

**"It's important to IHF that the non-European countries close the gap between Europe and the rest of the world. " PRC President Manfred Prause talks about the referees appearance in the Women's Junior WCH**

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Manfred Prause is President of the IHF Playing Rules and Referees Commission (PRC). At the 17th Women's Junior World Championship held in Korea. Prause is in charge for the nominations and analysis of all referee matters. The IHF-website

talked to the 70 years old German about the referees appearance in this tournament.

**Is this Junior World Championship a competition for the secondary growth of the referees?**

**Prause:** Of course it is not the first selection of our most experienced referees who appear at this Junior World Championship. But all these couples here in Korea have come out of our international training program for referees, which the IHF is successfully running since five years now. In this program we have listed a number of 50 referee couples from all continents, who will be nominated for our international tournaments.

**There are quite a lot of new couples in Korea.**

**Prause:** It's important to IHF that the non-European countries close the gap between Europe and the rest of the world. This happens by a lot of intense education. Regarding the referees more than the half of all 16 couples at these championships are from non-European countries.

**And are you satisfied so far with their activity?**

**Prause:** It was hard to find an option at the end of the preliminaries. The most difficult matches are still to come in the Main Round now. But so far we did not receive any negative critics from the teams at the end of the matches. This is a good sign.

**Which meaning does this championship has for the referees?**

**Prause:** Good achievements will open the door to even more appearances on higher levels such as World Championships for men and women. I could easily imagine that one or two of these couples here will be nominated for the Men's World Championship next year in Sweden. An even more will go to the Women's WCH in Brazil, for sure.

**Are there differences between male and female referees?**

**Prause:** In the beginning when the first women appeared on the court they had to

fight for acceptance. Now, if they are on the same level as men, women get more compliments than their male colleagues, especially in women's handball.

**How many female referee couples do you find within the IHF competitions?**

**Prause:** Still the men are in majority. From about 80 couples worldwide we have twelve female couples. Analogue to soccer we aim to nominate only women to the Women's or Women's Junior World Championship in the future.