



World Players Association #WorldPlayersUnited

Nyon, Switzerland, 5 June 2022

New World Players Association leadership to intensify efforts to strengthen unions and address power imbalances in global sport

Affiliates of the World Players Association (WPA) met at FIFPRO HQ in Amsterdam late last month to elect a new Executive Committee (Ex Co) team to lead the organization through the 2023-26 period.

The WPA, which is headquartered in Nyon, Switzerland, brings together over 85,000 athletes, through 138 player associations, in over 70 countries, across 17 different sports. The 14-person Ex Co, comprising the leading representatives of athletes globally, committed to scaling up efforts to build the power of the player association movement and stop the harm arising from the power imbalances many athletes are subject to because of global sport's governance and institutions. This includes threats to their health and safety, the exploitation of their commercial rights, and cases of widespread abuse.

Tony Clark, Executive Director of the Major League Baseball Players Association (MLBPA), was elected as WPA's new President. Clark's election follows an active 18 months where MLBPA players have withstood a 99-day lockout and taken historic steps to organize and welcome minor league players into the union - including the conclusion of a first CBA.

MLBPA, Executive Director, and incoming WPA President, Tony Clark, said:

"The MLBPA has a proud, 57-year history of success rooted in unity and a highly engaged membership. We look forward to actively contributing to building the strength and solidarity of our brother and sister unions globally. As the MLBPA's history clearly demonstrates - the right to organize and ensuring athletes have an equal say in all matters affecting their careers and livelihoods - must be the basis for athlete rights worldwide."

President Biden's former Secretary of Labor and new Executive Director of the National Hockey League Players' Association (NHLPA), **Marty Walsh**, is a new addition to the Ex Co, along with **Stefano Sartori**, who is a veteran of the player association movement with the Italian footballer's union - the Associazione Italiana Calciatori (AIC).

They join the following long-serving members:

- Jonas Baer-Hoffmann (Germany), FIFPRO Secretary General (First Vice President)
- Omar Hassanein (Ireland), the Chief Executive Officer of International Rugby Players (Vice President)
- Tamika Tremaglio (USA), Executive Director of the National Basketball Players Association (NBPA) (Vice President)
- Camilla Garcia (Chile), FIFPRO Global Board Member
- Terri Jackson (USA), Executive Director of the Women's National Basketball Players Association (WNBPA)
- Paul Marsh (Australia), Board member of the Australian Athletes Alliance (AAA) and CEO of the AFL Players Association

- DeMaurice Smith (USA), Executive Director of the NFLPA
- Tom Moffat (Australia), Chief Executive of the Federation of International Cricketers' Associations
- Dejan Stefanovic (Slovenia), FIFPRO Global Board Member
- Paulina Tomczyk (Belgium), General Secretary of EU Athletes
- Takuya Yamazaki (Japan), Legal Counsel and Board Member of the Japanese Professional Baseball Players Association; and
- Christy Hoffman, General Secretary of the UNI Global Union (Ex Officio)

The Ex Co would like to sincerely thank and acknowledge the outstanding contributions of outgoing **President, Don Fehr**, and **Executive Director, Brendan Schwab**, who are finishing their tenures with the organization after almost a decade at the helm. Fehr and Schwab have been instrumental in laying the foundations for World Players, embedding its presence as the recognized voice for athletes among many global institutions, and making great strides to ensure the fundamental rights of athletes are embedded in global sport.

Schwab spearheaded efforts to negotiate major labour and human rights commitments with institutions such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the International Labour Organization (ILO); lead the development of the sport and human rights movement - including the creation of the Sport & Rights Alliance and Centre for Sport & Human Rights; along with fighting landmark campaigns for athletes (such as Bahraini refugee Hakeem al-Araibi) to ensure that powerful sports bodies uphold, in practice, their rhetorical commitment to the human rights of athletes.

The Ex Co has appointed long serving Director of Legal & Player Relations, Matthew Graham, as the interim Executive Director whilst a process is established to determine Schwab's successor.

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The **World Players Association**, part of UNI Global Union, is the exclusive global voice of organized players and athletes across professional sport. It brings together 85,000 players through more than 100 player associations in over 60 countries. Its role is to ensure that the voice of organized players is heard at the highest levels in the decision-making of international sport.