honorary Treasurer**

Gordon Shumack Wales stated that it was his pleasure to propose that the President Mr Peter Mundy should continue. Gordon outlined the significant lifetime work of Peter who should be considered as the father of the ELF and lacrosse in Europe. We are all involved in this latest event thanks to the President. Gordon then requested delegates to vote on his proposal, which was seconded by Kristian Gotsch. This received **unanimous acceptance**. The delegates expressed their acclaim and appreciation in the usual manner.

The President responded and thanked the proposer for his kind words and the delegates for their support. He stated lacrosse had given him an immense amount of pleasure and satisfaction. He was delighted to observe continued progress and development. He reminded all present that there was still much to do and every action required effort.

The President then proposed Kristian Gotsch to continue as men's Vice President. Gordon Shumack seconded the proposition and after a vote the proposal was **unanimously accepted**.

The President then proposed Lisa Matinenevsi to continue as Ladies Vice President. Kristian Gotsch seconded the proposition and after a vote the proposal was **unanimously accepted**.

The President thanked Lisa and Kristian for their continued work on behalf of lacrosse in Europe. Without their important assistance and effort ELF would not functioned as effectively.

The President then introduced Mr John Debnam who had offered to undertake the duties of Treasurer. He had known John for a very long time and the ELF were fortunate to have someone of his professional knowledge taking responsibility for the ELF finances. Mr Debnam was invited to address the meeting. He did so and briefly outlined his very successful business career and his friendship with the President. He was looking forward to assisting the ELF subject to delegate's acceptance after a vote the proposal seconded by Kristian Gotsch was **unanimously accepted**

The President then introduced Gordon Shumack Wales who had agreed to undertake the role of secretary. He requested those present to accept Mr Shumack as secretary the proposal was seconded by Kristian Gotsch by and after a vote the proposal was **unanimously accepted**.

Item 14 To elect other members to assist the Officers with the ongoing affairs of the Executive Committee, Honorary Referee Co-ordinator Men, Honorary Referee Co-ordinator Women, Honorary Secretary of the Friends of the ELF.

The President requested Mattias Lockerman to continue as Honorary Referee Co-ordinator Men. Mattias had done an excellent job including taking a lead at the current event and he was delighted that a European referee had been recognised. Mattias agreed and the President requested the delegates to vote on the proposal and Kristian Gotsch seconded this. After a vote the proposal was **unanimously accepted**.

Madge Corbitt Wales requested the word referee not be used as umpires officiate the ladies games and they do not have referees. This was not an amendment would occur. Discussion ensued after which Madge Corbitt undertook to communicate the vacancy to her colleagues and would report back to ELF in due course. She was thanked for this.

The friends of the ELF was a post dealing with finances and income generation, as a result the President suggested that the Treasurer may wish to supervise this important facet of the ELF. Mr Debnam responded, "that it goes hand in glove with the Treasurers work". He was delighted to accept.

The President then requested those present to accept Mr Debnam as Honorary Secretary of the Friends of the ELF. Kristian Gotsch by seconded the proposal and after a vote the proposal was **unanimously accepted**.

Item 15 Decision: Addition to the ELF constitution to allow for postal votes

Kristian Gotsch explained the rationale of postal votes with e-mail communication in advance of any suggested rule change. Countries would have sufficient time to consider the suggestion, which would need amendment to the current rules/constitution. The President seconded this proposal and after a vote the proposal was **unanimously accepted**.

Item 16 Any other business.

Rule changes

Ron Balls England spoke to a paper, which he had formulated and which had been previously circulated for the benefit of delegates. This concerned the number of referees to be deployed at ELF events. The rule change was suggested which would bring the ELF into the same formula and organisation as the former ILF had successfully used for many years. He proposed that this be accepted at ELF.

The President informed the delegates that the executive committee of ELF agreed with the proposition and he moved that it should be accepted and he thanked Ron Balls his the time and effort. Gordon Shumack Wales seconded the proposal and after a vote the proposal was **unanimously accepted**.

Ladies disagreement in respect of games format

Liisa Matinvesi informed the meeting that following some disagreement in respect of the way the ladies games had been scheduled consequently a meeting had been held to review the position during which a proposition was put forward to change the format. This failed by 6 votes to 3 with one abstention. Discussion followed it was evident that the ladies wished to have the same opportunity as the men to win through the groups and have a chance at winning the event. It was accepted and regretted that ELF did not have sufficient time to either discuss changes or implement change. Schedules had been published and spectators in particular who had made arrangements to travel in relation to the published programme could be greatly inconvenienced.

Further discussion ensued relative to ensuring the women played against the same rules as the men concerning playoffs. The delegates were assured that matters would be corrected. The rule changes suggested by Ron Balls England would ensure future events would allow the ladies greater opportunity.

It was noted that the Czech Republic ladies had been playing under protest.

The President apologized for situation that had occurred and assured those present that change would be implemented, following the vote for change and it was unfortunate that this situation had happened.

Advisory board

Ritchie Moran Ireland suggested the ELF should have an advisory board to assist the executive. Individuals from various countries could report to the Executive and President. Discussion ensued which resulted in the idea being received as very helpful.

The President thanked all concerned for their input and stated it would of assistance if the delegates could consider this further. The use of the postal vote, which was earlier accepted, may enable the matter to appropriately dealt with and a proposal should Ireland wish to move the issue forward.

Disciplinary matters

Sweden stated that a disciplinary committee formed correctly states all participating nations should be included. It is supposed to be built up from the same groups so could be biased. It was then suggested that such a committee should be “an independent committee”

The President noted the difficulty of bringing together 18 Nations and that an independent appeals and adjudication committee was meeting after the AGM to investigate and determine the specific disciplinary appeal of an incident, which occurred during this event. That committee would also report on how we can improve the operation of a disciplinary committee at future events. He was confident that the outcome would minimise the risk of future reoccurrence.

Closure of the meeting

The President then enquired if any other delegates wished to speak before the meeting was to be closed. In the absence of an affirmative response, the President thanked everyone for their attendance and their contributions to the meeting. He wished them well for the remainder of the event and a safe return to their home.

He closed the meeting at 8.55pm