



“Raising Racketlon Awareness”

The ultimate, long-term goal for Racketlon is clearly to achieve official national and global recognition (with national organisations and with GAISF or similar international sporting bodies) as well as to engage with long-term sponsors to create a sustainable and professionally run sport.

However, I believe that Racketlon as a sport is still a long way from being able to achieve this recognition and also, in its current state, is unable to successfully approach large, potential sponsors.

This is why I feel strongly that our strategic priority for the next 2 years should simply be around raising the awareness of Racketlon, whilst at the same time creating and developing a structure and a product that is attractive to sponsors.

But it is raising the awareness of Racketlon that is the key to everything. We need more people hearing about Racketlon, talking about Racketlon and ultimately we need more people playing Racketlon – only when we achieve this can we start to think about recognition and large sponsors.

Our governing structure, our resources and how we present and promote tournaments must reflect this no.1 priority of “*Raising Racketlon Awareness*”.

Over the next 2 years these are the principle areas I see as being key to achieving this:

- *Get Racketlon being talked about by the 4 Racket sports communities of Table Tennis, Badminton, Squash and Tennis:*

A VERY HIGH % of Swimmers, Cyclists and Runners have heard of Triathlon.

A VERY SMALL % of TT, Badminton, Squash and Tennis players have heard of Racketlon.

Racketlon needs to be talked about by those involved in our 4 sports - not at National and International Federation levels but at the grass-root, playing, community levels: by players, by coaches, by parents, by schools, by universities etc.

There are huge worldwide communities who play the 4 Racketlon sports – we need to tap into them and plan strategies to infiltrate these communities effectively and get them talking about Racketlon.

Social Media offers the best, cheapest and most realistic way of infiltrating these communities - especially through some of the big, worldwide forums connected to these 4 sports.

- Launch a 2 year *Social Media Plan* (alongside the new website), with targets set for content creation and user engagement across all channels within clearly laid out timelines. Over time, part of the execution of this plan could be outsourced to a professional online marketing company as and when we are able to find the resource.

- *A Social Media Content Plan:* much more human resource needs to be directed at creating content for social media – we will need to find and develop an extensive and motivated team of people. I would look to create a core team of 5 to 10 people (not just one person as we have now) who would all regularly contribute different types of content but also encourage our wider Racketlon community to contribute as well. *Without content no social media plan will ever work.* We already have a team of 7 people signed up to this social media team and I'm looking to recruit more!
- *Ambassador Programme:* Recruit key Racketlon Ambassadors who have a big social media presence with hundreds of thousands or millions of followers. Ideally a current or ex pro from the 4 sports. Make the role very easy and not a big commitment for them which will help attract the biggest names: 1 or 2 social media posts per month (supplied by us if necessary), that mentions Racketlon + (ideally) one personal appearance per year at a Tournament.
- We have already created the “*What is Racketlon?*” page on the new website with a great video – now we need to use it. We need the whole Racketlon community to share the link to this page and the video to all their racket sports friends, team mates, parents and coaches.
- *Contact sporting blogs, sports journalists and key influencers.* Supply them with interesting Racketlon stories. Not just tournament reviews or previews, but more in depth facts, figures, and human interest stories about Racketlon. How do the elite players train? Which sport supplies the most successful Racketlon players and why? Why Racketlon is an ideal sport for the character development of children? Get them writing articles and get them referring to Racketlon. All as part of our wider marketing plan (both online and offline).

Leadership & Accountability

- In order to successfully manage this push for better Racketlon awareness, as well as to implement a more professional governance structure, it's vital that Racketlon has a paid Executive President or CEO. At this crucial stage in the sport's development it is unrealistic for this to be a voluntary position – a voluntary position makes it impossible to ensure the amount of hours necessary to achieve these goals and it also creates less accountability - all of which leads to less progress.
- The Executive President would continue to work with the elected Council and aim to deliver an agreed set of goals to an agreed timeline.
- I have proposed to fulfil this Executive President role for an annual fee of 12,000euros based on a minimum of 2 full day's work per week.

This would be afforded through the following savings:

General Secretary role:	6000 euros per annum
Costs of FIR Office, Vienna:	2400 euros
Reduction in travel expenses:	500 euros

And through the following funds:

Increase in FIR income through greater player numbers

Current annual FIR profit

It's vital to take this step and appoint someone who has the time and motivation to develop the sport whilst also being held accountable to deliver this development within an agreed timeline.

As well as developing a better, more effective governance structure, this development can easily be monitored and evaluated by assessing social media engagement data and ultimately by participation levels.

Governance, Structure & Personnel

We would maintain an elected Council but there are numerous new roles of responsibility that I feel need to be created: social media content creators & social media managers, player and member country representatives being some examples.

The table below represents the Council structure I believe we need in order to address the important priorities around "Raising Racketlon Awareness" whilst also improving how the sport is administered.

Proposed FIR Governance Structure & Roles of Responsibility

Role	Name	Seat on Council	Comments
CEO / Executive President	Duncan Stahl	Yes	Paid position at a minimum of 2 days per week.
Vice President	Graham King	Yes	
World Tour Manager	Kirsten Kaptein	Yes	Setting up and scheduling of the World Tour...
Treasurer	Amke Fischer	Yes	
Rules Officer	Hans Van Daele	Yes	
Social Media Manager	Anna-Klara Ahlmer	Yes	Part of a much wider social media team.
Player + Member Country Representatives	Dan Busby	Yes	Dan will be backed up and aided by Natalie Paul and two others (to be confirmed) who will not have council positions and who have better knowledge and connections to the women's game + the 'amateur categories' and seniors players.
Non-European Racketlon Development	Frank Kleiber	yes	

Rankings	Poku Salo	Yes	
EU Project	Marcel Weigl	Yes	
Head of new delegate team + delegate training	Kresten Hougaard	Yes	
Consultant Positions to the elected Council			
Player & Member Country Representatives	Natalie Paul + 2 others tbc	No	To assist Dan Busby in giving a voice to the Players and Member Countries at Council level.
Ambassadors	tbc	No	1 to 4 high profile sports men or women with widespread social media presence.
Rules	tbc	No	Will aid the Rules Officer and concentrate on putting any changes or amendments into writing.
Social Media Content Creators	Sam Barker, James Pope Inge Omey, Cedric Junillon, Robert Wilde, Jesper Hougaard	No	
Recognition	Radu Ionescu	No	
Sponsorship	tbc	No	Will engage a sponsorship / fundraising professional (who will earn an agreed % of what is raised).

Other Areas:

Apart from the key strategic priorities already mentioned, this is an additional list of areas (in no particular order) that I would want to address alongside the Council:

- Creation of a Foundation (independent from but supported by FIR) who's core aim will be to raise funds for the development of junior Racketlon.
- Review of player license fee structure.

- More engagement with the players (through their new representatives on the Council) but also through player surveys so FIR can better understand areas that need to change.
- Greater support of member countries in the development of Racketlon and tournaments in their territory.
- Review of World Tour prize money.
- More resources allocated to promote the world tour.
- Develop more tournaments in more places to keep the World Tour interesting and exciting for the players.
- Review and restructuring of the delegate system to give more support to Tournament Directors and create greater consistency and more professionalism across all World Tour tournaments.
- Restructuring of the Team championships (Worlds and Euros).
- Simplification and re-naming of the different classes at world tour tournaments.
- Review the option to return to an annual world championships.
- Change the name of FIR to a more effective, workable title. For example:

International Racketlon Federation (IRF)
World Racketlon Federation (WRF)

Duncan Stahl
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