

Open Letter from Rich Cendali

May 10, 2019

Dear Jumpers, Coaches, Parents, and Kids,

I have been involved in rope skipping for over 40 years and some have called me the Grandfather of the sport. I created the first rope skipping sport organization (IRSO) and later became one of the founders of FISAC-IRSF. FISAC-IRSF was formed in 1995 for the athletes to unify the sport of rope skipping and to give all athletes opportunities to grow and compete.

Rope Skipping is facing a major crisis. This has been developing over the past few years because some people have not wanted to work together. They prompted a vote to merge FISAC-IRSF and the recently created World Jump rope Federation (WJRF). Supposedly the result of this merger will be an organization to be known as the International Jump Rope Union. Unfortunately, this vote was taken without any detailed plan on how to accomplish the merger and was not legal under the existing Statutes of FISAC-IRSF. As a result, decisions are purportedly being taken excluding long-standing members and created turmoil in the sport. This is not the way forward. It is not how to achieve unity. Our sport was united until these individuals decided to form a new organization. These are the individuals that wouldn't work with FISAC. Instead, they broke away and started a new international organization claiming to unify our athletes. They claim to be able to improve our sport financially and obtain greater recognition for our sport internationally. It is not clear that these people can fulfill such promises.

If there are problems with FISAC-IRSF, then a new congress should be called, and the issues resolved democratically. Forming a new organization sounds easy, but it is a difficult and complex process not to be approved without a clear plan. I doubt if it is the right solution to any problem for our sport and likely will be looked on by the international sport community as a sign of disorganization and disunity in our sport.

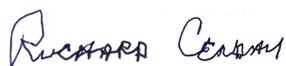
The merging of FISAC appears to be an unfriendly takeover in the eyes of many people all over the world. Decisions are being made without any legal authority or guidelines, by people claiming this is the way to unite the sport. I disagree. However, many have come to feel that the IJRU does not have the best interest of the sport, our member countries, or the athletes. The termination of FISAC and the purposed merger are a bad idea for many reasons, which should be more fully discussed before taking any rash actions. This proposed merger has not been legally voted on and I urge you to oppose such poorly thought out ideas. I would suggest, instead, calling a legal congress where ways of improving the sport and correcting any issues with FISAC-IRSF may occur.

FISAC-IRSF was developed to unite our athletes. Can it be improved? Of course. However, instead of working with FISAC-IRSF and its national federations, IJRU has tossed them aside and demanded that organizations follow their path. They claim that they will get the sport into the Olympics. However, this will take many years and as long as there remains a division in our sport, it will not happen.

It is time the jump rope community questions the practices of IJRU. How can this organization claim to be unifying the sport when they created the division in the first place? Is creating a new organization and not including federations that have decades of history and experience promoting unification in rope skipping the correct answer? How is ignoring organizations and athletes that have worked for years for our sport promoting unification?

An international coalition has been formed to oppose the merging of WJRF and FISAC-IRSF. This coalition is dedicating itself to uniting athletes and countries without alienation. Countries and continents will unite to ensure that everyone has a voice. We cannot let a select few determine the fate of our sport. This international coalition, Friends of Rope Skipping is working with AAU (Amateur Athletic Union) to provide a World Championship in conjunction with the AAU Junior Olympic Games. AAU Junior Olympic Games will have over 15000 athletes representing numerous sports. AAU has a working relationship with the Olympic committee and this will give our athletes the opportunity to compete and become either AAU Jr. Olympic medalists or World medalists! Please join us in July/August, 2020 at this premier event being held in Virginia Beach, VA, USA. Use this link to see a video about AAU: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w9oyGus3m48>

Let's get our athletes together and work at unifying the sport the legal and right way. Caring and sharing, remember those words!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rich Cendali". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rich Cendali