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NEWS RELEASE

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PAHF Congress and Forum - February 25, 2005 - Havana, Cuba

The Pan American Hockey Federation held its Congress and annual Board and Committee meetings in Havana, Cuba February 23 - 26, 2005 within the framework of the Men's Pan American Junior Championships. An open Forum was sponsored on the topic of "*Hockey Events - Raising the Bar*".

The following are the key highlights from the Meetings.

1. Election of the Board

The following were elected to the PAHF Board of Directors by acclamation:

- President: Tony Von Ondarza (Venezuela)
- Honorary Treasurer: Chris Waters (USA)
- Members: Bev Johnson (USA), René Granat (Venezuela), Eduardo Guelfand (Argentina) and Aaron Sher (USA)

In order to fill a vacancy remaining on the Board, the new Board appointed Monica Cumberbatch of Barbados as a Member until the next Congress.

2. New National Association Member

The Congress welcomed Panama as the 22nd member of the Pan American Hockey Federation. A gift of 50 new hockey sticks and an offer of assistance was given from the PAHF to the new association.

3. Competition Sites and Dates

The 3rd Indoor Pan American Cups for Men and Women respectively were awarded to Kitchener-Waterloo in Ontario Canada to be held December 8-11, 2005.

Plans for the upcoming Women's Junior Pan American Cup to be held March 16-27, 2005 in Puerto Rico were reviewed.

It was noted that the Americas will be the site of the FIH Women's Champions Challenge In Virginia Beach, July 8-18, 2005 and the FIH Women's Junior World Cup in Santiago, Chile September 14-25, 2005.

4. FIH World Hockey Umpiring Boost

Several umpiring courses, including one held in Havana for Umpire Coaches, are being set up in recognition of the 2005 World Hockey Umpiring Boost. The Board also approved a Continental Exchange Program proposed to take place between the PAHF and the Asian Hockey Federation. This program will benefit promising young umpires in the two continents. The continents will exchange one male and one female international umpire from their respective Continental Promising Umpire Lists.

5. Club Development Workshops

A report was heard on the first-ever in the Americas Workshop on Club Development held in the Dominican Republic in December 2004. This Program developed by the FIH recognizes the importance of Clubs to hockey development and sets out the key elements in establishing and maintaining clubs. Further workshops will be held in the Americas in 2005.

6. PAHF Technical Seminar

It was agreed that the 3rd PAHF Technical Seminar scheduled for 2006 should be cancelled. It was agreed that this seminar was too expensive for its value and that its objectives could be achieved through other newer programs.

7. Framework for Coaching Courses

The framework for a three level PAHF system of coaching courses was agreed upon. The purpose of these courses will be to teach coaches the basics so that they are in a position to attend and benefit from FIH coaching courses and then contribute back in their own countries.

8. PAHF Awards

The PAHF agreed on three awards which would be put in place to recognize outstanding contributions to the development of hockey in the Americas. The award of Honorary Life Member has already been in place and was presented to Dr Peter Porritt in 1999. The first-ever PAHF Order of Merit was presented to Allan Woods at the Congress in recognition of over 27 years on hockey contributions. Also presented were two President's Awards given to Cesar Blanco of Argentina and Jose Gonzalez Cortina of Cuba for their contributions to hockey in their own countries.

9. Committee Chairs

The following were appointed as Chairs of the PAHF Committees

- Events and Competitions: Alberto Budeisky
- Development and Coaching: Bev Johnson
- Medical: Fook Wong
- Umpiring: Richard Kentwell
- Media and Communications: Aaron Sher

For more information, please visit the Pan American Hockey Federation web site at www.panamhockey.org

The Pan American Hockey Federation (PAHF) is recognized by the FIH as the governing continental federation for all field hockey in the Pan American region. There are 22 member Nations of the PAHF. For more information please contact info@panamhockey.org