

Highlights of the ESDRA Congress 2008

The 2008th Congress was hosted by the Swedish Federation in Malmö the 14th-15th of June. Our thanks to SDSF for being such a good host.

The Congress had delegates from ten full member federations and one associated member. IFSS was represented by Vice President Bernard Pepin and WSA was represented by President Jan Nordlöf.

The Board had invited the delegates to a pre-Congress discussion on Saturday morning concerning our future sport development. Guest speakers Arne Boysen from Norway presented the creative and interesting Olympic Model for Sleddog Sports and the experience already gained from those events, and Johan Fegar from the Danish Orienteering Federation gave a highly thoughtful and stimulating presentation of the DOF's efforts in changing their sport to be more visible and modern with the aim to be an Olympic sport.

The three-hour discussion was extremely interesting and there were many positive reactions from the delegates on the ideas of development. Our sport has undergone little change in view of meeting the demands from the spectators or the media to make our sport more visible and understandable. The delegates present truly spent an active and efficient three hours in considering the future.

The ordinary Congress started with a silent moment in memory of the late off-snow director, Vaclav Kovaric.

The Delegates only had one motion to vote on and this was accepted by the Congress after a modification in the text. If it is possible for the organiser the EC Nordic style will have four days with the program for the additional day being pulka races. The change also means that the Combined race will be on Saturday. No other motions were sent to the Congress by the member federations.

The Anti-doping Committee detailed the tremendous amount of work yet to be done if ESDRA and IFSS are to be correctly in compliance with the WADA Code, which is an absolute obligation in the eyes of the IOC. The delegates were very firmly reminded that the national federations also have obligations of conformity and that they must contact their National Anti-Doping Organisations in order to see what they must do to comply at their national levels.

The Off-snow European Championships in Rastede 2008 now has two homepages. One in English: www.ec-rastede.com; and one in German: www.ec-rastede.de. Race Marshal for the EC will be Robert Schiesser.

The On-snow European Championships 2010 will be held in Jakuszyce in Poland. It is a snow secure station in the southern part of Poland. We congratulate Poland and wish them good luck.

Robert Schiesser informed the Congress that due to increasingly heavy professional responsibilities he regretfully must step down as Nome-Style Director in mid-term. The President regretted this decision but understood and accepted it and expressed the Board's high regards for Mr. Schiesser and its gratitude for all the work he has done for the sport and with the Board over the years.

Elections for the Board:

President:	Lars Svanfeldt - re-elected 2 years
Secretary:	Michelle Menger - re-elected 2 years
Director-at-large (Nordic):	Olle Rosén - re-elected 2 years
Director-at-large (Nome):	Irene Plank - elected 1 year
Director-at-large (Off-snow):	Nils Finsrud will be acting director for 1 year

The Congress ended with a splendidly-done and much-appreciated video from Kamchatka showing a 10-year perspective of their sleddog sports development.