



Takashi Ogawa
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Fédération Internationale de Saut à la Corde - International Rope Skipping Federation

Dear FISAC-IRSF member countries, athletes, coaches, officials and all other rope skipping family members,

Firstly, thank you all for your continuous support to FISAC-IRSF and our beloved sport of Rope Skipping. We always feel blessed whenever communicating with people who show their enthusiasm and love towards our sport.

This letter may become somewhat of a personal message from me to you to clarify what is happening to the world of Rope Skipping and where FISAC-IRSF and Rope Skipping stands in the international sporting world. Please note that this letter is not to accuse or criticise any individual/s, country/continental organisations, international federations or past contributors to the sport.

As you may have realised, International Jump Rope Union (IJRU) has been formed between Fédération Internationale de Saut à la Corde (FISAC-IRSF) and World Jump Rope Federation (WJRF).

Thank you for those individuals and organisations who expressed their support as well as concerns towards this merger. I would like to share the facts of FISAC-IRSF and the reasons of the necessity of the merger with you here.

STATUS OF FISAC-IRSF

I accepted the role of President FISAC-IRSF in early 2016 when the organisation was in the middle of preparations for the 2016 Sweden World Championships. We are still very proud of the success of the championships thanking the board members at that time, the Swedish organisations and all of the member countries. Please allow me to thank Richard Stannard, the President of ERSO, for his support during the preparation of WC 2016.

However, at the same time, I realised that FISAC-IRSF had lost its strengths as an international organisation. We were required to address numerous issues including the 2012 and 2014 Championships matters as well as other problems that had not been attended for a number of years. Again, please do not misunderstand this, I am not trying to blame previous FISAC-IRSF board members. The mess, if I am not afraid to call so, was likely caused by all the changes within the organisation. After 2010, FISAC-IRSF experienced changes of the board members and presidents several times.

Here, I would like to express my appreciation to my executive board, Janet Locke and Silke Fürnschuß, for supporting me during the difficult times. Especially I would like to thank Ronald Kappert, Former President and current Executive Director of FISAC-IRSF. Honestly speaking, without Ron's work, including legal and financial paperwork filing, we may even not have been able to host the 2016 Championships.

Thanks to my board of directors, FISAC-IRSF regained its standing, but we were still working on maintenance and catching up with a necessary workload, including communicating with international organisations such as Global Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF).

FINANCES OF FISAC-IRSF

As many of you may have known, FISAC-IRSF's main income is the capitation fee of the World Championships, which is approx US\$50/ attendee every second year. Even with 1,000+ attendees, FISAC-IRSF's revenue is a mere \$40,000 - \$50,000 for two years (after all expenses) which is never enough to govern, develop and advance the sport of Rope Skipping. FISAC-IRSF certainly requires a new financial structure to maximise the function as an international federation.

In addition, it has been a challenge to find a national rope skipping organisation to host the World Championships. It is getting harder and harder for the countries to fulfil the requirements as a hosting country. For these reasons FISAC-IRSF would not have been able to exist on its own much longer.

WORLD JUMP ROPE FEDERATION (WJRF)

World Jump Rope has been operating since 2011. It has been successful and is scheduled to hold its 8th championships in 2019 in Norway. FISAC-IRSF had failed to effectively communicate with WJRF and the division between two organisations did not help the development of Rope Skipping in the international sporting world. It is one of FISAC-IRSF's primary responsibilities to advance the sport of Rope Skipping. It is necessary and unavoidable for us to work with WJRF to achieve it. I would like to show my respect to Shaun Hamilton who agreed with the merger between FISAC-IRSF and WJRF. The decision must have been extremely difficult while WJRF had been experiencing successful years.

2019 World Jump Rope Championships will be the last revenue for the future IJRU. If you have opportunity to attend, I would like to encourage you to attend the event.

GAISF (Global Association of International Sporting Federation)

For any sport or any international sporting federation, it is extremely important to be present in the international sporting world as a member of GAISF (formerly known as SportAccord). Becoming a member of GAISF is the first step of being part of the Olympic family.

Since I became an official of FISAC-IRSF (2015), I quickly learned the importance of initiating the process to associate with GAISF with the guidance of certain board members. However, FISAC-IRSF failed to take the necessary steps to improve the status of Rope Skipping as a sport.

In fact, FISAC-IRSF had applied to become a member of GAISF a number of years ago. However, FISAC-IRSF was absent from the international sporting world until I started serving for Rope Skipping as the President in 2016 when I started communicating with GAISF. I attended SportAccord conference in Denmark where I was educated by other international federation and officials that Rope Skipping will have no future in the international sporting world while FISAC-IRSF and WJRF exist both independently. I was also harshly questioned by the officials why FISAC-IRSF had been absent for more than 10 years from the GAISF world.

IJRU

Both Shaun Hamilton, the President and Chairperson of WJRF, and I realised that there was only one option to advance our sport and make it part of the Olympic family. The only way is to have ONE SINGLE world body to govern the sport of Rope Skipping.

FISAC-IRSF and WJRF formed a working group (three representatives from each Federation) to discuss all the details of the merging process. The merging process and forming of IJRU were supported by both FISAC-IRSF and WJRF in March 2018.

IJRU has been granted Observer Status of GAISF in April 2018 and since then it has received a series of guidance and support from GAISF and other international organisations. The Observer Status may be the very bottom layer of the Olympic pyramid but I am pleased to tell you all that we are at least there and will not be ignored any more.

Please allow me to point out that IJRU is the first and the largest opportunity that Rope Skipping has ever received in its history. Our next goal is to become a full member of GAISF and we definitely need your support, understanding and trust to achieve it. There is a defined process to achieve this, and IJRU is working hard to establish a presence in the world of Rope Skipping.

The IJRU working group has 50/50 representation from both FISAC-IRSF and WJRF where we always hold the mantra of "For the sport and its athletes". It is not WJRF taking over FISAC-IRSF nor FISAC-IRSF taking over WJRF under the name of IJRU.

LEADERSHIP in IJRU

You may have realised that Shaun Hamilton was selected as the President of IJRU where I am Executive Vice President. It is not the sign of WJRF taking over FISAC-IRSF. Shaun Hamilton actually is the more experienced leader and has good connections with GAISF and other international federations. Therefore, it was I, who made the recommendation for him to be the President of the new federation to advance our sport of Rope Skipping.

FUTURE of Rope Skipping with IJRU

IJRU has been working extremely hard to make its standing in the international sporting society. With GAISF's support, IJRU has been establishing good relationships with other international federations. Several organisations including FIBA (basketball) contacted IJRU to demonstrate our sport at their events and these have been a great opportunities not only to show how great our sport is but also to make great connections with other federations and officials.

One of the first goals of IJRU is to work with national organisations to achieve their status. In some cases, IJRU's GAISF Observer Status made the sport of Rope Skipping recognised as an official sport within their country. Making your country organisation strong and developing the status of our sport is making Rope Skipping stronger in the world of sport. I urge you here to communicate more with IJRU if your national organisation needs any support to allow us to help the sport and athletes in your country.

2020 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The World Championships in 2020 will be the first combined event for FISAC-IRSF and WJRF. It will be the most exciting event for all of us and we would love to meet all the top athletes wherever the event will be held. The IJRU Technical Congress has been

communicating about the events and rules with everyone publicly through its blog. Please read this and send in your feedback.

<https://tc.ijru.sport/>

OLYMPIC GAMES/INTERNATIONAL MULTI-SPORT GAMES

I heard some comments about Rope Skipping making Olympic Games soon. I would not want to deny the possibilities of being part of Olympic Games. However, IJRU needs to make certain progress to broaden the chance of being part of the international multi-sport games, such as the Olympic Games and World Urban Games, etc. Having more country members and advancing their national governing bodies (making Rope Skipping recognised in more countries) is a vital part of the IJRU's progress. I would like everyone to understand the importance of supporting IJRU to hold up high our beloved sport of Rope Skipping in front of the rest of the world.

TO YOU

I would like to thank you all, athletes, judges, officials and Rope Skipping fans for showing me your passion and love towards our sport. I have been part of this sport for more than 20 years and loved every minute of it, and am looking forward to the next 20 years. However, I also realised that it is the time for a change in order to advance our sport. I understand that some of you may have been against the merger between FISAC-IRSF and WJRF. This merger is not for anybody's personal gain, but this is for the sport of Rope Skipping and its athletes. IJRU's working group and board members are all working hard voluntarily to advance our sport.

We have an opportunity to make real change in our sport, and that opportunity is with us now.

Please do not just look at the change, do not just witness the change, but please be part of the change with us.

Yours in sport,



Takashi Ogawa

President

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