

ISRF SECRETARY'S REPORT 2019

A) I want to thank the ISRF committee, the treasurer the chairman and the club secretaries for all their help in 2019.

This was my Fifth year as secretary and as much information was given to the ISRF members as possible through the year.

We are lucky that many of the ISRF members enjoyed the racing from the UK and Ireland in 2019.

I want to congratulate all the prize winners in 2019.

In particular I want to thank the conveyors & the liberator of the pigeons for the excellent job they did for you and ISRF this year.

The conveyers are an excellent bunch of lads and have done their best in 2019 to give you and your birds the best service as possible.

The transport Managers have done a great job also and have done their best to keep the clubs in check and have their birds loaded on to the transporters in an orderly fashion each week.

The I S R F official web site <http://www.isrf.ie> is still up and running.

B) The ISRF had a very good year this year with an increase in members ship of 31 members compared with 2018 and a balance of 50,000 approx.,(this is a rise of 13,000 on 2018 (Increase in fees of 15 euro and 30 extra members) The ISRF gave out 35000 in prize money

C) LOOKING FORWARD TO 2020

1) Baldonnel to be Dublin's second civilian airport

Mon, Aug 2, 1999,

DENIS COGHLAN IRISH TIMES

Dublin is to get a second civil airport to provide increased air traffic capacity and to raise money for the Defence Forces.

The Minister for Defence, Mr Smith, will propose that a large proportion of the State lands at Baldonnel military aerodrome should be sold to fund the modernisation of the Defence Forces.

*The Government will decide next month whether the airport should cater for light aircraft or for large-scale commercial traffic. **The Air Corps would retain a military presence at the airport south west of Dublin, close to the M50 motorway.** Mr Tony Ryan, Ryanair's founder, has urged the transformation of Baldonnel into a commercial airport and already private developers have submitted a number of projects to the Government. When Mr Smith brings his proposals to Cabinet, they will probably be considered within the context of proposals by the Minister for Public Enterprise, Ms O'Rourke, for the shake-up and **part-privatisation of Aer Rianta.** The Progressive Democrats have advocated the sale of Shannon Airport to the private sector, as a first stage in the privatisation of Aer Rianta, but the Tanaiste, Ms Harney has said she does not favour a public monopoly, such as Aer Rianta, being simply transformed into a private monopoly. Because of this approach - and the need to ensure competition in the sector - the Government may look again at its earlier decision not to favour a large-scale commercial airport at Baldonnel. Yesterday Mr Smith said his **preferred option would be an independent commercial enterprise** - run separately from the Air Corps - at Baldonnel. As in many other European countries, the Air Corps would have its own section at the airport and share some facilities, such as runways, with commercial users.*

*Any deal with developers in the private sector **could be on a direct sale or a lease-back basis.** The scale of the development - and the financial return to the Department of Defence - would depend on the type of commercial enterprise involved.*

***It could be a private enterprise development for small aircraft, or a large-scale venture such as suggested by Ryanair.** These would be matters for the Cabinet to decide, he said.*

*The Department of Defence has already raised £30 million from the sale of Army barracks, and it plans to raise **another £100 million through the sale of land at Baldonnel, firing ranges and other properties.** The Minister said this cash injection would allow the Defence Forces to implement their modernisation plans within five years, rather than within the initial projection of two decades.*

As you can see from this article from the times Baldonnel is a serious problem for the ISRF inland race program and its members who train along the Nass road corridor. Other organisations have been told in the past that they can't have their birds flying over Dublin airport and have to stay outside the 50 k zone set out by the airport authority (they are still racing from inland positions). As far as I know the IHU have a meeting this month to discuss these issues with Baldonnel. Let's hope things go well.

2) The ISRF cannot become complacent if the members want the same level of service and prize money from the ISRF in the coming 5 years.

We have been losing 30 members (6000 euro yearly financial loss) every year in the past except for 2018. In the next 5 years I recon if this trend continues we could easily lose 150 members (30,000 euro yearly loss). With these membership losses in the ISRF the financial model the ISRF was built on is broken and a different approach has to be looked for.

The members have to treat the ISRF as a transport organisation which has to operate in the financial constraints and cannot operate at a financial loss.

Pigeon Diseases are having a serious effect on the number of birds being transporter and the losses among the racing pigeons - so much so that the federation will have a serious look at the YB race program if these diseases keep coming around every year. Some members won't send their birds to a YB race in case their birds might get sick.

The main sources of income is the membership fees and weekly birdage. The ISRF must look for new sources of income and also have a serious look at reducing the expenditure. At the same time there must be a balance between encouraging fanciers to keep racing pigeons and also race them without being overcharged at the same time. The ISRF must have sufficient funds to pay the bills.

It should be pointed out that the ISRF is competition with other organisations for fanciers to join the federation and to transport their birds.

When the ISRF is using 3 trucks at the start of the OB & YB season there can be between 80 to 140 empty crates on the third truck

We need to fill these crates to help the finances of the fed.

The members decided at a previous AGM to transport birds of other organizations during the racing session provided the ISRF had the room on the transporters to do so.

In this regard I wish to make the following suggestions to the membership.

A) I believe now the ISRF members should also allow individuals (regardless of where they come from) who want to send their birds on the ISRF transporters. They should only be allowed to do so (provided there is room) and also they must pay for their crates. I support this proposal that is on the agenda.

(Remember we are competing with other organisations for these birds also).

B) When the 3 transporters are in use at the start of the OB and YB season, that there be no bird quota in any club provided the clubs do not exceed the WEEKLY CLUB QUOTA of crates given to them by the ISRF secretary. (This proposal will give fanciers the option of using their own crates especially during the YB session at the same time not exceed the max crate of 666 crates on the transporters and will increase the income for the ISRF. (The total quota to the 30 clubs is less than 666 crates so there won't be any overflow of crates)

C) The members who top the ISRF weekly races and open races should be asked to donate a YB off their fed winner to be auctioned at the end of the season on social media sites etc. This will give the membership an opportunity to purchase the top blood lines in the ISRF.

D) The federation should look at the reducing the number of diplomas required by putting 10 to 20 results on one card.

This will help to reduce the expenditure.

E) There should be an increase of 50 cent on the weekly crates (2 cent per bird of an increase). The crates have not been increased in a long time and this proposal won't break the bank but will bring in 4000 euro approx. in a year.

These 4 proposals together will bring in 8000 to 10000 euro approx. if everything works out as planned and will cover the future losses due to loss in membership for the next 5 years.

F) Summary

It's been a pleasure for me to do what I can for the ISRF in the past 5 years and I hope the ISRF will survive the next turbulent years.

We might get more members from other organisations but the ISRF must operate on certainty.

I wish the ISRF and its members the best in the coming years.

M Roche ISRF Secretary