

# MINUTES FIR EGM 2022

Saturday 27th August 2022, 09:00 – 10:30

Racket Sports Centre Graz, Ragnitzstrasse 58b, 8047 Graz, Austria

**Chair:** FIR Executive President Duncan Stahl

**Minutes:** FIR Vice-President Graham King

**Vote Counter:** Myriam Enmer

## Final Agenda

- 1) Welcome note members
- 2) Confirmation of minutes of FIR 2021 AGM on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2022 (published on [www.racketlon.net](http://www.racketlon.net))
- 3) Discharge of Executive President & Council Members & Auditors & Board of Arbitration

### Council:

Duncan Stahl (GBR)  
Anna-Klara Ahlmer (SWE)  
Dan Busby (GBR)  
Amke Fischer (GER)  
Kresten Hougaard (DEN)  
Kirsten Kaptein (NED)  
Graham King (SUI)  
Jean Michot (FRA)  
Poku Salo (FIN)  
Marcel Weigl (AUT)

### Auditors:

Patrick Bürgi (SUI)  
Joachim Gersdorf (GER)

### Board of Arbitration:

Karim Hanna (SUI)  
Zigmars Puikēvics (LTV)  
Carola von Heimburg (GER)

- 4) Election of Executive President and Council Members for 2022-2025

Executive President for 2022-2025 & Marketing Officer: Duncan Stahl (GBR)

Executive President for 2022-2025: Radu Ionescu (ROM) proposed by Turkey and Greece

Vice President for 2022-2023 (as per FIR Statutes section 9.3) & Rules Officer: Graham King (SUI)

Remaining Council Members:

- Players' Representative: Anna-Klara Ahlmer (SWE)
- Treasurer: Amke Fischer (GER)

- Head of Delegates: Kresten Hougaard (DEN)
- World Tour Officer: Kirsten Kaptein (NED)
- Member Country Representative: Jean Michot (FRA)
- Rankings Officer: Poku Salo (FIN)
- Junior Development Officer: Marcel Weigl (AUT)
- Sustainability Officer: James Pope (GBR) proposed by GB & France
- Non-European Racketlon Development: Adarsh Vikram Narayanaswamy (IND), proposed by India & Germany
- New Player Development: Myriam Enmer (FRA), proposed by France & GB

- 5) Election of Auditors:
- Patrick Bürgi (SUI)
  - Joachim Gersdorf (GER)
- 6) Election of Board of Arbitration
- Karim Hanna (SUI)
  - Carol van Heimbürg (GER)
  - Zigmars Puikevics (LAT)

### **FIR EGM Attendees**

31 Countries present or delegated their voting power to other members, with a total of 78 of the possible 82 votes (95%):

<b>Member Country</b>	<b>Nominated Representative</b>	<b>EGM Votes</b>
Afghanistan	Doris Turner	2
Australia	Leigh Sands	1
Austria	Marcel Weigl	6
Belgium	delegated to Germany	0
Canada	delegated to USA	0
Czech Republic	Michael Horacek	6
Denmark	Kresten Hougaard	3
Finland	Poku Salo	3
France	Jean Michot	5
Germany	Christian Börner	7
Great Britain	Dan Busby	7
China - Hong Kong	Steven	2
Hungary	Balazs Döbörhegyi	2
India	KK Cheema	3
Israel	delegated to Switzerland	0
Latvia	Zigmars Puikevics	1
Malta	Duncan Stahl	1
Netherlands	Marc Veldkamp	4
New Zealand	Sion Wiggin	1
Poland	Dariusz Walczak	3
Romania	Radu Ionescu	4
Sweden	Jimmy Tay	3

Switzerland	Graham King	8
Thailand	Frank Kleiber	1
USA	Patrick Moran	3
Greece	delegated to Romania	0
Luxembourg	delegated to Netherlands	0
Norway	delegated to GB	0
Slovakia	delegated to Austria	0
Spain	delegated to Turkey	0
Turkey	Tarik Koubaa	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>78</b>

4 Countries not present with a total of 4 votes

Member Country	votes
Estonia	1
Croatia	1
Slovenia	1
South Africa	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>

#### Non-voting FIR EGM attendees

1. Parick Bürgi (SUI, Auditor)
2. Myriam Enmer (FRA, FIR Council candidate)

#### **1) Welcome note, members (Duncan Stahl)**

FIR President Duncan Stahl opened the AGM at 09:09, took over as chair and welcomed all representatives. He pointed out that the sole purpose of the EGM was to elect various officers. He proposed FIR Vice President Graham King as meeting secretary to take the minutes, and Myriam Enmer as vote-counter, which was agreed without any objections. He also proposed a 10-minute limit on individual presentations. Graham pointed out that the Q&A session following presentations, however, should continue as long as there were reasonable questions to be answered. The 10-minute limitation proposal was accepted unanimously.

Graham confirmed that 78 of the 82 votes (95%) were either present, or represented at the EGM, and declared that the 50% quorum necessary for the AGM to take decisions had been reached.

He noted that Radu Ionescu had challenged the interpretation of the FIR statutes to calculate the member voting power based on the on the number of the member's nationals on the FIR World Ranking list at the start of the calendar year. After consultation with the Swiss Racketlon Federation's President, Karim Hanna, a lawyer by profession, it was determined that a recalculation based on the number of a member's nationals with a FIR Player Licence at the end of the previous year was required. This had resulted in a few minor changes to the voting power, with a bigger 2-vote increase for countries holding a FIR World Championship in the past year (Switzerland and the Czech

Republic). A printed copy of this revised voting power was handed out to all attendees on EGM registration.

Graham also noted that for the first time he knew of, there was a choice of candidates to vote on (for the position as President), and so as determined by the FIR statutes section 9.1.4, voting was anonymous, rather than by a show of hands. He then explained the voting process of filling in the different voting slips, handed out to attendees at registration, and placing them (folded) into Myriam's red hat without her looking at them, for counting after all votes had been submitted.

Radu noted that this process was not fully anonymous, as France was the only country to have 5 votes, and Switzerland the only one with 8 votes, and so their vote would be known to Myriam. Dan Busby (GBR) proposed the EGM take a vote by show of hands whether the process was nevertheless acceptable. His proposal was unanimously approved.

## **2) Confirmation of Minutes of FIR 2021 AGM**

This agenda item was skipped, to move straight on to the election of the FIR President.

## **3) Discharge of Executive President & Council Members & Auditors & Board of Arbitration**

This agenda item was also skipped, to move straight on to the election of the FIR President.

## **4) Election of FIR President & Council Members**

Graham then announced that the election of the FIR President would begin with a 10-minute presentation of Duncan, then one of Radu, followed by a Q&A session, prior to submission of votes. Radu proposed that the Q&A should follow presentations, while the information was still fresh in members' minds. Radu's proposal was unanimously approved.

Radu also stated that he wished to make his presentation after the vote, not before it, yet still wanted his Q&A session based on his communications to members leading up to the EGM. After some considerable cross-examination of his motive for this request, it was agreed that Radu had the right to not make a presentation.

Duncan then summarised the aims and achievements of his past 3 years in office, and his objectives for the next 3 years, should he be elected.

- expansion of the number of countries playing Racketlon (many venue owners in new countries contacting him directly about holding Racketlon events)
- expansion of the FIR World Tour with new locations and venues to keep existing players motivated (Berlin, Dubai, India, Luxembourg, Massachusetts, Moscow (though since cancelled), Poland, Roehampton, Rotterdam, Sheffield (Nick Matthew Steel City Open) etc
- planning of new tournament locations (Australia, Denmark, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, etc)
- announcement of separate 2023 Doubles World Championships (Roehampton) and Singles/Teams (Rotterdam)
- significant expansion of social media online marketing activities with significant increase in number of articles published, website hits etc
- response to the 18-month fir world Tour gap caused by the Covid pandemic by launching a fund-raising campaign to keep FIR financially afloat, resulting in exceeding the 6k budget with a revenue of 10k
- activities to attract funding and sponsorship through paid advertising on FIR websites, merchandising and ongoing discussions with two different racket brands and sports drinks to sponsor the 2023 FIR World Tour

- increase of number of players by 20%, and using the increased revenue to create a project and development fund for the lesser developed nations to assist with their marketing and junior development etc.
- assignment of the role of female Racketlon development to Anna-Klara Ahlmer and Myriam
- re-introduction of 2 SWT tournaments per year with prize money
- offering of free live-streaming to all Tournament Directors

On completion of Duncan's presentation, Graham opened the Q&A session

Marcel Weigl asked why there had be no sponsorship or selection of a single-funding-partner achieved during his past 3 year term. Duncan replied that it was too early, and that FIR was too immature then to attempt this then, but that with the growth achieved over the past 3 years, FIR was now in a position to go to Racket brands and sports drinks producers, and that such discussions were already now ongoing.

Zigmars Puikevics asked about the development of juniors. Duncan replied that he had formed an alliance with StreetRacket, a Swiss association founded and run by Racketlon players, to introduce Racketlon to new audiences, especially youth, without the need for sports centres

Marcel Weigl asked why this was done when there is an existing ERU Youth Concept. Duncan responded that it is complimentary.

Michael Horacek asked for more details about Women's Racketlon development. Duncan explained that Anna-Klara and Myriam would be contacting women Racketlon players at all levels, including parents, in a drive to attract more women and girls to Racketlon, and that FIR is looking at holding a female-only tournament to support this initiative.

Marcel Weigl asked about the planned free live-streaming and why use was not being made of the existing ERU Streamster options. Duncan replied that the supplier, Swish, is already offering livestreaming, including live-scoring and player names, across multiple sports. He explained it is a slimmed-down version compared to the relatively expensive Streamster, intended for the smaller tournaments and budgets. Tournament Directors will be able to choose which streaming system they use, but that it would be made mandatory for 2023

Radu was then invited to take the stage. After further discussions and requests from the Afghanistan, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Great Britain and Latvia representatives, Radu agreed to present his manifesto for Presidency.

Radu noted he had been "barking" at the FIR presidency and processes for 3 years, based on his 30+ years management and leadership experience in sports and business. He stated his continued discontent that since 2011 there had never been any alternatives at elections, which, without any challenge, results in the positions being able to do what they want, or do nothing, with no desire to do better.

Regarding his 17-point manifesto, he stated he cannot convince anyone doubting its achievability, but that he wants more, and wants better, and it is important to try. Radu also criticised the FIR annual budgeted revenue of EUR 40k, which, 20 years after its foundation, is a joke for an international sports federation, with nothing having been done to increase this. He stated he did not how to increase it, but he knows what is achievable and it is important to try.

Graham then opened the Q&A session.

Radu countered criticisms of his failure to attract any EU projects during his term as a FIR Council member by explaining that after the first attempt failed, his proposal for the following year, requiring FIR to fund 20% of the project size itself, was vetoed by the FIR Council.

Radu noted Graham's decision to stand down from the FIR Council, would Radu be elected as President, commenting that anyone who was at the World Championships could see that he does everything, and concerns that change and the unknown will likely lead to an increase in the workload are natural. Dan Busby asked Graham if he would give his reasons for such resignation. Graham confirmed his very high workload, but that he finds it manageable, his belief that Duncan works even more, and his firm conviction that his workload would unavoidably increase to unbearable levels, would there be a change of Presidency. Radu noted that Graham had agreed to ensure an orderly handover, would this be necessary, which Graham confirmed.

Zigmars Puikevics asked Radu who his team would be. Radu responded that he would work with any FIR Council members who decided to remain, taking into account that some of them will be paid for the work they do, and that he would create an office back home, where the costs for a paid administration were feasible.

Marcel Weigl supported Radu's candidacy by listing the European Racketlon Union's achievements; the only, professionally run, SWT tournaments, with EUR 200k of budget, EUR 50k of sponsorship money, events on national TV, shuttle buses, complete referee coverage, live-scoring and live-streaming etc.

Graham then called on the FIR members to cast their vote<sup>1</sup> by clearly marking their choice on the voting slip, folding it, and placing it in Myriam's red hat. Myriam then counted the results:

- Duncan: 61 votes
- Radu: 17 votes
- No abstentions

Following conclusion of the Presidency vote, Graham turned to the vote on his election as FIR Vice President. He claimed a presentation is not necessary, as all attendees know him, invited questions (of which there were none) and requested FIR members to cast their vote. Myriam confirmed his election was unanimous.

Graham then turned to the election of the remaining FIR Council members. Marcel Weigl requested Amke be voted on separately, citing a compliance conflict, that the President and Treasurer should be partners in life. Duncan explained that whereas he understands this, there are checks and balances in place, such as Graham being required to approve any spending, and a yearly audit. It was then agreed that FIR would strive to replace Amke during the next term, without agreeing to any exact timeline. The vote was then divided into first on the rest of Council and then separately on Amke as Treasurer. Duncan then ran through all the Council members with their roles and explained that as Dan was stepping down from office, the vote would also be to approve his discharge. Myriam counted the votes:

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<sup>1</sup> It was unfortunately overlooked to vote on the discharge of Duncan, and all other FIR representatives (Council, auditors, Board of Arbitration) remaining in office, for their term in office since the previous AGM. This will be tabled instead at the next AGM

- Council approved: 75 votes
- Abstentions or spoiled papers: 3 votes

Votes were then cast on Amke's position as Treasurer:

- Approved: 48 votes
- Against: 20 votes
- Abstentions or spoiled papers: 10 votes

### **5) Election of FIR Auditors**

On conclusion of the Council elections, election of the FIR auditors and Board of Arbitration were, by agreement, conducted by a show of hands.

Graham named the two auditors and gave a brief background of them both, before they were both unanimously elected.

### **6) Election of FIR Board of Arbitration**

Similarly, Graham named all three Board of Arbitration members and gave a brief background of them before they too were unanimously elected.

Duncan then closed the EGM at 10:45.

*Minutes taken by Graham King and confirmed by Duncan Stahl*

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Duncan Stahl

(President)

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Graham King

(Vice-President)