

# FITEQ NEWSLETTER - MARCH 2020

*Edition 6*

**Welcome to your monthly newsletter from the International Teqball Federation.**

This month's edition reflects another busy period for teqball. From the celebration of International Women's Day to our OSFO membership, FITEQ continues to drive its aims and ambitions through strong leadership and partnerships.

**#WorldIsCurved**



## NATALIA GUITLER APPOINTED CHAIR OF FITEQ ATHLETES' COMMITTEE

Brazil's teqball World Champion in mixed doubles, Natalia Guitler, was recently unveiled as the Chair of the FITEQ Athletes' Committee following her appointment at the General Assembly in Hungary, Budapest, on 8 December 2019.

Guitler, the first female to win a Teqball World Championship, has already inspired women around the world to get involved and play teqball. Now, as Chair of the Athletes' Committee, Guitler is excited to get to work and ensure the interests of athletes are represented throughout FITEQ's decision-making processes.

FITEQ Athletes' Committee Chair Natalia Guitler said:

"It's an honour to be appointed as the Chair of the FITEQ Athletes' Committee and represent all players around the world – the TEQ family. I am very happy but fully aware of all the responsibilities of this important role. I am looking forward to bringing this sport to the next level, let's do it together!"



## SUCCESSFUL CHALLENGER CUPS HELD IN CHOČEN AND LOS ANGELES

Thirty teams from 10 European countries gathered in Choceň, Czech Republic, on 9 February 2020. Organised by a Local Organising Committee in Choceň and supervised by FITEQ, athletes competed for \$2000 in the indoor open doubles event.

Nikola Mitro and Bogdan Marojević from Serbia claimed first place, Ádám Blázsovics and Csaba Bányik from Hungary finished second, while Hugo Rabeux and Julien Grondin from France took third.

FITEQ then hosted its first-ever Challenger Cup in the United States on 23 February, with 18 men's doubles teams, including 6 female players, competing in Los Angeles.

The Challenger Cup tested the use of a 12 points system, over the usual best of three sets format. Hungarian doubles pair Balázs Imreh and Árpád Sipos emerged victorious with a score of 12-9, 12-9 in the final overcoming Joao Barreto and Thiago Lusardi from Brazil. After a successful first event, FITEQ is looking forward to returning to the United States for more Challenger Cups in the future.



## MALAYSIAN TEQBALL ASSOCIATION HOST COACHING AND REFEREE COURSE

The Malaysian Teqball Association (MTA) hosted a two-day national level coaching and referee training course for more than 70 participants in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 10-11 February 2020. Twelve of the course participants were female, demonstrating that teqball is a sport for both male and female Teqers.

All participants passed the course, achieving National Level Accreditation in line with FITEQ regulations. To maintain consistency across all National Federation training programmes, FITEQ delivered its own four-day all-in-one course for referees and coaches in February 2019.





## TEQBALL EXHIBITION MATCH HOSTED IN SIERRA LEONE

FITEQ successfully hosted a teqball exhibition match in Freetown, Sierra Leone, on 14 February, aimed at engaging new young Teqers.

The exhibition match, which was hosted on Valentine's Day and dedicated to Sierra Leone Women and Sports Commission President Mrs Pamela Williams for her efforts and dedication to sport development, was attended by a number of senior sports representatives from Sierra Leone.

Williams praised the involvement of female referees in the exhibition and committed to growing the sport of teqball throughout the country. Vice Chairman of Teqball Sierra Leone Alie Nyelenkeh echoed Williams' comments, stating that teqball "should be spread to every part of the country".



## FITEQ CELEBRATES HUNGARIAN PARA SPORT DAY

FITEQ celebrated the Hungarian para sport day on Friday 21 February 2020 with the signing of a historic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Hungarian Paralympic Committee (HPC). The MoU is FITEQ's first-ever cooperative agreement with a para sport organisation and follows the initiation of para sport activities at the start of 2020.

FITEQ President Gábor Borsányi and HPC President László Szabó signed the agreement in the Hungarian capital of Budapest. FITEQ and the HPC will work together to support the growth of para teqball and the Paralympic Movement in Hungary. The agreement will see the HPC share its expertise and network of contacts with FITEQ to help develop para teqball all over the world.

As part of the Hungarian para sport day, General Secretary Marius Vizer Jr presented FITEQ's plans for para teqball to a high-powered audience. Amongst others in attendance were International Paralympic Committee (IPC) CEO Mike Peters, and many other prominent guests from Hungarian sport. In the morning of the day, a local high school in Budapest hosted a demonstration of para teqball.



### FIRST-EVER WOMEN'S CHALLENGER CUP

The home of teqball hosted the sport's first-ever Women Challenger Cup, with 24 athletes travelling to Budapest on 1 March to compete in the historic event. Participants from Hungary, Romania, France and Poland battled for gold medal in women's singles category.

After the group stage, in the main draw, Hungarian Anna Izsák defeated her compatriot Zsanett Janicsek 20-18, 20-16 in the final. Janicsek's second place finish mirrored her performance in the 2019 Teqball World Championships mixed doubles competition.

Boglárka Lepsényi's 20-5, 20-12 victory over Romanian Rita Mitri in the bronze medal match ensured that Hungary secured all three medals. Interestingly, all players come from the same club, Phoenix Academy, the leading name amongst the clubs in Hungary having great activity and participation through various age and gender groups.





## FITEQ OFFICIALLY JOINS THE ORGANISATION OF SPORTS FEDERATIONS OF OCEANIA

FITEQ has officially joined the Organisation of Sports Federations of Oceania (OSFO) as the latest step in the Federation's global development.

As a member of OSFO, FITEQ will be able to learn from the organisation's industry-leading knowledge and benefit from its extensive network of sports organisations in Oceania as it aims to continue teqball's growth and development throughout the region.

OSFO Secretary General Chet Gray said:

"We are delighted to welcome FITEQ as an official member and we look forward to working together in the mutual interest of promoting and enhancing the sport of teqball in communities across the Oceania region."

FITEQ General Secretary Marius Vizer Jr said:

"We are very grateful to OSFO for welcoming FITEQ to be a part of their impressive work. We are excited by the prospect of cooperating with OSFO and the benefits this working relationship will bring to existing and future teqball National Federations in the Oceania region."

OSFO, established in Brisbane, Australia, in March 2005, was formed to unite regional sports federations to promote sport, share knowledge and resources and coordinate development across the Oceania region.





### FITEQ HOLD SERIES OF KEY MEETINGS IN ASIA

FITEQ General Secretary Marius Vizer Jr travelled to Asia at the end of February for a series of key development meetings, as part of the international federation's continued drive for growth of the sport in the region.

Vizer Jr's first stop was in New Delhi in India, where he met with the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) President and IOC Member Dr Narinder Dhruv Batra and IOA Joint Secretary Namdev Shirgaonkar, as well as other key stakeholders in Indian sports development. Discussions focused on FITEQ's strategic plan and the planned series of educational courses in India ahead of teqball's debut on the Asian Beach Games in Sanya in 2020.

Vizer Jr then travelled to the Maldives, where he met with the country's Commissioner of Sports Heena Ahmed Saleem and the Maldives Olympic Committee Secretary General Ahmed Marzooq. Following a successful meeting, FITEQ will help find partners for the establishment of teqball clubs in the country.



## TEQBALL ATHLETES AROUND THE WORLD SUPPORT INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Teqball athletes around the world support International Women's Day FITEQ, together with the chair of the Athletes' Committee Natalia Guitler led a video from teqball's best female athletes from all around the world to celebrate International Women's Day.

International Women's Day is a global celebration of the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women.

Guitler, who became the first woman to win a Teqball World Championship by winning the 2019 mixed doubles event with teammate Marcos Viera, sent a message to the "Queens of the Teqball Family" calling for all female athletes to "have strength and determination to overcome ourselves and show our power".

As one of only a few sports where women and men compete on an equal playing field, female athletes, referees, coaches and officials from Brazil, Hungary, Malaysia, Austria and Djibouti were proud to mark the occasion.

Launched by the FITEQ Women's Committee in 2019, the **Zero-to-Hero Project** aims to shatter stereotypes and break down barriers by teaching women of all ages to learn and excel at teqball within 30 days.

At the end of 2019, FITEQ also reinforced its commitment to equal opportunity as it signed the Brighton plus Helsinki Declaration on Women and Sport and was officially recognised and admitted as a member of The Association For International Sport for All (TAFISA).

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