

Minutes to the 129th Executive Committee Meeting in Bordeaux, France

Date:	16 March 2016	
Time:	Session I	09:00 – 12:00
	Session II	14:00 – 16:00
Venue:	Burdigala Hotel	Salle Conseil
Participants:	Jean Brihault	President
	Arne Elovsson	Vice President
	Ralf Dejaco	Treasurer
	Leopold Kalin	Chairman Competitions Commission
	Jerzy Eliasz	Chairman Methods Commission
	Ole R. Jørstad	Chairman Beach Handball Commission
	Predrag Bošković	Member
	Per Bertelsen	Member
	Helga H. Magnusdóttir	Member
	Joan Marin	Chairman - Professional Handball Board
	Lidija Bojić-Ćaćić	Chairwoman - Women's Handball Board
	Michael Wiederer	Secretary General
	Andrea Moser	Chief Finance Officer
	Markus Glaser	Chief Sport Officer
	Vesna Lazić	PA to the Secretary General
	Marsha Brown	Corporate Liaison Coordinator

1. Welcome, programme and agenda

President Brihault welcomed the EHF Executive Committee to Bordeaux, France for the meeting and passed on the apologies of FFHB President Delplanque who was in Paris and could not attend due to illness.

2. Minutes Executive Committee 01/2016

With no further remarks, the minutes were accepted.

3. Reports and decisions

3.1. Finance Delegation – meeting 02/2016

With the minutes at hand, the Executive Committee was informed that the agenda points to which a decision needed to be taken would be dealt with under the respective points of the Executive Committee meeting. EHF Treasurer Ralf Dejaco, supported by CFO Moser, gave a brief report beginning with the forecast to the 2015 EHF Result, which was better than the outcome originally budgeted and remained close to the information already given at the meeting in Krakow. The accounting procedure is proceeding in the normal way and according to the schedule; the external auditing process began in March and so far, no major changes have been made. The EHF Comptrollers are scheduled to meet in April 2016. The final 2015 EHF Result, subsequent to the external and internal auditing procedures, is to be confirmed by 31 May 2016 at the latest. Dejaco requested that the confirmation be designated to the Finance Delegation (meeting 05/2016 in Cologne); with the procedure to remain the same as in the past years, no objection was raised.

The Executive Committee was informed that for the 06/2016 meeting in Vienna, they will be provided with both the internal (Comptrollers) and external (Androsch) audit reports, final information to the 2015 result, the 2016 revised budget, and the 2014 budget result comparison (in preparation for the EHF Congress – 11/2016). For the benefit of the Executive Committee, Dejacó highlighted key figures and provided current information on the status of the Social Fund, and EHF reserves. Upon request, the members are informed that in accordance with Austrian law, it is recommend (but not obligatory) that a non-profit organisation hold a reserve of a maximum of one year's turnover; if this amount is exceeded, a purpose (i.e. special projects) for the excess must be shown.

3.2. Secretary General – business report

Giving his report, Secretary General Wiederer noted that the short period between the EHF EURO 2016 POL and the meeting was intense and all topics of relevance will be covered during the meeting. To the EHF EURO 2016 POL, he informed the group that the follow-up is ongoing and the reports that will form the final analysis have been submitted. Upon completion of the analysis, the findings will be presented to the Executive Committee for taking conclusions. In lieu of a written report (expected), Wiederer verbalised the outcome of the TV figures (exp. 1.6 billion viewers) and spectators (exp. 400k) and noted that all reports have been very positive; nonetheless, for future events, certain factors would be taken into consideration.

To the meeting session that took place last week in Vienna (NB, PHB, TRC, WHB, EURO Qual. Conference, WHB Workshop, and other meetings), Wiederer noted that it was the most intensive week in terms of execution and administration. To all the meetings, the minutes were at hand. It was mentioned that the EHF/M continues to work with partners in order to bring the competitive season to its conclusion; the season is progressing well and additional information (EHFM, etc.) would be delivered at the corresponding point in the agenda.

In closing, Brihault mentioned that following the comprehensive renovation of the EHF office basement level, the working situation is 100% back to normal (documents, etc. returned to in-house storage) and the insurance absorbed the majority of the costs. He extended his thanks, once again, to the staff at the office for continuing their work under such conditions.

3.3. Report Legal Management

With the report at hand, the Executive Committee was informed that it was 'business as usual' in this area. Elovsson, in his function as the Chairman of the Tournament Management, reported that the higher density of small punishments during the EHF EURO 2016 POL, based on measures implemented following EHF EURO 2014 HUN/CRO, were efficient and widely accepted by the officials.

3.4. Report Anti-doping Unit

No specific report; AD testing was carried out prior to final tournament in Poland, and during the event all participating teams underwent testing - all tests were negative.

3.5. Report EHF Marketing GmbH

Brihault gave a brief reiteration on the change in leadership with EHF Marketing GmbH and underlined that, contrary to conjecture, it was solely the decision of the former Managing Director not to renew his employment contract. In the period that followed, legal advice was sought on how to dissolve the contract and the advice received (stand-by duty, annual leave, etc.) was subsequently implemented.

The Executive Committee was informed on the content of the latest meeting (witnessed by EHF AB Member Wiederer) between the EHF President (EHF AB Chairman) and the former Managing Director, where P. Vargo was notified of the decisions made; Vargo signed that he received the document and no negotiation was entered into as directed by legal advice. Concerning the connection with the initiator of a private league, until 30 June, Vargo is obligated to respect all professional rules. Brihault thanked Joan Marin (FCH President) for the support of the FCH organisation during this time.

The Executive Committee is informed on the first EHF AB Advisory Board meeting since the change in leadership, which was prepared very well by interim Managing Director, D. Szlezak; the atmosphere with the EHF workspace is good; EHF employees are relaxed and working well despite the changes. The procedure to recruit a Managing Director will begin within a reasonable timeframe, to which the EXEC will be kept informed; however, it was also noted that due to a confidentiality clause, certain documents cannot be supplied to the Executive Committee.

In response to a question concerning the current relationship to EHF sponsors, the Executive Committee was informed that meetings with partners have taken place (i.e. MP & Silva) and hitherto no negative response from the partners; opposite to that all the major partners, (MP & Silva and VELUX) underlined their interest in intensifying the cooperation.

Closing the report, Wiederer spoke of the proposed ticketing strategy for the VELUX EHF FINAL4 for the period 2017- 2020 which began as a strategic approach in late 2015, and foresees amended seating categories and an increase in ticket prices; a plus of EUR 500k is the estimated result of the suggested changes. It was mentioned that the interest in the event remains 'extreme' and that the demand still outstrips supply as the organisation endeavours to find the correct balance. The new ticket system is expected to be introduced in May; however information will be given prior to the current FINAL4.

3.6. Report other business partners

No special report was given.

3.7. Further reports

Opening the agenda point, Brihault noted that a brief report to the amendments to the IHF Rules of the Game would follow during the report of the Competitions Commission. He informed on the IHF-EHF meeting that took place in Basle on 22 February. At this meeting the questions of the Emerging Nations Tournament and the EHF EURO qualification in the future and the approach of a professional league (initially bandied as the 'First World League', then as the 'Euro League', and in current discussion as the 'Premier Handball League') were tabled in full support granted by the IHF. In addition, the EHF also took the opportunity of the meeting to raise the issue of ball sizes, etc. The EHF will meet with the IHF in Basle with the emerging nations once again on 25 April 2016.

Mentioning the EU High Level Group on Sport Diplomacy, Brihault mentioned that the work was ongoing in a serious way; at the meeting, the importance of a clear definition of the European Sports Model was mentioned and the necessity to tend to the matter underlining the point that sport governing bodies are charged with a social responsibility whereas such a liability cannot be imposed on private ventures. A conversation with EOC President P. Hickey was cited where a meeting between the European Olympic Committees and European Team Sports Association (ETS) was proposed as the sports (basketball, football, and handball) are current effected by this matter.

In other matters, the EHF President represented handball at the EU Sports Forum and the documentation from the event will be submitted to the EHF Office.

4. Technical Commissions – reports and decisions meetings 02/2016

4.1. Technical Delegation / CAN

On behalf of the Technical Delegation, Kalin (CC Chairman) outlined the topics of the meeting that took place in February; with reference given to the presentation by H. Blunck (EHFM) on the future of handball, the group was given information on current and upcoming technologies for the physical (i.e. player cameras) and administrative (i.e. instant replay system) aspects of the game. Following the mention of an instant replay system that was tested during the 2015 VELUX EHF FINAL4, and a video scouting system that was under review, it was stated that though complex, both systems should be used in the future.

Other discussions during the TD meeting centred on the amendments to the IHF Rules of the Game to be implemented as of 1 July 2016 (see AP4.2), the prolongation of partnerships, the success of the 3rd EHF Scientific Conference, the upcoming English version of the European Handball Manager course; further details to each topic were available to the Executive Committee members via the minutes to the meeting.

In the discussion that followed, Brihault said that in the PHB meeting earlier in the month, the subject of a medical commission (also discussed on previous occasions) was broached once again. He underlined the two-fold benefit of the Scientific Conference to cultivate contacts within the scientific and medical field, and secondly to utilise the information gleaned in EHF educational courses, etc. Brihault voiced the opinion that it was not a good idea to form a permanent structure similar to that of the IHF Medical Commission. Brihault strongly recommended that the EHF should continue with the dynamic platform that is the EHF Scientific Conference.

To the subject of technology and handball, Secretary General Wiederer mentioned the numerous unsolicited offers received by the EHF and stressed that it would be essential to have a strategy for technological innovation and asked the permission of the Executive Committee to have an external organisation (SwissTiming) present an overall solution (incl. instant replay) at the 2016 VELUX EHF FINAL4, which was duly granted.

Taking reference to the testing of player cameras parallel to the EHF EURO, the following was noted: special installations are needed in the sport halls to work with the signal produced by the camera; the system does work, but a test on a wing player did not produce the best visuals; the player has to wear a construction under the shirt, but initial feedback stated that it was not intrusive; and equipment has to be supplied to teams in advance of the game.

Brihault stated the EHF would continue to work of the matter in a serious way, and that it was necessary to avoid gadget appeal and only introduced technologies which serve the game and have no negative impact. Wiederer added that the difference between player and evaluation technologies must be considered in terms of sensitive issues (consent, rights, etc.), as well as the fact that all relevant information (football: 200k per club; ice hockey: goal-line) on cost factors is currently being collected in order to assess economic and organisational elements.

It was underlined that it was the right time to look for new solutions, but any new technology implemented should not put additional pressure on referees, but rather it should assist them. Moreover, the Executive Committee agreed that an official communication on technological innovations in handball (interview via eurohandball.com) should be issued soon.

4.2. Competitions Commission

Leopold Kalin, Chairman of the Competitions Commission, informed the members of the Executive Committee on the following matters:

Club Competitions: the current season is ongoing and is proceeding accordingly with no major incidents reported; and with the group phase concluded, the knock-out rounds lie ahead in the coming weeks. With a Hungarian ‘derby’ in the quarter-final, a Hungarian team is guaranteed at the 2016 edition of the Women’s EHF FINAL4 in Budapest; and the results of HBC Nantes in the EHF Cup will likely secure their participation at the final tournament in May.

National Team Competitions – Qualifications: qualification rounds 3/4 of the EHF EURO 2016 SWE were concluded prior to the meeting with no surprises in the results; the months of March and April make for an intense period of action as the 2016 WU20 World Championship (RUS) Qualification Europe, Olympic Games Qualification Tournaments for men and women, M20 EURO 2016 (DEN), as well as the Men’s EHF EURO 2016/2018 play-off matches will take place. The draw for the Men’s EHF EURO 2018 qualification will be held during the SG Conference in Dubrovnik/CRO on 14 April.

National Team Competitions – Final Tournaments: the 2016 edition of the Women’s IHF/EHF Trophy concluded in Tbilisi, Georgia last week (Gold – FAR; Silver – GEO; Bronze – LAT); the Georgian Handball Federation was praised for the high level of organisation, though it was underlined that the sporting level was not acceptable as proven by a wild variance in the final scores. Chairman Kalin mentioned that one participating delegation came with only 10 players, of which one player held dual nationality (USA); it was also noted that the coaches of the participating delegations showed little interest in participating in the Coaches Clinic.

With the preparation of the 2016 YAC events in the final phase, it was mentioned that the nomination of persons responsible is not to be underestimated as they are taking place parallel to each other; thus for example, five refereeing responsables will be needed for the five events in the same time period as the OG qualification. The matter of awarding the 2017 YAC events will be dealt with later in the meeting.

The minutes from the TRC meeting in February were made available to the Executive Committee, to which no comment or questions were raised. They are also informed that 19 couples from the YRP are currently in Rouen (FRA) at the ISF event; 5 couples were assigned to the Women’s IHF/EHF Trophy in Georgia. YRP couples will be assigned to upcoming events in Prague (CZE) and Veria (GRE). The procedure for the 2016 European Open in Gothenburg (incl. Referee Candidates’ Course) is unchanged.

Additional Matters: in response to the amendments to the IHF Rules of the Game to be implemented as of 1 July 2016 were discussed at the meeting of the Competitions Commission in February; the general reaction to the changes was negative, as a consequence the CC prepared a document for discussion to be tabled at this Executive Committee meeting. The Executive decided to implement the rules as of 1 July as foreseen. It was stressed that the period between March and June will pose a challenge to prepare for the implementation of the rule changes in order to be ready for the European Open that begins on 4 July, when the first matches will be played with the new rules.

In the short discussion that followed – prior to the motions of the CC being tabled – Brihault, who was present in Rouen for the opening ceremony of the ISF event, highlighted the “good show” based on the work of the 23 schools involved.

Taking reference to the Women’s IHF/EHF Trophy, it was said that the event is a competition like no other and it is primarily about development; however, with some teams it was not just a matter of participation, it was also a matter of education. In the ensuing discussion it was suggested that the event be evaluated on the level of the Competitions Commission and the Women’s Handball Board.

To the organisation of the EHF Cup and the matter of the organiser/host team advancing automatically to the Final Tournament, the procedure was reiterated; however, the HBC Nantes is not the lowest second ranked team. Though the Executive Committee took note of the fact that some clubs wanted to change the system, it was also noted that none of the clubs are eager to host. The positive turnaround of the EHFC final tournament event was acknowledged and it is hoped that in the future there will be a neutral organiser.

Motions of the Competitions Commission to the Executive Committee:

- 1. All matches of Men’s and Women’s competitions within the EHF (Club Competitions as well as National Team Competitions) starting from the 2016/17 season will be played with a 15 minutes halftime. All matches of YAC competitions within the EHF (qualification as well as final tournaments) will be played with a 10 minutes halftime break. Wherever necessary the EHF reserves the right for an individual decision. **The motion is accepted.***
- 2. Proposal/Recommendation of rule change no. 4 of the IHF (“Injured player”) is not to be implemented in any EHF competition. **Following a short discussion, the Executive Committee rejected the submission of the proposal; it was stated that it is important that the CC/MC explain the rules and give guidelines concerning the implementation.***
- 3. Players’ Clothing: amendment to be implemented into all regulations of all EHF competitions as follows –“In case of players wearing long sleeves under the shirt the sleeves must be of the same colour as the main colour of the shirt and all sleeves must be of equal colour. In case of players wearing short or long tights under the shorts the tights must be of the same colour as the main colour of the shorts and all tights must be of equal colour. In case of players wearing compression socks they must all be of equal colour.” **The motion is accepted.***

4.3. Methods Commission

Jerzy Eliaz, Chairman of the Methods Commission, gave an update on the recent activities; the MC last met in February.

2016 Club Management Seminar in Cologne / GER prior to the VELUX EHF FINAL 4: the invitation to the 5th edition of the Club Management Seminar was distributed to the National Federations; information was also published via the EHF website and the EHF CAN facebook page. The main topic for the seminar is “Current and Future Club/Federation Marketing Strategies”. The registration deadline was set at 10 April 2016.

Young Coaches Workshop: The 3rd edition of the Young Coaches Workshop in Balatonboglar (HUN) will take place in June 2016; again the Member Federations have been informed and details were

published information via the website and EHF facebook page. The seminar is open to 7 male and 7 female participants not older than 28 years. The registration period ends on 10 April 2016.

RINCK Convention: Eliaz reported on a communication exchange between the MC and ISR concerning the advancement to level three of the RINCK Convention; however, this was blocked by the MC as nothing has developed on this level in ISR since the Federation joined the RC two years ago, and the level three conditions have not been fulfilled. For information purposes, Lidija Bojić-Ćaćić mentioned that two coaches from SCO will join the upcoming coaching seminar organised by CRO.

2016 “European Handball Manager”: the upcoming course offered in cooperation with the University of Cologne will begin in June; currently there are 16 participants already registered for the module that will be taught in English for the first time since the inception of the course. The deadline for registration is 30 April.

Medical and Scientific Platform: Following discussion surround the idea of a medical commission, the accord within the Methods Commission is to use a network of medical and scientific experts for serving Handball in Europe.

Motions of the Methods Commission to the Executive Committee:

1. *“Wheelchair Handball” working group: In order to define clear rules, regulations and specifications needed for the planned Nations’ tournament in December 2016 as well as all further EHF initiatives (and on request of team representatives, referees, etc. involved) the EHF MC wishes to form a working group and proposes the members coming from SWE, POR, NED, FRA referees. **The motion is accepted, with the recommendation that input is also sought outside the system i.e. EOC Paralympic Office and other continental federations (JPN, PANAM).***
2. *SMART programmes: after checking the content and budget of the SMART agreements provided by ALB, AND and MLT, the EHF MC recommends the signing of both agreements (on the occasion of the Conference for Secretaries General dated 12-14 April 2016). **The motion is accepted. The MDA SMART request is still under consideration by the MC; the cost-effectiveness versus actual development was questioned and the suggestion of implementing a different (less expensive) programme. It was mentioned that ALB had received balls under the SMART programme, but arrived at the IHF/EHF Trophy without any balls. With reference to MON (no active team within the EHF structure), it was stressed that the Federation is active on a regional level (FRA/MON/ITA) and AND continues to organise many courses.***
3. *RINCK Convention status: formation of an EHF RINCK Convention panel for guiding the non-signatories already in 2016 for preparing their membership (to be announced at the Conference for Secretaries General in Dubrovnik). – accept the principle, further information in June after the dialogue in Dubrovnik. **The principle of the motion is accepted – further information is requested by the Executive Committee (meeting 06/2016) after the conclusion of the dialogue in Dubrovnik.***
4. *EU week of Sport: continuation of cooperation with EU within week of Sport in 2016. **The motion is accepted.***

4.4. Beach Handball Commission

Ole Jørstad, Chairman of the Beach Handball Commission guided the members of the Executive Committee through the latest activities of the group; on this occasion, there are no BC motions to be presented.

2016 MW 16 BH EURO in Nazaré / POR: the registration for the event is complete and 16 men's and 16 women's teams are registered (though more teams registered than there were places). The second event workshop took place in February and was followed by the first beach handball draw that was streamed live via eurohandball.com. 'Info 2' containing nominations, playing schedule, court plan, etc. was distributed the participating teams in March 2016. It was mentioned that the local media is very involved in the process, raising the profile of the tournament.

ebt Finals: the organisation of the event in Thessaloniki (GRE) taking place in May 2016 continues to proceed according to the set scheduled; the registration deadline for teams is 4 April 2016. The event workshop took place in February. Education courses for referees, delegates, and coaches will be held on the fringes of the event. The courses are nearly at full capacity.

2016 Champions Cup: the third edition of the Beach Handball Champions Cup will take place on the first weekend in November once again in Gran Canaria in cooperation with ULPGC, who will coordinate the educational courses. A workshop is planned to cover the topics of accommodation, transport, logistics, and additional activities incl. the brainstorming clinic, where participation was deemed to be at an unsatisfactory level on the last occasion.

2017 MW17/senior BH EUROS: the BC has held informal talks with potential organisers; the deadline for applications to host the event has been fixed for 6 June 2016.

BH education tool for 2016: the educational tool for beach handball coaches will be finalised in April 2016. Two more educational instruments are in planning.

Relationship to EUSA: Mentioning the EHF meeting with EUSA, Chairman Jørstad viewed the ongoing cooperation with EUSA as an opportunity to bring beach handball to the universities of Europe, and it is hoped that the BC will have the opportunity to meet with EUSA. In addition, Brihault mentioned that he will be in attendance at the EUSA Conference on 9 April (the EHF is a EUSA award recipient) and that the beach handball dimension is part of the good relations that the EHF has with EUSA. In this context, following the EHF EURO in Poland, contact with EOC President Patrick Hickey was re-established concerning the inclusion of beach handball to the European Games; this was followed with a letter referencing beach handball along with video footage to show how attractiveness of the sport. This will be mentioned again when Brihault meets with Hickey on the next occasion.

5. Competitions – reports and decisions

5.1. Organisation of events

With the written overview at hand, Secretary General Wiederer added a few points in reference to the upcoming summer events and the nominations on a representative level. He noted that a few items had changed, that other items were unclear and a general clarification was sought.

- EBT Finals: Jørstad
- USPE: Bertelsen
- Masters: Bošković
- BH MW16: Jørstad
- W18 EO: Elovsson

- M20 DEN: Eliasz – Magnúsdóttír
- EUSA: No EHF Representation
- M18 EURO CRO: Kalin – tbn
- M18 ECH BUL: Magnúsdóttír / M18 ECH LTU: Dejaco / M18 ECH GEO: Bojić-Ćaćić
- BH Ch.Cup: Jørstad
- EHF EURO 2016 SWE: tbn.

To the EHF EURO 2016 SWE it was agreed that the current Executive Committee would nominate the representatives to the event in good time for the preparation and logistical purposes according to the functions at the tournament; this will take place prior to the EHF Congress in November (ahead of the elections), which in turn eases the transition for the newly elected team.

5.2. National Team Competitions

Awarding of the 2017 Women's 19 EHF EURO: with the bidders SLO and HUN, the event was awarded to Slovenia (event location – Celje). CC Chairman Kalin (SLO) refrained from voting.

Awarding of the 2017 Women's 17 EHF EURO: the event was awarded to Slovakia (event location – Michalovce).

Awarding of the 2017 Women's 17 EHF European Championships: the events were awarded to Lithuania (event location – Klaipeda) and FYR Macedonia (event location – Skopje).

Information was given to the procedure regarding the release of players, as well as the consequences when delegations fail to fulfil their duties and obligations. Wiederer spoke of the injury compensation fund, a system that has worked well, as well as the difference in the system in use at the IHF. With the foundation information given, Wiederer reiterated the key points and the rundown of events in a current case concerning a national team player and his club based in a different country.

A discussion ensued where the questions of responsibility, doctor/patient confidentiality, establishing liability, among others were raised. It was underlined the releasing club had no opportunity to make a new hire for the season, and that there was a claim that the continued use of the player exacerbated the original injury and may have extended the recovery period. The EHF will conduct a comprehensive analysis of the situation to establish what action is to be taken against the National Federation involved; dialogue between the EHF with the club and Federation is ongoing. The EHF has requested the cooperation of Forum Club Handball in a first approach, followed by the involvement of EHF in a second step – this suggestion was accepted by the Executive Committee.

5.3. Club Competitions

Markus Glaser introduced the motions regarding club competitions:

1. *WCL Motion (Distribution of places) The motion is therefore to adapt the distribution of guaranteed places in the Group Phase of the 2016/17 Women's EHF Champions League as follows: Instead of offering one guaranteed place to each Champion of the Federations from 1-12 of the seeding list, the Federations 1-2 of this ranking list get two (2) guaranteed places each and the Federations 3-10 of the seeding list get one (1) place each. The remaining 4 places are to be awarded by Executive Committee decision resp. played for via the Qualification Tournaments as it was the case until now. **The motion is adopted.***

2. *WCL Motion (“Organization right at Qualification Tournaments”) Motion The right to organize a qualification tournament to the Women’s EHF Champions League is no longer decided by a draw, but decided according to the seeding of the teams in the group starting with the 2016/17 season. The first right goes to the best seeded team, the 2nd right goes to the 2nd best seeded team, etc. **The motion is adopted.***

3. *M/W CL Motion (Consequences if a club decides not to make use of its place in the Champions League): The following article is to be included in the regulations for the Men’s and Women’s Champions League: “If a club does not make use of its right to participate in the Champions League, its registration in one of the following two seasons is subject for a particular consent and confirmation by the EHF. The open place reverts back to the EHF who will distribute it as a Wild Card. The National Federation concerned may not register an alternative team.” **Following a revision of the text, the motion is adopted.***

4. *WCL; M/W EHFC Motion (Two teams per club in EHF Club Competitions): As of the 2016/17 season the article in Part II. “Competition”, cl. 2.2.4 of the Men’s Champions League is also to be included in the regulations for the Women’s Champions League, the Men’s and Women’s EHF Cup as well as for the Men’s and Women’s Challenge Cup. **Following a revision of the text, the motion is adopted.***

5. *M/W EHFC / M/W ChC Motion (Definition of point of time for withdrawals): The following wording is proposed as a motion and to be included in the regulations of the Men’s and Women’s EHF Cup as well as Men’s and Women’s Challenge Cup. Important: the amounts of the fines remain unchanged, it’s only a harmonization of the point of time:*

Withdrawal after the announcement of the competition: Fine from €5.000 - to €10.000

Withdrawal after the first draw of the competition: Fine from €10.000 - €25.000

The motion is adopted.

5.4. Other Competitions

In addition to the minutes available from the main meetings that have taken place, additional sessions did take place where side competitions (i.e. wheelchair handball, etc.) were discussed.

A meeting with the International Masters Games Association took place, currently an official agreement between the EHF and IMGGA is being formulated.

In June, the future of the EHF European Open/Partille cooperation will be discussed. The upcoming event is the last covered by the current contract. On behalf of the EHF, the Secretary General expressed his thanks to Stefan Albrechtson for being an integral part of the initiation of the European Open and continuing to be part of the event over the past years.

5.5. Competition related issues

5.5.1. Referee / Delegate Compensation

EHF Treasurer Ralf Dejaco, in his function as chairman of the working group, introduced the topic of referee/delegate compensation. To the first meeting in January that took place in Krakow on the fringes of EHF EURO 2016, he gave a rundown on the composition of the group and stated that to start the meeting, a short presentation given on the nature of the business to be treated FAR initiative, followed by a motion to the 2014 EHF Congress). He underlined the importance of the fact that from 2001 to 2015, handball has seen a global devaluation of the allowances and match fees

reach 35%. Key costings for referees and delegates for club competitions (EUR 650k p.a.) and the EHF EUROs (EUR 560k p.a.) were given.

Dejaco informed the Executive Committee that, although no concrete figures for a potential solution were discussed, an analysis of cost distribution (EHF-Clubs-National Federations) was taken under consideration, as well as the taxation issues (which are still being examined) because of the varying situation in the different countries. The initial findings from the meeting were presented at the board meetings (NB/PHB/WHB) that took place in early March.

In a next step, the second meeting of the working group will be scheduled for April/May 2016 when all information has been collected and analysed. The summary findings will then be submitted to the Finance Delegation (05/2016) and the Executive Committee (06/2016) with a proposal (incl. figures) for possible implementation in 2017. At the 2004 Congress in Cyprus, the right to decide on the compensations was given to the Executive Committee.

5.5.2. 2020 Qualification system

A summary of the activities was given on the level of the Competitions Commission, where the technical aspect of the system was discussed. The Nations ranked 26 – 50 (based on the outcome of the play-offs, three nations will remain unaffected) were invited to partake in a meeting on 7 March (EHF President, CC Member, NB Member in attendance) where the EHF Office presented the proposed system that was already communicated to the Executive Committee; this system garnered much support from the Federations present. The meeting also targeted the idea that the nations should not only be confronted with the results, but also be part of the discussion process in order to achieve the objective of raising the number of qualification participants from 38 to 50 (with a minimum of 44). At the end of the meeting, the nations present (excl. LIE/MON) expressed a willingness to take part in the qualifications either in phase 1 or via a reworked Emerging Nations Tournament. To this end, a meeting with the IHF has been scheduled (25 April) for final clarification – if the situation progresses as desired, it will be possible to have 48 nations involved in the EHF EURO Qualification, which would be a major success for the sport.

It was mentioned that it is necessary for the Executive Committee to have a common understanding of the system as it is hoped that the registration process can begin shortly. The new system does not only mean the involvement of all federations, but a regular participation upon the implementation of the new format.

In the discussion that followed, it was said that if IHF support was not forthcoming, the EHF would have to organise its own (European) tournament independently. Brihault mentioned that the IHF and EHF had reached agreement on the principle issue, technical matters still required resolution.

The competition system and its regulations will be completed and sent to the National Federations for the registration process, which then will result in the start of the first phase already in October 2016.

5.6. Competition related issues

Brihault introduced the point as item that concerns all the questions raised that related to the competition structure (age groups, overload, injuries, etc.). He stated that he had responded to the questions raised by pointing out that the issue was complex and that the matter had to be viewed in both qualitative and quantitative terms, and that the numbers of matches is an important element. Taking this into account, how much responsibility has to be borne by the international, national, and European competitions has to be determined, because the 'workload' is a culmination of all the

events – this is the quantitative aspect. Moreover, the matches are becoming more intense (bodily contact), the demands on the body are higher; this is also the case with the training sessions which are many and are also intense on some occasions and quite a number of injuries occur during training session.

Through the Scientific Conference, input has been received on the nature, timing, and on injury prevention and rehabilitation; and all of this information has to be analysed in earnest in order to have a global package that covers both the qualitative and quantitative aspects, which also takes the various categories into account (senior, junior, men, women, age categories, etc.) in order to find solutions. Brihault stressed that it should be made known that the EHF takes the matter very seriously.

Wiederer added that it would be helpful to have the formal approval from the Executive Committee, as in this case, the EHF is approaching the market proactively. Discussions are expected due to the cycle (more stress every four years), and opinions are changeable. He also mentioned that due to the registration process in place, the EHF was made aware that the majority of injuries occurred prior to the EHF EURO 2016, rather than during the event; the average age of players since the very first EURO in 1994 and 2016 has increased by more than 3 years, which means that the complaints that claim that players are losing their careers too early are in fact correct. Thus, it is the right step for the EHF to be proactive in this area of research now. Closing the point, Brihault stated that the research has to be conducted in a vigorous way. There was no objection to the request of the Secretary General.

6. Boards and Stakeholder Groups

6.1. Meetings Nations Board / Professional Handball Board

In addition to the minutes available, the Executive Committee was informed that many of the points discussed at the NB and PHB meetings were the same and were also treated during the meeting of the Executive Committee. No question to either protocol was raised.

Upon invitation of PHB Chairman Joan Marin, President Brihault added comment to PHB AP9 (Decision Making Process/Representation National Federations). Reiterating the root of the discussion – FCH input to ‘paper federations’ and a call for Brihault to initiate a change in the voting system i.e. more votes for more active federations, he stated his opinion that the real issue is on the level of the IHF and did not transpose to an issue on a European level.

In defence of the Federations named, it was noted that all the federations have different levels of activity. Brihault underlined the democratic process (one Federation/one vote) and stressed it was the responsibility of the EHF not to destroy Federations, but to take ‘weaker’ federations and help make them ‘stronger’, and implementing a system of proportion voting would destroy the system. Brihault reiterated that an approach to decide on which issues Federations receive more votes would be contested; it would be for the National Federations to raise such an initiative.

Concerns raised by the PHB to the placement of the future Younger Age Category competitions in the calendar have been partially resolved by the implementation of the new system (YAC EUROs & YAC ECHs); to the complaint raised within the PHB that some clubs feared that their young players are unavailable because of national team duties and that they are overloaded was tackled to the best of the ability of the EHF when the U20 events were scheduled in July and the U18 taking place in August. The EHF underlined that ‘overload/player burden’ encompassed many factors, all of which do not lay with the EHF; however, the EHF did request documents that supported the claims, but have not received any information to date.

6.2. Meeting Women's Handball Board

With the minutes to the Women's Handball Board available, WHB Chairwoman Lidija Bojić-Ćaćić reiterated the point that the analysis and comparison the women's handball surveys conducted in 2012 and 2014 on a club and national team level were concluded and the information was distributed; the results of the survey will be presented at the Conference for Secretaries General in Dubrovnik in April.

She spoke of her satisfaction with the work of the Technical Referee Commission to the development and promotion of female couples; however, the WHB would like to see more development in the area of young female referees.

Reference was made to the WHB proposal on gender equality (see point 2 below) to support female delegates at the EHF Congress; Bojić-Ćaćić underlined that it was necessary for the female participants to have the appropriate qualifications and suggested that a resume is submitted with the registration.

To the WHB projects, it was reported that the EHF has and will continue to support the participation of female applicants at EHF educational seminars and courses; in 2016 the EHF will support 5 female participants to attend the Club Manager Seminar and 5 female students undertaking the European Handball Manager University programme. In cooperation with the Beach Handball Commission, the EHF will support selected participants at the educational courses on the fringes of beach handball events.

Other upcoming WHB activities include the signing of the Brighton Declaration on Women and Sport that advocates the full involvement in every aspect of sport; the continuation of the Female Leadership Award (female head coaches), which will be presented during the EHF EURO 2016 in Sweden; and the furtherance of the Female Handball Ambassadors Project.

Bojić-Ćaćić introduced the first WHB proposal:

- 1. Introduction of the National Federation Award for Women's Handball Development:** the WHB proposes the introduction of an award for the National Federation(s) that have made the greatest development in women's handball; the WHB would like to encourage Member Federations to submit an application for consideration; the first edition of the award will entail an 'open criteria' to give each EHF National Federation the chance to be a recipient. It is hoped that the inaugural award, if approved, can be presented during the 2016 EHF Congress.

To the Women's IHF/EHF Trophy, Bojić-Ćaćić mentioned that some National Federations had contacted the Women's Handball Board to express dissatisfaction that the information to the event was not distributed in a timely manner, which led to some Federations being unable to coordinate their preparation in an efficient way; a response was coordinated with M. Glaser. Moreover, WHB Member P. Orasson suggested that the criteria for the organisation of qualification matches be lowered for those Federations that are lower ranked; again, an initial response was given by M. Glaser to Orasson.

In response to the issue of standards in qualification games, Brihault stated that it connects the approach of the WHB with the EHF EURO 2020 Qualification Conference with the emerging nations. He continued by saying that in order to have home and away matches in every country for the first

round where there is no television and there are only emerging nations participating, the standards must be downgraded within reasonable limits. He noted that it would be difficult, because there could be no downgrade in safety and security measures and playing conditions, but this approach will be treated. Brihault underlined once again that if lower ranked nations wanted to participate and organise games at home, then they must find a way.

Concerning the Brighton/Helsinki Declaration it was noted that it was a declaration whereby the continental and international sports federations undertake to implement a policy of gender equality. The EHF had decided to implement the declaration, but faced a problem that the EXEC blocked the holding of an extraordinary Congress, which supposed to decide on a motion for promoting gender equality. When the motions were heard at the 2015 EO Congress, a two-third majority was not obtained. However, more than 50% of the national federations were in favour of the motion and therefore, the EHF can sign the Brighton/Helsinki declarations with a reasonable amount of credibility. The agreement shall be signed on the occasion of the Women's EHF EURO Qualification Draw in Gothenburg on 10 June 2016; this is in agreement with the organiser.

Regarding the awards proposed by WHB, Secretary General Wiederer voiced his hesitation. Using the example of the school project awards he mentioned the difficulties during the selection process (7 applicants for four awards), which showed elements of non-objectivity. He continued that to award a nation for the best women's development without knowing of any criteria does not enable to the Executive Committee to approve such a step due to the outcome being wholly subjective. He suggested that criteria should be developed in time for a decision to be taken in June for a possible awarding in November. In conclusion, Brihault stated that the idea in principle is positive; however, it must be defined on a technical level.

In response to the question of how much money was spent on WHB projects in 2015, Chairwoman Bojić-Ćaćić informed the Executive Committee that all projects were with budget; for an exact figure, information will be sent by the Women's Handball Coordinator in the EHF Office.

Wiederer raised his concerns about the interpretation of the results of the surveys which were sent to the Executive Committee members; he urged caution concerning the distribution of the results and noted that in his opinion the analysis of service needed the professional approach. He remarked on the good work undertaken by the WHB Coordinator to the service of the Board to give a picture; however, to the outside world, the survey is a collection of statements from players perpetuated as the truth of women's handball. Before it is sent to the National Federations, it has to be cross-checked by a specialist to validate the results, as to draw the wrong conclusions from the information could result in a negative impact for women's handball.

In response, Bojić-Ćaćić underlined that the data collected in the national team surveys were only the opinions of the participants at the events; while she agreed that the information should be kept in the hands of the European Handball Federation, it should be used a promotion (i.e. many delegations are satisfied with EHF EURO events). Brihault commented that with such surveys (open questions) the outcome is very subjective, and there is a possibility of responses having being filtered; based on this reasoning, he suggested that the surveys remain internal (noting that the surveys had been marked confidential) and that the data collected be used by the EHF for presentations, clarifications, and limited exploitation, etc. and closed by saying that it was raw material that should not be taken outside the political bodies.

A brief report on the WHB Workshop that followed the meeting on 10 March, was led by Bojić-Ćaćić and WHB Coordinator A. Cuderman, was given. The gathering welcomed 35 participants where they

received a comprehensive presentation on the current and future WHB projects; documentation on the workshop was made available to the Executive Committee and the feedback and input will be analysed with the objective of creating future projects. Feedback already obtained included, but was not limited to:

- General satisfaction shown for the EHF EURO
- EHF EURO Qualification in tournament format (requested by lower ranked nations), with costs being the main concern
- Adjustment of the age category in female YAC events (currently 17/19 to 18/20)
- Use opportunities to motivate Federations to bring more female representatives into the boards and commissions

Bojić-Ćaćić underlined the encouraging outcome of the workshop; EHF Vice President Elovsson also praised the good atmosphere and positive attitude of the participants. He hoped that there would be a follow-up to the workshop.

Closing the WHB report, Bojić-Ćaćić outlined the second WHB proposal:

2. **Cost absorption (participation at congress / accommodation) of one female participant per federation at the EHF Congress:** this proposal was based on a congress decision to allow the Executive Committee the flexibility to support and bolster female inclusion within the handball federations of Europe by support the presence of female delegates at the EHF Congress – thus did not originate with the WHB. In the discussion, the proposal was rejected by one member of the Executive Committee who disagreed that this was the correct way to secure more female participation. In a counter argument, the point was conceded that it would be better to have more natural involvement, but action by the EHF in this regard did need to be taken. **The proposal was approved by majority and applies for the upcoming 2016 EHF Congress.**

6.3. Meetings Stakeholder Groups

The minutes to the meetings of Forum Club Handball and the European Handball Players Union were made available to the Executive Committee.

7. Preview 2016 Conferences

7.1. 9th EHF Conference for Secretaries General

The organisation of the event that will take place in April is ongoing; 'Info 3' has been distributed to the National Federations. Topics for the planned workshops will include the current workload of the players (which is designed to gather feedback and input from the National Federations), Calendar Conference, as well as the draws (M20 – DEN & Men's EHF EURO 2018 Qualification) which were described as a relevant part of the Conference.

7.2. 13th Ordinary EHF Congress

7.3. 25th EHF Anniversary

The preparations for the Congress (11/2016) are in progress and the rundown corresponds to the usual schedule. The EHF Office will prepare all relevant questions for the June meeting, which is foreseen as the first opportunity to raise and discuss any remaining open questions. Due to the fact that it is an election congress, it is hoped that not too many motions will be submitted to the Congress in November. The Gala event celebrating the 25th anniversary of the EHF will take place on the evening of 18 November where additional guests are to be invited.

8. Other issues

Executive Committee Meeting 09/2016: the Icelandic Handball Federation requests information to the organisational elements for the meeting in September (arrival, departure, special requests) to be transmitted to the Federation within the next three weeks. The requested information will be collated by the EHF Office and sent to ISL.

Executive Committee Meeting 03/2016: The members are informed on the schedule for the remainder of the meeting – regional presentation of the 2017 World Handball Championship followed by a press conference – the Executive Committee Members are to be hosted by the Regional Handball Federation of Bordeaux for a communal dinner.

With thanks to the members of the Executive Committee for their contribution to the treatment of the agenda points and the discussions, President Brihault closed the meeting.

For the Minutes: M. Wiederer/M. Brown
Vienna, 24 March 2016