

IAU President's Report (Interim 2006-2008)

To all IAU Member Federations and IAU Committee colleagues

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This report covers the period September 2006 to June 2008. The topics covered include:-

- the preparation of new IAU Statutes
- the relationship of the IAU and World Crossbow Shooting Association WCSA
- a visit by IAU VP Mrs. Pearl Ho Bin to the GAISF General Assembly in Beijing
- the development of a portable 30 Match Target system by the Netherlands federation
- development of IAU website and eNewsletter
- summary of Match and Field division events 2007/8
- looking ahead ...

IAU Statutes

Since the Special Meeting in Steyr Austria on August 20, 2006 the proposed new IAU Statutes have gone through two further revisions. The 3rd Draft was distributed to member early in June and is on the Sulgen EGA Agenda for approval by the Delegates.

If adopted, the 2008 Statutes will represent just the first step towards a complete restructuring of the IAU. The time scale for further changes will, to some extent, be influenced by the outcome of the negotiations between the IAU and the World Crossbow Shooting Association WCSA on re-unification. It would therefore be good if the Sulgen EGA will declare its support for the Executive Committees efforts to achieve reconciliation with the WCSA - and an early return to a single, more effective international organization.

Relationship of the IAU and the World Crossbow Shooting Association WCSA

At the end of 2002 the IAU lost a significant part of the IAU Field Division when Australia, Great Britain, Finland, New Zealand and the USA left us to form a new organization - the World Crossbow Shooting Association WCSA. Not only did we lose these nations - we also lost 2 continents; the Americas and Oceania.

Soon after I became President, the WCSA Secretary John Clark in Australia, the IAU Executive Committee and I negotiated an agreement (MOU appendix 1) which is intended to lead to eventual reunification. Sadly, not long after this agreement was signed in October 2006, the President of the WCSA Tony Bradbury died. In accordance with Tony's wishes, his colleagues on the WCSA Executive, led by John Clark continued with the MOU initiative.

Since 2006 the IAU and the WCSA Executive Committees have considered a number of options; for example the running of combined IAU/WCSA Championships as a short-term measure. Consideration has also been given to the formation of a new "umbrella" body to co-ordinate crossbow shooting. However this would add yet another layer of administration, when what is actually needed is a reduction. In the end, the most effective solution will be full re-unification into a single world organization.

The recently elected WCSA President John Bingham (GBR) has been invited to attend our EGA in Sulgen. John's wife Iris, the WCSA Lady World Champion (wheelchair assisted category) is also taking part in the Weinfeld event as a Guest of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee and I are pleased to welcome John and Iris to the EGA.

IAU-WCSA relationship continued

My recommendation is for the IAU and WCSA Executive Committees to continue to work together with the objective of preparing a set of principles, and a time-table, through which re-unification can be achieved. This must also involve the IAU's Field and WCSA Technical Committees in order to prepare a set of harmonized competition rules. I suggest that 2010 be set as the target date for a decision on re-unification.

GAISF /AGFIS Membership Application

On April 26, 2007 the IAU Vice-President Mrs. Pearl Ho Bin and the Secretary General of the IAU's Asia Confederation Dr. Mrs. Ning-Ning Mahlmann attended the GAISF General Assembly in Beijing, China as observers. Afterwards Mrs. Ho Bin and Dr. Mrs. Mahlmann had a private meeting with the GAISF Director General Mrs. Christine Dominguez to discuss the IAU's prospects for future membership. Mrs. Dominguez confirmed that there is no limit to the number of times that an applicant can submit an application and that the ISSF (Shooting) and FITA (Archery) are both supportive of the IAU's application. However, we were advised that the IAU needs to prepare a much stronger presentation package for our next application.

For more than 20 years Mrs. Bin Ho has worked to secure GAISF recognition for the IAU at considerable personal expense. The IAU Executive Committee and I wish to express our sincerest thanks and appreciation to Pearl and to Dr. Mrs. Mahlmann for this work and for travelling to China and representing the IAU last year.

Since the Beijing meeting IAU Vice President Frans Fakkers has been in contact with the Netherlands Olympic Committee NOC, and there is the possibility that the NOC could assist with the IAU's next GAISF membership application.

As from 2007, in order to become a member of the GAISF, an international federation must have at least 40 member countries. Only one (1) national federation per sport per country will be counted. The list of member countries must include at least three (3) continents.

At the end of 2007 the IAU had 24 member countries on two (2) continents; Europe and Asia (but not all of these federations had paid the IAU annual fee in 2007).

On this basis, membership of the GAISF appears to be a very distant goal for the IAU.

My recommendation to the EGA is for the Executive Committee to be asked to start to prepare the next membership application and, at the same time, continue to negotiate with the WCSA in order to establish terms for reunification. In addition to this, efforts must be made to recruit new and former member nations. It should be noted that the WCSA supports GAISF membership in-principle, but has concerns about the cost to those federations who have nothing to gain through GAISF membership.

However, the efforts of the Executive Committee alone will not be enough to secure GAISF membership for the IAU. We will need to work as a team.

Our chances for success will be greatly improved if each and every national Delegate will commit to working together with the IAU Executive Committee. For example, if every existing IAU member federation made it their objective to mentor just one new member country each year for the IAU, the target of 40 countries on 3 continents could be reached by 2010.

IAU Finances

The IAU Secretary General Eric Dougliss will report on the IAU's financial state during the Sulgen EGA. However, I would respectfully ask the Delegates for their co-operation by making sure that the IAU annual fees are paid into the IAU's bank account by the due date each year - and not waiting until the next IAU championships to pay in arrears.

As and when the IAU becomes a member of the GAISF, it will cost at least 5,000 CHF per year in annual fees. On top of that will be the expenses to send a Delegate to the GAISF General Assembly each year. For example in 2009 the meeting will take place in Denver, North America.

The cost to the IAU of championships medals has increased greatly in recent years. As an example; for the 2008 World Championships in Sulgen the total cost to the IAU for medals will be around 4'500 CHF (2'900 Euros).

I recommend to the Executive Committee that the situation with the IAU medals be reviewed immediately after these World Championships. Unless organizing committees are prepared to return to the situation where the medal costs are shared 50/50 with the IAU, it may be necessary to change to a less expensive design, or to reduce the number of medals presented, which would require changes to our rules.

Match Target Equipment developments

Earlier this year it was announced on the IAU website that a new portable rail-driven Match-crossbow target system (10 and 30m) has been developed by the Netherlands federation NKB. These targets will soon be available for hire to organizers of IAU Championships events. Further details will be handed out by Frans Fakkers during the Sulgen World Championships.

On behalf of the IAU I offer our congratulations to the NKB President Frans Fakkers and his national federation for their initiative.

IAU Match Division

Since the World Championships in Steyr 06, the IAU Executive Committee approved the organization of three Match division events for the years 2007-8.

An offer from the Russian federation to run the European Championships (Match & Field) in September 07 did not come about due to the non-availability of 30m Match target systems. However, as reported below, the Crossbow Union of Russia went ahead and organized a very successful Field division event.

In February 07 Switzerland [EASV] sent out invitations to an IAU Match 10 / 30m Euro-Cup in Höngg SUI. Unfortunately this event had to be cancelled due to a lack of entries. Even allowing for the fact that this event was announced at short notice (3 months) this was a very disappointing outcome for the EASV and for the IAU. But despite this set-back, the EASV were willing to support the organization of the 2008 IAU Match World Championships in Sulgen and Berg. The IAU Executive Committee would like thank the EASV President Mr. Andreas Burkhalter and his organizing team for making our event possible.

IAU Field Division

The Russian Crossbow Union CUR successfully organized the 8th IAU Field European Championships in St.Petersburg during September 07. Under new management from the end of December 06, the CUR did a remarkable job to put together their event in less than 9 months. The competitions were dominated by the Croatian team, and 10 new individual Field division records were set in St.Petersburg. On behalf of the IAU Executive Committee I would like to congratulate the CUR President Alexander Verennia and his team on the organization of a highly successful event.

It was at St. Petersburg in 07 that the Swiss Field Crossbow Federation SFSV offered to organize the 2008 IAU Field World Championships in Weinfelden. Once again we faced the situation where our organizer had less than one year to organize an event. SFSV President Peter Wohlgensinger and his team were up for the challenge, and as a result crossbow shooters from 17 nations will be taking part in the World Championships in Weinfelden.

For the past 2 or 3 years there have been major problems with the IAU Championship Calendar. Organizing committees have had less time to prepare - and it has also been difficult for national federations to plan annual budgets for their teams. This was the reason why the German team - including our reigning Ladies World Champion (Field) - was unable to take part in the European Championships in St. Petersburg.

To avoid any repetition of this in the future, the Executive Committee and I would like to see an early return to a situation where organizers have at least 2 years to prepare for a major IAU Championships.

In Sulgen, at the EGA on July 9, we hope to confirm the Championships calendar for 2009 (European Championships 18m Field Indoor in Croatia / European Championships Match and Field). The Executive Committee will also be inviting the national delegates to assist with the securing of new Championships bids for the 2010-11 seasons (International, Cup and Championship events Match and Field).

With regard to relations with the WCSA, there are two proposals on the EGA Agenda that will form a part of the rule harmonization process that I referred to earlier in my report. These proposals are (a) for the IAU Field division rules to include a new category for Assisted (Wheelchair) shooters and (b) the recognition of the Field Division Seniors (over 55's) as a full IAU title event.

IAU Website developments

Over the past two years the internet has become the principle means of communication for the IAU. Information is first made available on the IAU website www.iau-crossbow.org - or sent directly to member's computer inboxes by email. This has reduced the need for expensive meetings, and through improvements to the official website and an email newsletter, we have been able to keep our membership better informed.

The internet is now all about collaboration between people and organizations. So please Delegates, log-on to the IAU website as often as you can and interact with us. We need your News and also your ideas for improving the way we do things...

So that our records are up to date, please send us your latest email and web addresses for our records. This can be done through the Contacts page on the IAU website or by email to secretary@iau-crossbow.org

Looking ahead ...

As well as the preparation of new Statutes and ideas for restructuring the IAU, the Executive Committee and I have been working on a number of other development projects, some of which appear of the Sulgen EGA Agenda as proposals. These are two of the projects that could come into effect during the next 2 years...

IAU WORLD RANKING SYSTEM: Frans Fakkers has proposed the introduction of a crossbow shooter ranking system. At the moment this is only a concept, but the rankings could be based on the aggregate scores (including Finals) achieved at IAU registered qualifying events e.g. World, Continental, Cup and International events run according to IAU regulations. This proposal is on the Sulgen EGA Agenda and, if supported by the national Delegates the project, will be referred to the Technical Committees (Match and Field) for the preparation of new rules - possibly in time for the 2009 season.

The IAU Executive Committee and I believe that, with the cooperation of event organizing committees, IAU World Ranking Events could become a high profile target shooting series that will motivate new member nations to join the IAU.

CROSSBOW TRAINING PROGRAMME: I have recently begun to lay the groundwork for a new scheme to teach people (of all age groups) how to shoot a crossbow. To begin with this project will be developed at local level in England. This will be done in collaboration with the Coaching & Development Manager of the UK National Small-bore Rifle Association NSRA (member IAU Match division) and also local Air-Rifle and Archery clubs in the Wolverhampton area. My first objective is to prepare a crossbow shooting "module" that can be integrated with existing 10m Air Rifle and Archery instruction programmes in the UK.

I have already proposed the scheme to a leading manufacture who produces a basic target crossbow which retails in the UK for under 350 GBP (440 EUR / 715 CHF) less sights. They have said that they are willing to support the scheme. The publishing company that I write for is also willing to provide me with a promotional platform in their shooting-sports magazines (titles include 'Bow International' and 'Target Sports'). This company could also handle the publication of Training materials.

My ultimate objective is to have this scheme adopted by the IAU - possibly by 2010 - and for the IAU to use it to help nations new to crossbow-shooting take up our sport.

Closing remarks

This report marks my retirement from the IAU Presidency for personal reasons. My work for the IAU over the past two years has been accomplished without the help of national federation funding or administrative support. It has taken a big commitment to reach this point. Although much of the IAU's work can be done through the internet, bringing the IAU and the WCSA back together will involve travel and meetings. The same will be required if the IAU is to begin to recruit the new nations we need for GAISF recognition.

What the IAU needs to achieve over the next 2 years will demand far more in the way of resources than I personally can bring to the task. That is why I decided that we should look for the next President.

What the IAU ideally needs now is a President who has the support of a national federation that is fully committed to the development of Match and Field crossbow shooting – as well as being actively involved with ISSF (Rifle) and FITA (Archery) disciplines. Such a situation would offer the most possibilities in terms raising the profile of the IAU.

Closing remarks - continued

Following my invitation to member federations earlier this year I am delighted to report that two excellent candidates have been nominated to take-over the leadership of the IAU until the Elections at the 2010 General Assembly.

Both candidates have the full backing of their respective national federations which in turn each have a long and successful involvement with international crossbow shooting.

Whichever candidate wins in Sulgen I am sure that he will do a great job for the IAU.

To close my report I would like to thank each of my colleagues on the IAU Executive Committee for their support and encouragement during my term of office. My special thanks to Eric Dougliss for his work as Secretary General. As my appointee Eric is also retiring at the end of the Sulgen World Championships. Finally I would like to thank Mrs. Ruth Laverie for professionally managing the IAU's accounts and also Harry Lugmayr for his assistance with the IAU website.

Ich wünsche Ihnen einen wunderbaren Aufenthalt in Sulgen, Berg und Weinfeldern sowie viele spannende und faire Wettkämpfe.

Mit herzlichen Grüßen

I wish you a marvellous stay in Sulgen, Berg and Weinfeldern as well as exciting and fair contests.

With cordial greetings

Chris Aston, President IAU
Wolverhampton, England
June 2008

