

Dear ITTF-ParaTT Executive Board,

We were very interested to see at last the TD Report for the Slovakian Open published very late - 2 months after the tournament. We have a number of points that we would like to bring to your attention regarding the conditions at the Sports Hall and would greatly appreciate it if you would consider these not as just complaints but as valid suggestions for the improvement of the competition in 2010.

The TD report does not really highlight the problems that players faced in Slovakia nor mention the fact that though the price was 100 euros more than in 2008, the conditions were exactly the same as the year before when it was a 30 Factor.

Therefore our first question we would like to ask is: have you a Check List which stipulates specific criteria for venues that are to be considered worthy of a Factor 40 accreditation? If not we would suggest that this be done as soon as possible in order to ascertain that more problems do not arise in the future.

If you already have such a checklist we would ask that this be published in order for everyone to be aware of exactly what conditions merit a Factor 40 accreditation and ensure that these criteria be met.

Our observations are as follows:

Toilets: The toilets in the sports hall are not wheelchair accessible – only if the wheelchair is wheeled in backwards and possibly then maybe a class 4 or 5 can transfer to the toilet. There is no room to turn the wheelchair and there are not sufficient bars to hold on. The doors did not close properly either. These are the same toilets offered when it was 30 Factor.

The four mobile toilets outside were always hated by players because they were not cleaned regularly and also there are no lights there making it extremely difficult for catheter users when it begins to get dark. They were accepted for a 30 factor - unfortunately they cannot be accepted if the Slovakia Open has been accredited a 40 Factor – that is absolutely clear.

The easiest solution for this problem is, by 2010, to make at least FOUR toilets IN the sports hall fully accessible and if required we can send the organizers the necessary dimensions and pictures showing how an accessible toilet should be. A Factor 40 tournament cannot limit the number of players so it is extremely important to have at least 4 – if not more – accessible toilets and they must be cleaned at least every 2-3 hours especially if there are more than 150 players.

Entrance and Route to the Sports hall.

Again there has been no upgrade on the ground for wheelchair access to this hall for a number of years and if this is a Factor 40 tournament then this also must be a criteria for accreditation. We know of at least four wheelchair players who fell on the way to the entrance to the sports hall because of large holes and because the slope down from the road is not straight and is dangerous. People have complained about this before and again it would take very little to sort these problems. Otherwise there may be a more serious accident in the future because the entrance to the sports hall is very uneven also and there have been quite a few incidents with wheelchairs there too.

Transport to the Sports Hall.

Another point is the distance to the sports hall. There was a transfer bus put on for class 6 player Domingo when he insisted that he required it, but we believe this should also have been offered to class 1 and 2 players (in fact anyone who required it really) because the actual distance from the Maj hotel to the sports hall is around 850- metres because wheelchairs have to do a detour to get to the sports hall. It would not cost much to have a shuttle service in the morning and afternoon at specific times and also on request. Usually buses are hired by the day and again for a Factor 40 this should be a point of accreditation.

Hotel accommodation

The General information stated that *Maj Hotel is fully accessible for wheelchair users but we have a limited number of rooms available.* In factor 40 tournaments there is no limit of players so it follows there cannot be a limit of accessible rooms. Hotel Slnava has not accessible toilets at all and only the most able class 4 and 5 should be accommodated there, therefore there is definitely a greater need for more accessible accommodation for 2010. Bottled water should also be served at mealtimes in a Factor 40 tournament because there have been stomach problems in the past when tap water in jugs has been offered instead.

Overall Cleanliness standards at the sports hall

Another observation was the general cleanliness regarding the hall – the floor, the tables, around the water bottles, the entrance etc. could have been a lot better and again for a Factor 40 this should be taken into consideration.

Finally we would like to say that the overall organization of the tournament is good; transport from airports to hotels is very good. With the resolution of these problems listed, the Slovakian Open could become a very good tournament and we hope it will be in 2010.

Thank you very much

Players' Committee, IPTTC

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