

IMMAF Board Meeting 6/9th February 2020 Hilton Hotel, Nur Sultan, Kazakhstan.

Directors Present:	Kerrith Brown, President	(KB)
	George Sallfeldt VP	(GS)
	Bertrand Amoussou	(BA)
	Wissam Abinader	(WA)
	Denitza Batcharova	(DB)
	Tom Madsen	(TM)
	Raymond Phillips	(RP)
	Tatiana Klimenko	(TK)
	Victor Frolov	(VF)
	Svetlana Odintsova	(SO)
	Vadim Finkelstein	(VF)
	Iskander Karim	(lK)
	Galimzhan Yessonov	(ĠÝ)
	Stewart Brain	(SB)

Director Apologies: Apologies , Han Juili, August Wallen

Densign White, CEO Nick Davies In Attendance: (DW)

(ND)

Minutes: Gosha Malik (GM)

Agenda Item	Comments	Action
1	Roll Call: The meeting was Quorum there being the required number of Directors present.	
2	Apologies: Mr Han Juili, Stewart Brain, August Wallen.	
3	President Opening remarks. KB welcome all and thanked the Kazakhstan Federation for their hospitality and organizing the meeting. KB thanked to IK for making it possible. The plans will be made for 2020 as a one united IMMAF organization and we are pleased to accommodate everyone. IMMAF team will present their activities for 2020. There are lots of demands and we will make sure we deliver for the next generations. It is important to show to the rest of the combat sports that MMA is the leader. We need to keep the focus on our goals. KB thanked DB for UFC commitment and support.	

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4	APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 14th November, Manama, Bahrain:	Approved
	The minutes approved as accurate, proposed by Raymond Philips (RP), seconded by Bertrand Amoussou (BA).	Approved
	 Action points: From the minutes agenda point 8, approval of appointed commissions, since then lots of work has been done. (GS) Discussion on approval of newly appointed commissions was moved to day 2 and the vote was moved to day two. Changes to the age eligibility policy were changed. As long as the athletes are in the age band during the championship they will be allowed to compete, as a result, the year born criteria previously agreed by the BoD was replaced. The amendment was approved. Agenda for meeting was approved. 	
5	Minutes of the General assembly Manama Bahrain November 15 th 2019. Proposed by (RP) and seconded by (BA). These minutes will need to be approved before sign off by the General Assembly.	Approved
6	Approval of revised IMMAF statutes (BoD) The amendments to the statutes were conducted by Stefan Stenudd, the changes need to be approved by General Assembly. IMMAF Board was asked by GS to read them and come with feedback to be presented to the General Assembly. Headline changes are: a) Amendment on the term of the board, the 8-year term will revert in 2027 to 4 years. b) Committees are elected for no longer than 2 years. c) Move from biannual GA to annual GA. d) Notification period changed from 4 months shorten to 90 Days. e) Continental representation on the board f) Athlete representation on the board It would be ratified by the Extraordinary General Assembly in 2020.	Approved
7	Approval of new Staff appointments Nick Davies started on a casual basis and we are looking to use his services more as we are getting busier. Nick's introduction. Nick is a journalist and spokesperson for World athletics, deputy General Secretary and Chief of staff for President Sebastian Coe. Nick has had an extended career in sport organizations with the background in large Olympic Federation will bring his PR expertise in media, lobbying, sports politics and strategy, help with office structure, especially in a commercial area, with IT opportunity. ND will work with Tobias on the new IT project. GS welcomes Nick guidelines and leadership. New IT structure had been introduced, with support of Tobias Sahlin who builds a new platform that will help with communication for committees. This project follows up on the discussion from the board meetings in Lebanon. The report from the company name Nemesis is not ready yet. Tobias' support most probably will solve more problems. The Board was asked for approval of the two appointments.	Approved

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	GS confirmed that Tobias experience in working in cooperate companies and Nick Davies in strategy will bring benefits to IMMAF work processes.	
	The appointments were accepted by a unanimous decision.	
8	 WADA update a) The last case of a positive sample from 2019 Asia Open, Thailand is still not resolved. The Thai laboratory is closed by WADA. The athlete from Australia is challenging the result. The B sample will be transferred to Australia, but the athlete might be able to challenge the process of how it was handled.GS asked if the B sample could be moved to a more central hub in Europe. He does not think sending to Australia is ideal. TM asked if IMMAF has a protocol for this kind of situation. DW confirmed that IMMAF follows the protocols contained within the WADA code.TM agreed that all was done correctly in the case and there are no objectives, KB confirmed that Michele Verroken is an expert in the field and we follow her recommendation. b) The legal case against WADA continues. The CEO attended the court hearing before the judge in January.WADA asked for the case to be dismissed since they are changing their policy in 2021 that would allow them to decide independently on IF applications to become a signatory to the code. IMMAF is challenging this move because a change in WADA policy is no guarantee that IMMAF will receive signatory status. The judge will set a new hearing date in the meantime IMMAF has until end of January to submit a reduced witness list. KB confirmed that WADA is a weak link in order to obtain the next step with GAISF, and strategically it is key to achieve it before any other combat sport will try to apply and have this opportunity. 	DW/ND
9	GAISF update: GAISF differed a decision on our application to give combat sports of GAISF to have an opportunity to make any objection they have for IMMAF to become an observational member. The deadline was 31 December 2019, GAISF confirmed that they received objections from combat sports by 24 January 2020. Objections were based on rivalry and compatibility. Image: The discussion commenced regarding compatibility. IMMAF is not aware of the rivalry any more since amalgamation with WMMAA. We do not know who claims rivalry, DW has written to GAISF and asked for clarification. We think that Olympic values are in question. They were asked in a formal letter for clarification, and DW asked for IMMAF to be able to present to other members. It is not really known what goes on behind closed doors. SB thinks we should try and put together some analysis, ask UFC for help. MMA rule sets are well known, maybe the combat Sambo is the reason for rivalry. KB the key is to cover all combat sports, there are around 14 combat sport falling under AIMS and President is Stefan Fox. They made a vote to block MMA in the Combat sports meeting during Sportaccord 2018 vote. We do not know exactly which sports are blocking us, but there are around seven who might have objections. Some are rather well known like wrestling, Judo, Muay Thai. And if other sports are guided by these individuals, the council will not have a clear opinion. The main point that arose was that they don't like the cage, they don't understand that this is a safety area. Athlete having their head against the cage wall comes across as dangerous, and, according to experts, this is not the case. KB is alarmed that the representative who is looking after our case is not well educated about MMA, therefore his opinions and guidelines are not going to be supportive of us getting observations status. We have the following options to get directly to councils members. We need to educate others, as it seems that the reason for objecting lies in the lack of understanding. I	
	DW commented that it is highly unlikely to get a reply from GAISF on what countries objected to IMMAF membership. We need to go ahead and do a matrix with all the combat	

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Item	sports. GAISF is due to make a decision in April during a council meeting. The IMMAF Swiss lawyers are of the opinion that it will not be easy to bring a case against GAISF in the Swiss courts, better would be CAS option.	
	TM it is clear that those people want us to go to sleep, go away, and fail. If we believe in politics we are going to lose. The only thing that can make us win is if they find someone who they hate even more. They don't like us, don't understand us, we need to make them listen to us, right now they don't even listen. People who help out cases don't understand what we do. TM thinks we need to put force behind and make them listen, to put more pressure.	
	SB it is true that other sports are not listening to us, we need to ask Nick for some parallel activities and put more pressure.	
	TM we need to force them to sit in front of us and listen to us, more points of attack.	
	TK mentioned that when we stop using Mixed Martial Arts rather than MMA it stops confusion with governments. TM agreed to this, we need to use the correct language. SB we are pretty much triathlon, maybe we should go this road. Sweden set up the vocabulary. Athletes, not fighters, bout, not a fight. KB we changed the language, we changed terminology. The most important is what we are set over to the council. It is a shock to others how quickly we went through to build, and that we need to address this message through media to IOC and council members for them to understand we are a new sport.	
	BA it is important how we present yourself and how we communicate, we are doing a great job and put pressure on communication to those people. We have our moral code, let's show it to them. This will help.	
	DB most probably we need to put more media pressure, an open invitation to our events to all those members, combat and not combat. They might not have seen an event like that at all. California is a great area for MMA, maybe start lobbying there. The host city in 2028 could be able to invite MMA events and recognize the commercial value. UFC has a direct conversation with NBC, who is an Olympic partner, understands what their perspective and thoughts are for MMA. Pursuing conversations on the ground the Olympic partners and use all available opportunities.	
	ND the Olympic press is so conflicted around our issue. Their business model is built on publicity against us. We should start building our own platform, contract third party people to ask GAISF the questions like why are you not allowing the sport, why cage is wrong, and this is behind closed doors at the moment. We need spotlight on them to force them to express their attacks, defend us or neutral. This would make them uncomfortable. IOC is crucial as well, we need plan B, IOC is more important than GAISF, we need to create a strategy how we can persuade Thomas Bach that we are ok, or who around him needs to be on our side and influence him. As Deni said approach IOC partners for 2028. The last is to work with established sports, see what recognized sport needs from us.	
	KB think of similarities we have done with France. We could approach boxing, or Sambo. We could help them and we could work with them to get recognition. We need to be creative about how we are going to meet the opposition.	
	GS we could put together a presentation MMA recognition strategy as an action for CEO. Put together a plan of the last 7 years of conversations with WADA, GAISF.	
	Action point: This action point to CEO to prepare the plan.	
	KB create a group with biweekly calls	

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	TK mentioned that we can look into language strategy to get a wider audience.	
	DW it is good to look into other options if we think in our sports we might need to look into GAISF agreement, wrestling was kicked out because of MMA, boxing is now sorting out their problems and taking on MMA only make it worse. We need to think about it how do we want to get to GAISF. We need face to face meetings with other combat sports.	
	SB the youth and new MMA practitioners might be the group. To identify new faces.	
	VF the process will take some time, all the skills we are using, it will take some time.	
	RP if we look at sports against us, the athletes are coming to our events from those sports, maybe this is a way to talk to them.	
	KB National Federations of those sports don't agree with what International Federations Leaders do. National Federations from other combat sports are recognizing MMA, example of France where boxing is recognising MMA. We need to address the individual who seems to be above the law. The other sports would sit there and watch and block.	
	TM we need to reach out to others that we want to cooperate.	
	GS we should look to others.	
10	Switzerland: Moving company to Switzerland. The IMMAF registration could be a move to Grigioni Canton rather than Lausanne. Directors were asked to provide ID verified by authorities.	
11	Financial Report: 1. Yr End 2019- DW confirmed that copies were distributed. Sohals accountants are based in Birmingham. DW presented the 2019 accounts to the Board. The operating loss in the year is showing \$42008.00. Interest payments were due to currency exchange charges.	
	2. Mgt report January 2020- The management report for the month of January 2020 was presented to the board. GM outstanding Membership fee is due to Federations not paying. It would be more encouraging to offer to Presidents to come to Championship without paying the Championship fee for World Championship, this should encourage payment. GS requested a list of non-paying federations, TM suggested to keep on chasing federations for payment. GS remind present that non payment does not allow the Federation to vote. DW had a conversation with RP and Namibia cannot pay. TK describe WMMAA system according to the population. DW said that we have accumulated debt and don't have any reserves in IMMAF, if we are running \$1.8 mil turnover we should have 1-year running cost in the bank, at the moment we rely on cash flow. TM said to make the board aware that there is a problem before pushing the bills. DW we are pretty good with payments and if we are not able to pay we inform people that the payment will be delayed.	

Hosting Rights: Hosting rights fees secured for the Asia Open and the World championships in Kazakhstan. IMMAF will continue to look for hosting roght fees for all	
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assets.	W
Sponsorship: Green Hill continue to be the equipment supplier. Safejaws supply mouth guards. IMMAF still searching for sponsors especially for regional and continental events. Licensing Opportunity: IMMAF is exploring the opportunity to create the IMMAF 'kitemark' for equipment that could be provided by approved suppliers for a fee.	
Merchandising KB Plans for IMMAF to have purchase platform for National Federation. TM asked if we have a plan for the distribution of Green Hill equipment. KB confirmed all in plans, and working with National Federation to encourage them to buy the equipment. The process needs to be simple and standardised. IMMAF APP	
IMMAF App is one of the revenue streams bringing money to National Federations and IMMAF, mobile phones are an everyday tool of a new generation. BA is aware of the big interest in China. App using 7 different languages. DW confirmed that UFC gym is very interested in using the app and progression scheme, till now they are using Jujitsu syllabus. KB the app is important for Youth development. TM we need to listen to our members, very important is to listen to the coaches.	
IMMAF content	

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	ND the most important plan for 2020 is IMMAF streamline, we should not have any more dark events. IMMAF.tv subscription is not really great. Isobel Carnwath is working with TV adviser head a digital tv Giles Goodwin. Giles Goodwin is advising on building IMMAF audiences even if you need to give it for free, to increase viewers. Trying to attract local marketing. Working closely with National Federation, support and cross-promote. Brand 2020, the logo has been revised. Event key artwork is more professional, redesign IMMAF, the website for end of February, visual work is more catchy, more consumers focus than the internal face. Social Media 2020 the aim into user generating interactive content looking into engaging National Federations, a bit more enteterning a bit more fun to attract young people. And include a number of dedicated campaigns like GAISF and long term planning.	
	Media 2020 Media reach is very high in numbers, but we need to be more realistic that the figures might be inflated by media reports, IMMAF covers news like WADA issues, GAISF rejection, personality, individual coverage like Marc Goddard, athletes going pro. Good traction is with some federations like Russia, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Poland but small federations might need our help. Journalist invited to the Championship helped to give us good coverage in papers like Sun, Metro this proved cost-effective. Political coverage reach was good and hit 2 mil, especially France recognition. We need to more improve on teams covers, more journalists at events, more MMA influencers, maybe get ambassadors like UFC fighters. New way to store our content, at the moment only David Green, it is not very expensive to have a storage. GS this is a very small cost by building our own storage platform. He has a hard drive system. We need a combination of the hard drive system and cloud. VF said he was trying to get the content licence for Russia, TV Channel representatives want to come to London to talk about it. The Russian TV needs to obtain the licence agreement for transmission not the content of the transmission. DW was not aware that there is a problem with Russia. There was contact with IMMAF for over 2 years. GST — The company who can help to address key areas like membership and create a junior Championship platform. They can help with loyalty schemes attracting recreational participants to attract as many as possible. They can bring all separate platform together, this can be helped with Tobias role when he will coordinate the building of IMMAF IT eco system. TM sounds all good, we have 2 internet partners, we are bringing another Company. Is this necessary. ND they want to be our partner and work on current systems and bring solutions to gaps we have, like no youth platform. KB they will take a lead to work with all our partners, more will be discussed during Tobias' presentation.	
13	Commissions and Committees: GS explained that Committees are elected by Board of IMMAF Directors, the decision on commissions should be made during the meeting. Nick Davies introduced the commission's document.	

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	GS one decision made, GS will talk to the Chair and will talk about tasks. During World Championship we will do a summit and check the progress. The reason for the commission is to use experts for important decision-making. VF was asked to join the arbitration committee and accepted. Anti-doping committee voted in Athlete committee voted in Business Development committee, KB would like to add more people, GS agreed voted in Coaching committee voted in Communication committee voted in Competition Bidding voted in Disciplinary Committee voted in Competition Bidding voted in Disciplinary Committee voted in Financial Committee voted in Nomination Committee elected Medical Committee voted in Nomination Commission voted in Women's Commission voted in Youth Commission to discuss voted in GS suggested giving each member a diploma and package with priorities for 2020. TM mentioned to be aware that the commission should be multinational, GS accepted that current selection is temporary and would be reviewed when we have more funds for translators. Tobias Sahlin presented the new IMMAF platform. TS was working on the implementation of the platform with DW, ND, and GS for the last few months. Office 365 was accepted as the most suitable application. The following components would be used: outlook, SharePoint and video link. The application would be used for Team communication and working relations, including video communication. It will be very beneficial for Teams and Commissions. GS confirmed that training session will be provided. This new platform will consolidate all applications IMMAF is currently using. It will help managing data and commercialising our content. TM asked about financials, GS confirmed that TS will work as a volunteer and cost will be reviewed later.	
14	IT report Nemysis- Removed from Agenda as report is incomplete.	
15	Website and Branding report- The new IMMAF website will go live in March	
16	Federation Update: (KB) US Federation was put in a special measure for some time, the project was headed by George Sallfeldt and Stewart Brain. It was planned that US would be the top organization, however National Federation did not achieve the expected level. The report was completed, message with final decision needs to be sent by email to the National Federation representatives. The areas the federation was developing was not in line with IMMAF recommendations. GS introduced Stewart Brain on the phone. SB It took 4 months of talks, the split appeared and the federation was divided in 2 groups. It took another number of months to organise the General Assembly. The number of members initially taking part in GA was 3k, eventually only 20 people were taking part, and actually only 7 people were present on the call. There were several problems with the GA, the voting was digital and not transparent.	

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	The appointed scrutineers never spoke. The level was very bad. President Frank Babcock stepped down shortly after the AGM and handed over the role to Ryan Brueggeman. There was lack of transparency and good governance. SB recommended suspension. IMMAF will appoint someone to take care of Federation's day-to-day activities, which will allow athletes to come to the Championships, Coaches to join the progression. This committee, minimum of 3 people, will then try to get more clubs to join and arrange a new AGM. GS suggested TM to create the group, the directors voted TM. The decision to expel can only be done by the General Assembly. KB accepted the importance of making changes in order to ensure the development of the sport. IMMAF should not be afraid to make those decisions. Directors agreed unanimously the recommendation to suspend US Federation and decision will be presented to the General Assembly. KB asked DW to send the information to US with the details of the IMMAF Board Directors' decision.	
	Uzbekistan recognition. Galimzhan Yessenov introduced a new Member to the Board of Directors as an observational member, which was unanimously approved. GS welcomed Uzbekistan as an observation member and confirmed that the General Assembly will vote for full member award. The certificate the signature took place. Central Asia MMA commission was created. Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan. KB proposed to allow Central Asia Commission, GS proposed to ratify the group and directors voted yes.	
	Ireland Notes were presented. DW and KB went to Ireland on 15 January. They met with the Irish Martial Arts Commission (IMAC). MMA in Ireland is still not recognised by the Government. Sport Ireland is refusing to recognise MMA and pushing MMA to go under non-Olympic combat sports, IMAC. IMAC has also been refusing to recognise MMA. IMAC statute does not allow MMA to be a part, so change of statute is required. Meeting with Brendon Dowling president of IMAC and Roy Baker VP of IMAC, (WAKO President). They are expecting IMMAA to apply. Even though application will be denied, IMMAA can apply for membership directly to the General Assembly. DW suggested this route as the most suitable for IMMA. Roy Baker confirmed that if IMMAF receives the GAISF acceptance then IMMAA will automatically be accepted.	
	France Bertrand Amoussou. MMA is officially recognised in France and is included under FFB - boxing. Competitions could start in September 2020. GS this is really a historic moment. This success will allow other countries to follow. Thank you to Bertrand. BA thanks to UFC and IMMAF for making it possible. KB thanked, on behalf of the board, to all involved and getting the job done, and it shows where IMMAF is.	
	England UKMMAF was discontinued in a similar situation as the US and a new organization was created. Marc Goddard is currently the President. They have already had board meetings and a General Assembly. DW will be help on receiving recognition from the Government or Sport England. SB asked what were the criteria for recognition in England. DW confirmed	

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	that it was members, good governance, bank account and audited accounts. It looks very positive. UK's umbrella is only necessary for the Olympics.	
17	Calendar of Events: Alistair Pettitt explained that we have continental, youth and senior events. 2018-2019 IMMAF went to 4 different locations: 2018 African, Oceania, European, World Championships; 2019 Asian, and PanAmerican. Youth Championships took place for the first time in Rome in 2019. TM asked if we had enough people to work on events. AP made DW aware of how much support he needed, however, we are usually short on resources. Tatiana Klimenko is helping with events; she is shadowing all processes and procedures. TK brought her expertise and contact with Federations who crossed over. The priory is the athletes' safety. It is important to have an IMMAF doctor present. TM board should be aware of needs	
18	Technical Update: Report of Andrew Mochanov was circulated to board members in advance of the meeting.	
19	Eligibility Criteria Youth, Junior and Senior: IMMAF has more issues around the time of Championship, the Team Penalty policy of points was introduces based on new rules and procedures. The process had been created by Ralph Cook. Teams can have points deducted from ranking. As a result, not only an athlete but all team will be affected by points loss. This seems the best way to tackle the problem of athletes' discipline during the Championship.	
20	Risk register- The CEO presented to the board of directors the IMMAF risk register. Most of the risk identified remained and at the same level low, medium or high.	
21	AOB	
22	Date & Location of next meeting.	