

## PRESS RELEASE

### 17<sup>TH</sup> EUROPEAN COMPANY SPORT GAMES 2009

**The biggest sporting event in Europe for recreational sport is coming back to Rovinj after 20 years. The 17<sup>th</sup> European Company Sport Games (ECSG) will take place June 17-21, 2009 with more than 4,500 contestants from 22 countries competing in 21 disciplines.**

In spite of fierce competition from Hamburg, Prague and Lahti, the city of Rovinj, thanks to truly exceptionally prepared candidacy, has for the second time become the host of the most important European recreational sporting event – the European Company Sport Games. Besides the well-prepared candidacy, a key part in bringing the ECSG to Rovinj was played by the Croatian Sport for All Federation, led by Professor Findak and Professor Relac.

The European Company Sport Games is a specific sporting event which, despite its size, does not attract big attention of the sports public. The reason for that is the fact that the event is not marked by top results. Nevertheless, the event is of great importance for the city of Rovinj and Croatia. As far as organization and the number of contestants are concerned, this event is up there with the most popular sporting events in the world. For example, at the last Mediterranean Games held in Almeria, Spain in 2005, there were 3,500 contestants (1,000 contestants less than at ECSG) who competed in 26 disciplines (just 5 more than at the ECSG). In order to successfully organize an event of this magnitude, there are almost 1,000 people of different profiles, such as referees, sports event coordinators, hostesses, public utilities, people responsible for the maintenance of venues, drivers and many others, who are included in the organization of the games.

The 17<sup>th</sup> European Company Sport Games will be attended by more than 4,500 athletes from 22 European countries, who will compete in 21 disciplines: athletics, badminton, bowling, golf, basketball, mini golf, football, foot tennis, shooting, volleyball, beach volleyball, orientation moving, darts, swimming, handball, table tennis, squash, chess, tennis and bridge. Croatia, with 500 participants, will have the largest number of contestants, and the host city will be represented by 170 contestants.

In the city of Rovinj, there will be 18 different sporting events, while the rest of the program will be organized in Rovinjsko Selo, Bale, Vrsar, Pazin, Pula, on the Brijuni Islands and in Trieste. The main venues in Rovinj are the Valburna gym, football fields of FC Rovinj, sports centre in the vicinity of Hotel Eden, Istragrafika gym within the former tobacco factory, and other arenas in the city and within Maistra properties.

The backbone of the Games Organizing Committee is made up of the representatives of the city of Rovinj, Rovinj Tourist Association and Maistra, together with the representatives of the Croatian Sport for All Federation. In the last few months they have ensured the best possible accommodation, transport, day trips and other cultural and entertainment programs which the participants can enjoy in their spare time. It will also make possible for the contestants to explore the town and its valuable sights. The president of the Organizing Committee is Mr. Giovanni Sponza – the Mayor of Rovinj.

Besides sporting competitions, the games will be marked by a rich entertainment program, which will begin with the official opening of the games on Wednesday, June 17, at the main Rovinj square, starting at 9 pm. After that, there will be an entertainment program every night all the way until the closing of the games on June 21, featuring the performers such as Gustafi, Davor Radolfi and Ritmo Loco, the Lado ensemble and many others.

The European Company Sport Games is an event with a 30-year-long tradition and its primary goal is to promote and encourage sport as the culture of healthy living. This event is an important sporting event, but also plays an important social role by creating good human relations and facilitating the development of tourism and economy. The games are organized every two years in a different country, with the summer games taking place during odd-numbered years and the winter games during even-numbered years. The EFCS member countries apply to host the games, and the Assembly of the European Federation secretly votes for the host country and the city which provide the best conditions for organization. The first games were held in Vienna 30 years ago, and have grown to become the most significant sporting event in Europe.

Rovinj is a city of both professional and amateur sports. Along with many clubs, Rovinj has become the center for organizing international kinesiology meetings and important recreational events, two of which were held under the sponsorship of the International Olympic Committee, with the raising of the Olympic flag. Very good traffic connections, top accommodation capacities, rich and diverse gastronomic offer, as well as numerous venues and different sporting grounds, many of which will be restored and built, are enough to guarantee that Rovinj will be a successful host of the 17<sup>th</sup> European Company Sport Games in the year 2009.

The participation in this kind of event of great social significance is an important recognition for the Croatian Sport For All Federation and the city of Rovinj, contributing to the identity and international promotion of Rovinj and the entire region. The event has government support and will take place under the sponsorship of the President of the Republic of Croatia, Mr. Stjepan Mesić.

#### Event sponsors

- City of Rovinj
- Rovinj Tourist Association
- Maistra d.d.