

2022 IFAF ANNUAL CONGRESS MINUTES

Birmingham, Alabama
July 14, 2022



**INTERNATIONAL
FEDERATION**
OF AMERICAN FOOTBALL

Introductory Note

The 2022 IFAF Annual Congress was staged in Birmingham, Alabama

IFAF Representatives and Meeting Administrators

- Pierre Trochet, IFAF President
 - Jim Mullin, IFAF General Secretary
 - Michael Eschlbock, IFAF Financial Director
 - Mak Koshi, IFAF Director of Development
 - Scott Hallenbeck, IFAF Vice President
 - Roope Noronen, IFAF Director of Competitions
 - Andy Fuller, IFAF Managing Director
 - Parliamentarian: Jason E. Robinson, CP (Sport Law, Canada)
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- Minute Taker: Steve Alic

Pre-Congress Addresses

Opening Remarks

IFAF President Pierre Trochet

- Welcomes participants to Birmingham, Ala.

Keynote Speaker 1

Kit McConnell, International Olympic Committee. Sports Director

- Commends IFAF on its work, especially in recent years
- The IOC looks forward to being a partner of IFAF every step of its way to full IOC recognition
- Referenced the IOC's Olympic Agenda 2020+5

Shared how COVID-19 had a financial impact on sport and sponsorship. Added that the landscape has changed. However, the IOC and its members will adapt, although it may not be easy.

Keynote Speaker 2

Irina Gladkikh, International Olympic Committee Associate Director, Winter and Recognised Sports and IF Relations

- Discussed the IOC's priorities for gender equality, which is more than numbers of athletes, but also inspects quality of uniforms, venues, prize money and equipment for men and women.
- The IOC offers 25 recommendations for gender equality on the IOC's website; she added that she would share these with IFAF to share with members

- IOC asks international federations to reach leadership figures with at least 30% of gender balance, which could mean at least 30% of leadership being men as some federations are over-represented by women.
- She looks forward to working with IFAF toward full IOC recognition
- She added that she watched flag football earlier in the week for the first time and congratulated IFAF members on American Football's success.

Keynote Speaker 3

Damani Leech, National Football League, Chief Operating Officer, International

- The NFL is pleased to collaborate with IFAF on Vision 28
- Flag football is growing, and tackle football remains the bedrock of the sport with 2 million players age 6-17
- It is important that football remains a sport for all: girls, boys, women, and men
- Gave examples of athletes progressing through the NFL's Player Pathway Program, giving international athletes a chance to make a career playing NFL football
- "We feel that the best athletes in the world should be playing this sport."
- Through "Vision 28" the NFL is committed to work with IFAF to continue to promote flag football for multisport games.

Conclusion

Pierre Trochet, IFAF President

- Complimented the Keynote Speakers
- Emphasized the need to build momentum around our sport and its future; all have a role in it
- "Our passion for the game will give us energy to grow together and to make our athletes part of the Olympic Family."

--CONGRESS BREAK--

IFAF Congress Called To Order: 10:08 a.m. Central Time (U.S.)

- Meeting is called to order by IFAF General Secretary Jim Mullin

Roll Call of IFAF member Federations in Attendance (in the room or online). The list was read in order of registration.

United States -- present

Czechia -- present

Mexico- present

Luxembourg -- present

Canada -- present

Sweden -- present

Chile -- present

Norway -- present

Brazil -- present

Japan -- present

Poland -- present

Philippines -- present

New Zealand -- present

Belgium -- present

Italy -- present

Finland – present
Germany – present
Nigeria – present
Haiti – present
Slovakia – present
Uganda – present
Denmark – present
Argentina – present
Georgia – present
Serbia – present
Russia – present
Ghana – present
India – present
Ivory Coast – present
Egypt – present
Malaysia – present
Ukraine – present
El Salvador – present
Australia – present
Israel – present
Panama – present
France – present
Turkey – present
Switzerland – present
Ireland – present
Great Britain – present
Austria – present
Kenya – present
Morocco – present

10:24 a.m. CT

- 26 voting delegates representing 60 votes are confirmed (by Jason Robinson)
- IFAF General Secretary Jim Mullin declares a quorum – meeting is duly called
- Jason Robinson is appointed as meeting scrutineer by General Secretary Mullin

Norway announced that with Russia present, it will leave the meeting

- The following departed the meeting once Russia's attendance was confirmed:
 - o Denmark
 - o Norway
 - o Finland

General Secretary Mullin invited nominations for delegates who will read these Congress minutes for review:

- Minutes will be reported by meeting secretary
- IFAF will review Minutes for accuracy
- Countries appointed to serve as Minutes Reviewers:
 - o Turkey
 - o Brazil
 - o Argentina

Congress attendees were asked for corrections to the Dec. 11, 2021 IFAF Congress Minutes

- No corrections announced or volunteered
- Minutes of the Dec. 11, 2021 IFAF Congress are approved as circulated

Executive Board Report from the past year

- Delivered by IFAF President Pierre Trochet
- President Trochet reports that IFAF has a renewed ambition
 - o After 2 challenging years of COVID, competition is back and expanding
 - o 2023 will be the largest cycle of flag football in IFAF history
 - o Though Diana Flores, IFAF's Athlete Commission is working with the IFAF Board
 - o IFAF Athletes are "the heart of our game" and are part of our governance
 - o Expressed excitement for the 2022 Women's Tackle World Championship in Finland and the 2023 Men's Tackle World Championship in Germany

IFAF Review 2022 (through the present date)

- Delivered by IFAF Managing Director Andy Fuller
 - o IFAF will remain a French-based organization for foreseeable future
 - o IFAF is engaged with Sports Law Canada as needed to assist with strong governance and standards in sport practice
 - o There will be a Statutes review which will involve a range of stakeholders
 - o IFAF will build a Leadership Team with skills to drive IFAF forward; may change the structure of the IFAF Board
 - o IFAF also plans to have two central arms of operations
 - Football Operations: education, training, competitions
 - Business Operations: governance, revenue-generating
- This may expand the size of IFAF's staff
- Work done by volunteers will be critical toward this structure's success
- o A membership survey was issued earlier this year, providing valuable information toward IFAF's upcoming/future priorities
 - ☒ Key findings determined by the survey:
 - Grow the game
 - Identify IFAF's strengths and challenges
 - 80% of members have an anti-doping policy; IFAF will help those who don't have one
 - Majority of members have no Athletes Committee, which is needed
 - Half of IFAF members have a referee education program, 40% working toward one
 - For the first time, tackle is not where most nations have teams competing in IFAF competitions
 - Gender-balance in IFAF leadership is needed
 - IFAF to empower members to develop training programs (revenue-generating) for athletes, game officials, and coaches

IFAF Finance

- Delivered by IFAF Managing Director Andy Fuller
 - o IFAF had an operating balance of \$80K in 2021
 - o Limited revenue and limited expenditure
 - o Accounting documents will be circulated to members soon
 - o Most of IFAF income is in the form of membership fees and competition fees
 - o A grant from the IOC was IFAF's greatest source of income

- o Investments
- ☒ New IFAF website
- ☒ Clean Sport program
- o Membership income is our core revenue stream
- ☒ 50% of these funds go into the Clean Sport program
- o Investments needed for 2023 budget:
- ☒ Staff
- ☒ Partner agencies
- ☒ Deliver wider services required for our sport

Questions Permitted for Andy Fuller (11:10 a.m. CT)

- Secretary General Jim Mullin announces 10 minutes of questions permitted
- All questions answered by IFAF Managing Director Andy Fuller

Argentina

- ☒ Q: Update on the payment of Tommy Wiking's law firm?
- ☒ A: IFAF made a final payment in 2021. We were disappointed about this, but it has been resolved. There is nothing more from that case.

Turkey

- ☒ Q: When is next Congress?
- ☒ A: The next Congress will be a point of order at end of this meeting, deferring to President Trochet.

- ☒ Q: What will we do to get more sponsorships?
- ☒ A: We will open a branch of Business Operations that will cover sponsorships. We are building a business model, looking at how we brand our competitions and invite media partners to brand with us. It's time to dedicate a business operations department in IFAF. We believe that Vision 28 and flag in multisport games will lead to new business opportunities.

Expounded answer by IFAF Financial Secretary Michael Eschlbock

- You need a good committee, but you need a strong product to sell. Andy is working to develop product. One of our most promising products is flag football. Working toward full recognition with IOC will give us something to sell. Having IFAF's legal seat in Paris is strategic given the prominence of activity in France at present. We have a window of opportunity that we've never had before.

Nigeria (question submitted online)

- Q: Do you need to look at a country's needs before you decide on your events? We want to align with IFAF.
- General Secretary Mullin Answer: We will have process and consultation with the continents.
- ☒ President Trochet Answer: We are committed to have each continent have a chair and bid, review with members. We will have a continuous process.

--CONGRESS BREAK - 10 Minutes--

IFAF Congress Continues: 11:31 a.m. Central Time (U.S.)

Membership of Nations

- Great Britain announces that it will not vote due to it sharing sentiments with Denmark, Switzerland, and Sweden re: Russia participating and will abstain from voting
- No objections
- Great Britain will abstain from voting

Consideration of Submitted Motions

- Andy Fuller speaks on rationale of the motion
- o Two (2) paragraphs under Section 2.1 – adding paragraphs (m) and (o) as mentioned in motion document provided to members
- ☒ (m): ensure all levels of federation commitment to diversity equality
- ☒ (o): implant programs and practices to ensure sustainably to American Football, including the environment of where the competition is taking place ...
- Motion is moved by Argentina
- Motion is seconded by the United States
- Discussion opened
- o Virtual members are specifically invited to discuss as well
- o No debate
- CLEAR MAJORITY – motion is carried announced General Secretary Mullin, 11:38 a.m. CT U.S.

Election of Board Members for 2022-26

Non-executive director positions:

- Oceania
- The Americas

Some continental nominations were invalid:

- Africa: was submitted by a non-IFAF-member country
- Oceania: submitted by a nation not in good standing
- Europe: not submitted in time

IFAF Board will determine how these positions are filled or not filled by the next Congress

Valid nominations:

- Oceania – Russell McConnochie. New Zealand
- Americas – Javier Lepiscopio, Argentina, and Felipe Pereira, Brazil

Oceania Vote

- Two voting members from Oceania will vote for this candidate (voting link launched by Jason Robinson)
- o Australia
- o New Zealand – email (11:44a CT)
- Three votes cast in the ballot
- o Russell McConnochie was duly elected as Oceania representative

Americas Vote

- ☒ Five voting members to participate in this board member election (voting link launched by Jason Robinson)
- o Javier Lepiscopio was duly elected as Americas representative

IFAF Medical Committee

- Dr. David Patterson delivered a presentation on concussion

- At presentation's conclusion, President Trochet affirmed IFAF's commitment to athlete safety

Other Business

- Robert Huber (Germany) desired to make a presentation on the 2023 IFAF Men's Tackle World Championship, but was unable to do so due to technological issues. This presentation will be delivered at a later time.
- Panama asked when nation rankings will be updated for flag football.
 - o IFAF Director of Competition Noronen reported that rankings will be reviewed and more will be clarified about the ranking system for future competitions.

2023 IFAF Congress

- President Trochet volunteered that countries in Europe and Africa have expressed interest in hosting the 2023 Congress.
- He added that more information is to come based on an assessment of bids and options.

Motion to Adjourn

- Motion made by the United States
- Israel seconded the motion
- Clear majority carried the motion.

2022 IFAF Congress was adjourned at 12:32 p.m. Central Time (U.S.)

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Ends

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