



# Competitions Conference

18–20th April 2008 • Vienna, Austria

Key notes by Jean Brihault / EHF Vice President

- The EHF sees it as its duty and responsibility - as the ambassador of the sport of handball on the European continent - to continually revise and review the European competitions plan
- To find the correct equilibrium is by no means an easy task, but an essential one. There is a wide-spectrum of different interest groups, all of which are represented here (eg. IHF, National Federations, clubs, players, media, partners, sport scientists etc.). The aim of this event is to find the optimum long-term competition strategy for men's handball.
- The matters which are on the agenda for this EHF Competitions Conference are centred around 3 pillars, which are of central importance and key to any plan:

**PILLAR ONE:** National teams, club and player – we need to have a two-way working relationship – one which works cohesively, rather than one which works paradoxically. Needs to be expanded upon...

**PILLAR TWO:** Finding the correct competition balance, both in terms of the playing system and calendar. This is a mammoth task but one which the EHF, together with all partners and stakeholders, is tackling head on. Measures have already been implanted, some are in the pipeline for discussion and some are on the horizon. We all have to accept this can only be accomplished together and with a long-term pro-active and positive approach.



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**PILLAR THREE:** The athletes are paramount protagonists to our game and they need the necessary support network. We want to go further than here and now, we want a system which supports them from the start to well after their career. We need to care and listen to them now. Again some matters are well on their way to implantation – for eg. playing and rest days at European/ Championships, insurance policies and some will be discussed here within this forum and the steps will be set for their realisation.

- The European Handball Federation has taken much time in finding the optimum design of this event. We have been faced with a new challenge, first of bringing representatives of all groups together and secondly securing the optimum forum to achieve the results we are aiming at. We chose a system of group discussions with summaries. I would like to underline this is an open-event. Everybody has the chance to have their say.
- We must all be aware that we will not find answers to every question today. A long-term vision and plan is not something that can be completed and implanted overnight but we are all responsible for its foundation and content today and tomorrow.
- We are not allowed to lose sights of the ultimate objective and founding principles of ensuring the development of the sport, from the roots to the tips.
- We need to merge our knowledge together and form the basis for a plan; we can only do this by being in one boat together. Individual interests have to be put to one side to achieve the ultimate goals, which we will in turn all profit from.



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