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+++ CONCLUSIONS +++ QUOTES +++ EVALUATIONS +++

EUROPEAN WATER POLO CHAMPIONSHIPS BELGRADE 2006

Bartolo Consolo, Italy, LEN President: “We are very happy with the running of these European Championships. The fact that Serbia’s Head of State is attending the final shows the importance water polo enjoys in this country. It is also very rewarding that the final matches are played in front of a sell-out crowd creating a fantastic atmosphere. The new rules have certainly upgraded the quality of the game. This fact is a great motivation for LEN to think about other important improvements for the future.”

Sven-Egil Folvik, Norway, LEN Secretary: “The Organising Committee has done a tremendous job with all its partner, sponsors and suppliers. I also congratulate the organisers on the security, which was excellent. This was important after the incidents in Kranj 2003. My personal observation is that particularly in the men’s competition the gap between the highest level and the lower level teams has become bigger. The new rules demand longer matches and shorter periods for scoring, and the players are more tired after the games. I am a bit concerned for European championship finals when you have results with a big difference of goals, because these are the best teams in Europe, if not the world. I don’t know whether that’s a result of the new rules. To me, Romania playing for the bronze medal is a positive surprise. It shows that teams can move up.”

Haluk Toygarli, Turkey, Chairman of LEN Technical Water Polo Committee: “We saw faster games than in the past, more action and more opportunities of playing fast. The best example were the Romanians who excellently played that game adjusted to the new rules. These Championships will be remembered for the first realisation of the new rules.”