

Gothenburg 2023-06-29

Dear esteemed members of the FIPJP board and others whom the following concerns,

It is with great regret that the Swedish Petanque Federation are hereby forced to inform you that we will not be sending teams to the World Championships in Benin. There are two main reasons for our decision.

The first has to do with the timing of the different Championships this year – and the fact that the World Championships in Benin and the Men's European Championship in France are scheduled so close to one another in time. Our concerns regarding this timing are certainly not new. Rather to the contrary, we first raised this issue in early August of last year and sent yet another letter of concern in late October, none of which rendered a response from FIPJP. Our proposition to reschedule the championships, thereby allowing also smaller Federations (in Europe) to put their best team forward for both of these events, have thus neither been answered nor heard. Three days of rest and preparation between the Championships in Benin and France is simply not sufficient – especially given that, as you are well-aware, the European Championship in France also serves as qualification for the World Championship in France next year.

A second, and interrelated reason, has to do with the conditions under which the players will compete in Benin. As you are also well-aware, the poor timing of the different Championships this year can be traced back to the fact that the Men's World Championship of 2022 was postponed until this year to allow for the completion of the promised, grandiose bouldrome in Cotonou. But, since this bouldrome has still not been completed, the entire reason for the postponement no longer exists. This means that the Championships in Benin will not only be played in violation of Article 2 in the World Championship rules (which states that the Men's World Championships, as well as the World Championships in singles and doubles, should be held in even years) but also in violation of Article 6 (which states that the organising committee must provide covered lanes). In our view, a decision to move or cancel the World Championships in Benin should have been taken as soon as FIPJP was made aware that the bouldrome would not be completed.

We would like to emphasise that our decision not to participate this time is not related to the fact that the Championships are hosted in Africa in general or in Benin in particular. Rather, we regard the rotation between different continents as both a welcome and obvious part of our common petanque world. We hope that we will soon have another opportunity to play a World Championship on the African continent.

We also hope that the Championships in Benin will be a success – for the hosts as well as for the countries that participate.

Until we see you in Bangkok in November, we wish you all the best!

Sincerely,

Lasse Franck on behalf of
the Swedish Petanque Federation