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ISSF TO LAUNCH NEW JUNIOR CUP CHAMPIONSHIP IN 2014

The International Shooting Sport Federation announces the inauguration of ISSF Junior Cups, a new Championship series featuring competitions for junior athletes in Olympic and Youth Olympic Games events.

The ISSF Executive Committee recently approved the establishment of a new ISSF Junior Cup Championship series. The official announcement of the new series and the selection of the first ISSF national federation to host a Junior Cup came today from ISSF President Olegario Vázquez Raña and Secretary General Franz Schreiber.

"ISSF Junior Cups are a vital part of a major new ISSF initiative to more actively promote junior shooting on a worldwide basis," President Vázquez Raña said. "Encouraging more youth in more countries to participate in our sport by giving them more opportunities to compete in high standard international competitions is a key to our future."

Secretary General Schreiber reported, "the ISSF ultimately expects to sanction and supervise Junior Cups on each continent every year. Junior Cup programs will include the 15 Olympic events plus the Youth Olympic Games Mixed Team events. Programs may also include team events, other ISSF-recognized events or ISSF-recognized Sport for All events such as Target Sprint or Five-Shot Air Pistol. Junior Cup competitions will be MQS competitions if conducted in the qualification timeline of the Youth Olympic Games or Olympic Games. They are open to all junior competitors who are age 20 or younger during the competition year."

"We are pleased to announce that the first ISSF Junior Cup will be organized in Suhl, Germany on 26 May to 1 June 2014," the Secretary General continued. "Suhl's annual Junior International Shooting Competition (IWK) is already a well-established junior competition that has been held for many years; in 2013 this competition hosted 550 junior athletes from 40 nations. The Suhl Shooting Center is a great venue with many spectators and media support and it will be newly equipped with electronic targets in 2014. The ISSF looks forward to cooperating with the German Shooting Federation to launch the new ISSF Junior Cup series there."

The ISSF plans to expand the Junior Cup series by selecting additional organizers for 2015. ISSF Member Federations interested in hosting Junior Cups in 2015 or future years are encouraged to apply to ISSF Headquarters. The ISSF is seeking organizers with venues that have at least 60 10m, 60 50m and 40 25m rifle-pistol firing points, with electronic targets. Junior Cup shotgun bids should have at least three ranges. "The ISSF wants Junior Cups to fulfill standards similar to those established for World Cups to guarantee the best possible competitions for junior athletes," President Vazquez added.

The ISSF will appoint a Technical Delegate for each Junior Cup. Vice President Gary Anderson will be the Technical Delegate for first Junior Cup in Suhl. He commented, "Junior cups are indeed very important for the future of our sport. These additional international junior competition opportunities will inspire even more youths to become active in shooting."

ISSF regulations for Junior Cups require selected organizers to propose international juries. Limited doping controls are required. Organizers may charge a reduced entry fee of a maximum of EUR 70. National Federations that want more information about ISSF Junior Cups should contact the ISSF Event Manager at ISSF Headquarters.

Other ISSF Junior development initiatives, in addition to Junior Cups and full ISSF support for the Youth Olympic Games, include adding Finals for 2014 World Championship junior events and encouraging ISSF National Federations to enter juniors in their two out-of-competition entry places in 2014 World Cups. For the first time since junior events were added to the ISSF World Championship program in 1994, junior events in the Olympic disciplines in Granada will include Finals.

"We hope these new youth development initiatives and especially the first 2014 ISSF Junior Cup in Suhl will have the full support of our member federations. We are confident that a stronger ISSF junior program will bring all of us a stronger ISSF," ISSF President Vázquez Raña concluded.

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