

43rd International Committee of Sport for the Deaf (ICSD) Congress – Rome

13th September 2011 – 15th September 2011. Summary Report.

The 43rd International Committee of Sport for the Deaf (ICSD) took place in Rome, Italy, 13th September – 15th September 2011. UKDS sent two delegates, Chair of UKDS, Philip Gerrard, and Board Trustee, Sharon Hirshman. Craig Crowley, newly elected president of ICSD at Taipei Congress 2009, opened his first Congress as the President of the ICSD. Craig was nominated to become President in 2009 by UK Deaf Sport, and was the previous Chair of UK Deaf Sport. There were a total of 47 member countries in attendance out of 80 member countries.



UKDS Representatives – Sharon Hirshman and Philip Gerrard

Day one of the ICSD Congress saw keynote speakers from IOC, Jean-Laurent Bourquin (Sport Manager, IOC), Manuela Di Centa (IOC Board member and from the Italian Olympic Committee), and Pancelli (Vice-President of Italian Paralympic Committee and President of European Paralympic Committee), all pledged to help and work with ICSD. They all urged ICSD to follow the Olympic movement charter. One example is the formation of the athletics commission for ICSD. Dean Barton-Smith, Australian and former Olympian & Commonwealth in decathlon, addressed the delegates at the Congress via videophone. Dean is deaf himself. In Dean's address, he announced the formation of the athletics commission which will include Dean and Terence Parkin, Olympian & Commonwealth Swimmer medallist from South Africa. Terence is also deaf. The delegates were excited at this development. Other speakers included Colin Allen, newly elected President of World Federation of the Deaf (WFD).

Buenos Aires, Barcelona and Ankara were the three countries that made strong bids for the right to host 2017 Deaflympics. The first two days of the Congress saw frantic lobbying by all three bidders, culminating in a vote by delegates to nominate a hosting country for Deaflympics 2017. The voting process was done in an open and transparent way as all delegates could see the ballot box being opened and the votes being counted. Barcelona was eliminated in the first round, with 11 votes. Buenos Aires with 17 votes and Ankara with 19 votes progressed to the second round. Ankara was the ultimate winners with 25 votes as opposed to Buenos Aires having 22 votes. It was agonisingly close.



The Ballot in progress

UKDS had two proposals tabled at the Congress. Proposal 40 was to amend the constitution to allow a federation to send more than one team where appropriate as per International Sport Federations. The example in this case was Great Britain participating in the Deaflympics but England, Scotland and Wales to be permitted to participate in the World Championships as per FIFA regulations. Philip and Sharon lobbied hard to ensure that other delegates understood this proposal and to support it. UKDS also raised the benchmark for methods of submitting proposals by presenting the proposal in international sign and subtitles heading via a pre-prepared video clip. It was a huge success for UKDS after four years and relief to have this proposal approved with the votes of 26 for, and 5 against.

There were a total of 64 proposals. Proposal number 3 submitted by Australians asked for a full review of the ICSD including a new constitution. This was to be carried out by an independent commission. Many other proposals submitted by

various countries including UKDS's proposal number 46 were added to proposal number 3 as all were of similar intention. Therefore proposal number 3 and the other remaining 50-plus proposals were approved and ICSD will present a new format of ICSD including a new constitution to the delegates at the 2013 Congress for approval. Regular updates will be provided through the next two years.

The Congress discussed at length the lessons to be learned on the cancellation of High Tatras, Slovakia Winter Deaflympics 2011, Athens, Greece Summer Deaflympics 2013 and Vancouver, Canada Winter Deaflympics 2015. The main points were as follows;

- Government Support
- Financial Guarantee
- More Inspections.

ICSD announced the five points on the values of ICSD which helps to address the failings of those cancelled Deaflympics. The five points are as follows;

- Sport First
- Stronger Deaflympics
- More opportunities
- More visible & partnerships
- Olympic Movement

Budapest, Hungary gave a presentation on their offer for a minimum Deaflympics in 2013 to ensure that the summer Deaflympics is not altogether cancelled due to the pull out of Athens, Greece. Delegates approved for Budapest, Hungary and ICSD to work together to seek the necessary guarantees for the Summer Deaflympics to take place. Final confirmation will be announced from 1st January 2012.

We were pleased to see that whilst at the start of the Congress, delegates were unsure of Craig Crowley as President of ICSD as he was new to them; the confidence in Craig grew as the Congress went on. Craig and ICSD board handled the Congress professionally and steered the delegates through some difficult but necessary discussions about the future.

Philip Gerrard – Chair UKDS – Delegate at Congress
Sharon Hirshman – Trustee UKDS – Delegate at Congress



Introducing the President of Taiwan



Profits from Taiwan Deaflympics to be donated to ICSD



Barcelona doing their best to persuade us to bid for them for 2017 Games.



Typical day at Congress



Congress in progress



Show of hands