

Minutes of European president meeting 2018

Friday the 20th of July 2018

Amsterdam, Ookmeer Sportcentre, the Netherlands

Agenda:

1. Minutes from Saeby, Denmark during the Danish Convention 2017
2. European Convention 2018 in Amsterdam - Maarten
3. European Convention 2020 in Sweden (July 3-5, 2020) - Tommy
4. European/International newsletter
5. What's going on in each country
6. Square Dance in the future / plans for the future ?
7. Next meeting in Germany during iPAC in Barmstedt (July 26-28, 2019) ?
8. Miscellaneous

Introduction of the persons present:

- Tommy Hansson & Elvy (President SAASDC)
- Wolfgang "Wuffi" Daiss & Claudia (President EAASDC)
- Lotte Vangsgaard (President DAASDC)
- Susan Ellis (President BAASDC)
- Tomáš "Doug" Machalík (President CSCTA)
- Barbara Reinhartz (Secretary NVSD & EAASDC Representative for NL)
- Aaltje Welle Donker (Treasurer of the NVSD)
- Maarten Weijers & Willy (President NVSD)

Maarten and Willy, president NVSD, organizing team EC

Susan, president BAASDC; does interviews of British callers and cuers. EAASDC was member of the BAASDC, since 1982. Later on that changed, as Wuffi points out. The UK lost 1200 dancers lost in the last 5 years.

Lotte, president DAASDC; there are mostly C-dancers in Denmark. In all 1200-1400 dancers. And many clubs work outside of DAASDC because it is very easy to start a small club in a local community centre.

Tomáš (Doug), president since 2009 of the Czech callers association. 400 dancers in the Czech Republic. Many only dance within their club. At the moment the numbers are stable. Some start again now the children are grown up. About 20 dancers here at the EC.

Tommy, president of SAASDC, incl. Finland, since 6 years. 3700 dancers in Sweden. In the 90ies they had over 7000. It is slowly rising again. Elvy is the wife of Tommy.

Wolfgang (Wuffi): president of EAASDC. Claudia is the partner of Wuffi.

Barbara: secretary of NVSD and representative of the Netherlands to the board of the EAASDC. She will take minutes.

Aaltje: treasurer of the NVSD.

The NVSD has two staffmembers: the webmaster and the dance coordinator, who makes a list of the weekend-activities.

Minutes:

1. Minutes from Saebj, Denmark during the Danish Convention 2017

Approved without changes.

2. European Convention 2018 in Amsterdam - Maarten

Maarten explains some of the backgrounds of the EC 2018.

The NVSD is not allowed to organize anything. Therefore the 3 Dutch EAASDC member clubs organize this EC on behalf of the EAASDC. Ron van Dijk said: GO FOR IT! In 2015 this started the activities.

2016 we presented our plans at the British EC convention. We calculated on 800-1200 dancers. In the beginning the preregistration was very slow. Beginning of 2018 we had 1000 preregistrations. And from then on the numbers were climbing fast. End of April we had 1600. End of June we had 1875. Now we have about 200 people on the door extra.

This does not include the organization, callers, cuers, shops etc, then we are "2000". We have 24 countries.

Because of the large numbers we added another 7th hall for A2 with extra callers.

John Webb advised us not to register the dance level of the dancers because they will follow the callers. We hope that the halls will be sufficient. A2 hall had 11 squares; the plus hall is completely full. The A1 was OK.

The program is clear. The opening will be a flag parade. There is a speaker from the US-Embassy. All of the Presidents will be presented. Wuffi will do some words; then there will be the handing over of the flag to Sweden, who will do a short presentation.

We have learned a lot. Maarten will debrief with Tommy. We had advice from John Webb as well. Sweden may also take over the national flags, Maarten offers.

Many of the organizing committee have never organized an event larger than 250 dancers... So it was a bit stressful, how this would all work out. Others had attended many big dances incl. other EC's. They could give advice how to handle large numbers of dancers.

3. European Convention 2020 in Sweden (July 3-5, 2020) - Tommy

It will be held just outside Stockholm, Sigtuna. There a famous school there, it is a nice old town. Early in July, 3-5 July 2020. The hosting club is extremely good. They hosted the Swedish Convention 6 years ago.

The website will be open after the speech tomorrow. The flyers will be presented as well. Market it as Stockholm in the international communications as it is close to Stockholm, which is familiar to many dancers.

Sweden: please send the URL so that the other associations can post links at their homepages.

In Sweden they have organized big events before, so it is not the first time for them.

4. European/International newsletter

For the 2017 newsletter, Ron van Dijk had material from many countries also outside Europe. That came through Wuffi's connections.

Shall we ask Ron again to make the newsletter at the end of 2018? Yes!

Nice idea to connect the dancers also from outside Europe. It is not a must to do that, but it is nice.

The BAASDC is pushing the dancers to go abroad. It is nice to do.

5. What's going on in each country

6. Square Dance in the future / plans for the future ?

United Kingdom

In the introduction round we also started this issue. Clubs that have a graduation, they get 250 pounds.

The BAASDC is losing callers very fast. And they are losing dancers. It is really dire. They try to get a few more people in to keep the clubs going.

The magazine editor is 80+, and the question is whether he will get someone else to do it...

Denmark

There will be a new website soon. The magazines will stop at a request of the dancers; facebook will take over with paid advertising. Some of the clubs are getting young people in. They are doing well.

Learning goes in crash courses. They prefer weekend courses, also on higher levels. 4 weekends for C2 for example...

On our EC: it is difficult to find callers for the C2-program.

There are dancers up to C3b... It is the same in Stockholm...

Czech Republic

From a caller's perspective: 25 years ago we had a lot of university students. That is no longer the case. The average age is 50 and rising. The new people are older/retired. You have to take that into account when teaching. In Prague is only one club that does a class. The average is between plus and A1. It is difficult to get new people; it would be nice if the people who stopped, came back, with their friends...

We hope that in 5 years we are at the same level as now.

Sweden

The magazine is losing advertisements and is therefore getting more expensive. They use Facebook more.

In the big cities it is going well: they get good callers. Small villages in the country miss a caller; they have to invite callers from elsewhere which is expensive.

An idea is to educate a dancer to get music and use a computer instead of a caller ...

There are two people here who educate callers. Another educates these dancers/dance leaders.

The Swedish SD-organization will become part of the big sport organization. Tax for callers will be reduced and they may receive money from the government.

They try the boards to really lead the clubs, not only do paperwork.

Clubs are encouraged to do outside demo's. They have cards which they can hand out.

There are the Buffalo's, like the Lions in Germany; up to 35 years of age. They are the younger people.

Maarten adds: The Lions have a limit of 30 years for active members, and the older people become senior members. The senior members have a badge with a different color. They pay something to support the club. Some members are also members of other clubs.

Tommy: In Sweden, the Buffalo members have to be member somewhere else. They just come together and have fun. The dress code only applies for Saturday nights; otherwise they are very casually dressed.

Germany

The club numbers are the same, about 540 clubs.

Wuffi was contacted by Japan. There they have the goal for gaining new members 100.000 in a few years. In 2020 it should be 50.000...

In Japan; each dancer pays directly to the association with payed personnel.

6 Clubs in Russia miss callers as well. Austria is stable, France too. Switzerland is dropping in numbers. There are 2 new member clubs from the NL.

Plans: we want to gain people.

They have all day schools in Germany, and in the afternoon, they have to entertain the children. Square-dancing is an option.

An idea is to have a get together once a year with old members, and some dances after a few beers. Then try to get them back in, with their children, if possible.

Classed are usually for nine months, with a fee of 125 euro's. In three months, we try to get them to basic I. After that basic II and MS. We will try this at the end of this year.

The youth team organizes crash weekends; the Lions do it and the youth team of the EAASDC do that as well.

Overall it is a bit like in Denmark. We have to do something... We have to work to achieve something. It does not happen without hard work.

In Denmark they had grandparent/grandchildren weekend. That club got 90 people for this. They all liked it. It worked very well.

The Netherlands

We have 133 dancers in the Netherlands. Maarten was the youngest 35 years ago and is still one of the youngest at his club... If we do nothing, the numbers will decline as it did the last years.

Grand Square gained some money yesterday. They want to get dancers to start calling by starting to play with music, start some singing etc.

If we have a 10 evening course we may reach Basic I. We try to do that outside existing clubs, for they are tired to fight against the decline. We might try it on a different level with some friends. Otherwise there is no future to square dance in the Netherlands.

We tried to get the national media to the EC but there are so many events that they may go to...

There was no reaction to your applications.

Concluding: About half the countries are stable; the other half is declining fast qua dancers and qua callers.

The board is trying to get new ideas to work.

7. Next meeting in Germany during iPAC in Barmstedt (July 26-28, 2019) ?

Björn is on the board of the Percolators. Let's ask him to organize the meeting.

8. Miscellaneous

Tommy is asking after the privacy regulation. He was concerned when pictures appeared on the internet.

Wuffi has been active on this issue before. The new regulation is mostly on documentation. When photos are concerned, this is something else. Whenever you go to a big event, the personal rights get smaller. We must tell people if pictures are taken by the press.

If something is on FB or snapchat: a group picture is not problem; a personal photo is a problem. You must agree to have it taken.

There are no pictures posted by the EC-fb-site. The pictures are posted by individuals.

Do not confuse the privacy regulation with the right to not have your photo taken, Barbara says. The privacy regulation applies in the same way in the whole EU, while the legislation on a person's right

to have their picture taken, is subject to national law. Therefore, it is possible that different EU countries have different rules on this.

On the Danish association dance there was a drone taking photos. The dancers were warned beforehand. At a German dance in May the dancers were warned beforehand as well. This is wise to do when pictures are taken by journalists for example.

Maarten has one issue:

We may have to review the EC guidelines again in 2019. For example, to look at the levels (what about Basics)? Then in 2022 they may use the new guideline. Wuffi says that the discussion may be held in the forum, after Maarten and Tommy have mailed about it to start.

Susan must get access to the forum. Wuffi will arrange it for her.

Should we have a new thread on finding the candidate for 2022? The forum is very handy to use it.

The meeting is closed at 22.28.