

COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

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**REPORT OF MISSION: 6th EDITION OF THE AFRICAN WRESTLING
TOURNAMENT OF THE COMMUNITY (AWTC)**

Within the framework of the organisation of the 6th Edition of the African Wrestling Tournament of the Community (AWTC), Mr. Djibril BADJI, the Head of Sports Development undertook a mission to Niamey, Niger from 20th March to 01st April, 2008. He was accompanied by Mr. Samuel MOGAJI, Head of the ICT Training and Capacities Building. They were later joined in Niamey on 26th March, 2008 by Mr. Simon TARO the Director of the EYSDC.

The mission was successful thanks to the goodwill of the Honourable Minister of Youth and Sport and staff of the Ministry of youth and sports of the Republic of Niger who worked tirelessly and cooperate with the member of EYSDC for the success of the tournament.

During the week that preceded the competition, activities were focussed on the organisation of a refresher course for referees who were expected to officiate during the 6th AWTC tournament and on the publicity of the event in all its aspects.

TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR THE REFEREES

The workshop was declared opened on Saturday 21st March, 2008 by the Minister of Youth and Sport of the Republic of Niger who described the workshop initiative as an evidence of the maturity and effective orientation of the AWTC. The Secretary-General of the Ministry of Youth and Sport, the various National Directors and special advisers to the Minister were all present at the opening ceremony. The following countries participated in the training workshop: Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo.

The training was conducted by Mr. Abdou BADJI, an expert in the African Amateur Wrestling Federation (CALA) and International Amateur Wrestling Federation (FILA). He was assisted by Malam BARKA, the National Technical Director of Traditional Wrestling of Niger and Khalifa SOW, chairman of the referees' commission of Senegal.

Concerning the publicity of the tournament, EYSDC participated, with the support of the Adviser on Communication of the Minister of Sport of Niger, in the following sport programmes:

- The national radio sport programme, transmitted live,
- The national television sport programme organised by the Communication Adviser to the Minister of Sport and the Director of Sport,
- There was a press conference by the Director of the EYSDC assisted by Mr. Djibril BADJI and Mr. Samuel A MOGJI of the EYSDC.

During the press conference, the Director of EYSDC highlighted the measures that have been taken in order to sustain the AWTC, and also mentioned the support being given to wrestling. The innovative aspect of this year's tournament was the organisation of a refresher course for referees in order to reduce the complaints arising from the decisions of officiating officials.

Mr. BADJI highlighted the strategies put in place by the EYSDC so as to encourage countries to participate in AWTC: payment of the transport fare of **five wrestlers and a journalist per country**; hotel accommodation and feeding were provided freely to all participants, cancellation of registration fees and finally, a substantial increase of prizes awarded to wrestlers that qualified for the final and winners at the tournament.

It is important to note that contacts have been established with the branch of the International Council of Radio-Television stations of French expression (CIRTEF) for the tournament's recognition at the International level. A draft cooperation agreement will be considered during the next edition of the AWTC.

THE AFRICAN TRADITIONAL WRESTLING OF THE COMMUNITY

The 6th Edition of ATWC took place in Niamey, Republic of Niger from 27th to 30th March 2008. The scheduled programme during the tournament is as follows:

- Weighing of wrestlers: 27 March at 8:00 AM
- Opening ceremony: Friday 28 March, 1st round of the competition at 5:00 PM
- 2nd round of the competition: Saturday 29 March in the afternoon
- Final: Sunday 30 March in the afternoon

The creation of EYSDC facilitates the application of the Council of Ministers Decision C/DEC/3/11/86 of 29th November 1986 making the traditional wrestling an EDOWAS Sports.

It should also be noted that this edition was an occasion for National Wrestling Federations that participated in the tournament to review the activities of the West African Traditional Wrestling Association (WATWA), since its creation on 1st April, 2007. The important decisions taken during the meeting were:

- The revival of the Bureau's activities,
- The drafting of internal regulations,
- Application to ECOWAS as observer,
- A contribution of 100,000 FRS per Federation in order to enable the bureau to function,

- *A request for EYSDC's support to the association.*

The competition started on Friday 28 March with nine participating countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo. See annex for the results of the tournament.

The Republic of Guinea arrived late and could not participate in the competition but an arrangement was made for them to demonstrate their wrestling ability while Sierra Leone participated as observer.

During the opening and closing ceremony of the tournament, Government representatives notably the "Premier Ministre", the Minister of youth and sports including the representative of ECOWAS Commission and other guest witness the occasion. The tournament attracted large spectators and the venue was at full capacity.

OBSERVATIONS

The organisation of the training workshop for the referees was a very good initiative as it will enable the setting up of a body that will advise EYSDC in the selection of referees who shall officiate in the future competitions. Therefore, referees shall no longer be included in the contingent of participating countries; this will in turn reduce the pressure on them. They will be selected based on their performances and not their nationality. It is worthy to note that this effort had greatly improved the officiating performance of the referees.

CONCLUSION

In order to improve on the success gained at the 6th Edition of AWTC, the first ECOWAS traditional wrestling of Dakar shall take place on the 26th – 30th June 2008 in Dakar, the Senegal.

RESULTS of the 6th EDITION of the AWTC

Niamey, 27 - 30 March, 2008

TEAM RESULTS:

- **1ST** : SENEGAL 2 500 000 F
- **2ND** : NIGERIA 1 500 000 F
- **3RD** : NIGER 750 000 F

INDIVIDUAL RESULTS:

- **Less than 66 Kg:** **GOLD:** Albert Kout DOGUE (Senegal) 1 000 000 F
SILVER: Celestin NAMA (Burkina Faso) 500 000 F
BRONZE: Taware PEREKEBOTARE (Nigeria) 250 000 F
- **66 - 75 Kg:** **GOLD:** Birama SECK (Senegal) 1 000 000 F
SILVER: Hermann KOUANE (Burkina Faso) 500 000 F
BRONZE: Joel ENETIMI (Nigeria) 250 000 F
- **76 - 85 Kg:** **GOLD:** Omar FALL (Senegal) 1 000 000 F
SILVER: Athanase MOUSSIANE (Burkina Faso) 500 000 F
BRONZE: Robert DAFA (Nigeria) 250 000 F
- **86 - 99 Kg:** **GOLD:** Joseph Sininel BOTIC (Nigeria) 1 000 000 F
SILVER: Kozon PEYEBINAM (Togo) 500 000 F
BRONZE : Oumarou Ali Bindigao (Niger) 250 000 F
- **More than 100 Kg:** **GOLD:** Abass WADE (Senegal) 1 000 000 F
SILVER: Sunday OPIAH (Nigeria) 500 000 F
BRONZE: Halidu SOUMAILA (Niger) 250 000 F