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SOFTBALL “THRILLED” TO BE ON IOC’S 2020 OLYMPIC SHORTLIST

ISF President Says “We’ve Never Given Up On Restoring Dreams”

PLANT CITY, FLORIDA (USA) -- Having returned to the world headquarters from last week’s International Olympic Committee Session in South Africa, International Softball Federation President Don Porter today expressed great joy on the sport being back in the running for a spot on the Olympic Games programme.

“Without question we are thrilled to have softball on the IOC’s shortlist for the candidate sports for 2020,” the ISF president said. “That being said, the real victory, of course, would be a decision in our favor come 2013 when the vote is taken on which sport the IOC will add for the Summer Olympics.”

Mr. Porter added that, “We’ve never given up on restoring dreams. Just as the athletes give it their all on the field, we must ensure that we make every effort to return softball to the Games so that a new era of players can get the chance to compete on the biggest stage like others did in 1996, 2000, 2004, and 2008.”

The ISF president stated that, “Softball brings so much to the Olympic Movement. We know that the IOC wants a sport whose best athletes will compete at the Games. It should go without saying that a sport clear of doping problems is a must. And a sport that is global, relevant, and not financially burdensome to the host organizing committee round out the attributes that have been stated as being of prime importance. We are confident that softball delivers on all of those criteria.”

Mr. Porter noted that an ISF Olympic Legacy Committee had already been formed this year in anticipation of the shortlist announcement, with ISF Secretary General Ms. Low Beng Choo as the chairperson. He said that convincing the IOC that softball should be the one sport that they add in 2013 for the 2020 Games will be a global effort that will require and involve support from not only the worldwide softball community and the ISF’s current 127 member national federations, but others from within the Olympic Family, National Olympic Committees, sports ministries, media, government, and the corporate sector, “who we need to win over.”

Already there are over 23,000 followers at www.facebook.com/BackSoftball, which is set to become the digital headquarters for the Olympic reinstatement campaign.

About the International Softball Federation

The ISF is the world governing body of the sport as recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and SportAccord (formerly the General Association of International Sports Federations). Softball (women's fast pitch) made its Olympic debut at the 1996 Games in Atlanta. There are 127 affiliated countries in the ISF and millions of participants in the sport worldwide. The sport is contested in more than a dozen multi-sport Games. Learn additional details about the Federation at www.ISFsoftball.org.

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