



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE ROLLER SPORTS

**MINUTES OF THE FIRS ORDINARY CONGRESS
MURCIA – SPAIN
December 2nd, 2006**

Members in attendance:

Argentina	Iran	New Zealand	Uruguay
Australia	Italy	Portugal	Venezuela
China	Japan	South Africa (S, A)	
Egypt	Korea	Spain	
France	Mexico	Switzerland (RH, IH)	
Germany	Netherlands	USA	

1. President's opening remarks

Presidente Aracu: I firstly wish to welcome all delegates. Here beside me I am pleased to have the first Vice President Valerie Leftwich, the Secretary General Roberto Marotta, and particularly, I was pleased to invite the President of the Spanish Federation, Carmelo Paniagua and a very special guest, Mr Rafael BLANCO, General Sports Director of the Consejo Superior de Deportes, whom I leave the floor for a few opening words ...

Rafael Blanco: a heartily welcome to all of you, welcome to Spain and welcome to Murcia. I bring you the Spanish Government's greeting. It is a great pleasure for me to be here in Murcia and attend the FIRS Congress, where so many friends countries are gathered to meet in these sports days here in Spain. I wish particularly to address to someone who devotes his life daily for the development of the roller sports all the world over, my friend Sabatino Aracu. Roller sports, in all disciplines always found a deep and important tradition here in Spain. The *Real Federacion Española de Patinaje* is the only official body entitled to represent Spain in roller sports at International level recognised by the Spanish Government. I hereby confirm that the Spanish Government considers rollersports as a developing sport to be supported for the insertion in the Olympic Programme. Our Government, through its intercultural exchange programme has at the present time established agreements with 50 countries in the world, from Latin America to China, and is ready to help out roller sports in its process of development and perfecting. You must know that the Spanish Government intends to stand in the front line of the world's sports scene and Madrid is candidate city for the 2017 summer Olympics, a place where rollersports would certainly be inserted in a very important role. I will close wishing you all the best success in this wonderful world championship and a pleasant stay here in Murcia.

Carmelo Paniagua: on behalf of the Spanish Federation I am proud to host the 51st world figure skating championship as well as the FIRS Congress in the city of Murcia, where I guarantee all efforts were done in order to set up the best organization ever. The Spanish Federation is at your total disposal to make every single detail may be at the complete pleasance of the competent technical committees and of FIRS. I seize this opportunity to

thank the FIRS President and each one of you wishing you at the same time a pleasant stay in Murcia.

Roberto Marotta: we shall now open the Congress following the Agenda and appointing the scrutineers (Luis Brandao – Portugal; Ute Villwock – Germany). At point “c” of the agenda we are required to approve the minutes of the previous Congress.

The Assembly votes in favour, no abstentions, no contrary vote, the minutes are approved unanimously.

Presidential Report

Dear friends, consider this report of mine as a reflection done together with each one of you, in order to provide us with a clearer view on the real status of our sport. Over 20 months have passed since my election, not even two years and 4 congresses already celebrated. I wish to thank all those who were always there, all through this time, sharing with me the same love for this sport and the will to improve it more and more. In our time making our sport grow involves love, organizing skills and financial resources. I wish I could feel your trust as an ideal handshake just like the will of working together in harmony, just like I proudly see it happening in my central committee. My special thanks goes to the Italian Roller skating federation, for its important support to FIRS, in structure, resources and qualified staff (Laura, Cecilia e Luca). Not mentioning the credits of the past managements, we've tried to give a new strategy to the management of our resources, implementing - in co-operation with the head of the sports facility management of the Italian Olympic Committee – a special commission whose task will be the collection of data for the construction of sports facility dedicated to the practice of all roller sports and mostly have them available to everyone to download from the FIRS official internet website.

Planning involves automatically financial resources, and the financial inheritance from the past management made this job extremely hard. There were firstly a lot of debts which needed to be paid, and we managed to do that through a further taxation charged upon the technical committees and me, personally. We sadly found out that FIRS was 3 years in outstanding debts with International Bodies such as GAISF e IWGA, plus outstanding allowances to personnel, settled with the valid support of the Spanish federation. Big sums of money have then been used to safeguard FIRS in the legal procedures related to the Catalunya case. Thanks to the support of the Italian Olympic Committee I can proudly say that the balance has now turned positive again, and we're already planning new investments and in search of new potential financial partners, which, I guarantee, shall appear in the FIRS budget, next year.

We've got one major goal, give credit back to the image of our sport and join the Olympic programme. All through this months we've been in touch with senior executives of the IOC, such as Mr Fairweather, Mr Felli, and President Rogge himself. Just one year ago, with your contribution, we could put together the numbers of our sport and show up at the IOC Session in Singapore, ready to claim for the insertion in the Olympic programme. Thanks to that presence we can say today that we're one of the 3 sports likely to get included in the Olympic Programme, because ours is an extraordinary “product”, visible all over the world. We didn't make it in Singapore, yet no one could, just think that two sports have even been erased from the programme, a real black day for the international sport. No matter all our contacts, established with the support of the Italian Government, there was no way to make it, there, for nobody. The IOC Session shall newly discuss the Olympic Programme in 2009, no doubt we'll be there. I'll make sure that a visit to the President of the local Olympic Committee shall be arranged every time I visit a country hosting a world championship. I am available in helping each one of you connecting with the relevant Olympic Committee and/or Government, the way I had pleasure to do here with my friend

Rafael, Director of the Consejo Superior de Deportes, a visible sign that the Spanish Government is on our side and ready to support us in our march towards the Olympic recognition. Similar contacts have also been activated with important leading eastern countries, such as China. Last year we invited to Rome, in the occasion of the world figure championships Mr Alex Gilady, manager of the IOC TV and Radio Commission. After that meeting I had clear in my mind the importance of how our sports look like on TV. We need to keep the quality level of our sports high and steady so that special guests like the IOC Members can appreciate them. I seize the opportunity if thanking the Korean friends for the organization of the best speed worlds of the past 20 years. We might refer to International Sports Bodies such as the GAISF, in order to get indications on the most suitable seat for hosting cities for a world championship. We might even think of Dubai – top world trade crossroads, and that would mean for us important image and financial outcomes. Rollersports is already in the Pan American Games and in the programme of the 2009 Mediterranean Games, which also represents a major meeting point for Arab countries. We want to support a development programme there through the action of technical staff creating a base roller movement, competing in inline speed events. We're also working on the inclusion of the rollersports in the Commonwealth Games, the University Games and The Masters Games, a multisports event gathering over 20.000 participants from all over ...

The FIRS website has recently been upgraded, with brand new multimedia purposes. Soon everyone shall be able to use the website for the affiliation procedures and for merchandising online.

Keywords for us means top quality image, and webtv.

A show of the FIRS webtv is shown to the Congress on the big screen.

In a spirit of united purposes, I attended the meeting of the European and Panamerican Confederation, while Roberto Marotta was present at the meeting of the Asian Confederation. We are in the same team, sharing the same project and hopefully the same enthusiasm. As I said during last Assembly, my wish is still to meet as many of you on the competition playgrounds.

The Presidential Report is approved unanimously by the FIRS Congress

The FIRS Secretary General informs that the present nations are 21 for a total of 83 votes

Report of the 1st Vice President (Valerie Leftwich)

As FIRS Vice President I attended the Oceania championships in New Zealand, a successful event in spite of the big distances for the participants. I saw in July with my committee World Inline hockey championships, where a new implemented system is now granting the less developed countries like China or Japan a certain number of matches, and this is also positively affecting the game standards. In September, accepting the invitation from the Asian Confederation, I had pleasure to meet in Taiwan Mr Yoshiro Noguchi, a man devoting 50 years of his life to rollersports, passing in that very seat the chairmanship of the CARS to Mr Guo Min, President of the Chinese Fed. whom I address my best wishes. During the Asian Games I had a meeting with the World Games management, and our conversation was about the participation of the disciplines of the inline hockey, artistic and speed at the Kaohsiung World Games, a top important event for our sports. I seize this opportunity to remind you that next year's figure worlds shall be in Australia, in the Gold Coast. The site is extremely pleasant both for the weather and the

landscape, you are very welcome to participate and I am available for all information. I finally wish to thank Presidnet Aracu and Dr. Marotta for their steady support.

Report of the Vice President Simon Wilkins (Oceania)

In the last months the Oceania Confederation has been deeply engaged with the promotion and development of the roller sports, particularly on a project related to the practise of skateboarding in New Zealand, in co-operation with the local government. Oceanian Championships have been a real success, thanks to a massive participation which makes me enthusiastically look at next year's championships in Adelaide, in South Australia. Oceania skaters took part at all FIRS world championships, and it's worth mentioning the huge success of New Zealand speed National teams, awarded with 7 medals at the speed worlds in Korea, a magnificent result for such a small country. Next challenge is represented by the organisation of the 2007 figure worlds in the Gold Coast. Also thank to the words of the President we are more and more aware of our tasks and hereby wish to invite all National federations to bring their best athletes to Australia so to make the show unforgettable. We know it's going to be a long trip for everyone and we wish to thank all of you for this effort. Special thanks to the FIRS Secretariat for the precious work carried out through the year.

Report of the FIRS Secretary General

Rollerskating is certainly the passion of my life, yet I must confess this year I devoted more time there than to my private life. We have now 90 member countries, 76 out of them are active in sports. As you all know the IOC asks the active presence of at least 85 countries. One of our tasks is to see the rollerskating family grow with new active members, that is to say running national championships and good contacts with their relevant National Olympic Committees. We scored this year the record in participating countries (50) at the speed worlds, and this is surely due to the magnificent organizing efforts of the Korean Federation. Fifty participating countries are a significant message to the IOC, and I agree with the President saying that the decision taken at 2005 IOC Session in Singapore signed a black page in the history of sport. We had pleasure during the 2005 Duisburg World Games in having the IOC Sports Director, Mr Kelly Fairweather assisting at our speed events. Our sports are in the programme of the 2009 Kaohsiung World Games, all federations are invited to send their best athletes. Our American friends are working hard so that our sports can remain in the programme of the Panamerican Games. The newly elected CARS President, Mr Guo Min, is striving to have roller sports included in the Asian Games, our President got rollersports accepted in the Mediterranean Games, Valerie Leftwich is working on the inclusion of our sports in the Commonwealth Games, and finally, we shall surely enter the Master Games and the University Games. The IOC has approximately a hundred influent top managers all over the world, we should get in touch with each one of these, convincing them about the solidity of our base. We've put under the supervision of the CIC new disciplines which shall surely bring new Energy to our sports, so our door must be left open for them. FIRS is the governing body for rollersports, including the emerging ones, as they represent a chance to create new interest around our sport and to widen our base, with the disciplines of the skateboarding, inline freestyle, inline jump, longboarding, alpine skating (cross country ski on rollers), and the balonpatin (soccer on skates). We will not comply with the general values of sport unless we comply with its rules, I'm talking about the rules of WADA, world agency fighting the use of drugs in sport, I'm calling each one of you to contribute to this important task, and refer to Dr. Pat Wallace, Chairman of the FIRS anti-doping Commission.

Report of the President of the Comité Internationale de Rink Hockey

Strucksberg: dear delegates, friends, my report is in the Congress folder, I shall not spend more words on the contents explained there. I wish anyway to underline the big success of the Ladies world championships in Santiago del Chile. I wish to remind you that 16 teams shall compete next year at the "A" world championships in Montreux (SUI). I seize the opportunity to thank the organisers of Montreux and our Japanese friends, organising next ladies world championship. I wish to close with the news of the first world championship for clubs within the end of 2008.

Report of the President of the Comité International de Patinage Artistique

Pollard: it's a pleasure to be here in Murcia and I wish to thank the RFEP President for the fantastic organising committee of these world championships, maybe the best ever. I spent the last two years far from home and from my job, like Roberto, due to the political aspects related to the Catalunya issue and to the Panamerican Games. I attended the decision-making Panamerican Games Meetings of the past 20 years, and every 4 years our sport had to strive to stay inside the programme. One thing I've learned from these meetings is that our federations can be our worst enemies, due to their lack of contacts with the relevant Olympic Committees. Missing these meetings would mean, as we say in English "out of sight, out of mind"... We must be visible and we must keep knocking at those doors. Last august, in a meeting of the Panam Games in Rio de Janeiro I was told by the Board of directors that speed skating would have been included and they would have also built a track inside the velodrome, and all this tank to that "Black day" in Singapore, because even if we did not make it, we were still in the list of the "eligible" sports.

Rio de Janeiro is candidate city for the 2016 Summer Olympics, and they also decided to build the track, should our sport be voted in the Olympic Programme. Out of the 7 non Olympic sports applying for the pan-american games only 4 made it, and one of them was us. When it's about dealing with the IOC you need to be 100% co-operative, present and visible, and, as President just said, in the next two years we'll have to be there any time the IOC is holding a meeting, with our best athletes and managers.

Report of the President of the Comité International of Roller Inline Hockey

Pickard: I spent most of my life working with roller skating, firstly in the United States and then at International level. I started back in 1994 to work with the inline hockey, its popularity arising with the boom of the inline skate. Right in 1994 the FIRS Congress held in Portugal officially recognised inline hockey as fourth discipline. Our work focused since then on the standardization of rules and regulations all the world over. I can proudly say today that since the first world championship organised in Illinois we had 28 different National representatives participating. Maximum number of participating teams in a world championship is 16 for men and 10 for ladies. We had 12 world championships, and the 13th will be here in Spain (Bilbao) in 2007. There are right now 34 countries in the world organising regular National championships. One of the major problems related to this sport lies in the dimensions of the track, larger than the normal 20 x 40 tracks of the traditional hockey. You don't easily find facilities this size and larger staff everywhere. We normally refer to the facilities used in the winter for the ice hockey. This sport has a bright future ahead, because of the large number of fans al lover the world. The ice hockey players themselves do practise this sport during the summer. We're trying to involve more the less

experienced teams organising the FIRS National Team World Cup, where matches are played by levelled teams, thus more chances to play more matches. Next year we shall also organize a Junior world championships in Duesseldorf, from July 25 till 29. Inline hockey has been in the World Games programme for the last 2 editions, and it's been a big hit being one of the very few WG sports broadcasted at world level. Though we're the youngest among the FIRS disciplines, we are collecting respect and honours, and we need to deserve and keep these conditions, growing and introducing new ideas thanks to the presence of new teams. Thanks for your attention.

Report of the President of the Comité International de Course

Marotta: This year in Anyang we've hit the record of participating countries: 50, with over 700 entered athletes. Soon after our appearance at the IOC Session in Singapore, we participated at the World Games in Duisburg, having the WG President Ron Froehlich, accompanied by Kelly Fairweather as special and enthusiastic spectators, despite of the rain and the bad weather. I wish to stress the importance of participating at the World Games with our best athlete, because only with the best show we can try and attract the media and the TV networks. 2005 Speed Worlds were held for the first time ever in China, I wish hereby to thank the Chinese Federation for their fantastic hospitality and for a perfect organisation. I wish to thank the Korean Federation and the authorities in Anyang because thanks to their combined action we raised the organisation of a world championship to a higher level. Thanks to all delegations, as with their presence they contributed to the success of the 2006 worlds. Colombia shall host the 2007 speed world championships, in the town of Cali, we'll be in 2008 in Gijon, Spain; in 2009 in Switzerland, Zurich. CIC is waiting for bids to complete the calendar for the years 2010/2012. I hope that Colombia 2007 shall raise the records established in Anyang. Thank you all.

Report of the FIRS Auditor represented by Roberto Marotta

Marotta: please find in your folder, according to the FIRS Statutes, the consolidated balance sheet of the 4 technical committees and the one of FIRS.

Dr. Marotta reads the items of the balance, incomes and expenses.

All of our balance sheets have been sent to our Auditor, Dr. Luis Alfonso Munoz, who checked them carefully and prepared the consolidated balance sheet with some comments which you shall find in the last pages. Ours is a rather poor balance, we hope to find larger resources in the future for a more complete promotion of our sports.

In the absence of questions or comments we pass to point "I" of the Agenda.

I) NEW AFFILIATIONS

The FIRS Central Committee, further to an attentive analysis of the documentation provided by the new candidate FIRS members, approved their provisional affiliation, and we're called today to their final admission within FIRS, one by one. *Scrutineers are invited to verify the ratification voting.*

HAITI	–	unanimously approved
MONGOLIA	--	unanimously approved
SOMALIA	--	unanimously approved
THAILAND	--	unanimously approved
IRAN	--	unanimously approved

The FIRS President informs the Assembly about the presence, the participation subjudice of their team at the Anyang and Murcia worlds, confirming his personal complete trust towards the IRAN Federation.

L) Proposals from Member Federations

No communications or proposals arrived

Aracu: Before leaving the floor to free interventions I wish to ask the Congress to consider Mr Yoshiro Noguchi, who just retired from his sports career, for the nomination as honorary FIRS Mmber

The Assembly approves by acclamation

Luis Brandao: I wish to thank the FIRS President and the Secretary General for the massive work carried out and hereby grant the engagement and contribution of the Portuguese Federation. I wish to draw your attention on the standardization of the disciplinary, financial and organizational regulations of FIRS and the Continental Confederations. I deem it necessary to work on the development of organisational standards for the main events through the development of a guide book of compulsory organizational for all countries, so that the image of our sport can be uniform. Last but not least we should be informed on the figures of our sport, at national and international level.

Aracu: Luis, yours was an extremely constructive intervention. Statutes of the Confederations are important because their principles are totally shared by FIRS. As concerns the “numbers” of our sport, I agree that we should all have all possible data available, using the potentials of our internet portal. The FIRS website shall soon enable new functions, video and data viewing/downloading and statistics on the presence of our sports in all regions of the world.

No other interventions, the meeting ends at 12.30

The Secretary General
Dr. Roberto Marotta

The President
Hon. Sabatino Aracu