



WELCOME to the first edition of our new monthly newsletter, filling you in on all the latest news, activities and initiatives from the International Table Tennis Federation. With so much happening in our sport, looking beyond our busy events schedule, with constant progress being made off the table too, we wanted to give a clear round-up of the major comings and goings to all our stakeholders.

2020 is an especially important year, with the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games putting our sport truly in the public eye, but we are also constantly working to raise the profile of table tennis with our daily actions to achieve sustainable growth. The good news is that things are moving forward at an impressive speed, as we endeavour to take the sport of table tennis to completely new heights.

The future is bright, but let's keep working hard to achieve our goals!

THOMAS WEIKERT ITTF President
STEVE DANTON ITTF CEO

SHOW OF SOLIDARITY AGAINST CORONAVIRUS



"Be Strong, Wuhan!" the message on LED boards at the recently held 2020 ITTF World Tour Platinum German Open.

Due to the outbreak of the Coronavirus in China the ITTF and the Qatar Table Tennis Association are helping our friends at the Chinese Table Tennis Association to arrange for the Chinese national team to train in Doha, Qatar. This is where they will focus their preparations for the 2020 ITTF World Team Championships in Busan, Korea Republic, following the ITTF World Tour Platinum Qatar Open. Both events will be held in March.

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Currently in China there is a real need of face masks and medical suits that will help the country to stop the spread of infection. On behalf of the Chinese Table Tennis Association (CTTA), the ITTF is asking for anyone within the table tennis community who knows how to find suppliers and manufacturers of these much-needed items to help deliver them to the people of China, by [contacting the ITTF](#).

GLOBAL HOME OF TABLE TENNIS

Spanning 18 countries across four different continents, an exciting list of 28 cities declared their interest in the chance to become the ITTF's next Headquarters, which will enable the centralisation of the overall workforce and drive the continued growth of the sport.

The ITTF is looking for a thriving new hotspot for table tennis players, business professionals, coaches and officials from across the globe to unite in a single location and collectively take table tennis to the next level among the world's leading sports.

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BUILDING THE GLOBAL HOME OF TABLE TENNIS IN YOUR CITY



NEW ERA OF TECHNOLOGY IN TABLE TENNIS



The implementation of ball tracking technology in table tennis marks an exciting new era for the sport.

Table Tennis Review (TTR) technology will be implemented at major ITTF events and the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

This follows the successful introduction of TTR at the 2019 ITTF World Tour Grand Finals, in which players left positive feedback about the opportunity to use technology to review the original decisions of umpires.

Therefore, the ITTF Executive Committee has agreed to implement TTR at major ITTF events in 2020 and the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, while constantly working to deliver the best possible product, such as reducing the time spent between the player's call to review and the final decision.

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HIGH PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

For ITTF High Performance & Development, 2019 ended as 2020 is meant to continue: with innovation and expansion. All three integral units, Continental Development, High Performance and Education have been working tirelessly on implementing new projects and initiatives in line with the ITTF Strategic Plan.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT HIGH ON THE AGENDA

In Continental Development, the new Women's Development initiative "My Gender. My Strength." gained traction throughout Latin America and Asia, where it was introduced as a pilot project in 2019, with ten National Associations implementing projects to increase female participation under the programme's umbrella.

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FROM REGIONAL TALENT IDENTIFICATION...

Regional Hopes and Cadets Weeks & Challenges, which provide an opportunity for athletes of the U12 and U15 age groups to train and compete, are an integral part of a progressive and sustainable path for player development. In December 2019 and January 2020, Asia held three such regional events: the Southern Asia edition took place in Nepal from 13-18 December 2019, the Central Asian one from 22-27 December 2019 in Uzbekistan, while the Western stage concluded on 30 January 2020 in Saudi Arabia (KSA). The overall participation exceeded all expectations – 131 young players and more than 30 coaches.

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...TO GLOBAL TALENT DEVELOPMENT

The High Performance unit has also created further opportunities within the player development pathway, one of which is the Hopes Squad, which follows on from the ITTF World Hopes Week & Challenge and feeds into the Hopes Team within the next year. The training camp, held in Ningbo (China) in December, organized in cooperation with ITTF Youth Development Strategic Partner QG Sports, saw eight girls and eight boys selected at the 2019 ITTF World Hopes Week & Challenge train towards a place in the 2020 ITTF Hopes Team.

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INTERNATIONAL UMPIRE EXAM GOES ONLINE

In ITTF Education, the end of 2019 brought a focus on developing a global, open to all, online examination. For the first time, prospective International Umpires will be able to complete the exam in 10 different languages (English, Arabic, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Spanish, French, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese and Russian). The 2020 exam period will run from early March to the end of April 2020, while the National Association registration closes on 22 February.

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"My Gender. My Strength." programme in Ecuador.



Hopes Squad Training Camp in Ningbo, China.



New format IU exam to go live in March 2020.

ITTF FOUNDATION

REINFORCING COMMITMENT TO REFUGEES

In December 2019, the first ever Global Refugee Forum was held in Geneva, Switzerland. The initiative, run by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) in collaboration with the Olympic Refugee Foundation (ORF) and International Olympic Committee (IOC) is designed to make the world a better place for refugees through sport.

Over 80 organisations, including National Olympic Committees, international sports federations, national associations, clubs, and civil society organisations, responded to the call.

The ITTF Foundation, together with the ITTF, signed the following three pledges:

1. To promote and ensure access for all refugees, without distinction of any kind, to safe and inclusive sporting facilities.
2. To increase availability and access to organised sports and sport-based initiatives for refugee and hosting communities, actively considering age, gender, ability and other diversity needs.
3. To promote and facilitate equal access to and participation of refugees in sports events and competitions at all levels.



World Taekwondo, Peace and Sport and ITTF Foundation together at the Global Refugee Forum in Geneva, Switzerland.

ITTF WORLD VETERANS TOUR EXPANDS IN 2020

After a successful 2019 Tour in which over 700 players competed in five events around the world, the ITTF World Veterans Tour will debut in Lagos (Portugal) in April and feature a minimum of six events in 2020, ending in Vancouver (Canada) in December. Also included on the 2020 Tour at this time are Karlskrona, Sweden (September), Singapore (October), Istanbul (November) and Aalborg, Denmark (November).

The ITTF World Veterans Tour provides players aged 40 years and older with the opportunity to compete in a globally connected, professionally organised and managed series of events. Bidding for the 2021 Tour will open in May 2020. • [READ MORE](#)



ITTF Foundation present at the 2019 ITTF Star Awards in Zhengzhou, China.

FIRST DONATION CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED AT ITTF STAR AWARDS

The ITTF Foundation launched its first ever donation campaign in line with the 2019 ITTF Star Awards in Zhengzhou, China, supported on site by ITTF CEO Steve Dainton, ITTF President Thomas Weikert, Chinese Table Tennis Association (CTTA) Liu Guoliang, as well as all international winners of the 2019 ITTF Star Awards.

Following a night of glitz and glamour at the ITTF Star Awards, the kind support of the CTТА enabled the ITTF Foundation to support joint projects in China in line with the vision "Solidarity through Table Tennis."

Right now, the ITTF Foundation is seeking funds for several new Dream Building projects in Africa and Asia, such as Slum Ping Pong in Uganda which aims to break the cycle of poverty by providing children living in slums with financial support to attend school and gain an education.

Your generous donation will contribute to ITTF Foundation project partners which support some of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups worldwide.

[MAKE A DONATION](#)

GROWING SPONSORSHIP DEALS

HANA BANK Announced title sponsor of the 2020 World Team Table Tennis Championships, Hana Bank is one of the business networks under the parent company of the Hana Financial Group, headquartered in Seoul and established in 1967. The Hana Bank 2020 World Team Table Tennis Championships is the most significant international table tennis event of the entire year, in which the world's best players will be representing their national men's and women's teams in a bid to win the sport's most coveted titles.

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QG SPORTS AND CHANGXING GROUP Official sponsors of the 2020 ITTF World Tour German Open, QG Sports is an emerging sports company, dedicated to new business development in the field of table tennis training and events; Changxing Group is a leading high-end menswear brand, serving as the professional consultant for the Chinese national table tennis team, regarding their image and apparel.

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QG Sports and Changxing Group on show at the 2020 ITTF World Tour German Open, held between 28 January and 2 February in Magdeburg.

LD SPORTS The Chinese sports content, marketing and entertainment platform was announced Major Partner of the 2020 ITTF World Tour Qatar, Korea and Australian Opens. Founded in 2015, LD Sports seeks to inspire and empower users of the platform to realise their dreams. As such, LD Sports has become a primary educator to support children looking to kick off their sports careers.

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UNIVERSAL One of the largest insurance groups in the Caribbean region, Universal was announced title sponsor of the 2020 ITTF Pan America Cup for a second consecutive year, following the resounding success of the 2019 partnership, helping to take the event to a new level commercially.

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LIEBHERR

Announced title sponsor of the 2020 ITTF Men's World Cup in Düsseldorf, Germany, the globally operating technology company thus extended its longstanding partnership with the ITTF. Liebherr was title sponsor for many top-tier ITTF events in the past.

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The Liebherr brand was exposed to over 70 million worldwide viewers as title sponsor of the 2018 ITTF Men's World Cup in Disneyland Paris.

LOOKING AHEAD TO HOUSTON

The 2021 ITTF World Table Tennis Championships will be the first edition under the new, expanded format, and Houston is getting ready to put on a show for what will also be the first time that the World Championships Finals have been held in the United States.

With the new event structure being introduced, the ITTF has worked hard to set up the qualification pathway to the World Championships Finals, with 11 regional stages and five continental events taking place over the next year and determining who will eventually line up in Houston in June 2021.

Once the curtain falls on the 2020 ITTF World Team Table Tennis Championships in Busan, Korea Republic, full attention will turn to Houston with the start of the implementation phase, including specific venue and hospitality requirements to ensure that the event runs to plan. •