
INTERNATIONAL WEIGHTLIFTING FEDERATION

President
Dr. Tamás Aján (HUN)
IOC Honorary Member



General Secretary
Ma Wenguang (CHN)

Correspondence: IWF Secretariat, 1146 Budapest, Istvánmezei út 1-3. Hungary

Phone: (36.1) 353-0530, (36.1) 312 7012 — *Fax:* (36.1) 353-0199, (36.1) 269 0208 — *E-mail:* iwf@iwfnet.net

Bank Account: IWF HU06 1176 4056 2482 4019 0000 0000 – OTP, National Savings Bank, Nádor u. 6, 1876 Budapest, Hungary

Budapest, 26/03/2012

OPEN LETTER TO THE WEIGHTLIFTING FAMILY

Re: Reply to the Editorials of the EWF President and General Secretary in the EWF Magazine 11

To Dream or to Work...?

The answer to the above question is very simple to many of us and maybe not, to some of us. Working for our beloved sport for the past 35 years has taught me that with dreaming you cannot achieve unity, strength and respect that the weightlifting sport today holds within and receives from the Olympic Movement.

I find it strange that in the Editorial of the European Continental Magazine there is not one word about the Continent's achievements or progress, if any, during the past 4 years' presidency, but in the center of all it is again the IWF. Instead of putting dreams and hopes to us, one would expect from Continental leaders to take responsibility and work consensually with colleagues around the table to achieve success.

It is ridiculous that someone fearing the most, according to the Editorial, that weightlifting will be eliminated from the Olympic Games Program, is the one who has done everything possible in the past three years to ensure that it happens. When the EWF violated the IWF Anti-Doping Policy and that backfired on its leadership the next step was to file complaints and a lawsuit first against the IWF, later against the IOC.

I "dreamed" that after the 2011 Executive Board meeting in Paris, the EWF leaders will contribute to cooperation and unity in our sport. When the IWF received the list of candidatures for the EWF elections, it posted, in good faith, a communiqué on its website wishing success to all candidates. My "dream" fell apart when I read the EWF Editorials. Once again they confirmed that the focus is on a personal agenda instead of the development and the welfare of Europe's weightlifting sport.

Naturally, as a politician I am aware of the ongoing campaigns before elections and therefore it would be very much appreciated if qualities and achievements were to be measured on an objective scale. My goal was to remain neutral; however, realizing another wave of attempts to mislead the voters, being someone knowing and assuming his responsibilities, I am ready for an open debate.

The IWF Anti-Doping Program is well established and WADA compliant. All positive cases are published on the IWF website. We could all see the public sanctioning of nations at recent IWF Congresses – while someone must have been dreaming away instead...

When the IWF is accused of not being strong enough on nations, let me ask the EWF President: wasn't he the first in the IWF Executive Board who proposed a financial sanction in Antalya for the whereabouts non-compliant nations instead of their suspension? For a Continental President not to participate in the all-important IWF 2011 World Anti-Doping Conference only shows neglect and contempt since that was a platform for all IWF members, the National Federations to put their questions, concerns and comments forward and learn as much as possible on important aspects of the IWF's fight against doping. Naturally if the EWF's representative on the Executive Board only rarely participates in IWF Board Meetings and Championships one should not be surprised at the misleading comments he makes on many subjects he fails to have a profound knowledge of.

Back at the Executive Board meeting in Seoul, 2009, both the EWF President and the Auditors themselves suggested that the IWF internal Auditors needed external help to perform their duties. When we read the EWF General Secretary's Editorial it becomes evident, even if for some of us it was already an open secret, that his approach is merely financial within his campaign in the EWF elections putting the IWF's leadership in the center of criticism. When the EWF's current General Secretary is talking about the IWF's audit he is wearing his "other hat" again just like he did when he breached the confidentiality clause of the Swiss law when sharing information he had obtained during the IWF audit with the EWF Board and other third parties.

On issues of money naturally everybody wants to see a clear picture. The IWF, the governing body of its member National Federations, launched a Development Program distributing 1,275,000 USD annually including substantial support to the Continental Federations. On page 35 of the EWF Magazine it is clearly indicated that the EWF Symposiums were held with IWF's contribution; well there is a contradiction again.

Referring to the IWF's Swiss accounts that were reviewed by the Swiss office of Ernst & Young, the international auditing company, including the accounts since 1992 and finding no discrepancies or defective conduct, the EWF General Secretary yet again puts himself into a conflict of interest position with regard to his scope and qualification. It was to no surprise that following false allegations, misleading statements and repeated proof of lack of proficiency – the 2009 Executive Board and Congress did not approve the Auditors' Report. At the same time the IWF Executive Board proposed to cease the services of the internal Auditors at a lawfully convened, regular Board meeting, and that was presented to and approved by the IWF Congress. Since then an external, professional, Swiss based international auditor company has been auditing the IWF's books and accounts in accordance with Swiss law.

Still talking about money, how can a Continental President embarrass himself more than proving that he does not know the IWF Rules and Regulations? 250 USD Entry Fee is collected only at the Qualification events but not from the journalist, photographers, directors, only from those as provided by the IWF Rules and Regulations therefore it is a totally justified figure. 150 USD is spent by the IWF on anti-doping activities and the rest goes to the Organizing Committee. Interesting to note that the EWF also collects the so called "unjustified" Entry Fee of 150 Euros, from each participant and who knows what it is spent on.

In the IWF's Qualification System that was approved by the IWF Executive Board including the EWF President the small nations are not left behind or hindered; much on the contrary, they are

given the opportunity to take part in the Olympic Games true to the Olympic Spirit. Let me recall that the EWF President put forward a few suggestions on the amendment of the IWF Qualification System which turned out to be the same as the System we already had in operation and he is criticizing now.

Look who is lecturing the IWF on communication...? Visit the EWF's website and judge for yourself. Then check out the IWF's new website, Facebook page, Twitter, YouTube and you are surely among the thousands of readers of our fortnightly SPO(r)TLIGHT newsletters.

Weightlifting was the 2nd most viewed sport at the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games according to IOC Statistics and we will not be content with anything less at the London Games.

Europe is the cradle of our beloved sport but recently it has been losing its leading position. Those who are committed and have a plan instead of dreams, and are able to lead the continent on the path of progress and raise it to its worthy status shall now come forward and I wish them the best of luck at the upcoming Continental elections.

Please remember: we shall not be "dreaming" together but work hand-in-hand.



Dr. Tamás Aján
IWF President
IOC Honorary Member