

# THE INTERNATIONAL FIELD ARCHERY ASSOCIATION

Home page: [www.ifaa-archery.org](http://www.ifaa-archery.org)



## New Year's Message from the IFAA President.

Dear National Delegates and Executives and Archers of the IFAA.

Another year has passed and our Treasurer Tim Stone and I have now served the IFAA as Executive Officers for 14 years. A long time considering that an Officer does not expect to serve longer than two or three terms.

I thank you for your trust in us and that you allow us to lead the IFAA for another four years.

The year has been quite eventful, but also quite difficult for me. My so-called part time employment as a retired project manager became soon a full-time job which did not allow me to attend to the IFAA in the way I would have liked.

I have relied increasingly on our Secretary Martin Koini to attend to the day-to-day running of the IFAA as well as attending various meetings and the planning the way forward for the IFAA. That has not been easy task for Martin who has spent a lot of his family-time working for the IFAA without the strong support that was needed. I believe that he has done an excellent job this year.

After the meeting of European members in February 2008, Martin and I attended a meeting with the Secretary-General of the FITA Mr. Tom Dielen and Mrs. Trudy Medwed of the ÖBSV.

As reported previously, the meeting was cordial and informative and it was the basis on which further talks have continued.

In September Martin officially attended the FITA WFAC in Wales and had extensive discussions with various FITA Officials.

This meeting was followed by a further meeting in Spain where FITA hosted their first European 3D under EMAU.

Various topics were discussed which resulted in a joint declaration in which both parties have undertaken to work together on various issues as well as the agreement to "recognize each other as independent sports organizations".

I believe that as a direct result of these discussions and our acceptance by the FITA Congress there is a renewed interest in the IFAA from Spain and we had our first archery team from China (Shanghai) at the 2008 NAFAC, a major breakthrough.

The draft of the agreement is attached to this message for your information. The formal declaration will however be issued later in January 2009.

This however is only the first step. We have now to decide the way forward.

This will involve a lot of work for the Executive and further debate within the IFAA as well as discussions with other parties. It will require from you that you start reading up the various legal aspects within your country and become more informed of what is happening in the world of sport. It is a process that is required so that you may make informed decisions in August 2010.

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The most pertinent issue for the future of the IFAA is in fact quite simple and many other issues are related to this one:

**Is the way forward for the IFAA:**

- 1. to be a recognised International Sports Association that gives recognition to our top archers as well as to our social archers or**
- 2. to be a International “Social” Association where archers come together for archery and social interaction and in this process call the winners of such event the World or Regional Champion, irrespective of his/her performance.**

Whatever decision is made in 2010, both will have far reaching consequences for the IFAA.

In the event of choosing option (1) the following issues will become pertinent:

1. The need to register as a member with the GAISF.  
This organisation has a membership that includes all International Sports Associations that confirm with the GAISF minimum requirements. We at this stage do not comply as our membership lies below the minimum of 40 members.  
The future of the GAISF is not certain as it forms in part a duplication of the IOC and other organisations such as the WADA (World Anti-Doping Authority) may well replace it.  
The question therefore is if joining the GAISF is of such benefit to our members that it warrants the high expense of joining that association.  
We therefore ask of all our members to assess the benefits at their National level.
2. The need for clear Anti-doping rules.  
From our initial research it has become quite clear that a mere reference to the IOC doping policy in our By-Laws is no longer sufficient and may not acceptable in terms of National Law. Almost all governments have underwritten the Copenhagen Declaration against the use of drugs in sport and most countries have now laws against the use of drugs in sport which must be enforced by National Sports Bodies.  
The formal acceptance of anti-doping rules under the WADA Protocol is a major challenge for all of us as it dramatically in contrast to the founding principles of the IFAA.

Nevertheless I believe that it is the Executive’s duty to inform you of the consequences if we accept or not accept the WADA Protocol

On thing is certain: By accepting the protocol the IFAA will need to restructure the tournaments and Classification to allow the Pros and the “Competitive” archers to compete in the Adult division, but subjected to WADA testing, and the “Social” archer who will not be subjected to WADA testing.

I ask that you read up on the subject to be able to make a decision based on knowledge rather than emotion. Your input on this subject will be highly appreciated.

In the event of choosing option (2) the following issues may become pertinent:

1. We may be challenged to call ourselves a sports body and may lose our registration in Switzerland, who has underwritten the Copenhagen Declaration, and as such may not be in a position to recognise us, unless we underwrite the WADA protocol.
2. We may be challenged to host “World” events or “Regional” events as we have not underwritten the WADA protocol.
3. Our members that have been recognised by their national sports council and/or Department of Sport may be forced to leave the IFAA.

You can understand the “trend” in which things may happen and already some of our members are being challenged.

A meaningful co-existence, cooperation and mutual recognition with the FITA also will result in various steps that are required by both associations:

1. Cooperation between the IFAA and the FITA against drug users and in the event of major disciplinary cases.  
One of the bases of coexistence between the two associations is to respect each other’s disciplinary decisions against “serious offenders” and those archers who are penalised have no alternative choice by joining the counterpart.
2. Standardisation of equipment definitions and styles.  
This is not meant to reduce the number of styles in the IFAA but to harmonise the definitions of the styles that are recognised by both associations, i.e. Freestyle Unlimited, Freestyle Limited Recurve, Barebow and Longbow.  
We will also be looking at harmonising various limitations such as draw weight/arrow speed, maximum arrow thickness etc.  
This will cause less confusion and allow archers to compete in the events of both associations without having to modify their equipment or even having to buy new equipment.
3. Legality of bows.  
An increasing number of countries consider the modern archery equipment no longer as purely recreational equipment and the occasional incidents as well as rise of bow hunting has made governments more and more aware that bows are dangerous and can be used in defensive and offensive ways with lethal consequences.  
It is expected that in future the free purchase and use of archery equipment may become limited in a manner not unlike the purchase of fire arms.  
The IFAA and the FITA intent to start a joint lobby against such rules and inform our governments of the use of archery equipment for recreation and competitive sport.

4. Air transportation of bows.

Many of our archers have already encountered problems in the acceptance and handling of our equipment by airport personnel and security. On several occasions archery equipment has been treated in a similar fashion as fire arms.

The IFAA and the FITA need to start a combined lobby and inform them of our sport and recreation to obtain exemption in the event of official tournaments. In this process we must also make contact with national security well before such an event is hosted.

Also in this case we will have to ask our members to start talking to their national governments and obtain information about these rules and regulations from their national carriers.

Other steps that were or will have to be taken:

1. The decision to register as a non-profit sports organisation in Switzerland requires us to assure that the Constitution does not contravene the law of that nation.

Swiss Law has required a change in Article XVII B of the Constitution as IFAA assets in the event of dissolution may only distributed to other non-profit organisations. The status of most of our members as non-profit organisations is unknown to the IFAA and a direct reference to these members is seen to be illegal. Our Lawyers advised us of the required change.

The IFAA Executive has authorised the change subject to acceptance of the World Council in 2010 on the basis that in such an event most, if not all assets will have been lost in an attempt to revive the IFAA.

2. Safety on the ranges

Safety on the ranges must be upgraded and organisers of IFAA events should in future incorporate the local and national safety rules. Although the V-P remains the authorised person to accept the ranges in terms of the IFAA rules, executing authorities who need to implement national and local safety rules must also be involved and approve the ranges in terms of safety.

3. International Exposure.

It was decided at the last World Council meeting to give the IFAA more world exposure.

Our first step will be to attend the ATA Exposition in January 2009. The IFAA will have a boot next to the NFAA boot, and Martin Koini will attend the Exposition and attend to the boot.

4. Restructuring of the Executive Council.

In the event that the World Council accepts the WADA protocol a restructure of the IFAA Executive will become necessary by adding elected and seconded members, such as an Anti-Doping Committee, to spread the burden of the Elected Executive Officers. This may include nominations of regional Vice-Presidents, the inclusion of a (part time) Secretary-General, etc.

Other issues that may need consideration are:

1. Restructuring of the Championships and “supervision” of these events in view of high attendance and over expenditure. We may have to look at smaller but more frequent events and divide large regions up in 2-4 regions to make events more accessible.

2. The possibility of acceptance of autonomous (self-governing) regions from large countries in a similar manner that we accept Wales, England and Scotland.

This includes regions such as Kaliningrad and Shanghai.

In the case of their application it is my intention to accept these applicants as Associate members until the next World Council meeting. This will give us time to come up with a proposal how we may integrate these Regions in our membership.

Many of you may say that the abovementioned issues contravene the spirit of the IFAA as it was originally intended and that we will become too much like FITA.

Although I do believe that some of the issues will result in extensive discussions we must keep in mind that the 1970-ies are no longer and that sport has changed so much that changes will be needed for a meaningful survival of the IFAA.

I believe that many of you are aware of the required changes and the challenges that we have to overcome. Already at National level some of our members are forced to change or to simply cease to exist. The IFAA will face the same problem and the longer we wait to face the challenges we more difficult it will be to do so later.

I believe that it is important to communicate with you directly.

The 2009 meeting of European members has the potential to get 2/3 of our members together. It is the ideal opportunity to discuss the various issues and try and explain the various options. At the same time I will also try and attend meetings with various FITA officials in Lausanne with Martin Koini, to pave the road for further communication and cooperation as well as a meeting with our lawyers in Lugano to find out what the requirements are for any such changes as well as sign the Italian Version of Statues after the changes in April this year.

The invitation was however for February, the month that I cannot leave my contracts.

I ask therefore that the meeting is moved to 07 March or 14 March 2009.

This change will also give you time to get familiarised with all the potential changes and requirements.

The task of the Executive over the next year and a half is quite enormous. We hope to be able to give you guidance in that period and that the correct decision will be made in 2010.

Nevertheless, we cannot do it alone and we need your active input !

Last but not least I remind you that in 2010 the IFAA will be 40 years !

We wish to make it a special event with a special logo !

Although we did ask before, we need to ask again that you come up with a proposal for a logo. We received no input from our first request.,

Leaves me to wish you a prosperous and healthy 2009.

Kind regards

Loet Smit  
IFAA President