

editorial



Dear Friends,

January the 1st 2008 meant the launch of an Olympic year in our lives. With due reason, the entire world focuses on Beijing. Hundreds of millions of eager supporters and viewers just can't wait to see another edition of the

world's most capable athletes – now for the first time to take place in the world's most populous country, China. The Weightlifting Family is not immune to the "Beijing Symptom" either. Before the big Games, however, we shall have some significant episodes on several continents which – beside the Olympic events –

will have a determinant effect on weightlifting in the next years. We are not only speaking here of the five Continental Qualification Events completing the list of entries to the Beijing Olympic Games but also about the election of new leaderships to the Continental Weightlifting Federations.

The Pan-American Federation already had its Electoral Congress in Chile in February. Next in time is Oceania in March, whereupon the EWF will elect its new Executive Board in April. Africa will round up the series with its Congress to be held in October. Asia had preceded the other four continents: the AWF elections took place at the beginning of 2007.

EWF President, two-times Olympic champion Mr. Waldemar Baszanowski (right) will leave office in April

Photo: Studio Kominis



Today the IWF has 181 affiliated members. The growing membership, the rising participation of competitors on an international level is partly to be thanked to the competent activities and increasing efforts of the Continental Federations. Europe can count with 48 countries, Asia with 44, Pan America with 37, Africa with 31 and Oceania with 21 members. The responsibilities involved here are, of course, enormous. Though aware of the impact these Continental elections may have on our entire activity, the IWF is paying full respect to the integrity of the Federations, therefore we refrain from being involved in any way or taking sides. All we wish to ask the membership of the Continental Feder-



The newly elected Executive Board of the Pan-American Federation (Photo: Gabriella Bárány)

ations: chose the best candidates!
 Chose the officials for the following four-year term who can and want to do good for weightlifting in their respective continent – hence to the benefit of the world's weightlifting. Nowadays, the requirements set against any official in such senior position are high. Sport management at this level undoubtedly demands professionals in place. Fortunately, the choice is wide: in each Federation a great number of capable candidates are running for the positions of President, Vice-Presidents, General Secretaries or Executive Members. Your task is to be united with one single target in your eyes: the best service to the interests of weightlifting. In this exciting period the IWF would like to take this opportunity to thank the outgoing leaderships for their committed services to the sport. Meanwhile, even if you are not re-elected, please do not stop sharing your experience and expertise with the new managements!
 We wish to thank our friends Andres Vargas from Puerto Rico, as well as José Herrera

of Venezuela for their activities as President and General Secretary of the Pan-American Federation. At the same time, congratulations and best wishes to the new President: William Ozuna from Dominican Republic and the new General Secretary: David Montero from Brazil!
 In Europe we shall welcome a new President with no doubt, since after many years of service Waldemar Baszanowski has decided to step down. Both Waldemar and the EWF General Secretary Marino Ercolani Casadei deserve our praise and gratitude for outstanding activities. Oceania is our fastest-developing continent, thanks to the enthusiastic work of its leaders, Paul Coffa and Seiuli Paul Wallwork, both of whom we wish to thank for many years of service. The continent with the greatest – hitherto unexploited – potential is undoubtedly Africa. They still have a long and difficult way to go to succeed in bringing up the level of the majority of the African

membership to that of the leading countries of the continent. The merits of Gamil and the late Samir Hanna, as well as Dr. Edmon Takla should be underestimated. We wish the best of success to all at these important elections in the hope that the baton will be seized everywhere by those most deserving.

Dr. Tamás Aján
 IWF President

Yannis Sgouros
 IWF General Secretary