

MINUTES

IBU Executive Board Meeting 173
25-26 September 2024, Belgrade/SRB

ATTENDANCE

DAHLIN, Olle	IBU	President
HAMZA, Jiri	IBU	Vice President ¹
SCHERER, Christian	IBU	Treasurer – virtual (on 25 th), in person (on 26 th)
BOYGARD, Tore	IBU	Executive Board Member
DAFOVSKA, Ekaterina	IBU	Executive Board Member (on 26 th)
FARCNIK, Tim	IBU	Executive Board Member
HÄCKI-GROSS, Lena	IBU	Executive Board Member - virtual
SAGUEZ, Fabien	IBU	Executive Board Member
SANTER, Nathalie	IBU	Executive Board Member
STEINLE, Franz	IBU	Executive Board Member
COBB, Max	IBU	Secretary General ²
<u>Guests:</u>		
BÖHM, Daniel	IBU	Sport & Event Director (SD)
GERASIMUK, Dagmara	IBU	Development Director (DD)
MCKENNA, Greg	BIU	Head of BIU (for #5)
RAKIC, Riikka	IBU	Head of Strategy, Sustainability & Governance (HSS)
WINKLER, Christian	IBU	Communication Director (CD)

¹ Further referred to as VP

² Further referred to as SG

AGENDA
IBU Executive Board Meeting 173
25-26 September 2024, Belgrade/SRB

1. President's Welcome
2. Approval of agenda items + pot. conflict of interest announcement
3. Circular decisions between EB Meetings
 - 3.1. Reallocation IBU Cup
4. Reports, General
 - 4.1. President
 - 4.2. Other EB members
 - 4.3. Secretary General
5. Biathlon Integrity Unit
 - 5.1. Report: "BIU" (G.McKenna/F.Steinle)
 - 5.1.1. Solidarity Fund
 - 5.1.2. Athlete Wellness
6. Reports, Overall and Strategy
 - See Congress update, 12.1
 - 6.1 Decision: IBU Human Rights Policy (R.Rakic)
 - 6.2 Report: IBU Climate Action Plan (R.Rakic)
7. Media and Marketing
 - 7.1. Report: "Media" (M.Cobb)
 - 7.2. Report: "Marketing" (M.Cobb)
 - 7.2.1. Report: Partner Summit and Budget
 - 7.2.2. Decision: Marketing Project Manager
8. Sports & Event
 - 8.1. Report: "Sport and Event" (D. Böhm)
 - 8.2. Decision: WC/WCH Seeding system (D.Böhm)
 - 8.3. Decision: Biathlon Festival Munich 2025 (D.Böhm)
 - 8.4. Decision: Open category prize money 24/25 (D.Böhm)
 - 8.5. Report/Decision: ECR changes – wording "gender" vs. "sex"
 - 8.6. WCH 2028/29 Candidate presentations, Sept. 26 09.00.
 - 8.7. Report: Summer Biathlon World Championships
9. Development
 - 9.1. Report: "Development" (D. Gerasimuk)
 - 9.2. **Decision: Regional Event Calendar and support 2024/2025**
 - 9.3. **Decision: Provisional membership NF LUX**
 - 9.4. **Report: Closing the Competition Gap initiative and Budget**

10. Communication

- 10.1. Report: "Communication" (C.Winkler)
 - 10.1.1. **Reach 26 Projects and Budget**

11. Finance and Administration

- 11.1. Report: "Finance and Administration" (M. Eidenhammer)
- 11.2. **Forecast I FY 2024/25**
- 11.3. **Decision: Funds for of additional strategic initiatives**

12. Miscellaneous

- 12.1. **Congress 2024, Belgrade/SRB, update, Sept 25**

13. Meetings

- 13.1. EB meetings
 - 13.1.1. EB 174 Nov 20-22, Munich/GER
 - 13.1.2. EB 175 Feb 20-21, Lenzerheide/SUI
 - 13.1.3. EB176 Jun 16-17, Salzburg/AUT
- 13.2. Other IBU meetings
 - 13.2.1. Congress 2024, Sept 27-29, Belgrade/SRB
 - 13.2.2. Technical Committee, Oct 27-28, Munich/GER
- 13.3. Other meetings
 - 13.3.1. WOF General Assembly, Oct 21, Lausanne/SUI
 - 13.3.2. IF Forum, Oct 21-23, Lausanne/SUI
 - 13.3.3. Sportel, Oct 28-30, Monaco
 - 13.3.4. ANOC General Assembly, Oct 30-Nov 1, Cascais/POR
 - 13.3.5. WADA Foundation Board, Riyadh, Dec 5, Saudi Arabia

14. Executive Session

Effective: Sept 19, 2024

MINUTES

IBU Executive Board Meeting 173
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1. President's Welcome

The President opened the meeting by welcoming the board members and guests to the 16th Ordinary IBU Congress in the Serbian capital of Belgrade. He also stated that the order of the agenda items will be slightly adapted to enable the virtual participation of AC representative Lena Häcki-Gross.

2. Approval of agenda items + pot. conflict of interest announcement

The agenda was approved as distributed.

EB member Tore Boygaard and Treasurer Christian Scherer announced a conflict of interest concerning the appointment of hosts for the IBU Biathlon World Championships 2028 and 2029. Consequently, they will refrain from attending the presentations of candidates other than their own and recuse themselves from the decision-making on the Executive Board's proposals for hosts, both 2028 and 2029 (see 8.6).

3. Circular decisions between EB Meetings

3.1. Reallocation IBU Cup #2

On 3 September 2024, the EB decided to reallocate the IBU Cup #2 that was given back by the Norwegian Biathlon Association at Sjusjoen/NOR to Geilo/NOR on the same dates, 4-7 December 2024.

4. Reports, General

4.1. President

The President referred to his written report.

He highlighted updates concerning the upcoming Olympic Winter Games Milano-Cortina 2026, where the OCOG has confirmed the organisation of a test event for Para Biathlon in Val di Fiemme/ITA on 29-30 January 2025. In Antholz-Anterselva/ITA, the details concerning team accommodation remain unresolved.

The 142nd IOC Session in Paris/FRA saw the announcement of retirement by President Thomas Bach with the candidates for his succession announced by the IOC in September. The election of a new IOC President is planned at an IOC Session on 19-21 March 2025 in GRE. The new IOC President will take office two months later.

During the Paris 2024 Olympic Summer Games, the President attended the International Summit for Sport for Sustainable Development 'Faster, Higher, Stronger - Together for a Better Future' launched by the French President Emmanuel Macron and the IOC, supported by the Agence Française de Développement.

During Paris 2024, the IOC together with TOP Partner Deloitte also staged a special ceremony to announce the short list for IOC Climate Action Awards 2024, where the IBU was the only winter sport nominee among the IFs.

The President complimented the organisers of the IBU Summer Biathlon World Championships in Otepää/EST, which served as another successful milestone for the preparation of the World Championships 2027. The construction of a new government funded multi-sport arena has already begun at the Tehvandi Sports Centre. This facility will serve as the media centre during the 2027 IBU World Championships.

Other recent events have included the unveiling ceremony of a statute for the accomplished Swedish Anti-Doping pioneer and VP WADA, Professor Arne Ljungkvist, and the City Biathlon event in Dresden, which turned out to be a great event despite rainy conditions. The Dresden event also featured para biathlon for visually impaired female athletes who were enthusiastically received by the attending fans.

Finally, the President noted a meeting with founder and main owner of Embracer Gaming Group, which focused on a significant agreement with the IOC to develop Esports and gaming opportunities for sports.

4.2. Other EB members

Fabian Saguez noted his attendance of the Paris 2024 Games, which were a great success. He elaborated on the ongoing organisational set-up process for the Olympic Winter Games French Alps 2030.

Tore Boygaard reported on his attendance of the first meetings with the national federations selected to be part of the Closing the Competition Gap strategic initiative which has launched successfully.

Nathalie Santer followed up on her work to facilitate the planning for Milano Cortina 2026 in Antholz/Anterselva.

Tim Farcnik also attended the Summer Biathlon WCH and reported on various meetings with NFs concerning the Congress motions.

Franz Steinle summarised the benefits of moving the City Event from Wiesbaden to Dresden and highlighted the significance of inclusion of para biathlon to provide these athletes a significant promotional platform.

Vice President Jiri Hamza remarked on the need for continuing discussions on the future of the Summer Biathlon World Championships and quantifying the financial importance of the event to certain national federations.

4.3. Secretary General

The Secretary General recounted his visit to Paris 2024 for both the Olympic and the Paralympic Summer Games. Several members of the management team also attended the event which particularly impressed by a superior look & feel concept and excellent athlete presentation. Besides attending the IOC Session, the Games provided an opportunity for SG to meet partners, such as the EBU, JTA and other federations. During the Paralympics, meetings with IPC President Andrew Parsons and Sport Director Jürgen Padberg helped elaborate and gain support for the IBU's future vision for para biathlon.

The WCH candidate inspections were conducted as per the bidding procedure by a team consisting of SG, SD, World Cup Race Director Borut Nunar and TC Chair Christophe Vassallo, with AC Chair Sebastian Samuelsson (virtual) and subject matter experts providing detailed feedback. The very time-efficient tour saw visits to all three candidates concluding with the attendance of the SBWCH.

SG also shared the now confirmed [IBU Para Biathlon World Cup calendar](#). The cooperation with FIS based on the new agreement is still looking for a productive basis and some calendar challenges remain. Notably the FIS has split the para cross-country World Championships between Toblach/ITA and Trondheim/NOR and plans to stage a much larger number of competitions than those planned for para biathlon.

SG noted the resolution of the Ustiugov and Sleptsova case where the CAS rejected the final appeal.

SG concluded by thanking the management team and all IBU staff for their work for preparing the Congress.

5. Biathlon Integrity Unit

5.1. Report: "BIU" (G.McKenna/F.Steinle)

The Head of the BIU, Greg McKenna provided an update on the CAS Appeal cases, relating to two former Russian athletes Ms Sleptsova and Mr Ustyugov. The appeal related to two decisions rendered by the IBU Anti-Doping Hearing Panel in February 2020.

CAS rejected both appeals. As a result, Mr Ustyugov's competitive results obtained from 27 August 2013 through to his retirement at the end of the 2013/14 World Cup season are invalidated. The disqualifications also include results achieved at the Sochi Olympic Games and World Championships.

Ms Sleptsova's competitive results obtained from 22 March 2013 through to the end of the 2013/14 World Cup season are invalidated.

The BIU continues its pilot with the artificial intelligence (AI)-based technology project named Voice Analytics Screening Tool (VAST). The technology is being assessed as a suitable tool to be used in support of the BIU's antidoping program.

VAST takes the form of a short (six minutes) telephone survey in the athletes' own language and participation is completely voluntary. National Federations, Athletes and Athlete Support Personnel have supported the initiative.

5.1.1. Solidarity Fund

The EB agreed to table discussion on the Solidarity Fund to EB 174.

5.1.2. Decision: Athlete Wellness

Head of BIU Greg McKenna presented a proposal for the establishment of a Mental Health Working Group (MHWG) consisting of representatives of BIU (lead), IBU Sport & Event and Development departments, athletes and two independent advisors as Mental Health Subject Matter Experts. The MHWG would initially conduct a mental health needs assessment and consider further programmes and activities as per the results of such an assessment.

The vision of the MHWG is that, in the long term, athletes' mental health support becomes a regular part of the BIU's operations and work of the respective departments within the IBU.

The AC was consulted and supported the proposal.

The EB decided to approve the proposal to set up a Mental Health Working Group led by the BIU.

6. Reports, Overall and Strategy

- See Congress update, 12.1

6.1 Decision: IBU Human Rights Policy (R.Rakic)

Following further assessment over the summer, the Board reviewed the draft IBU Human Rights Policy which expressly acknowledges the responsibility to respect human rights across all IBU activities and embeds human rights into IBU governance. The policy aligns with principles already contained in the IBU Constitution and does not require changes to existing IBU rules.

The EB decided to approve the Human Rights policy effective immediately.

6.2 Report: IBU Climate Action Plan (R.Rakic)

As a signatory of the Sports for Climate Action Framework, the IBU is required to publish a Climate Action Plan (CAP). In July 2024, the IOC notified 11 IFs that were selected as part of the IOC Climate Accelerator program whose recipients receive value-in-kind climate consulting from Deloitte, an IOC TOP partner. The IBU used this advisory offer from Deloitte to produce a draft CAP in close cooperation with the IBU Sustainability team.

The EB acknowledged the draft plan. The final version is to be presented for review and approval at EB 174.

7. Media and Marketing

7.1. Report: "Media" (M.Cobb)

SG presented a detailed analysis of the current situation on the sports media market. Given the existing IBU rights situation, it was recommended to focus on growing the sport's reach using digital and other promotions to drive event audience growth on-site and through broadcast. Untapped potential is seen especially in the areas of athlete following and guiding young generations' viewing habits. The benefit of digital streaming channels is that they provide detailed data for tracking purposes and determining ROI.

Several strategic initiatives under the so-called Reach 26 project are planned from the 2024/2025 season onwards.

One of these is a new Wintersport Mania egame where only a small financial investment in social media marketing within the existing budget can be used to probe the fans' appetite and explore e gaming's connection to the sport of biathlon.

Discussing the IBU's future commercial model as per the new Target 2030 strategic plan, the EB decided to task the Media and Marketing Working Group to review how to strengthen its negotiating power by including NFs and OCs into any commercial approach beyond 2030.

7.2. Report: "Marketing" (M.Cobb)

The central marketing agreement includes that for the Olympic period 2026-2030 the OC agreements should give a minimum revenue increase in total.

The EB decided that no media-or marketing agreements can be signed by NFs and/or OCs for seasons after 2029/30.

7.2.1. Report: Partner Summit and Budget

SG presented the concept and goals along with the current state of planning for a first Biathlon Partner Summit. The Summit aims to share experiences and innovative ideas among the IBU, its media and marketing partners EBU and Infront, IBU NF leaders

responsible for marketing, and the IBU's and NFs' commercial partners. Participation will be limited to a targeted group of subject matter experts.

The EB supported the plans to hold the Partner Summit at the Holmenkollen Park Hotel in Oslo from 19-21 March 2025.

EB member Tim Farcnik will support SG in the detailed planning of the event.

7.2.2. Decision: Marketing Project Manager

The EB decided to approve the position description for a Marketing Project Manager. This position will report directly to SG.

8. Sports & Event

8.1. Report: "Sport and Event" (D.Böhm)

SD referred to his written report. He especially highlighted the upcoming calendar planning work for seasons 2026/2027-2029/2030. A draft will be prepared by IBU staff to be approved by TC from a sport-technical perspective and to be presented at EB 174.

The EB is asked to provide overall strategic direction for this planning concerning overall calendar structure, snow risk management, and alignment with existing major event schedules. A task force will be set up to finalise the calendar proposals for EB's decision by the end of the 2024/2025 season.

The IBU Snow Network recently met in Sterzing/ITA. This collaboration forum has become one of the most productive gatherings and is likely to become increasingly important in the future. Work to develop data and science-based know-how in sustainable snow management must continue to ensure preparedness of IBU event hosts for future snow conditions. Launched centrally for the 2023/2024 season, the IBU will also continue to gather and analyse structured data on course preparation for every training and competition day across IBU event series.

A draft research report commissioned by the IBU from the University of Innsbruck (Professor Robert Steiger) to assess the snow security of IBU licensed venues worldwide until 2050's was presented.

8.2. Decision: WC/WCH Seeding system (D.Böhm)

The EB discussed at length the revised proposal for a new World Cup and World Championships seeding system for individual and sprint competitions that was prepared after extensive consultation with all key stakeholders.

The EB agreed that that the new system requires a comprehensive review after the first trimester.

The EB decided to approve the amended proposal for the WC/WCH seeding system. See Annex 1 8.2. EB173_Seeding system for WC WCH.pdf

The Athletes Committee representative to the EB Lena Häcki-Gross dissented.

8.3. Decision: Biathlon Festival Munich 2025 (D.Böhm)

The EB is positive concerning the concept of a Biathlon Festival and decided to enter negotiations with the media and marketing partners immediately.

The Negotiation Group will consist of the President, VP, SG and EB member Franz Steinle.

The Implementation Group (President, EB members Tim Farčnik and Christian Scherer, SG and SD) will continue detailed planning and report to the EB no later than in mid-October.

The EB decided to confirm the conduct of the event in 2025 subject to commitment of marketing and media partners.

8.4. Decision: Open category prize money – season 24/25 (D.Böhm)

The EB decided to approve the prize money structure for the World Cup season 2024/2025. See Annex 2 8.4. EB173 Prize Money 24-25 FINAL.

This means that new prize money categories will be introduced for the athlete with the best net pursuit time in pursuit competitions and for the fastest athlete of each relay leg.

8.5. Decision: ECR changes – wording “gender” vs. “sex”

The EB decided to approve the consequential wording changes as proposed.

8.6. WCH 2028/29 Candidate presentations

Each of the three candidates for the hosts of the IBU World Championships 2028 and 2029 presented their bids to the Executive Board, followed by a question-and-answer session, on Thursday morning, 26 September.

The EB gathered again on Saturday morning, 28 September, to agree on the proposals to the Congress for the hosts of each available Championship.

8.7. Report: Summer Biathlon World Championships

SD reported on the 2027 edition of the SBWCH held in Otepää/EST. The event was well conducted from the sport-technical perspective and offered a compelling side event program. Overall, however, even though 30 NFs participated, there were only 5 women and 4 men from the World Cup Top 30. TV coverage was provided by four broadcasters with limited viewership.

Notably, the back-to-back organisation of the IOC/IBU development camp and SBWCH was a great combination and demonstrated efficient use of the infrastructure and limited travel.

The EB asked the S&E and Development departments to work with TC to prepare a new development-oriented proposal for the Summer Biathlon World Championships for discussion at EB 174.

9. Development

9.1. Report: "Development" (D. Gerasimuk)

DD referred to her written report and provided selected highlights: *See Annex 3 9.1. EB173 Report Development.*

- Based on the success of the pilot regional basic course in Kazakhstan in July, additional region-specific courses are planned for 2025. Thanks to the support of the leading coaches in the sport, new educators have enjoyed the best available preparation for their new role.
- The 2nd issue of Journal of Biathlon Coaching was published in July 2024
- Olympic Solidarity now supports the IBU development efforts by €500'000 annually.

9.2. Decision: Regional Event Calendar and support 2024/2025

The EB decided to approve funding amounting to €279'800 for a total of 24 Regional Events planned during the winter season 2024/2025. See Annex 4 9.2. EB173 Regional Events support 2024.2025

9.3. Decision: Provisional membership NF LUX

The EB decided to approve the national federation of Luxembourg as a provisional member based on the recommendation of DD and complete documentation provided as per the rules.

9.4. Report: Closing the Competition Gap initiative and Budget

An initial round of consultations with the National Federations selected to participate in the first phase of the Closing the Competition Gap strategic initiative have begun with 5 calls having taken place before the Congress.

During these first discussions the NFs present the findings of their internal SWOT analysis and strategic needs for the short-term (2026) and long-term (2030 and beyond).

10. Communication

10.1. Report: "Communication" (C.Winkler)

Laura Fritzenwenger has joined the IBU in the vacant position of Junior Digital Manager.

10.1.1. Reach 26 Projects and Budget

See 11.3

11. Finance and Administration

11.1. Report: "Finance and Administration" (M. Eidenhammer/M. Cobb)

A new meeting box has been installed at the HQ to provide additional space for on- and off-line meetings in a group.

11.2. Forecast I FY 2024/25

Forecast 1 for the financial year 2024/2025 is aligned with the budget.

11.3. Decision: Funds for of additional strategic initiatives

The EB decided to approve an additional funding request in total value of €350'000 to provide for the Reach 26 initiatives and the Biathlon Partner Summit as well as hiring for the new position of a Marketing Project Manager during the ongoing budget year 2024/2025.

12. Miscellaneous

12.1. Congress 2024, Belgrade/SRB, update, Sept 25

The EB approved the updated wording of the motion 13.1.8 adjusted based on feedback from national member federations.

The EB further decided to ask the Congress to empower it to appoint the auditor.

The [Final Report for the Target 26 Strategic Plan](#) and the new [Target 2030 Strategy](#) have been published on the IBU website.

12.2. EB attendance

The EB agreed on an adjusted calendar for representation during the 2024/2025 season. EB attendance at the IBU Para Biathlon World Cup events 2024/2025 will be added to the document.

The EB asked SG to develop a role description for EB Representatives at IBU Events.

The reallocation of medals from Sochi 2014 is pending a formal decision of the IOC Executive Board and will be planned in cooperation with the respective NOCs with the appropriate EB attendance to be confirmed in due course afterwards.

12.3 Rules of Honours

The EB decided to add the following paragraph to the Rules of Honours (edition 2024):

The IBU Executive Board can decide to introduce athletes into the IBU Hall of Fame, if an athlete fulfils only two of the criteria but can prove an extraordinary track record. This rule also applies for biathletes and their results who have shaped the sport of biathlon before the founding of the IBU in 1993.

13. Meetings

13.1. EB Meetings

- 13.1.1. EB 174 Nov 20-22, Munich/GER
- 13.1.2. EB 175 Feb 20-21, Lenzerheide/SUI
- 13.1.3. EB176 Jun 16-17, Salzburg/AUT

13.2. Other IBU meetings

- 13.2.1. Congress 2024, Sept 27-29, Belgrade/SRB
- 13.2.2. Technical Committee, Oct 27-28, Munich/GER

13.3. Other meetings

- 13.3.1. WOF General Assembly, Oct 21, Lausanne/SUI
- 13.3.2. IF Forum, Oct 21-23, Lausanne/SUI
- 13.3.3. Sportel, Oct 28-30, Monaco
- 13.3.4. ANOC General Assembly, Oct 30-Nov 1, Cascais/POR
- 13.3.5. WADA Foundation Board, Riyadh, Dec 5, Saudi Arabia

14. Executive Session

An informal discussion only with Board members present took place during the meeting.

Confirmation of the final minutes for EB 173



Olle Dahlin, President



Max Cobb, Secretary General

10/23/2024