



Situation of Petanque in Lithuania

Linus Budrikas has founded “National boules sports federation” in 2010 with three other individuals.

Since then only he has managed the federation. Lithuanian petanque community was not informed what is going on with the federation internally, from financial or any other standpoint. There was always a lack of transparency in running the federation. In the span of 8 years federation was occupied with only one activity - to organize tournaments. Expansion of petanque community, training, development of infrastructure and every other necessary duties of federation was completely forgotten or ignored.

In the beginning of 2018, three petanque clubs in Lithuania were members of “National boules sports federation”. Clubs were unsatisfied with the situation and together requested accountability and transparency from the federation, because they were the ones that were paying membership fee and were getting nothing in return for years. No financial accountability, no financial support for representing national teams abroad.

Clubs got federation bylaws from public authorities, because they were never publicly shared by the federation itself. Clubs saw, that organization hierarchy, management bodies and all the procedures written in bylaws were completely ignored from the beginning of federation in question. Federation was run on imaginary model that Linus Budrikas has implemented by taking advantage of the trust of petanque community of Lithuania.

On 2018 April 16th all the clubs that were the members of that federation sent a letter to the federation asking for accountability and transparency guaranteed by the bylaws.

On 2018 April 20th Linus Budrikas responded by e-mail: “I, Linus Budrikas, nor until the date in question, nor at any time later will convene a meeting of members and will not put these questions on the agenda, because of my personal busyness and inability. Because I am perfectly aware of my inability and incompetence I step down from the position of director of National boules sports federation, I resign from the position of president and completely pull out of the activities of the National boules sports federation...”. Signed letters of resignation were included.

Since the bylaws were ignored for the entire lifespan of the Federation, there were no other viable managing bodies (presidium was just in bylaws but non-existent in reality). So after Linus Budrikas resignation there were no legitimate way to take over the management of federation. The members of the clubs and some other active parties of Lithuanian petanque community had a meeting later in the spring with Linus Budrikas about succession of federations management.

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During this meeting Linas Budrikas disclosed that federation is in debt to his own company a substantial sum of money. The debt was created singlehandedly, without any consultation with the clubs. When everybody asked for explanation he assured that the financial documents that explains the situation will be disclosed. They were never disclosed. Nobody took over the management of the federation because of lack of transparency and possibly unlawful transactions that were made in the name of federation.

At this moment only the potential bad press for the sport of petanque discourages us to take the matter of potentially unlawful transactions and other suspicious practices of old federation to the law enforcement.

Because of the described situation last year in Lithuanian petanque community a vacuum of governance has formed. There were no championships organized or anything else done for the sake of the sport.

In the end of last year petanque clubs of Lithuania has taken everything into their own hands and have founded a new petanque governing body “Lietuvos petankės asociacija” or “Lithuanian petanque association”. This new governing body is a direct expression of democratic will of Lithuanian petanque community (it was founded after petanque players of Lithuania voted that it is the right action to take). The founders of new federation are not individuals but legal entities (petanque clubs).

After all the events listed above, we “Lithuanian petanque association” made contact with CEP and FIPJP with application for our recognition as the only legal entity that has the power to represent Lithuania on international level, because currently recognized “National boules sports federation” have clearly failed and is a shameful example that should not be tolerated. We sent some documents and promised to cooperate if further documents, explanations or testimonies would be needed.

After a long period of waiting FIPJP president Mr. Azema have ruled that old federation is still viable and is good to represent Lithuania as a member of FIPJP and CEP. The decision was made because previously resigned Linas Budrikas lobbied Mr. Azema that this compromised federation that he created is still active and fully functioning. Since he was the only person to communicate with FIPJP and CEP for almost 10 years, they had no reason not to believe him.

So, at this moment we have this situation that in one organization (Lithuanian National Boules Sports Federation) there is this one person that holds membership in FIPJP and CEP. And in another organization (Lithuanian petanque association) there are rest of Lithuania’s petanque community. 4 petanque clubs that holds absolute majority of active petanque players of Lithuania.

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Last petanque tournament this (Lithuanian National Boules Sports Federation) organized last Saturday had around 5 Lithuanian petanque players, majority was from neighbouring countries. Everybody purposefully boycotted it. Nobody wants to have anything to do with this old federation because:

- There are all kind of actions required by bylaws that were ignored for 10 years.
- There are no legitimate governing bodies.
- Previous members never received any reports about federation activities, especially financial accountability.
- It have not provided government institutions with yearly mandatory financial reports for more than 3 years (impossible to say for how long exactly).
- It have lost trust of Lithuanian petanque clubs.
- It have lost trust of absolute majority of Lithuanian petanque players.
- Number of questionable business transactions were made by it.
- There was no growth of petanque during last 10 years.
- Linas Budrikas resigned from all posts and announced that his decision if final and not changeable, but after some time he proclaimed that he is still the president and director.
- Activities of this organization disregards the will and wishes of petanque community.
- None of the questions raised above were answered by Linas Budrikas.

Lithuania already missed this year's EuroCup because clubs are boycotting the old federation, we also could not register for CEP's first coaching programme because it is only for member federations

We live in the part of the world where democracy is relatively young so this kind of things is not unheard off. But our petanque community wants transparency and we think that publicity is the best antidote for shady business.

What can you do? If you have read up until this point, you have already exceeded our expectations.

Want to help us more? Raise this question during this year's CEP congress.

Follow our fight for Democracy.

Respectfully
Mindaugas Matulionis, president
Lithuanian petanque association