

Minutes From ECSA Meeting with Koln Sports Club, 6 September
2002-10-02

Background

For several years, ECSA has been trying to encourage Germany to join ECSA. This has not been possible in the past mainly due to the fact that German Customs (and Tax) administrations are divided up into separate regions for each of the Landers and there is no federal body to represent Germany.

The Koln (Cologne) Customs Sports Club announced last March that they would host an international Day of Sport to celebrate its 50th anniversary on 7 September and, through the RILO contacts, KOLN Sports Club encouraged other nations to send athletes to participate in a range of sports including football, athletics, volleyball and table tennis.

ECSA chairman Mick O'Hanlon opened contacts with the Koln Sports Club in April and he told Herr Christian Trepp all about ECSA its aims and history etc. Mick also told Christian that ECSA was very keen to get Koln to represent Germany at ECSA level and he asked whether it might be possible for the ECSA committee members to hold a meeting in Koln to coincide with the Sports event.

Herr Trepp kindly and graciously organised a meeting to take place between the ECSA executive and members of the Koln Sports Club on Friday 6 September in the RILO offices in Koln. These are the minutes of that meeting.

Attendance & Minutes

Mick O'Hanlon (Ireland & ECSA Chairman), Theo De Goeijen (Netherlands & ECSA Treasurer), Jean Pierre Brust (France & ECSA Executive Committee) and Lieven Muylaert (Belgium & ECSA Executive Committee), Christian Trepp, and two of his colleagues from the Koln Sports Club.

We spent some time explaining in detail that ECSA was not looking for any commitment from Koln Sports Club apart from the fact that they would perhaps act as a contact point for German representation with regard to ECSA events.

Christian explained the difficulties with the Landers situation and the fact that no federal representation existed. In this light, it would be difficult for them even to attend meetings outside Germany.

All of the ECSA Executive members explained that each of us had begun with such humble beginnings and that like Christian and his colleagues, each of us were people who had firstly organised events in our own countries and that our administrations had grown to believe in the value and worth of bringing customs and tax officials together in an informal setting as there were several benefits to be gained including:

1. making informal contacts which have proved to be useful to the administrations,
2. building better staff morale within our administrations by selecting sporting colleagues to represent their countries, their colleagues and themselves
and
3. raising the profile abroad of the administrations that participate in these events.

Our success goes in speed with every passing event and we told the German colleagues about the recent developments in 2002 including the Italian football tournament and the recognition of ECSA's achievements by the WCO in Brussels.

Koln Sports Club agreed to apply for membership at the 2002 AGM in La Rochelle. If accepted into ECSA, they will be known officially on our contact list as:

Germany - Cologne - Christian Trepp.

We concluded the meeting feeling that a lot of progress had been made and Mick O'Hanlon will outline the Koln case for membership to the membership at the La Rochelle meeting in October.