

Open letter by Martin Droz (sent via email and also posted on Facebook),

Quote

Dear flyfishing friends,
For many years I have been competing at international level in this beautiful sport of ours, fly fishing. Although I am not competing anymore, I still follow the results and competitors of all the Worlds and European championships.
It is very sad to see that the issues which we as competitors sometimes had over the years still have not been resolved.
It is the draw!
It would appear that FIPS doesn't or just don't want to see the issues at all.
The current situation which is occurring in Canada now is very disappointing and disgraceful.
The official draw is not where competitors actually fish their session.
It is cheating!! Cheating which comes from FIPS Mouche. Something I would never expect!!
There is only one sector where it is critical to produce a fair and even draw. To do that, all that is needed is to be able to count from one to ten to make it fair for all teams.
Because of the lack of interest in fairness the Czech ladies team members get abused by other countries' competitors and they will not enjoy having the pleasure of what they have achieved at the end of the competition and the positions they gained.
FIPS Mouche should officially apologise to all participants of World Ladies Championship and really reconsider the draw system and its methods moving into the future.
Most participants from all over the world spend large amounts of money to fish the competition and they deserve better!
Without competitors there is no FIPS Mouche required and if they continue to display such poor management skills I am sure international countries will just not bother being part of the competition fly fishing scene.
I am now based in Australia as a fly fishing guide and have already seen a decline in interest of competition fly because of things such as those I have previously highlighted.
Kind regards
Martin Droz

Unquote

Dear Martin,

your letter has been originally sent on FIPS-Mouche email address but as it was right after posted also on Facebook, I feel obliged to react and provide clarification publicly - on our website and also on the Facebook.

I can feel in your letter lots of negative emotions, personal assumptions and also some mistakes that I am going to address stepwise in my reply. On behalf of FIPS-Mouche I can assure you we are always open for discussion on any matters or issues however I do not find a social media the proper place for technical discussion. We encourage all our member federations to discuss any topics during long lasting general assemblies, addressing issue to the dedicated technical commission, or taking the opportunity to run a discussion throughout separated captains meeting at the occasion of our championships (e.g. second captain meeting dedicated to the future of FIPS-Mouche in Slovakia or know-how sharing captains meeting held in Bosnia i Hercegovina...). I have an understanding for a constructive criticism, but what I can not accept at all is any form of accusations, that I on behalf of FIPS-Mouche clearly and strictly reject. Anyway let us return back to your letter.

It is very sad to see that the issues which we as competitors sometimes had over the years still have not been resolved. It is the draw!

Draw functionality (as part of the Draw program) has been firstly introduced at the European championship in 1998 and after 1-2 years of its finetuning IT WAS AND IS WORKING perfectly, same as did it's work perfectly during the 2nd Ladies WFFC (I invite you to compare the draw results from the 5 sessions that are available on our website). The principle of rotations on the rivers is a different story and it was as a new item only recently introduced as an inspiration from some member countries. After a short usage during our events, it turned out that this system is much more suitable for local level events, but not for international ones. The system indirectly supports the home team in a local knowledge of the competition area, during the limited transfer options it was degraded by the organiser to rotate by 1 max 2 beats and additionally as it is determined by the organizers, independent from the draw program, in case of small number of teams, no one can mathematically avoid the rotation beat overlapping. All these above implications lead to the prompt removal of this system from the FIPS-Mouche Competition rules in May 2023 at the General Assembly in Rome. As some of the organizers of this year events had included rotation into Rule modifications (while last year inspections, including the World 2024) we decided and announced the exceptions for these events (see <https://www.fips-mouche.com/new-rules-2023-application-on-championships>). Going back to your letter – rotations were introduced in the Rules in 2021, which was much later then you finished your competition carrier and so it definitely may not be labelled as “an issue unresolved over the years” in fact rather contrary taking into account this year prompt cancelling...

It would appear that FIPS doesn't or just don't want to see the issues at all. The current situation which is occurring in Canada now is very disappointing and disgraceful. The official draw is not where competitors actually fish their session. It is cheating!! Cheating which comes from FIPS Mouche. Something I would never expect!!

If someone is willing to accuse a person/institution for a cheating he/she should have an appropriate arguments/evidence for it. So what really happened while the championship?

After session 2, where it appeared that SWE and CZE team had drawn beats 9 and 10 in the first session and 10 and 9 in the second session. Thus, they had to fish, due to the rotation between beats 9 and 10, these two beats twice. This is quite possible within the FIPS draw Prg as with just 10 teams it is impossible to have a random draw with fishing without adjacent beats. It's quite evident that 5 team members fishing 5 sessions from 10 competing teams (10 beats per sector) would in fact, before the start of the last session, know perfectly which beat they would be fishing in that last session. This would mean that this draw would not be random and not secret!

During session 3 the USA ladies team captain made a formal complaint in compliance with the CR 2023 regarding the result of the draw stating that is mathematically possible to make a draw without having to fish adjacent beats. A jury meeting was called at 20:00 hrs of day 3 of the competition. The CZE team captain was member of this jury.

During the jury meeting the USA Ladies team captain agreed that it was not possible to have a secret random draw result as before the final session the competitors would know which beat they would be fishing.

In preparation of the jury meeting, the USA Ladies team captain, together with the International organiser and all the team captains had a meeting to make some proposals. AI is explained in the minutes of this jury meeting. These minutes are available on the FIPS-Mouche website: <https://www.fips-mouche.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/2023-WLFFC-Jury-meeting.pdf>

All teams agreed that the draw for sessions 4 and 5 should be adapted manually so that in these 2 last sessions the competitors would not fish beats some of their teammates had fished before. As a result, the draw for session 5 as a result would not be completely secret.

Without competitors there is no FIPS Mouche required and if they continue to display such poor management skills I am sure international countries will just not bother being part of the competition fly fishing scene.

I can assure you that FIPS-Mouche is fully aware of all its obligations and services have been provided to fly fishing sport community and being developed over the years, from the beginning times when we were rather a consulting body (not involved into the championship) till nowadays when we have taken over a direct responsibility for the draw, resulting and supervision of the home controllers. All these items are a prove of trust we built over the years with our members that we highly appreciate and that can help in sustainably improvement of our beloved sport. And as for the “poor management skills” – let me remind you that all 4 Board members are former or still active competitors and there were 3 Board members present in Canada, who were taking part in the championships as delegates for many years beforehand....

So, dear Martin, even I was not personally present in Canada, I fully stand with all decisions and actions in this matter that were taken by FIPS-Mouche Representatives present and strictly reject all above accusations towards FIPS-Mouche, that are not based on facts. It is a very unfortune communication that puts our organisation in a bad daylight and constitutes bad publicity for international sport fly fishing in general. It would be much appreciated if you reconsider your post and rectify it accordingly....

Best regards
Mario Podmanik
FIPS-Mouche President