



Tribunal Arbitral du Sport
Court of Arbitration for Sport

PRESS RELEASE

HANDBALL – 2008 OLYMPIC GAMES ASIAN OLYMPIC QUALIFYING TOURNAMENT

THE COURT OF ARBITRATION FOR SPORT (CAS) CONFIRMS THE RESULTS OF THE MEN'S REPLAYED TOURNAMENT OF JANUARY 2008 AND OF THE WOMEN'S INITIAL TOURNAMENT OF AUGUST 2007

Lausanne, 20 March 2008 – The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) has decided the claim raised by the Asian Handball Federation (AHF), the Kazakhstan Handball Federation (KHF) and the Kuwait Handball Association (KHA) against the International Handball Federation (IHF) regarding the Asian Men's and Women's Qualifying Tournaments for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

At the IHF Council Meeting held in Paris on 17/18 December 2007, the IHF Council cancelled and ordered the replay of the Qualifying Tournaments held in Almaty, Kazakhstan and Toyota, Japan in August and September 2007. Both Tournaments have been replayed at the end of January 2008 with limited participation of the former contestants.

Subsequently, the Claimants filed a request for arbitration with the CAS on 19 February 2008 against the decision of the IHF Council to replay the Asian Qualification Tournaments. The AHF and the IHF agreed to the CAS jurisdiction to rule on the case. The Claimants requested that the results from the Men's and Women's Tournaments staged by the AHF in August and September 2007 be affirmed and that the results of the replayed tournaments in January 2008 be annulled.

The Panel of arbitrators in charge of this matter was composed as follows: Mr John Faylor, Attorney-at-law in Frankfurt/Germany (President), Judge Robert Reid, West Liss/United Kingdom and Mr Jean-Philippe Rochat, Attorney-at-law in Lausanne/Switzerland. The parties and their witnesses were heard on 19 March 2008 at the CAS headquarters from 8:30am to midnight.

Today, the CAS Panel ruled that the resolutions adopted by the IHF Council in Paris were invalid, being in breach of their own rules and without the AHF having been given proper opportunity to be heard. As required by the terms of the arbitration agreement, the CAS Panel considered the issues *de novo* in order to settle the dispute definitively. On the basis of the evidence submitted, the arbitrators unanimously held that the results of the Men's Qualification Tournament held in September 2007 should be annulled and that the results of the replayed tournament held on 30 January 2008 were valid. Furthermore, the CAS Panel confirmed the results of the Women's Tournament held in August 2007. The full award with the grounds will be published on the CAS website when available.

For further information related to the CAS activity and procedures in general, please contact Mr. Matthieu Reeb, Secretary General, tel : +41 21 613 50 00; fax : +41 21 613 50 01 or consult the CAS website : www.tas-cas.org.