

Report of the ETS General Assembly Tuesday, April the 21st, 2009 Valencia - Spain

The General Assembly of the European Turfgrass Society was held on April the 21st, 2009 in Valencia, at the “Paraninfo” conference hall in the Campus de Vera of the Polytechnic University of Valencia, Spain, from 19.30 to 21.00.

Participants:

At 17.15 PM there were 34 ETS members, which although less than 50% of all the ETS members (on the day of the GA , ETS had a total of 77 members), it was enough for a Quorum .
The General Assembly started at 19.30 PM .

Order of the day:

1. Presentation of the 2008 ETS activities
2. Financial balance 2008 and provisional financial balance for 2009: presentation, discussion and approval
3. The 2009 working programme: presentation, discussion and approval
4. ETS Conference 2010

General Assembly

The president, Mr. M. Volterrani, opened the general assembly.

He asked if the assembly agreed to voting by a show of hands. The assembly approved unanimously.

He proposed Mr. Stephen Alderton as the president of the assembly, and Mrs. Francesca Amendola as secretary of the assembly.

The Assembly agreed, voting by a show of hands.

M Alderton presented the first item on the agenda:

1. Presentation of the 2008 ETS activities

M Altissimo presented the major events of 2008 for the Society

2. Financial balance 2008 and provisional financial balance for 2009: presentation, discussion and approval

Mr. A. Altissimo, treasurer and secretary of ETS, presented the 2008 balance sheet and 2009 budget plan (in attachment).

According to these documents, Mr. Altissimo showed that ETS has not yet attained a breakeven point. This is mostly due to a low income from memberships (low number of members, compared to the number that what was foreseen at the beginning of the year), and to a low income from the organisation of ETS events.

Mr. Altissimo declared that, if there were no changes, ETS had only enough funds to continue its activity for another 2 years , before finishing the capital reserves.

There followed a discussion on how the ETS financial situation could be improved to ensure that it could continue to exist given the critical financial situation.

Mr. S. Alderton asked members to try to expand memberships to colleagues and to other players in the sector.

M F. Barenbrug pointed out that as the fees were the major part of the Societies funding base then this was an area that needed more study.

M Alderton commented that the current situation concerning companies, especially founding ones, was not clear, indeed the current statutes prevented company membership.

The Assembly discussed the green, silver, golden memberships and, in general, the current rules adopted to establish the amount of the membership fees every year. It was stated that the current system (for which golden, silver and green members pay only the first year a *una-tantum* “heavy” fee does not help ETS.

Mr. W. Zehetbauer proposed to consider the idea of working on changing the statutes of ETS, to include the recently introduced category of green members and eventually to make other changes and improvements that would allow company membership.

The Assembly continued the discussion by exchanging different opinions on a new fees system that should be more efficient in assuring the income needed by ETS to attain the break even point. Different opinions were proposed: increasing the ordinary members fees, changing the statute and opening the memberships to companies, offering different categories of memberships, etc.

Mr Altissimo, treasurer and secretary of ETS, made a note of the various proposals and agreed to work on a proposal for a new fees structure for the 2010 membership campaign.

Mr. S. Alderton asked the General Assembly to vote for the approval or rejection of the budget plan and balance sheet.

The General Assembly approved unanimously the 2008 balance sheet.
The General Assembly approved unanimously the 2009 budget plan.

3. The 2009 working programme: presentation, discussion and approval

Mr. A. Altissimo presented the 2009 working plan (in attachment).

He asked the General Assembly for supplementary ideas, proposals, comments.

Mr. Zehetbauer asked the organizers of the 2010 Conference of Angers and the ETS board to prepare rapidly a program and eventually a list of speakers of the Conference, so that the Conference can be publicized in a complete and efficient way.

Mr. S. Alderton declared that the organizing committee of the Angers Conference, to which he belongs, hoped to attain 400 participants in Angers in 2010.

Mr. Barenbrug proposed that documents and articles in the ETS database, should be available online for members, (only in English), so that knowledge could be shared between all members.

Mr. Alderton proposed that a concerted programme was undertaken with the help of local ETS representatives to spread the name of ETS and increase its presence in the local specialised press.

Mr. Panayotis asked for details on the organisation of the work concerning the realisation of guidelines on sport turf surfaces that had been proposed earlier by the Board as a subject for study.

Mr. S. Baker spoke about the existence of several, different national guidelines, not only for soccer but also for other sports.

Mr Alderton asked the Assembly to vote for the creation of a working group for the realisation of European guidelines for sport turf surfaces. The assembly agreed with three abstentions and no contrary votes.

Mr. Alderton proposed Mr. Baker as the coordinator of these activities, the assembly accepted unanimously. Volunteers (ETS members), interested in contributing to this theme, should contact Mr. Baker by e-mail. Mr. Altissimo proposed to open a free discussion on these themes by e-mail, that can be opened by ETS founding members, while Mr. Gabriels stated that also trials are an important factor in this field.

Mr. S. Alderton asked the General Assembly to vote for the approval or rejection of the 2009 working plan.

The General Assembly approved unanimously the 2009 working plan.

The president of ETS, Mr. M. Volterrani, closed the formal part of the General Assembly.

Mr. S. Alderton, after this, made a short presentation of the on-progress organisation of the 2010 ETS conference.

M Barenbrug proposed that a part of the Turf Tours should be optional allowing for a more flexible programme.

M Alderton explained there would be opportunities for company sponsorship during the event to keep costs down.

The General Assembly closed the meeting at 21.00.

ETS secretary
Mr. Adriano Altissimo

ETS president
Mr. Marco Volterrani