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<i>Author:</i>	FFP President Mr David Roth	Agenda ref. -	5.2
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OLYMPIC PROJECT – PARIS 2024

The French Parachute Federation held its electoral AGM on March 11th, 2017 and Mr David Roth has now taken the leadership as President for the next four years. One of the landmark projects of this new team is to have Indoor Skydiving included in the 2024 Olympics.

Mr David Roth and his technical advisors have been in contact with the executives of the CNOSF (French National Olympic Committee) and members of the Paris 2024 Organisation Committee. This landmark project is motivated by the opportunity that is given to us by the bid from Paris to host the Olympic games. The French Parachute Federation together with the wind tunnel operators in France are consequently studying the feasibility of having this discipline included in the Olympic movement.

The CIO 2020 Agenda presents an amazing opportunity to include new event into the Games in addition to those already recognised as Olympic disciplines. This is what has happened for Tokyo 2020 and will, without a doubt, also be the case for Paris.

It is important to note that the CIO mentions events rather than Sports. The key values contained in the bid and the value-add of a new event must complement each other.

The President has set up a task-force to give some thought to the strategy that needs to be put in place to convince the decision makers. The first contacts with the Paris Organisation Committee (COJO) are extremely promising, the project is far from being wishful-thinking as the COJO members have shown real interest.

Having studied all available documentation, the following points appear the most important :

- *The Organisation Committee and/or the Selection Committee will be responsible for identifying the events that are the most likely to correspond to the values carried by the Paris Olympic Bid.*
- *In 2020, a questionnaire will be sent to all the International Federations that are interested in becoming part of the Games.*
- *The final selection of 5 events will be taken by the IOC Programme Committee from a pre-selection of around 10 events.*
- *The selected events may differ from the initial proposals and they will only be retained for the Games in question.*

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The International Federations will be questioned which means, for parachuting, the FAI and the IPC. As the FAI covers various different air sports, it is very important that there be complete synergy between the FFP and the IPC.

The FFP to take the responsibility of developing the dossier and lobbying the Paris authorities and the IPC to relay and defend the project when the time comes for the FAI to respond to the IOC.

French Parachute Federation situation

The FFP is lucky enough to have been given delegation by the Ministry of Sport to manage Indoor Skydiving and Wind Tunnel activity in France. It is a well-known fact that parachuting carried many values but unfortunately also as an extreme sport requiring means that are subject to meteorological conditions which do not fit in with the media requirements of an event such as the Olympic Games. Parachuting held in an environment such as a Wind Tunnel where these uncertainties do not exist, offers not only the guarantee that the event(s) will take place but also satisfies the constraints/requirements of the Paris project: proximity, infrastructures that will remain after the Games, media exposure, facilitated access for the young, equal opportunity, inclusion of disabled events, financially balanced project, etc.

The FFP bases its analysis on the fact that there are two wind tunnels in the Paris area : Argenteuil, Paris la Villette and (plus other projects such as Disneyland Marne la Vallée) plus other relatively close tunnels such as Lille. Another important point for consideration is the keen interest in Indoor Skydiving shown by young people and their family circle. The FFP is already considering developing a programme with schools and colleges together in partnership with the Wind Tunnels throughout France.

What positioning can we expect from the IPC

The IPC has, for many, many years carried an Olympic dream. Associated with the FFP, the IPC has always supported multisport competitions that show off the know-how and high level of skill that parachuting requires. Unfortunately, past efforts such as Barcelona and Seoul have not been successful.

Parachuting is often used as a demonstration event or for publicity but it seems to have hit a glass ceiling that Indoor Skydiving might help break. It is in this sense that the FFP needs the support of the IPC. Initially this will be to help develop the events that could be put forward in this project. It is important for the FFP not to fall into clichés and be swayed by the emotional side of what is practised today but to be pragmatic to be able to fit into the specifications laid down by the IOC and in particular, universality. To this end, the FFP believes that Formation Skydiving is for the moment the discipline that fits closest to these requirements although even that discipline does not fulfil all the requirements. By the way, it is not the intent to leave out the others disciplines, and to include them on the discussion, each discipline having also good arguments. It is therefore very important that the IPC understands that we need to work together to define what could be the proposed events in terms of the time they take to compete, the way they are judged and the way in which they can be presented to the public.

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We also believe that the IPC has a key role to play in the case of other Air Sports having the favour of the FAI (as was the case for the CIVL and the Tokyo Olympics). FFP actions towards the Paris Organisation must be mirrored in the actions taken by the IPC. Differences in point of view must be resolved before any programme is presented.

Prospects

In this context, it is important that the President David Roth and the IPC French delegate be able to exchange points of view and discuss this project at the next IPC meeting with all the IPC delegates, and together develop a basic outline of actions before any steps are taken directly with the executives of the FAI. Several meetings have already been held with FAI about the project with positive feedback.

There is a degree of urgency in this matter as the final selection of the new events of the 2024 Olympic Games will be taken on 2019. The Games are awarded to Paris, the FFP and IPC must work now, with the support of the next plenary, on what the next steps are to be.

For the moment, David Roth and his team feel that this very real opportunity that comes with the Paris Olympic project needs to be, without any hesitation, to be exploited and that we need to work together to make it happen.

*David ROTH
President*