



## Tournoi NHL de Fribourg FRIBOURG (Suisse)

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### *Press Release*

## **NO INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT OF THE PICCOLOS OF FRIBOURG IN 2021**

Fribourg, September 14, 2020 - It is with great regret that the organizing committee of the International Piccolo Tournament of Fribourg announces that due to the current situation, it is forced to cancel the tournament that was to take place from April 1 to 4, 2021.

### **Many thoughts behind the decision**

The organization thought long and hard before making the decision to cancel the 2021 tournament. Several scenarios were possible, several factors were taken into account. With COVID-19 still present and a second wave threatening to occur in fall, management was forced to make this decision. It should be noted that it was impossible for us to postpone the date of this decision since the organization of such an event requires a long process spanning several months.

The main reason for the cancellation of the 2021 tournament is first and foremost to ensure everyone's safety. We do not know the future of this pandemic and cannot take any risks. It is important to remember that there are 500 players from all over the world, not counting the spectators and collaborators who would gravitate to the BCF Arena and the village hall for 4 days. The 2021 edition was planned with 24 teams and accompanying persons. To date, it is impossible to know how many people should accompany these teams. But it is certain that the number of people on site exceeds one thousand.

### **Several pending issues**

In order to hold the event, the tournament had to have clear answers to many of his questions by September 10. After much discussion, we found that it was impossible to get precise answers, which led us to cancel the tournament scheduled for April 2021.

Here are our main questions:

- Will the limitation of the gatherings to 1000 people still be effective next April? Could it be revised upwards? A good part of our revenues come from sponsoring and sales at the village hall. The current limit on the number of people would pose an insurmountable problem.

- Will the borders be open in April for all registered teams? For the 25th edition we had planned to welcome teams from all five continents.
- Will quarantine be mandatory in April for visitors entering Switzerland?
- Will the mask still be mandatory in April 2021? And the distance of 1.5 meters?
- Will the organizers have to ensure the "Contact Tracing" of the people present on site?
- Will we be able to accommodate 500 players and staff members while respecting the sanitary measures of the authorities?
- Are our loyal sponsors still able to support the event after a year of COVID-19 and its negative impact on the economy?
- Will we be able to use the sports facilities on the scheduled date? The calendar of the National Ice Hockey championship may be disrupted or even postponed for the 2020/2021 season.

### **A national tournament?**

If we had decided to organize the tournament in the same international format or in a national format only, respecting all sanitary measures, the holding of the event would still have entailed a financial commitment on the part of the organization of several tens of thousands of francs before the tournament. For example, the purchase of the NHL jerseys costs the organization about 60'000 francs.

In addition, the organizing committee wanted to hold a special tournament for this anniversary edition with an increased number of teams to 24, coming from all five continents. The tournament was planned over four days, three for a "normal" 12-team tournament. Special off-ice activities should also have taken place throughout the State of Fribourg.

### **Considerable impacts**

The cancellation of the tournament will of course have several impacts. Hundreds of young players and parents who have been waiting for this moment for a long time and for whom their participation in the tournament was a dream are now losing all hope.

The current committee will remain in place for the most part and will take advantage of this special year to reorganize itself and put everything in place to ensure an efficient continuation for the 2022 tournament.

For the organizing committee  
The President  
Giovanni Ferreri