

2005 Annual report from Euro Meetings Board

Dear Members

As you are all aware, 2005 has been a very difficult year for athletics, particularly the one day meets in Europe.

Looking at the problems our sport is facing at the moment and will face even more in the future (decreasing interest from the TV- stations, sponsors every year more difficult to find, costs have steadily increased)

We do not believe it would be wise to wait for the IAAF or the EAA to come up with solutions to our problems, since they are having difficulties themselves in finding partners and solutions to prepare the sport for the future.

We need to be proactive ourselves and look at every aspect of our sport and at ways to improve and modernise it."

As an organisation we need to become part of the consultation process with both the IAAF and the EAA if our sport is to return to where it was ten years ago. Many of us had full stadiums coverage on Terrestrial TV throughout Europe and much higher revenues from both TV and sponsors.

We cannot expect the IAAF or the EAA to make suggestions and give the necessary answers that will help our members in the future. They do not have the expertise or experience of organising one day meets; only we as Meeting Directors have that capability.

We need to have a long term view together with a long term strategy for our sport to flourish again. It is obvious this can only come from the Meeting Directors themselves.

Over the last 18 months, the Agents have been actively organising a 'group' which has already included regular meetings with the IAAF. We need to be part of this process as we can only influence change from the inside - never from the outside. As Meeting Directors, we need to be taken seriously and be part of the system. After all, we provide most of the monies on the circuit.

We need to be mindful of the fact there are other regions around the World that are envious of what we have in Europe regarding our meets and our circuit. They are already given large grants from the IAAF to the tune of 15.5 million dollars, supporting them in development and competition at our expense. We can no longer allow the IAAF to be financing these regions whilst ignoring European Athletics. Without the European one day circuit there would be no IAAF Grand Prix circuit and no World Athletic Final.

If you look at the current situation today, our sport is no longer televised on many of the major European terrestrial TV networks. This has a direct effect on all of our members, even if you do not belong to one of these major TV countries.

The lack of exposure of our sport on these major TV networks is catastrophic for our sport. For example, the TV viewing figures for the World Championships in Helsinki for the BBC and ZDF were down by 20% compared to Paris. The BBC is the only major European TV network still showing Track and Field on a regular basis. Even French national TV stopped showing the Paris Golden League meet this year - this is a very worrying state of affairs.

Bearing this in mind, along with many other issues, we the Board have come to the conclusion that we need to have a two tier system within Euro Meetings, giving us the opportunity to address most of the issues for all of our members.

As many of us have differing issues, it makes it impossible for all of us to be able to get the best out of the present structure.

We are therefore recommending the new structure outlined below. Both groups will operate under the name of Euro Meetings. There will not be an A or B group, as each group is equally as important as the other for the development of our sport and the European Circuit.

In closing this report, we, the board, will thank you all for the hard and excellent work you are all doing for our sport. We have seen sold out stadiums at some of our membersmeet, specially to congratulate is our Paris member with a new world record for attendance (more than 70 000 spectators). This give us hope for the future. Congratulations and good luck for 2006 season.

October 12th 2005-10-12 The Board of Euro Meetings