

Helsinki, Finland, 17th of January 2022

IFF Central Board meeting 1/2022 16.01.2022 over Teams

Place: Virtual Teams meeting

Schedule: Sunday 16th of January, 2022,

Participants: Tomas Eriksson	President
Jörg Beer	
Monica Birdal	
Tamuz Hidir	
Steen Houman	
Stephen King	
Martin Klabere	
Carlos Lopez	
Pakkamol Siriwat	
Filip Suman	Vice President
Kaarina Vuori	
Stefan Kratz	IFF Competition manager
John Liljelund	Secretary General
Sarah Mitchell	IFF Event manager
Excused: Calle Karlsson	
Agata Plechan	ATC Chair

Minutes

§ 1. Opening of the meeting

Mr. Eriksson opened the meeting at 10:00 CET and wished the members of the IFF CB a Happy New Year and welcomed the members to the virtual per capsulam CB meeting. Mr. Eriksson further informed that Mr. Karlsson and Ms. Plechan are hindered to participate to the meeting. Mr. Eriksson explained that the decision was taken on Thursday together to have the CB meeting and thanked everyone for making it possible to participate.

§ 2. Approval of the agenda

Mr. Eriksson concluded that there are no changes or additions to the agenda.

CB decided: To approve the report

§ 3. Discussion about the present situation of the Covid-19 pandemic and the execution of the EUR 2 and EUR 3 WFCQ

Mr. Eriksson gave some background information of the present situation we are facing. Ms. Mitchell reported that the IFF Competition office has prepared an internal background document concerning the situation with the WFCQ's 2022. The topics the CB needs to take a decision upon

today are mostly related to the situation of the EUR2 – Poland and EUR3 – Italy qualifications which are to be played during the first week of February, as the other three qualifications will be played later in the year.

The organisers of the EUR 2 and EUR 3 have informed that they will not be able to postpone the events, as they have no access to venues later and the present Covid-situation is raising questions among the participating teams of the safety to participate. There also need to be a discussion on what happens if a team can't participant and how the teams will be qualified.

The CB confirmed the organisation of the EUR 2 and EUR 3 in December before Christmas, as both the organisers and all teams had informed that they were able to participate. However, the Covid-19 situation has changed in an alarming direction, due to the fast spreading of the Omicron variant, which has affected some of the participating countries view on the safety and possibility of participation.

The Competition Office has this week sent out an information to the organisers and the participating teams of the EUR 2 and EUR 3 WFCQ's, that the CB will discuss the situation and asked them to come back with their feedback no later than by end of business on Friday 14th of January. The result of the inquiry has by Ms. Mitchell been collocated into a report (**Appendix 1**). The report clearly shows that the situation is very problematic as the views of the countries are very divided, as half want to play and half want to postpone the events.

In Poland there are presently not any restrictions, so IFF would have to put in place our own restrictions, like the ones for the WFC's played in December. In Italy the situation is more flexible, as there we can build a better Covid-19 bubble and six teams out of eight also are planning to travel with their own bus. We can say that it can be organised in the safest possible way and we can test, but with the omicron variant it might still create major difficulties even if there would be even one positive case, which then could spread uncontrolled.

Mr. Eriksson thanked Ms. Mitchell for a very good and comprehensive report and asked if there are anything new information occurred. Ms. Mitchell answered that the French Floorball has stopped all Floorball until the 7th of February, which could affect the possibility for the French team to participate, but there has not been any official change notified by the FFF.

Mr. Eriksson concluded that the CB now needs to discuss the following four questions, in order to clarify how to go forward, evaluating the factors of Health & Safety, Organisational, Financial and Competition Fairness matters. Mr. Eriksson emphasised that regardless which decision will be made there will be a lot of complaints and criticism, as the views are so different.

- 1) Shall the EUR 2 and Eur 3 WFCQ be played, postponed or cancelled?
- 2) How do we motivate the decision taken by the CB?
- 3) What new issues does this decision create?
- 4) How the IFF CB/Office needs to work with these questions?

Mr. Eriksson asked the CB members for their view of the situation and directed the question first to the members of the IFF Executive Committee.

Mr. Suman felt split between two possibilities, continue to play as planned or postpone the events. If we postpone, we need to look for other solutions, as a cancellation is not an option for the WFCQ's. It is not that much about the Health & Safety, as the omicron variant seems not to be as dangerous, but more a risk for the capability to actually playing the event.

Mr. Suman asked how many teams would come for the qualifications in Italy and Poland. Ms. Mitchell said that there are several teams in both qualifications that have indicated that it would be very difficult for them to participate in February. But for both events the real risk for the events

are the potential planned governmental restrictions to take effect from the start of February in the host countries. Mr. Suman had not thought about the risk of the new national restrictions, so he is a little in favour of postponements.

Ms. Birdal asked what happens if a player is tested positive during the event. Ms. Mitchell answered that the player tested positive, and the roommates are then isolated, and PCR tested. If those tests are also positive all team members must be tested with a PCR test. Any players waiting for PCR test results must be isolated and can't play during that time, so this could be an issue for the execution of the tournament, as the teams play every day. Ms. Birdal is in favour of the postponement.

Mr. King is leaning towards the postponement, as we at the best may have a total of four-five teams in the qualification tournaments, so it would be unfair for the teams which could not participate. The Health & Safety is still a major concern for the teams, as there are not yet a clear understanding of what the effects of the Omicron variant is if you get infected. The financial questions for the organisers must be discussed at a later stage.

Mr. Beer feels that this is now the absolutely wrong time to play an international tournament in this Covid-19 situation. So therefore, we should postpone the events.

Mrs. Vuori felt that the situation has changed quite a lot since December, so therefore we should postpone. The situation could be much better in May. Mrs. Vuori is also worried about the situation of the organisers, so hopefully there is some way we can help them, if the events are to be postponed.

Mr. Lopez was very surprised that there are differences in the reports of the countries and what these federations have done on the national level and informed concerning the qualifications. Playing now is not an option, from this perspective it is more to postpone or even cancel the events.

Mr. Klabere is mostly worried about how much this will cost for the participating countries and the organisers, even if the postponement is the only right decision the IFF can take in this situation

Ms. Siriwat is also in favour of the postponement and Mr. Houman felt that we need to have the best teams participating in the WFC Final round to secure a fair competition. We need to look into how we deal with the organisers in a later stage. The health issue is a problem, as the whole team could be quarantined during the tournament.

Mr. Hidir thinks it is a responsible decision to postpone and also Mr. Eriksson is in favour of the postponement of the tournaments, Mr. Eriksson asked how we shall deal with the finding of an organiser if Italy and Poland can't organise the event in May, and discuss the possibility of compensation for the organisers for extra cost occurring to the postponement.

Mr. Liljelund made a proposal to contact the organisers and ask them to look over their possibilities to organise the WFCQ in the period 23rd to 29th of May 2022 even in another city. If this will not work out the IFF Office will need to find another solution for organising the two qualifications in May, asking for organisers among the playing nations. The IFF shall then after having contacted the organisers also contact the participating teams in these qualifications and inform that they have been postponed to May. When it comes to the organisers IFF will look over the possibilities to provide some financial assistance to both associations, in order to assist them with possible costs incurred due to the postponement and in relation to any possible rescheduling of the event in their country.

Ms. Mitchell reminded that the IFF was originally in favour to postpone all three events in December, but as the organisers in Italy and Poland said that there are no possibility and all participants wanted to play, we went for playing in February.

Mr. Lopez and Mr. Hidir both felt that the responsibility of the participating teams are to be insured towards such possible situations like postponements and cancellations of events. Mr. Lopez informed that based on the feedback from the players it is quite difficult to say what they all think, as also there are major concerns with possible quarantines.

Mr. Kratz felt that IFF in this situation is able to find some financial support for the organisers Mr. Suman felt that it is very good if the IFF can offer some kind of compensation to the organisers in this situation.

Mr. Liljelund and Ms. Mitchell felt that we need first to contact the organisers and see what the possibilities are to hold the qualifications at the same time as the one in Latvia, even in a different city. Communication with the teams will be follow later once more event details are confirmed.

Mr. Eriksson thanked the CB members for their input and concluded that this is a very difficult decision the CB must take, especially with the knowledge of all the consequences for the organisers and participating teams, and without any guaranteed alternatives at this point. The CB was unanimous that this is the most responsible decision to take in this situation.

CB decided: To postpone the WFCQ 2022 EUR 2 and EUR 3 due to the present Covid-19 situation and the risk it imposes for the execution of the tournaments, as the Omicron variant is very aggressive. The CB further decided to continue discussions with the current organisers asking for their possibility to organise it in May, while also investigating alternative options

§ 4. Closing of the meeting

Mr. Eriksson closed the meeting at 10:57 CET

**John Liljelund
Secretary General**

**Tomas Eriksson
President**