

## Special Edition

### ITF Annual General Meeting concludes in Barcelona

The 2004 ITF Annual General Meeting attracted 90 nations and 280 delegates, partners and staff to Barcelona this week for two and a half days of meetings including the annual gatherings of the ITF Regional Associations, a half-day agenda of Key Issues Sessions and the formal AGM. This year's AGM was co-hosted by the Spanish and Catalan Tennis Federations as the final event in the year-long celebration of the Centenary of the Catalan Federation.

ITF President Francesco Ricci Bitti welcomed the delegates on Monday evening, thanking both Agustin Pujol, President of the Spanish Tennis Federation and Josep Ferrer Peris, President of the Catalan Tennis Federation for their efforts on behalf of this AGM. Pujol responded on behalf of the hosts, stating that this was the third time the ITF AGM had been held in Barcelona and congratulating both the Russian and Argentine Associations on the victories of their players at Roland Garros.

Following a morning of Regional Association meetings on Tuesday morning, the ITF AGM welcomed Makis Assimakopoulos, ATHOC General Manager, Sports for ATHENS 2004, who updated the delegates about the upcoming Olympic Games and in particular the Olympic Tennis Event. Following reports on the Olympics and the Tennis Anti-Doping Programme, the delegates were guests of the Lawn Tennis Association at their annual AGM lunch. Ricci Bitti thanked LTA President Charles Trippe on behalf of the delegates and also for the warm relationship that exists between the ITF and the LTA in London, noting that the ITF will be delighted to welcome the LTA to Roehampton as soon as their National Tennis Centre is completed.

In the afternoon session, the delegates received reports on Finance, the Constitution, Commercial Projects including Ambush Marketing, Fed Cup, Davis Cup, Marketing the Game including the Team Identification Project and the International Tennis Number, Development and the celebrations honouring over 25 years of ITF Junior Tennis. The final presentation of the afternoon was devoted to an overview of the ITF Technical Activities and an introduction of the ITF Global Tennis Survey that all National Associations are encouraged to participate in.

The AGM also saw the launch of the new ITF logo with its distinctive arc and ball design (shown on this page), and delegates were given a CD-Rom with guidelines for the use of the new logo. Information will also be provided on the ITF's intranet, ITFworldnet, as well as from the ITF Communications and Event Operations Departments. The ITF Portal, linking all of the ITF weblinks, is being launched in conjunction with the launch of the new logo. See page 3 for more details.



Juan Antonio Samaranch (Photo: Carles Domènec)

On Tuesday night, delegates were guests of the Spanish and Catalan Tennis Federations at the beautiful Palau de Pederalbes and were joined for the cocktail hour by former IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch. The Palau de Pederalbes was familiar to many ITF guests as it was the venue for the Final Dinner when Spain defeated Australia in 2000 to win its first Davis Cup title. During the evening, marked by a video featuring highlights of Spanish tennis history including Davis Cup, Fed Cup and the Olympic Games, the ITF President again thanked both Agustin Pujol and Josep Ferrer Peris for their generous hospitality and support.

The formal AGM on Wednesday was opened by His Excellency Juan Antonio Samaranch who told the delegates how pleased he personally was to see tennis so successful in the Olympic movement, congratulating Ricci Bitti on the negotiations with the ATP and WTA Tour that led to ranking points being awarded for both men and women at the 2004 Olympic Tennis Event in Athens. Samaranch

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## AGM continued...

also praised his successor, current IOC President Jacques Rogge, and cited the excellent relationship that exists between the ITF and the International Olympic Committee.

Ricci Bitti opened the proceedings, formally welcoming the delegates and thanking them for their participation. Following the formal acceptance of the minutes of last year's AGM in Rio de Janeiro, Ricci Bitti updated the assembly on the activities of the ITF in the President's Annual Review of the Year.

Important matters decided at this year's AGM included a resounding defeat of a Tennis Australia proposal to add an optional fifth player for doubles to Davis Cup squads and an acceptance by the assembly of the updated Fed Cup regulations for the 2005 competition necessitated by the format change that the competition will undergo next year.



*The AGM Gala Dinner (Photo: Carles Domènec)*

The AGM approved amendments to the ITF Constitution and support for the work of the Constitutional Committee in their efforts to update and modernise the ITF Constitution for presentation at the 2005 AGM.

The AGM also agreed the following decrease in shares (votes): Colombia from five Class B shares to three Class B shares (3 votes); Paraguay from three Class B shares to one Class B share (1 vote); Fiji from Class B membership to Class C. The AGM also agreed to hear the late application from Zambia to transfer from Class B to Class C membership and granted this request.

The AGM also ratified the application by Cambodia for re-admittance as a Class C member. This ratification will now be done by the ITF Board of Directors under a change to the ITF bye-laws. Four Class C members were suspended for non-payment of dues for two successive years: Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Swaziland.

Long-serving ITF Board Member Eiichi Kawatei was unanimously elected an Honorary Life Vice President of the ITF and the AGM approved ten Awards for Services to the Game for:

Baldev Aggarwal, Kenya; Sir Geoffrey Cass, Great Britain; Ashley Cooper, Australia; Joe Etienne, Haiti; Josep Ferrer Peris, Spain; Khalid Saaed Al Suntany, Iraq; Anna Skordumova, Russia; Koji Tanaka, Japan; Peter Wallenberg, Sweden; Phyllis "Woodie" Walker, USA.

The AGM was notified that the venue for next year's AGM is Prague, Czech Republic on 15-17 June 2005. Several nations put forward verbal bids to host the 2006/2007 ITF Annual General Meeting and were asked by the ITF President to submit a formal, written application stating their intentions.

The ITF President closed the meeting, thanking the ITF Board of Directors, the delegates and the ITF staff for their hard work and commitment.

Following the conclusion of the AGM, delegates were invited to a lunch hosted by France in honour of their 2003 championship Fed Cup team. FFT President Christian Bimes noted that, during his presidency, he had been fortunate to have two winning Davis Cup and Fed Cup teams. On behalf of the delegates, Fed Cup Committee chairman Georg von Waldenfels thanked the French President and wished his team good luck in this year's competition.

The final function of the AGM was the Gala Dinner hosted by Davis Cup champion nation Australia and the ITF at Parque Guell, designed by the famous Catalan architect Antonio Gaudi, and overlooking the city of Barcelona. Tennis Australia

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## AGM continued...

President Geoff Pollard welcomed the guests to the dinner, saying that he had always wanted to stage a Davis Cup championship dinner in Spain, had failed to do that in 2000 when Spain defeated Australia, but that this was his opportunity. He went on to speak of Australia's long tradition of Davis Cup success, and his country's commitment to the competition. On behalf of the delegates, Davis Cup Committee Chairman and ITF Executive Vice President Juan Margets thanked Tennis Australia and noted that their victory this year was somewhat bittersweet for the hosts of the AGM as Australia had defeated Spain in the final.

ITF President Francesco Ricci Bitti closed the evening with a final thanks to the Spanish and Catalan Tennis Associations who handed the traditional AGM trophy to Josef Nechutny of the Czech Tennis Association, hosts of the 2005 AGM.

## ITF launches new portal homepage and Olympic tennis website

The ITF today launched a new portal homepage for its website, [www.itftennis.com](http://www.itftennis.com), to coincide with the launch of a new logo for the Federation.

This is the latest step in the ITF's overhaul of its web presence, which began with the launch of [www.fedcup.com](http://www.fedcup.com) and taking [www.daviscup.com](http://www.daviscup.com) in-house at the start of 2003. As well as developing these two websites for the ITF's international team competitions, [www.itftennis.com](http://www.itftennis.com) is undergoing a major reorganisation as part of the ITF's commitment to increase the range and accessibility of tennis information available to all audiences over the Internet. The site was re-launched in August last year, comprising a number of micro-sites or 'weblets' - one for each key area of focus for the ITF.

The new portal has been designed as an entry point for all of these weblets, as well as a showcase for the wide range of information available from the ITF in all areas of tennis. Visitors can navigate to all of the ITF's weblets from this portal, as well as seeing selected news stories from the ITF's many activities.

Access to Baseline, the ITF's tennis database and the world's most comprehensive centralised repository for tennis results and statistics, has been improved. Visitors can now simply enter a player's name on the ITF homepage to see a list of records for that player, giving access to results, head-to-head records and biographical data. A calendar feature displays a selection of the ITF's current top events, while a list of all current ITF events is only a click away. Links to other tennis organisations complete the range of information available at [www.itftennis.com](http://www.itftennis.com).

At the same time, the ITF has launched a new weblet for the Tennis Event at the 2004 Olympic Games, which can be found at [www.itftennis.com/olympics](http://www.itftennis.com/olympics). All the latest news, entry criteria, medallists and the history of Tennis in the Olympics can be found on the weblet. Once entry lists and draws for the event are known, they will appear here too. During the event, on 15-22 August, daily reports, photos and results updates will appear, in addition to live scoring, courtesy of [www.athens2004.com](http://www.athens2004.com), the Official Site of the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens.

Information on the Tennis Event at the 2004 Paralympic Games, which takes place September 19-26, is already available from the ITF, on the ITF Paralympic Tennis website [www.itftennis.com/paralympics](http://www.itftennis.com/paralympics) although this will also be relaunched in the coming weeks. A weblet for the International Tennis Number (ITN), will also be live in the near future.

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