



WACS Northern Europe Continental Director's Report for the European meeting in Prague from February 21st to the 24th 2008



Azerbaijan



Belarus

Estonia



Denmark



Finland



Great Britain



Wales



Iceland



Ireland



Latvia



Lithuania



Norway



Russia



Scotland



Sweden



Ukraine

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By Gissur Gudmundsson

February, 2008

Dear **Miroslav Kubec**, President of the Czech Chefs Association, WACS President, fellow Board Members, friends and colleagues of Europe.

The beautiful city of Prague is a great place to meet old and new friends from all over Europe and it is a great opportunity to experience food and culture from this part of Europe. I wish I could stay until Sunday but I am sorry to say that I will go around lunch time tomorrow. I hope you will forgive me this.

First, I would like to thank Chef Reinhold Metz for organizing this meeting but at the same time I must mention that there were many worries expressed that this meeting is maybe too close to the Congress. It is not a critic to anyone but I believe we need to think this more through in the future.

If you think about it, going to Prague at the end of February and then meeting two and a half months later in Dubai is costly for any chef association. Many from my countries have expressed worry about this as well a few fellow board members because we are not impressed with the number of chefs going to the Dubai Congress. The main reason is the cost factor. If I speak for myself, I would like to see us spend the money we are spending now on this meeting on supporting the juniors to take part in the Bill Gallagher Forum in Dubai. Up to now there are too few registered and I urge you all to do what you can to send at least one junior to the Bill Gallagher Forum. The team in Dubai has worked hard to put up a program that will blow your minds. These guys are professional in this and I can promise you that you will get to see and taste new things.

16 countries make up the Northern European area and this makes it the biggest Continental area within WACS. I am extremely happy with the communication going on within our area. I am in contact with every country and they are giving me regular updates on their activities.

Within Northern Europe, a lot of things have been happening: We have had competitions, national meetings and other events and I think most of the countries are doing very well. We all have a problem from time to time but I can see that the problems are being resolved home and I believe that's the best way to do it.

The highlight in Northern Europe for the last few months since our last meeting is without any question the first Northern European Global Chefs Semi-final. 13 countries out of a total of 16 in Northern Europe took part in this competition that was held in Tallinn in Estonia.

Our colleagues and friends in Estonia did a great job with all the organising around this competition. The kitchen was first class, the dinners and the entertainment were made from the heart and the work given by the Estonian Chefs Association was something we all can be proud

WACS European Continental Director Gissur Gudmundsson

of. WACS can be proud to have members like Estonia that take the responsibility to carry out very important steps for WACS.

We in Northern Europe made the decision that jury members judging this competition would not come from Northern Europe. If you can't have judges from all the countries competing then this is an important thing to do to make the competition fair for everyone.

I'd like to use this opportunity to thank Estonian Chefs Association for what they have done for us, thank all the countries in Northern Europe that took part in the competition and thank them for sending the best of the best to this competition. The standard of all the competitors was outstanding, the difference from first to 13th being minimal. I would like to give a big thanks to Tony Jackson for the support and the help he gave us with planning and realizing this competition. He was with me in all decisions made for this competition and he also acted as an observer for WACS. I believe it's very important for us to work closely with the members of the Culinary Committee in our area when we prepare competitions like this.

The winner for the Semi-final came from Norway, and his name is Tom Victor Gauksdal. It was a clear win for the jury but the two women that came knocking on his back were very close and are worth mentioning; Carina from Sweden came number two and Pamila from Scotland came number three. I can tell you we definitely have strong competing women in Northern Europe.

Since the last meeting, I have met with many of the member country presidents from my area, had the opportunity to take part in some of the events organized by them, just to name a few, just 10 days ago I went to Wales to see the Battle of the Dragon, an outstanding competition where 3 of the best teams in WACS came to compete and used the opportunity to train for IKA in October. I was in London on Wednesday this week where I visited HotelOlympic and met many colleagues from all over the UK.

I am very happy with the communications we have had; colleagues call when they need to and I call them when I need their help or advice. This is why we have WACS.

Thanks to you all, it has been a privilege for me to work with you.

Chef's Regards,

Gissur Gudmundsson

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