



A.S.B.L. **BELGIAN AMERICAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE** V.Z.W.

Siège social: **Avenue de Bouchoutlaan 9**
1020 Bruxelles-Brussel

Numéro d'identification/registratienummer: 11077/96
Numéro d'entreprise/ondernemingsnummer: RPM 457954123
Compte bancaire/bankrekeningnummer: ING 310-1988400-83

NATIONAL REPORT AND DEVELOPMENT GOALS 2018-2019

EDUCATION

a) Youth tackle development program

The National Youth Committee has pursued the work started with the YTDP. The goal is to open the clinics to as many youth players as possible and to provide them with an improved coaching framework. 5 camps will be organized in 2018 starting as from March. The program is open to players aged 13 to 21, Belgian and foreigners, holding a valid licence with a Belgian team. The program is a non-competitive program focusing on the development of the athlete.

Youth players will also be granted with a follow-up by an orthopaedic specialised crew in order to improve their physical/training abilities and correct their muscle/tendons training programs. This will help improve the safety and resistance of youth players, avoid a substantial number of injuries on the longer term and better their preparation and physical condition for the national team. This will in turn also help the league to reduce the costs of players' insurance policies.

b) Coaches education program

The National Coaching Committee is in the final phase of the development of the coaching program. The national program is coupled to the FFFA program which is under process of recognition by the European authorities.

A total of 8 national controllers will be validated by the FFFA in order to sanction Belgian coaches' education programs. This process will guarantee a balanced education program for every coach in Belgium and enable to widen and improve the education of coaches in Belgium. The FFFA program was built on very strong basis that already proved to be successful. It guarantees us to be able to further develop the program with level two and then level three of education.

The management of the practical side of the program, outside the online courses and examinations, should be conducted in cooperation with the Growth of the Game in order to complete the basic mandatory education program with additional clinics focused on the needs of the coaches, these needs being determined after careful analysis by the NCC and GotG of the situation of coaching in Belgium.



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c) Officiating education program

The National Officiating Committee had a meeting with the BAFOC in the course of the month January in order to draw-up a picture of club team officials' level of knowledge and adequacy of the clinics with the needs of the team officials. The NOC will keep on collecting information about the needs of the club team officials to help the BAFOC improve their programs for club team officials. At the same time, an online course will be proposed to the candidates (and in general to any official willing review the basis) in order to help them improve their knowledge of the rules.

This program is linked to the appointment of officiating officers inside the teams to further improve the communication between the BAFL, the BAFOC and the team in order to help them comply with the regulations and determine their development needs.

d) Managers

The BAFL will set up a course for team managers in order to help them with the legal organization of the teams and compliance to the new law on non-profit associations that is under process of validation by the Belgian State. These courses will be given online using the Webinar platform of the BAFL. Depending on the introduction of the new law, these courses should start after the end of the senior championship. We are currently dealing with a lawyer and other non-profit association specials to guarantee a high level course for everyone.

COMPETITIONS

a) Senior national competition

The Elite Division is in its second year and proved to be correctly balanced. Two new teams will join the competition this year. According to the plan that was set up and discussed with the teams in 2016, the project will be re-evaluated at the end of this season and possibly adapted. The full set of rules and regulations applicable to the competition should also become fully applicable at the end of this year. A special meeting in this respect will be organized with the teams participating in the competition after the Belgian Bowl to evaluate and amend the regulations where necessary.



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b) Junior national competition

The Junior National Competition will be articulated around two divisions in order to avoid too important differences in the level of play. The winners of the second divisions will be invited to participate in the playoffs.

Alongside the regular competition, a Big 6 lookalike competition including three Dutch teams will also be organized. This program will be open to teams playing 11 men football.

c) Belgian Bowl

The Belgian Bowl is scheduled on Saturday June 30. After the success of the bowl organized by the Limburg shotguns in Beringen, we received two candidatures, one being a second organization in Beringen and one in Brussels. Both organizations fit the usual requirements for organization of the Belgian Bowl as set down by the BAFL regulations.

The decision regarding the allocation of the Belgian Bowl to one of these organizers will be made shortly after the General Assembly once the board has collected and compared all information in this respect.

NATIONAL TEAMS

a) Senior national team

The Senior National team has gained a strong reputation in the American football community over the past two years and is regarded as one of the finest programs in Europe. Thanks to the dedication of all coaches, volunteers and players, our country has recorded fine results both on a sports level as in terms of organisation. The large audience gathered at the games played in Belgium against Spain and Russia is a proof of the progress and popularity of the program.

The 2 years mandates of the Head coach, Mr Lee Rosky and General Manager are coming to an end and they both informed the board of the BAFL of their wish to stop their activities with the national team. The board of directors of the BAFL, through NCC commissioner Roald Piqueur is currently leading talks with candidate Head coaches to take back the lead in this program.

The BAFL intends to fully commit to the continuation of this program and will improve its participation in the development of the structure. This means improving the communication between the board and the national staff, assisting the program as to the financing of the operations



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(namely through the Advertisement and Finance Committee) and keep on providing with the legal and practical support in the framework of the international contacts with governmental organizations, foreign federation and IFAF services.

b) Junior National team

The development of the Junior National team was entrusted to the National Youth Committee. This project will be linked to the Senior National team in order to guarantee a smooth transition from one level to the other. The work of the NYC in 2018 will be focused on the organization of the structure, gathering of the coaches and staff as well as collection of information and selection of the players.

The Junior National team has to be understood as a program dedicated to the preparation of a group with a view to the participation in the upcoming European competitions and is clearly separated from the YTDP program. Although the coaches involved in the YTDP may also be active at the level of the Junior National Team and players may be scouted during the YTDP camps, the YTDP and the national team do not share the same goals. The YTDP remains a complete different organization focused on the development of the players.

COMMUNICATION

An improvement of the communication of the BAFL towards the team is essential. At the same time, a better flow of information from the teams and organizations towards the BAFL is absolutely required. The time spent on communication has to be increased but it is unfortunately difficult for the members of the board, aside from the work that is performed in other areas, to spend the time effectively required for an efficient communication. In order to improve this, we would like to reinforce the Communication Committee with additional profiles coming from both the FAFL and LFFA teams. This committee would be in charge with the management of the Facebook page, Website, press and general communication to the teams. This Committee would also be in charge with the collection of information with the teams in order to relay the information to the components of the BAFL and to the Public.

The BAFL website has been underused during the past couple of years. We intend to re-adapt as an improved communication tool. The database has already been partly completed with useful documents and the main regulations applicable to our league. The Facebook page is not updated regularly enough and can only be improved with the help of additional communication officers. We face the same issue the large companies are faced with. It is a fact that the management of social media has to be consistent and requires the participation of active communication officers. Currently, this job is performed on a voluntary basis but the system should be reconsidered since we



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cannot manage social media with the same efficiency as remunerated communication officers can do it.

The improvement of the whole communication system depends on the availability of volunteers and can only be improved with the help of additional members in the communication committee. We will therefore call the teams for candidates to participate in this and to guarantee that the communication of BAFL is improved and effectively coordinated with regional leagues' work.

REGULATIONS

a) Rules and regulations

The new set of rules and regulations has been partially finalised and has to be completed with a couple of points that were brought to the attention of the board during the defunct championship. We intend to link the new rules and regulations to those of the regional league in order to efficiently balance the regulations and guarantee a comprehensive model. This set of R&R is to include the main criteria required in the framework of the recognition of our sport by both the Bloso/Adeps structures and the international organisations (COIB/WADA/IFAF). It is essential to guarantee that the systems are applied evenly between the regional leagues in order to avoid small discrepancies that would lead to an uneven development of the level of sports in the regions.

A new Committee will be set up at national level including representatives of at least four teams (2 national division and 2 regional divisions) to work with the three BAFL/FAFL/LFFA representatives on the testing phase of this project. We intend to finalize this work by the end of the month August and to determine its entry in force at least 4 months prior to the start of the next national championship.

b) Disciplinary procedures

The number of disciplinary procedures has been growing in the past year leading to the conclusion that these have to be further analysed and developed. The workload in this respect is huge and requires a lot of time that cannot be covered by the BAFL board alone. It is proposed to follow the Rugby League system and to create a pool of commissioners appointed by the member associations. The work of the disciplinary committees would be led or supervised by one member of the BAFL board depending on the nature of the cases and links existing with the parties.

Disciplinary procedures are part of the R&R and have to be organized with both the FAFL and LFFA to enable two levels of jurisdiction for all plaintiffs. These procedures will therefore be analysed and further developed by the National Regulatory Committee and their 7 members.



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c) Transfer procedures

Transfer procedures are still to be refined and balanced between the national and regional levels. Transfer as they are organized under to old set of R&R do not efficiently answer the current situation at both domestic and international levels and have to be adapted to include common practices applied in our championships. This work is already under process between the BAFL and the regional leagues.

d) Code of ethics

The need for a Code of Ethics and a clear regulation of the transfers has become obvious during the past couple of year and was emphasized with the development of the multiple levels of competition. This code will be submitted to the analysis of the NRC and approval of the teams. Furthermore, the amount of transfer from one team to another team should be subject to certain conditions. Such conditions are already applicable in other championships in order to avoid the growth of wealthier teams at the expense of other teams.

e) Friendly games

According to IFAF and BAFL regulations, the BAFL should be informed of all national or international friendly games prior to the finalization of the agreements. This can have severe consequences as to the authorisation of friendly games by foreign federations and as to what concerns the insurance policies of the teams and players.

In order to avoid any issue in this respect, to improve the communication towards the public and ensure a correct application of IFAF regulations, a form will be drawn-up and made available online for registration of friendly games.

FINANCES

The BAFL is mainly funded with membership fees paid by the members at the beginning of the year. The total membership fees amount to 8000 € per year. Participation fees amounting to 50€ are also charged in the framework of the national junior competition. Exceptional income also came in 2017 from the litigation procedures following claims introduced before the litigation committee and amounted to 750€.

The main charges to be covered by the BAFL are the membership fees to be paid to the BOIC/COIB, IFAF and IFAF Europe, amounting to a total of 1525 €. The BAFL also covers the costs for officiating of the Belgian Bowl, Junior Bowl and Cadet Bowl, all these games being organised on a neutral field.



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This participation amounted to 945€ in 2017 and is expected to remain the same in 2018. The costs of cups offered in the framework of the competitions amounted to 630€ in 2017. The costs linked to IT services and online webinar and meeting tool amounted to 917.20€ in 2017. A participation of 414€ was also allocated to the YTD program in the framework of the game with the Dutch Lions. Other costs amounting to 745€ were incurred for meeting rooms and services in the framework of the General Assembly, events and litigation committees held in 2017.

An amount of 3900€ corresponding to late payment of 2017 membership and competition entry fees still has to be recovered and will be allocated to the continued plans for the period 2018-2019.

The board of the BAFL intends to increase the financial potential of our sport by organising at national level a Finance Committee including the regional leagues and volunteers from the associated members. This Committee will help the Federation to find additional ways of funding that could be allocated to specific plans or redistributed but cannot be put on the budget. Other sources of funding will also be investigated through crowdfunding initiatives. At the same time, the board will work with the leagues to investigate ways to pool the financial and human resources with the FAFL and LFFA and have them allocated to the programs elaborated with the leagues and members of the BAFL.

ORGANIZATION

a) Update and renewal of the National committees

The National Committees have been operated during the past year as groups focusing on a specific area of the game. Those National Committees are usually composed of three commissioners among the members of the FAFL and LFFA with one member of the board of directors of the BAFL. This enables the committee to gather information from each side, adapt the systems and prepare the regulations in accordance with both regional leagues.

It is important to make sure that the programs and regulations are developed evenly to avoid issues and blocking situations due to discrepancies in the programs. We remain confident that the participation of an extended number of teams in these committees can greatly improve the work of all three national and regional organizations.

b) Creation of a National Regulatory Committee

The development of our sport has made the legal structure of the BAFL more and more complex and requires a complete update of our rules and regulations. Although a large part of the job has already



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been performed (see regulations) we would like to invite additional commissioners to join a Committee that will be working on regulatory subjects.

This wider participation should enable us to improve the adequacy of the regulations with the effective situation of the teams and allow for a faster finalization of the work.

This committee will be composed of three BAFL directors among which the two regional leagues representatives and two to four additional commissioners chosen on a parity basis among the first and second division of each league. The most important part of the job will be performed via email and videoconference.

c) Creation of a National Advertisement and Finance Committee

A lot of efforts is being put in the research of sponsors and various sources of financing, often with poor results. In order to improve this aspect of the work we intend to organize a National Advertisement and Finance Committee that would be in charge with the collection of information and networking with potential investors and sponsors. We believe that gathering and sharing the information in this respect will benefit both the national initiatives and the teams by allowing to relay the information to the teams where necessary or to redirect the contacts to specific prospects. This Committee will also be in charge with the management of crowdfunding plans that will be started to fund the national programs and plans.

With this, we want to increase the potential of the leagues and teams in the research of sponsors and sources of financing by gathering the workforce for the benefit of all members.

d) Creation of a National Safety Committee

Safety issues have become a major concern for a large part of our members during the past couple of years. The more we develop the sport for younger players, the more we need to ensure the best framework for the practice of football in our country. We propose to set up an additional committee focusing on the analysis of the situation and development of an array of measures covering the safety issues on the fields and during trainings.

Considering the nature of the work to be performed in this area, we will also require external counsels from qualified doctors and health/youth development specialists.

e) Reorganization of the membership categories

The BAFL currently only has full member associations. Players and coaches are not directly members of the BAFL since the creation of the regional leagues. This results in a lack of representativeness towards the public. We are investigating ways to proceed with a revision of the system and to incorporate the players, coaches and volunteers as associated members. This process could be completed at the time of provision or renewal of the licences by the regional leagues. This will be done in cooperation with the regional leagues taking into account their specific requirements with respect to BLOSO and ADEPS regulations.



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The goal is to drastically increase the number of members of the Association in order to enable a better visibility and attractiveness towards government organisations and private investors, to enable the BAFL to finalize a national insurance policy covering both the club-team activities and national team activities. The transfer to a nationwide insurance policy will also make it possible to reduce the costs linked to insurance policies by spreading the risk on a larger number.

f) General Assemblies and basic services

As from this year, the General Assembly will be held twice a year instead of a single assembly each year. This will enable a better flow of the information and improve the participation of the member associations in the development of the programs.

The basic service initiated in 2016 will be re-scheduled on a monthly basis in the framework of the meetings of the board of directors. The board of directors holds its meeting using the online platform and used to hold at least one meeting a month. A basic service accessible online or at the front office of the BAFL in Brussels will be re-initiated in order to answer the questions of the members of the BAFL and collect their information/requests. The dates, time of these basic services/meetings will be made available online via the BAFL website and Facebook page.

INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

The international situation has become dramatically unstable and it is currently impossible to predict the issue of the conflict between the IFAF Paris including our closest partners France, Germany and The Netherlands and the IFAF New-York. We are touch with both the IFAF Paris and IFAF New-York but although we cooperate with have up to now been cooperating with the IFAF Paris we have to keep the possibility of our teams to participate in international competitions. Within the limits of our possibilities, we will try to keep our country represented in front of these organisations and to actively participate in their General Assemblies.