

European Rowing Management Board

2014 Annual Report

Membership of the ERMB

Ryszard Stadniuk (POL), Chair
Dag Danzglock (GER)
Nebojsa Jevremovic (SRB)
Algirdas Raslanas (LTU)
Patrick Rombaut (BEL)
Eva Szanto (HUN)
Roland Weill (FRA)

Meetings of the ERMB

FISA Joint Commission Meeting, March, London (GBR)
European Rowing Junior Championships, May, Hazewinkel (BEL)
European Rowing Championships and European Rowing Federations' General Assembly, May, Belgrade (SRB)
European Rowing Federations' Extraordinary Meeting, August, Amsterdam (NED)

Report on Activities in 2014

The focus of European Rowing activities in 2014 was on the continental rowing events:

2014 European Rowing Championships

The event was a breakthrough success with all the big teams taking part, continued growth in participation (36 nations, 649 athletes, 241 boats) and the best television viewers' ratings since the European Rowing Championships were reinstated back in 2007. The participation of female crews was extremely encouraging – 9 W8+ boats were competing at the ERCH 2014, to mention just one. Moving the date of the ERCH to May proved to be a good decision. The excellent organisation also contributed to the success.

2014 European Rowing Junior Championships

The 2014 ERJCH was an excellent event thanks to the good work of the experienced organising committee and the record number of participants - 31 nations, 449 athletes and 151 boats competed in the 13 events over two days. The standard of the competition was very high with many of the athletes who participated in the ERJCH going on to win medals or being finalists at the World Rowing Junior Championships later in 2014.

2014 European Indoor Rowing Championships

The European Indoor Rowing Championships were held jointly with the Concept2 Euro-Open following the previous year's combined event. Despite its good organisation, participation figures were still below the expected level and the challenge remains to attract athletes through innovative promotional activities. The 2015 edition of the European Indoor Rowing Championships was awarded to Szczecin (POL) with a new concept for

staging the event. Dag Danzglock is responsible for the European Indoor Rowing project and is supervising and assisting in the organisation of this event.

2014 European Rowing Federations' General Assembly (GA)

Decisions were taken about the attribution of future European Rowing events: the hosting rights for the 2015 European Indoor Rowing Championships were attributed to Szczecin (POL), the 2016 ERCH to Brandenburg (GER) and the 2016 ERJCH to Trakai (LTU).

The GA was a great forum for discussing hot (political) issues in the European sports' scene, among them the EOC European Games and the possibility of including rowing in the 2018 European Sports Championships. The National Rowing Federations proposed several new ideas including the introduction of a European Rowing U23 Championships and the attribution of the ERCH 3 or 4 years in advance so that the OCs have more time to prepare for the event. As the majority of the delegates indicated a clear wish to start a European Rowing U23 Championships, a survey was carried out about the possible format and date of this event. At an extraordinary meeting of the European National Rowing Federations the topic was further discussed based on the survey results. It was followed by an email voting procedure, the result of which was a decision to start the European Rowing U23 Championships in September 2017, with the WRU23 Championships event. The format and standard of the event will be the same as for the ERJCH.

In line with the FISA strategic plan, great attention was paid to the development of rowing in Europe. This includes increasing the number of FISA member Rowing Federations in Europe and also motivating the currently less active members. Many of these activities are driven by Roland Weill and Nebojsa Jevremovic. The involvement of some federations (FRA, GER, SRB, ITA) to help this process is greatly appreciated.

As an innovation, there was an informal Presidents' Meeting on the Friday of the ERCH in Belgrade which was a good opportunity for the NF representatives to exchange ideas.

The ERMB endorsed some new initiatives such as the Rowing Champions League and some projects (ITA and LTU) aiming to attract EU funding into rowing through the Erasmus+ programme. Unfortunately no rowing project was granted funding from the programme in 2014.

Accomplishments

- The European Rowing Championships was a highly successful event with growing participation and high TV viewer ratings.
- The European Rowing Junior Championships had a record number of participating nations, crews and athletes, plus increased popularity among the junior teams.
- The European Indoor Rowing project was continued with the 2nd European Indoor Championships staged together with the Concept2 Euro-Open in Copenhagen (DEN).
- The dialogue between the European NFs continues to develop in a structured way.
- Progress was made towards the inclusion of rowing in the 2018 European Sports Championships project.

- One new nation – Luxembourg - officially indicated interest to become a FISA member.

Challenges for the Future

- It is important for the ERCH to keep its status in the FISA International Regatta Calendar and continue to improve the event.
- The new European event, the U23 Championships, should be promoted among organisers and teams alike.
- European continental activities have to be constantly overviewed and adjusted, finding ways for improving events, developing European Rowing and supporting FISA's strategic plan.
- We should aim to increase the number of FISA's European members and activate all who have been less active by attracting them to the European and World Rowing events, with a special focus on initiating rowing activities in their countries and Olympic Qualification.
- European Rowing should become a key factor on the European sports scene. We should continue to strengthen our position in the European Sports Championships project.
- The 1st EOC (European Olympic Committees) European Games in Baku in 2015 are organised without rowing on the programme. The ERMB should continue discussions with the relevant parties about possible ways of including rowing in this European multisport event in 2019, whilst avoiding conflicts with existing commitments.
- FISA ERMB should continue to establish good governance practices including continuous review of regulations, clear decision making processes and exchange of information.
- The new European Union sports funding programme, Erasmus+, opens up new possibilities. Successful projects should be put together in the field of development, education, cooperative partnerships and not-for-profit events and be submitted to the European Commission for funding within the period 2014-2020.

Conclusion

The activities of the ERMB continue to support delivery of FISA's strategy, aiming to strengthen involvement in rowing and events at both a continental and a regional level and increase the number of active members. Thanks to the changes of the FISA Regatta Calendar and support of FISA staff, the significance of the European Rowing Championships continues to grow. With the new challenges rowing is facing at a world level, European Rowing should be a great contributor to the process of leading change.

Ryszard Stadniuk