

ordinary customs and tax officials in the form of sporting contact as a result? Here's the address:

---

<http://personal.inet.fi/koti/jjkweb/ecsa>

I also want us to remember how small the world is becoming when we saw the terrible floods in central Europe last August and we realise that our good friend Katy Stifterova cannot be with us today because her apartment was completely destroyed in the Prague floods. We send Katy & Wiene our good wishes and hope that Katy will overcome this adversity with her customary good humour and optimism.

Away from the playing fields, ECSA has been very busy. Lieven was probably the busiest man in Brussels in May and June when he had to organise the ECSA Half Marathon, co-ordinate the WCO 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations and the joint WCO/ECSA event as well as his normal daily work. We have an application for membership from Israel which arises from the WCO/ECSA event. I believe Israel has much to offer ECSA and I will recommend a 'Yes' vote at voting time.

I am also delighted to announce that our German friends in Koln Customs have considered applying for ECSA membership. Again, I will recommend a 'Yes' vote at voting time.

Lastly, I want to thank Jean Pierre also for his service to ECSA and in particular for his friendship to me since I joined ECSA. J.P. will retire soon from the French administration which he has served so well for so long and we wish him all the best for a long and happy retirement, next year".

## **Minutes of ECSA Annual General Meeting at La Rochelle** **4-5 October 2002**

### ***The Meeting***

Mick O'Hanlon (Ireland) welcomed the delegates who included Palle Lundborg and his colleague Inge Andersson (Sweden), Klaus Geiger (Finland), Lieven Muylaert (Belgium), Jean Pierre Brust (France), Botond Hejj (Poland), Jan Skalicky (Czech Republic), Graham Hopwood (U.K.), Juraj Gubi (Slovakia), Laszlo Kopf (Hungary), Giampiero Piacentini (Italy) and Theo de Goeijen (the Netherlands). Former ECSA Chairman and Honorary Life Member Billy Robb was also welcomed by all the delegates.

Apologies were sent by Daniel Koener (Luxembourg) and Svend Mandel Hansen (Denmark) who could not attend.

### ***Presentations, country by country***

Sweden has national competitions in Bowling, Golf and Football. During 2002, Sweden sent representatives to the ECSA 6-a-side football in Chianciano, Italy, the

Four Days' Marches in Nijmegen (Netherlands) and the Budapest Marathon in Hungary.

---

In 2003, Sweden will also organise a badminton event, possibly with invitations being extended to ECSA member countries.

Finland organised winter and summer games that cover a wide range of sports. In 2002, Finland was represented at the ECSA cycling event in the Czech Republic where Klaus Geiger took part. Klaus had great praise for the Czech hospitality as well as the organising of this event. In addition, Finland was represented at Nijmegen, the shooting in Budapest and the football in Chianciano.

During 2003, Finland hopes to organise a cross country skiing championship (strictly for amateurs!) where skiers of every ability will be welcome. Finland will host the ECSA 6-a-side (men's and women's) football in 2004 and they have already put an organising committee in place.

Belgium organised the 2<sup>nd</sup> ECSA Half Marathon in May which has now become an annual event hosted by the Belgian Customs. Belgium participated in Nijmegen and Lieven said that there was great competition for places to represent Belgium at the Nijmegen event.

2002 saw the first-ever Belgian participation in the Budapest Marathon. Belgium also took part in the shooting event in Budapest where the Belgian pistol shooters had great praise for the organisation and hospitality. Belgium also sent one representative to the 3,000 metres in the International Sports Day event to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Koln Customs Sports Club.

Lieven said that a new organisation was coming into being called the Social Services of the Ministry of Finances which will cater for the sporting, canteen and other needs of 30,000 officers in the Ministry of Finance (of whom 4,500 are customs officers). Lieven will investigate the possibility to see if the new organisation might be interested in helping Belgian customs to extend its sporting activities to other sports

Ireland sent representatives to the ECSA football in Italy (where the Irish ladies won second prize), the ECSA half marathon in Brussels, the Budapest Marathon, the Koln Sports Day, the Lupton Cup (in Manchester) and the Nijmegen Walk.

Ireland will host the Lupton Cup in Dublin in 2003 (this is a men's veteran football event restricted to England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland). Ireland will also organise a women's 11-a-side tournament to take place alongside the Lupton Cup during September. ECSA member countries are invited to send a women's team to participate. Contact Mick O'Hanlon at [mohanlon@revenue.ie](mailto:mohanlon@revenue.ie) for details.

Poland introduced a major reorganisation of its customs service which resulted in a loss of organisation of sports in Poland in 2002. Poland took part in the CEFTA games which includes countries of Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia and sports include football, volleyball and tennis.

Poland was represented in the ECSA shooting competition in Hungary, the Nijmegen Walk and the Budapest Marathon. Poland may organise a table tennis tournament next year.

---

France will decide during November which events it will organise and participate in during 2003. During 2002, France sent teams to the ECSA football in Italy (where the French ladies were champions), the Brussels half marathon, the Budapest Marathon, the Koln Sports Day as well as a tennis team to Moscow.

Jan Skalicky conveyed his colleague Katy Stifterova's thanks for the good wishes of the ECSA members who sent her messages of support after her apartment was flooded in Prague in August.

The Czech Republic organises domestic competitions in football, tennis, volleyball & running. The highlights for the Czech Republic in 2002 were when they became ECSA football champions in Italy and when they hosted the ECSA cycling event for teams from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Finland, Italy, Austria and the UK.

Czech Republic participated in the ECSA shooting competition in Hungary, the Budapest marathon and the Nijmegen Walk.

The Czechs will organise a table tennis competition in 2003. Contact Jan Skalicky for details at [skalicky@cs.mfcr.cs](mailto:skalicky@cs.mfcr.cs)

The UK C&E Sports Club has 13,5000 members and national sporting events are organised in every discipline. Graham Hopwood said that the UK sent a volleyball team to the Koln Sports Day in September.

2003 will mark the centenary of the UK C&E Sports Club and to mark the occasion, it will invite ECSA member countries to send teams of four to take part in a road relay race in Nottingham. Contact Graham for details at [Graham.Hopwood@hmce.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Graham.Hopwood@hmce.gsi.gov.uk)

Slovakia took part in the CEFTA games, the ECSA Marathon in Budapest, the Czeck Customs Mile (which Slovakia won with a female colleague coming second and third place in the 10k event). The 2002 CEFTA games were hosted in Slovenia and the 2003 games will be hosted by Slovakia.

Juraj said that Slovakia would like to see what level of interes exists for a sniffer or drugs dog competition for sniffer dogs and their handlers. Slovakia attended games which included this unique competition with teams form Hungary, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Ukraine, Poland, Russia, Norway & Austria. If interested, contact Juraj at [jgubi@colnasprava.sk](mailto:jgubi@colnasprava.sk)

Hungary's irrepressible Dr. Laszlo Kopf thanked his ECSA colleagues for all the get-well messages he had received when he was recovering from his heart surgery. Hungary organised the first ECSA shooting competition that included participants from Hungary, Poland, Finland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Belgium & Russia.

The Hungarian Customs & Finance Guard hosted a very successful and memorable ECSA committee meeting in Heviz.

---

Hungary sent participants to the ECSA half marathon in Brussels, the 43<sup>rd</sup> ATSCAF games (in Belgium), the Budapest to Vienna Supermarathon and Nijmegen. Laszlo made a formal request for ECSA funding for the 6<sup>th</sup> ECSA marathon in 2003.

Italy hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> ECSA 6-a-side football tournaments for men and women. It was a wonderful tournament (see June 2002 ECSA Newsletter). The ADI (Associazione Doganale Italiana) organised the Settiana Bianca (the White Week) skiing event in Falcadi.

The ADI sent participants to the ECSA half Marathon in Brussels, the Nijmegen Walk, the ECSA cycling event in the Czech Republic and the ECSA Budapest Marathon. They organised a major charity football match against the Vatican and this fixture will continue in the future.

Giampiero said that the ADI wants to test the level of interest that other ECSA countries might have for a 5-a-side football (what ages? Women's competitions etc) to take place next May. Contact him at [gp.piacentini@paponet.com](mailto:gp.piacentini@paponet.com)

Theo de Goeijen said that the Dutch Customs will host the Nijmegen Walk in 2003, even though the entire administration is being reorganised. In 2002, Netherlands customs participated in the ADI skiing in Falcadi (Italy) and the half marathon in Brussels.

Theo said that people who intended to walk in the Nijmegen Marches must walk in a group and only avail of the official breaks at the tree resting places along the course each day. Participants should be able to maintain a pace of 6 km per hour. Theo congratulated Italy's ECSA delegate Giampiero Piacentini who walked in Nijmegen in 2002 and said he looked forward to Slovakia's ECSA delegate Juraj Gubi, who plans to walk in 2003.

### *WCO/ECSA event June 2002*

Lieven told delegates about how this event came about (see Spring 2002 ECSA Newsletter) and he reported that it had been a successful publicity exercise which saw eight ECSA athletes representing their national customs administration being honoured by the World Customs Organisation before the director generals of most of the world's customs administrations.

Michel Danet (Secretary General of the WCO) presented special medals to the athletes and a special ECSA Newsletter provided information on the ECSA organisation for all the WCO members.

The question of sports funding from the WCO was a thorny issue as the WCO sees ECSA as a European organisation, not a world one. However, Michel Danet encouraged DG's from all over the world to look on the good contacts that had been

made between various administrations through ECSA activity when he told the WCO members from five continents that:

---

“ECSA is an example for the rest of the world. This is how to organise sporting contacts between neighbouring administrations. Perhaps some day we might see a worldwide inter-administration sporting and social organisation along the lines of ECSA that promotes better contact between different administrations”.

### ***New Members - Israel Debate Continues, Koln accepted, Slovenia to apply***

Mick O'Hanlon told delegates that Israeli customs had applied for membership of ECSA and he recommended a 'yes' vote to be taken after some discussion. Discussion centred around the original ECSA constitution and the definition of 'Europe'. Billy Robb asserted that 'Europe' included the EU countries and the European States that are involved in EU enlargement talks.

Mick felt that the definition could be widened to include those countries like Israel that are already included in European events like the UEFA Champions League, European Football Championship and even the Eurovision Song Contest. After an inconclusive debate that suffered because of the tight schedule, the conference agreed to postpone voting on Israel's acceptance.

The Executive Committee was instructed to research the original ECSA constitution to clarify the definition of 'Europe' and to make recommendations to the ECSA membership. Meanwhile, Mick will write to the Israeli contacts to explain the situation.

The members voted unanimously to accept the Koln Customs Sports Club as a full member of ECSA. Theo will contact Herr Christian Trepp regarding payment of subscriptions.

Laszlo Kopf told the conference that Slovenia is interested in membership and he will forward a contact name to Mick for further correspondence before the next Executive Committee meeting.

### ***Treasurer's Report-Subscription Increase to fund Sports activities***

Theo de Goeijen (ECSA Treasurer) presented the annual financial report to the delegates that showed ECSA's finances currently stand at €8,537 (not taking into account the annual subscriptions paid by delegates to the La Rochelle meeting).

Theo said that ECSA had disbursed funds of €4,451.74 during 2002. €855.87 had been paid out in respect of the new website (c. €800) and bank charges (c. 55.87) on the account during the year. The rest (€3,595.87\*) was paid to ECSA member sports clubs that had organised recognised ECSA sports events in their countries or sports events at which ECSA members had participated.

The events that received subvention from ECSA during 2002 included the ECSA pistol shooting competition in Hungary (€1,400), the ECSA Budapest Marathon (see \* below), the ECSA 6 a side football tournament in Italy (€1,715.87) and the ECSA Cycling Race in the Czech Republic (€480). Each event is considered for subvention on its own merit by the Executive Committee which also decides the level of ECSA support to be given, based on a detailed business case made by the applicant.

*\*This amount does not include a separate subvention paid to Hungary in respect of the ECSA Budapest Marathon, after the meeting. A future Treasurer's Report will reflect this.*

Theo said that at this rate of expenditure, ECSA's funds would be gone by 2005 and he proposed an increase in annual subscriptions from €50 per ECSA member to €100. This motion was carried by eight against three (Chairman Mick O'Hanlon abstained from voting, unless a casting vote was needed, which did not arise).

The increase to €100 should give ECSA an annual income of €1,500 (current membership) and it means that ECSA can continue to support requests for financial assistance from ECSA member countries for several years to come, at the current rate of support. The conference also recognised and thanked those countries' administrations that bear the entire cost of hosting events.

### ***Website Improvements***

Mick begged delegates (who had not already done so) to write a message for their country's homepage on the ECSA website. Janne Kallio (Finland) was thanked for the great work he had done in improving the website. Further technical improvements concerning the address are in store and Klaus Geiger will discuss these with Janne.

Delegates were told that half of the homepages had nothing on them and that this was a waste of resources when these countries could be making great publicity for their sports clubs, their colleagues, their administrations and their DG's. The ECSA website offers each member complete control of their own homepage.

You can include photos of sports events in your country, photos of yourself and/or your DG with his/her message of goodwill to other ECSA countries, your administration's crest and history or mission statement – the possibilities have no limits. A good homepage is one that makes the best PR opportunity for the country involved. Come on! Get those messages to Mick O'Hanlon now!

### ***New Committee Member & Elections 2003***

Following Denmark's Svend Mandel Hansen's announcement that he has to withdraw from serving on the ECSA Executive Committee due to reorganisation of the Danish customs, Finland's Klaus Geiger volunteered to sit on the Executive Committee until the AGM in Denmark next year when several committee changes are due to be made.

Klaus follows Finland's Tommi Kivilaakso who also served on the ECSA EC from 1997 – 2000.

Mick O'Hanlon pointed out that his term of office as ECSA Chairman will be due to end at the 2003 AGM when a new Chairman would be appointed. Several of the committee members had also been in their positions for some years and the question of elections will arise for other ECSA members to serve in these positions from 2003.

However, the question of replacing the entire ECSA EC *en masse* might not be such a good idea and perhaps one or two current EC members should stay on the EC to provide continuity to help the new EC members. The delegates were asked to think about these issues before the elections at next year's AGM which will take place in Denmark.

The EC will produce a rota showing which countries had served on the EC etc since 1992 before the next AGM in October 2003. Mick also praised the great work and advances made during the term of the current ECSA Executive which has been in office since 2000.

The EC will meet twice in 2003 before the Danish AGM in October when Finland kindly offered to host an EC meeting (possible in March or April) followed by Belgium's kind offer to host an EC meeting (probably to coincide with the ECSA Half Marathon in May).

## **Finnish Cross-Country Skiing event in March 2003**

Finland will host a cross-country skiing championship (strictly for amateurs!) where skiers of every ability will be welcome, next March. The event will take place in the centre of Finland in Puijo. The schedule is as follows:

Friday 7 March      arrive at Kuopio where the contestants will be met at the airport by Finnish Customs.

Saturday 8 March    Opening of the Winter Sports Championships at Puijo

Men under 40	10km freestyle
Men 40-50	10km freestyle
Men 50-56	5km traditional
Men over 56	5km traditional
Women under 40	5km freestyle
Women 40-50	5km traditional
Women over 50	5km traditional

That evening, there will be a prize-giving banquet (cost €21). Transport to the airport will be arranged for the contestants on Sunday. Accommodation is in Hotel Spa Rauhalampi, Kupio. Two nights' accommodation includes breakfast, free spa and gym with access to dance restaurant. Total price for two nights is €85 per person for a double room or €129 per person for a single room. AN extra bed in the room costs €48 for the two nights.