



## **Annual General Meeting 2009**

Time Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> August 2009 at 6.20 pm.- 9.20 pm.

Place Tenuta Castello, Cerrione, Biella, Italy

Present WGA Board:  
Vincent Thurkettle – President  
Arturo Ramella – Vice-President  
Esko Orava – Treasurer  
Pirjo Muotkajärvi – Secretary

Chairmen of the Committees:  
Ken Karlsson – Competition Committee  
Paul Thurkettle – Communication Committee

Countries Represented (20):  
Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovak Republic, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, USA. (See enclosure 1)

### 1 § Opening, Welcome and Legality

President Vincent Thurkettle opened the meeting in welcoming all delegates. The meeting was declared legal and commenced. The following matters were added to the agenda in any other business:

- France – Veteran's category
- Sweden – New association in Sweden
- Czech Republic – World Championships 2010
- Poland – World Championships 2011

### 2 § Rules and Statutes

Vice-President Arturo Ramella informed the meeting that the Statutes of the World Gold Panning Association are now completed and may be found on the web site of the WGA.

Also the competition rules are now polished, shortened and simplified in easier to understand English, no changes were made. The new version is on the web site of WGA and the countries are recommended to translate it in their own language as soon as possible.

### 3 §

#### Financial Report

Treasurer Esko Orava introduced the financial report from 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2008 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2009 which showed the valuation of 5227,32 euros at the end of the accounting period. (See enclosure 2)

He explained how the membership fees and votes are calculated according to the rules. The number of competitors from each country are counted together from the last two World Championships. Every twenty competitors give one vote more in addition to the minimum 2 votes, the maximum is 5 votes. Every country pays 25 euros per vote as an annual membership fee. (See enclosure 3)

As the membership fee has stayed the same for more than twenty years Esko Orava proposed that it should be raised from 25 euros to 30 euros per vote, because the value of the money has changed significantly through inflation during the last few decades. Also he proposed that maximum fee for the individual categories in World Championships would be raised from 25 euros up to 30 euros. No objection was made and thus the proposals were accepted.

### 4 §

#### Communication Report

Chairman of the Communication Committee Paul Thurkettle introduced the communication report including the topical information about WGA web site and Golden Times. He encouraged people again to produce material for the Golden Times. (See enclosure 4)

Paul Thurkettle announced that he will be standing down as the Chairman of the Communication Committee and the 2010 Spring edition of Golden Times will be his last one. The Board will appoint a new chairman and editor. Those interested should contact to Paul Thurkettle for details of the roles.

Vincent Thurkettle thanked him for his long and well-done work.

## 5 § Competition Report

Chairman of the Competition Committee Ken Karlsson introduced the competition report including the following topical matters:

- Elimination system is discussed and different ways tested for a long time and in conclusion, as long as the organizers follow the rule 'A minimum of 1 in 2 competitors must qualify for the next round' and it's up to them to choose their way of elimination system.

Vincent Thurkettle highly recommended the use of the old system that Italy has used this year where in every heat the ten best go forward and the rest will be taken by times.

- It is recommended by the committee that 'Standard Competition Gold' (manufactured gold) will be used during the World Championships at least in the official categories in the future in order to avoid the 'wild gold' problem.
- Competition committee hopes that organizers will not expect the members doing the work which should be done by the organizers during the championships. Those interested in joining the committee should contact to Ken Karlsson as they are looking for new members.

(See enclosure 5)

Vincent Thurkettle stated that the Classic pan category has been discussed for five years. Now the Board has bought the Estwing 14" so called Klondike pans for the organizers use and proposed that the pan will be used in the future World Championships in Classic pan category and the category will be changed as an official one.

Some representatives expressed their opinions that the batea pan should be used in the Classic pan category instead of the Klondike pan. Especially Czech Rep. would like definitely to use batea in 2010 when they host the World event. After many ideas, proposals and long discussion the board proposed that next year in Czech Republic they would arrange two equal, unofficial Classic pan categories, one with batea and one with Klondike pan. After this experience, the matter can be discussed further.

## 6 §

## President's Report

President Vincent Thurkettle said the previous reports of communication and competition covered all the board activity and he has nothing further to add.

## 7 §

## WGA Music

Gerry Tobias from Australia has composed a closing anthem for the WGA. The Anthem was played at the meeting and is also available on the WGA web site. Vincent Thurkettle informed the meeting that it will be played during the Italian closing ceremony.

## 8 §

## National Teams

Almost every year there are several countries who were not able to participate in the National Team event, even if they have 5 competitors, because of the rule 'A National Team consists of 3 male/2 female or 3 female/2 male'.

Ken Karlsson introduced the statistics showing that there is no big difference between male and female competitors.

The Board proposed that in the future the members for the National Team can be selected by nation without any limit of sexes. Vincent Thurkettle asked the meeting if the voting could be done by showing hands. As no objection was made, a show of hands demonstrated that 20 votes supported and 11 votes were against the proposal. The proposal was accepted.

A show of hands demonstrated also that 19 votes supported and 16 were against the proposal that this new rule will be taken in use immediately already in Italy. It was accepted that the rule came into operation at once.

## 9 §

## Bidding to host future World Championships

The South African delegation introduced their application to host the World Goldpanning Championships in 2012 in Pilgrim's Rest, Mpumalanga, South Africa.

The South African delegation and representatives were asked to leave the room during the voting. A show of hands confirmed one hundred percent support of the meeting for the bid and South Africa will host World Goldpanning Championships in 2012.

No other official bids were made.

#### 10 §

##### Any other business

- 1) The representative of France Anne Serre expressed their opinion that the age limit in the Veteran Category should be raised to 65 years, or perhaps even higher. Nowadays there are many competitors over 70 and even over 80 and they have to compete with 60 years old competitors.
- 2) Ken Karlsson of Sweden announced that three gold panning association in Sweden has joined to the new parent organization 'Swedish Goldpanning Association' lead by Thomas Linnarsson and having one thousand members.
- 3) Major of Zlate Hory and Veronika Stedra introduced the venue of the World Goldpanning Championships in Czech Republic 2010 and welcomed all to the event. Further information will be given to the competitors during the weekend.
- 4) Representatives of Poland welcomed everyone to the World Goldpanning Championship in 2011 to Zlotoryja, Poland.

#### 11 §

##### Board Election – President and Treasurer

Esko Orava has served as a Treasurer full term of six years which is maximum for one person. Marlise Luedi from Switzerland stood as a candidate. No other proposal was made. She was asked to leave the room during the voting. A show of hands confirmed Marlise Luedi as the new Treasurer.

Vincent Thurkettle has served as a President also full term of six years which is a maximum for one person. Vice-President Arturo Ramella from Italy stood as a candidate. No other proposal was made. He was asked to leave the room during the voting. A show of hands confirmed Arturo Ramella as the new President.

As Arturo Ramella was elected as a President the position of Vice-President became free. Vincent Thurkettle asked the meeting if it will be ready to elect a new Vice-President immediately. The meeting agreed to fill the position at once and after discussions Ken Karlsson of Sweden was proposed for the position by several nations. No other proposal was made. He was asked to leave the room during the voting. A show of hands confirmed Ken Karlsson as the new Vice-President. Belgium voted against and France abstained from voting on this issue.

## 12 § Closure

Vincent Thurkettle closed the meeting at 9.20 pm. thanking participants for good and active meeting.

Arturo Ramella thanked Vincent Thurkettle for his good work during the past six years as a President. The meeting agreed with applause.

Vincent Thurkettle  
President

Pirjo Muotkajärvi  
Secretary