



## New university degree focuses on table tennis

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The Faculty of Kinesiology at the University of Split in Croatia, in co-operation with International Table Tennis Federation and European Table Tennis Union recently announced the launching of a University Degree Study Programme in Sports Coaching especially designed for table tennis players and coaches.

Aim of the project is to provide the possibility of acquiring a university education level in the field of sports science and coaching (with additional emphasis on table tennis) to a wider table tennis community by using all benefits of modern technologies (such as “online” learning methods) and academic resources that exist within the community.

### **Start Date**

Pending final approval, the programme is scheduled to start in October 2016 at the Faculty of Kinesiology University of Split with the enrolment of students for the 2016–17 academic year.

“Being the host University for this truly global educational project is both an honour and responsibility for us. Using all benefits of global academic network and modern technologies is an important part of our development strategy and hopefully we will be doing more projects of this kind. With this particular project we are hoping to meet educational needs of international players and coaches that otherwise might be difficult to do in a more traditional educational setting” said Simun Andelinovic, Rector of the University of Split.

### **Organised in Croatian**

The project started successfully at the University of Split two years ago in the Croatian language for a group of South Eastern European countries, in which the same or similar languages are spoken. The project was immediately recognised and supported by the ITTF and twelve students were successfully enrolled.

Notably, the majority were former or active national team level players; one being Tamara Boros, a former World no.2 who on this occasion said:

“Based on my experience, this study programme is a great solution for active players and coaches, as it enables

them to study while pursuing their sports careers around the world. I am currently working and living in two different countries and thanks to this programme I am being able to actively study regardless of the fact that due to my professional duties I am frequently on the road. The fact I can choose time for studying that suits me best and arrange time for taking exams with my professors is very important for me. Studying in a traditional classic educational setting would be almost impossible with my current schedule. Of course, this model of study requires self-discipline and work ethics to force yourself to find time to study on a constant basis, without being physically present in classes, but as a former professional athlete I don't find that to be an extraordinary task. In education like in sport and life itself, you have to put certain effort to see good things happen."

### **Second Phase**

The launching of the programme in English language is the project's second phase, in which the project will really become global. Besides the University of Split, many other academic institutions worldwide are included in the project by providing lecturers and organisational support to some practical parts of the programme.

Within ITTF structures, which have been supporting this project from its beginning, one has been well aware of the importance of including athletes and coaches in educational Programmes during the course of their professional careers and immediately thereafter.

"ITTF is following the IOC's recommendations and paying great attention to its "Athlete Career and Education Programme", in order to enable athletes to develop professionally following the conclusion of their sports careers, as well as further educating currently active coaches. This also forms part of ITTF DNA [Developing National Associations] as education of coaches is critical to the long term success of any National Association." said ITTF president Thomas Weikert.

### **European Table Tennis Union**

One of the main reasons why the ETTU also fully supports this project is that it gives a possibility to coaches to extend their professional knowledge and gain well-rounded skills and proficiency in the field of sports science and coaching

"ETTU's Executive Board believes that the coaching in Europe can and should get more of our attention and support. Coaching is in the core of the development of our sport. In order to raise the quality of our coaching we have been organising a number of coach education activities/seminars throughout Europe lately and this project nicely supports our well-rounded efforts to achieve that goal. It is surely a big step ahead for education of coaches in our sport. The fact that so many international experts coming from different scientific and professional fields and connected with table tennis will be involved, should definitely help this cause" said Ronald Kramer, the President of the ETTU.

### **Accessibility**

One of the main aims of the study is also to make quality studying accessible to a wider/global table tennis community.

"With this project we have tried to build a model that would enable both players and coaches to actively study regardless of their professional duties in clubs, national teams or their current geographical location. I believe this is an optimal way to ensure they have access to high quality education in a place and at a cost that makes sense for them" said Goran Munivrana, the member of the ITTF Sports Science and Medical Committee and the project's manager.

### **Download Further Information**

The Faculty of Kinesiology at the University of Split: [The Prospectus for the Course](#)

The Faculty of Kinesiology at the University of Split: [Undergraduate/Bachelor's Degree Programme in Sports Coaching](#)

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