

Minutes to the 19th Meeting of the EHF Women's Handball Board (WHB) (Continuation meeting conducted via video conference)

Date/Time: Thursday, 2 April 2020 / 9:30 -11:30

Participants:

Nodjialem Myaro	Chair (FRA)
Pirje Orasson	Vice Chair (EST)
Leonor Mallozzi	Member (POR)
Narcisa Lecusanu	Member (ROU)
Liudmila Bodnieva	Member (RUS)
Deja Ivanovic	Member (SLO)
Gabriella Horvath	EHF EXEC (HUN)
Henrik La Cour	EHF EXEC (DEN)
Martin Hausleitner	EHF Secretary General
Alenka Cuderman	EHF Coordinator Women's Handball Programme

In Part: Peter Sichelschmidt EHF National Team Competitions

1. Welcome

Chairwoman Myaro warmly welcomed the participants to the video meeting, which started with the Coronavirus COVID-19 topics and respective consequences. La Cour highlighted that the situation is really critical on the private and professional level, and very different in each country and will therefore have a deep impact on us as well as on our sport and as on the business of the EHF. He praised the leadership of the EHF and expressed his thanks for the very professional management of this challenging situation. Secretary General Hausleitner stressed that there will be a very different situation after we come through the Coronavirus circumstances and the EHF will have to offer to the partners and all stakeholders a helping hand to get up and running again, as according to current information the sport will be the last topic of importance for governments in offering the opportunity to get started again. The situation has also changed in respect of the implementation of the Master Plan, and the EHF will be in cooperation with all stakeholders and will provide the updates.

5. Women's National Team Competitions

5.5. IHF Competitions

- ◆ Sichelschmidt informed about the changed concept of the IHF Women's Trophy, which is organised for youth and junior competitions: continental phase in the same year as W17/W19 EHF EURO/Championships and the intercontinental phase in the year of the World Championships. He further advised that the winner of the Intercontinental IHF Women's Trophy qualify directly to the World Championship. The CC have taken all facts into consideration and have seen the IHF Women's Trophy as rival competitions to the EHF Championships, therefore any involvement of the EHF in these competitions is not supported by the CC.

The WHB has taken the CC statement with understanding and is of the view that EHF Championships are appropriate and strong continuously scheduled competitions allowing the emerging nations to develop their teams.

In this respect it was again underlined the necessity and the importance of an additional competition, in the year of WU18/MU19 WCh for the nations ranked 20+ to be introduced by the EHF, so that all federations will have access to the EHF competitions through the whole YAC period (see the details in the WHB Minutes part one 03/2020 - AP 5.5, last line). The big interest for this additional competition was also expressed at the recent Women's Handball Network Workshop by the participants. The WHB will bring the respective topic to the attention of the EXEC for their consideration.

- ◆ Sichelschmidt further informed that the IHF is still discussing the introduction of the IHF Emerging Nations Championships for Women with 12 participants (50% from Europe), with the stipulated playing

period 28 September - 4 October 2020, which due to Coronavirus circumstances is postponed until further notice with a limited priority in the international calendar. The CC supported the planned competition with the remark that participants from Europe shall be nominated by the EHF and not by ranking, but on the basis of having undertaken more development projects for women's handball to which the WHB agreed. Furthermore, in the future this competition shall be used, similar to the men's competition, as a qualification phase to the EURO.

6. Women's Club Competitions

- ◆ Cuderman reviewed the Women's DELO EHF CL season 2018/19, highlighting the improved branding situation and the interest of the most clubs for cooperation, the positive impact of the social media strategy involving Anja Althaus as the "face of the WCL", and the improved digital channels situation (overall impressions +25%, overall engagements +129%). Whilst during the season the TV audience was increasing, the overall number decreased by 5% due to missing team from ROU at the FINAL4. The fact that the competition has doubled the TV audience in the last 5 seasons (from 83 mio. to 166 mio.) and 23 TV partners transmitted the matches into 60 countries in the last season is not to be overlooked. Especially positive was the development of the Women's DELO EHF FINAL4 with the onboarding of a title sponsor, increased side events i.e.: opening party, two appearances of Anastasia, locker room show, etc. The event was sold out for the first time prior the participants being known. Due to the research the event had more international spectators than before (54% from HUN, 46% from other countries) and 44% of them were women. An issue of concern remains the slight decrease in spectators in the arenas in the last two seasons. Györ Audi ETO KC has very strong audience with an average of 5.373 spectators, positive turnouts for Brest Handball (+39%), Buducnost (+25%) and Rostov Don (+19%), whilst the number of CSM Bucuresti and Sävehof have seen a negative tendency.
- ◆ The current season has been played until the quarter-finals. In the group matches the teams from 13 nations participated, in the main round from 9 nations, and in the quarter-finals from 6 nations. Due to the ramifications of the Coronavirus, the quarter-finals have been postponed until June 2020 and the FINAL4 until 5/6 September 2020, with an optimistic view to conclude the season; however, nobody knows when and how the competition will continue.
- ◆ Ivanovic presented the playing structure of the women's EHF club competitions for 2020/21 and highlighted the new playing system of the Champions League (CL) new place distribution and new ranking system, defined playing times for women's matches (Saturday for European League (EL) at 16:00 and 18:00, Sunday for CL at 14:00 and 16:00), changed marketing rights (80% centrally, 20% club sponsors), obligation to provide a video screen in the arena, all of which is agreed with the clubs. However, two topics are still open: venue capacity and the bank guarantee/insurance in order to avoid club bankruptcy during the season, both of which are currently under discussion. The playing system of the EL and the European Cup competitions will not be changed in respect of the current season with the exception of introducing a FINAL4 tournament for the EL.

7. Stakeholder Reports: Nations, Leagues, Players

- ◆ Ivanovic further informed about the current situation of the women's clubs in Europe. Almost all leagues in Europe with the exception of Belarus are suspended or have already finished their national league competitions. Training for the teams is not allowed, the players are therefore preparing according to their individual programmes. The Coronavirus will have a high financial impact on the clubs, and consequently the players. The clubs are in different positions as governments are helping/supporting sport differently from country to country. The future is very unpredictable: it is questionable as to when competition restarts and what will happen to sponsorship contracts; therefore the clubs are taking measures such as decreasing budgets and salaries i.e. for players, coaches, and staff, etc.
- ◆ Mallozzi expressed her concern that in this kind of crisis the women's clubs will go down first and highlighted the consequences for the players. Many of them will lose the status as professional players

and will have to go to work to support the families. The situation is very, very difficult. The support for women's clubs and players is required. Myaro will on behalf of the WHB take this important message to the EXEC for their consideration.

- ◆ Ivanovic highlighted also a positive outcomes of the challenging time and reported the social responsibility of some players in Germany helping with the distribution of the food to old people and that the players of two clubs in Hungary (Györi Audi ETO KC and FTC Rail Cargo) have made a financial donation, which their clubs have doubled, to support the local community in this very difficult situation.
- ◆ Mallozzi proposed to contact the RYT ambassadors to provide their experiences with the Coronavirus circumstances and encouraging messages as role models to the young players. The activity will be undertaken in the coordination with the EHF Media.

8. Women's Handball Projects 2019/20

8.1. Educational projects/EHF CAN (5):

- ◆ **2020 EHF RC Master Coaches Course:** four (4) participants
- ◆ **2020 EHF Club Manager Seminar in Cologne:** WHB initiative to support five (5) female participants; the EHF will absorb 80% of the associated course costs.
- ◆ **2020/21 European Handball Manager in Cologne (English language):** WHB initiative to support three (3) female participants; the EHF will absorb 60% of the associated course costs.
- ◆ **2020 Young Coaches Workshop in Hungary:** WHB initiative to support seven (7) female participants no older than 33 years; the EHF will absorb 100% of the associated costs.
- ◆ **2020 EHF Course for Beach Handball Referees, Delegates and Coaches:** WHB initiative to support ten (10) female participants; the EHF will absorb 100% of the travel costs.

All participants who received financial support are obligated to submit a report to the EHF/WHB. The objective is to raise the competences of the female non-playing staff and to empower their leadership.

8.2. Development projects (4):

- ◆ **Mentoring of Coaches in Women's Youth Handball (1/2019-1/2023):** the project above was created as a women's handball development project with the objectives to propel the EURO and WCL competition to the next level and to develop more female elite players in more countries in the future, and especially to close the gap to the top nations. The target group are member federations with the women's national team ranking 10-25 with a maximum of six federations in the same project period. Following the implementation of the project and the first feedback received from the targeted stakeholders is indicating that girl's handball is not (yet) on the development priority list of certain federations or they are undertaking the development activity with their own coaching staff. However, there is an expressed interest from the nations e.g. BEL and MNE, who have already taken an important development step in the project.
- ◆ **Profile of a female handball player per playing position (proposal)** – the project based on the available player's data during the big events (EURO, FINAL4): metrics, game statistics, Kinexon statistics, injury reports to be analysed and prepared for the best use of the teams/coaches and media. As a similar project with an experts group is already running at the EHF for the male players using the data from the Men's EHF EURO 2020, it was concluded that a similar project may be beneficial for women's handball, however it requires more information from the experts group regarding the environment and what will be the focus, who will use the data and which purpose they have. Based on updated information the group will take further decision in respect of the proposed project.
- ◆ **Respect Your Talent (RYT) Programme (3/2019 -)**
The WHB agreed on a new programme for the projects focussing on the encouraging of the young players for elite handball and assist them in their personal development on and off the court.
The project is structured in three steps:

- **RYT Summer Tour**
 - ✓ **Identifying talented players at the EHF YAC events** (W17/W19 EURO/Championships 2019) via award “Player of the Match”, provision of a commemorative t-shirt “Player of the Match & Respect Your Talent”);
 - ✓ **Meeting of the “Players of the Match” with the RYT Ambassador (role model)** - objective: we inspire;
 - ✓ **Tracking of the W17/W19 EURO ‘All-Star Team’ players** and share their stories on the EHF social media channels;
- **RYT camp for the talented players**
 - ✓ Participants: All-Star team players of the W17 EHF EURO/Championships 2019, 5 RYT ambassadors, 5 experts;
 - ✓ Training session in dual career, anti-doping, sports law, on-camera interview and social media
 - ✓ Key messages:
 - Stimulate development of skills: inspire, raise awareness, boost knowledge.
 - Empower personal development of talented players.
 - Enforce ambition for competitive pathway.
 - Strengthen the handball community (values, passion).
- **RYT Toolkit**
 - ✓ The RYT Toolkit is planned to be a centralized and specialized European handball platform. It shall provide digital information, inspiration and instruments to talented players.
 - ✓ The toolkit could be a part of the EHF website, an app or a combination of both. In any case, a toolkit for this target group must be appealing, visual, tangible, easy (e.g., language) and applicable.
 - ✓ Translating the “new type of learning” into a digital approach, the toolkit shall aim to be as interactive as possible.
 - ✓ Timeline 2020-2021
 - ✓ Topics: dual career, anti-doping, sports law, media communication, post-athletic career, rehabilitation/dealing with injury, nutrition, etc.

Due to the very positive feedback received from the players and federations the EHF decided that the RYT Programme will be extended also to the male players.

- ◆ **Women’s Handball Network Workshop** (10/11 March 2020) – focus on grassroots and development of the youth players, talent management and special topics for emerging handball nations (experts, MC/WHB). The feedbacks received were very positive and the WHB are very thankful to the federations, which shared their best practices, so that together we move the women’s handball forward. The collected workshop outcomes will be forwarded to the respective commissions and EXEC for their attention. For all details please see the “Women’s Handball Network Report”.

8.3. Promotional project (2):

- ◆ **Leadership Award:** Female Coach of the season 2019/20 – the concept will be developed.
- ◆ **Women’s EHF EURO 2020 promotion** – the project will be executed in conjunction with the EURO communication strategy and in cooperation with the EHF Media. The proposal will be developed asap.

9. Various

The WHB members expressed their satisfaction with the efficient virtual communication, wishing to use the video conferences for some of the meetings in the future. Thanking the members for their cooperation and contribution, Myaro closed the meeting.

For the minutes: A. Cuderman
Vienna, 6 April 2020