

BRAZILIAN OPEN
BRASILIA 25 - 30 November 2009

We, the players and coaches of the many countries that attended this tournament declare that this tournament was one of the worst organized tournaments in the past two years. How could this tournament have been given a Factor 40 without even first trying it out as a 20 Factor. From the outset it was apparent that even the most fundamental organization was completely lacking: HOTELS, TRANSPORT, MEALS, and at the tournament venue: WATER, ACCESSIBLE TOILETS, NUMBERS FOR THE PLAYERS, BALL BOYS, PIGEON BOXES. These fundamental criteria are essential to a Factor 40 tournament and even to a Factor 10 or 20 tournament and none of these had been given the necessary attention by the Brazilian Local Organizing Committee (LOC).

HOTELS

There were three hotels used; St Peter, St Paul and Academia: St Peter and St Paul were next to each other while Academia was much further away. Organizers said that one of hotels on the original list had cancelled all accommodation two weeks before. As we all arrived from the airport it was pandemonium at the two hotels: many people were not registered as staying at one hotel; teams were being split up; others were not even registered. The hotels did not know what was going on and neither did the organizers. In addition, a person from the LOC in charge of the payment of each team, in turn accused every team as they arrived that they had not paid and after long discussions with each and every one agreed that we had paid. What a welcome and what a lack of financial acumen.

Eventually accommodation was given - in some cases players waiting up to 3-4 hrs and going to both hotels in order to find accommodation; adapted rooms were available but definitely not in the numbers required. Those teams that had arrived early in fact were the lucky ones: the few adapted rooms had been allocated and the remainder of the rooms were totally unsuitable to class 1-3 players. Though vehement protests were made, and wonderful promises made saying they would

resolve the situation, nothing was done for those players who had rooms totally inaccessible for their needs. Even worse was the 90 euros supplement for those that had single rooms and also prices of 180 euros for an extra day when the price of a room in every hotel was in fact only 85 euros. How could the organizers justify charging this price for single supplements and for extra days.

TRANSPORT

Transport was a nightmare from the beginning to the end. There were **NO ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES** - this is unbelievable. All wheelchair players **WERE LIFTED INTO THE VEHICLES BY TWO VOLUNTEERS** as 1) there were no ramps 2) and no specially adapted vehicles. Some seats had been taken out from two buses only to be able to transport players. Inside the vehicles there was no security for the players in these old buses. **THIS IS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE FOR ANY TOURNAMENT - NO ATTEMPT WAS MADE TO RESOLVE THIS PROBLEM THROUGHOUT THE TOURNAMENT.**

On the first morning of the tournament when all players must be at the hall - **THERE WAS NO TRANSPORT AVAILABLE AFTER ONE BUS AT 7am!** More than half of the teams were told to arrange taxis for transport and the organizers would be refunded their money. Most did receive the money back but again this kind of treatment should not be allowed to happen again. On the first night when players had played from 8am - 20.45 at night, transport back to the hotel was again a huge nightmare. Buses were outside but the organizers of the transport did not seem to know how to organize it. By the second and third day the bus timetable had began to work and there were more buses available and some semblance of organization but it was very late.

MEALS

As in any tournament on the arrival day dinner is given but the LOC had arranged 150 meals for people at the venue **BUT HE HAD NO TRANSPORT TO TAKE PEOPLE THERE.** So he said that everyone should eat at their hotels that night - up to 30 Brazilian Real and then the organizers would pay them back. Again a lack of organization and a terrible welcome on the first night with people worrying that

their meal might come to over the limit of 30 Brazilian real and some teams unable to eat because they did not have any money.

Meals at the venue were by a catering firm and the first lunch was a nightmare with queues of up to 70 people at one time. There were insufficient tables and chairs for everyone and eating lunch was an event that took some people up to 2 hrs. For the evening meal that night many people just ate in and around hotels though they tried to resolve the problem by providing more tables and chairs and moving the serving table into the middle of the room in order to stop the queues. The food was very much the same menu and also did not cater at all for those with vegetarian needs.

TOURNAMENT VENUE

The tournament venue had 24 tables in the hall and 16 training tables. These were the only good feature of the tournament. However the actual venue was not clean at all - many of the seats were absolutely filthy and the surrounding areas were very dirty with rubbish and stagnant water.

On arrival at the venue on the first day of the Open there was still no numbers for the players, no water, no ball boys and no pigeon holes. For the first time ever all the players decided to stop play at 10.30 as there was still no water and no ball boys. At 10.45 some water arrived and a few ball boys, but in fact the 2nd umpire in many matches continued to act also as a ballboy. Again this is totally unacceptable for a 10 or 20 Factor but for a 40 Factor the event should have been cancelled there and then. By the second day they had organized a water supply room, pigeon holes and more ball boys and numbers and water tickets were dispensed. The venue had very few accessible toilets also.

To sum up this tournament was a complete disaster and should not be allowed ever to take place again- certainly not as a 40 Factor and we would hesitate to even give it a 20 factor. Many of the conditions were totally unacceptable for the players.

The problem in Brazil is that they seem to have no conception how to organise a tournament for disabled players. There was no pre-organization and only when everyone started to arrive did they begin to sort things out

Finally a future rule for the ITTF- Para TT should be that no tournament be given a 40 factor without a trial 20 Factor first in order to make sure it merits a factor at all.