



## Monarch Airlines Ceases Trading

To All EKF HoA's & Members

**As you are no doubt aware, Monarch Airlines went into Administration on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2017.**

The EKF had booked all the flights for our delegation going to the World Junior Karate Championships, being held in Tenerife, with this airline.

The flights were booked under a Group Booking, direct with Monarch Airlines, and paid for by BACS transfer.

Direct flight bookings and group bookings are not ATOL protected when booked for scheduled flights. Also, payments made directly by BACS transfers are not protected either. This meant that the EKF were unable to recoup the cancelled Monarch flight money paid to them.

**This means that the £18,700 the EKF paid out for flights to attend the World Championships has been lost.**

The EKF will become one of the creditors to Monarch Airlines and there is only a slim chance that some monies could be recouped. It is unlikely that anything close to the full amount would be reclaimed within the next year or so.

We were left with two choices; cancel our participation or rebook alternative flights.

To cancel the EKF's participation in the Championships would have further damaged the EKF finances as the entry fees, transfers, hotel accommodation, as well as the air fares, would not have been reclaimable and would have had to be repaid back to the athletes by the EKF.

The alternative to rebook the flights with another airline would only be viable if the flights could be obtained at reasonable costs to the EKF otherwise, this too, would have seriously damaged the EKF finances.

The decision by the EKF board was to attempt to rebook the flights to see if this would turn out to be the cheaper option. If viable, this would also have meant that we would not be denying the young athletes the opportunity to participate in the most prestigious of competitions where they can gain official WKF Ranking points towards qualification to the Junior Olympics.

A consequence of the Monarch Airlines collapse quickly led to the remaining airlines seeking to exploit the situation that we, like many others, have found ourselves in with trying to find alternative travel. (Many of the airlines have hiked their airfares for the same travel period to over £1,000 per passenger!).

A fraught few days of internet searches and phone calls has resulted in some positive results. We have managed to secure direct flights for the same period of travel, but at an understandably higher cost.

Initially, the flights amounted to approximately £417 per person, the newly secured flights now amount to £607 per person, still a much lower rate than is being offered by many airlines.

**As the squad and staff numbers were exceptionally high for these championships, the EKF has had to find an additional £27,310 to cover the cost of these flights. This, with the already paid staff cost, exams, and participation fees totalling £18,000, has reached an astronomical figure. However, the cost of cancelling the championships and refunding the athletes alone would have been far more at £45,000 which is way above the figure for rebooking.**

We believe that asking for the full additional costs from the athletes arising from this extraordinary situation would be harsh in these circumstances. Therefore, we have asked the athletes if they could make an additional payment of only £190, which is the difference between the original and new airfares. This has already started to happen with some payments from the athletes already being sent to the EKF.

This has been an extremely exhausting and stressful time for the EKF staff and directors, and everyone else involved, and hopefully you will all agree that we have managed to salvage what was looking like an impossible situation. This was an unprecedented situation and we must thank those involved for turning this around.

I hope we have been able to explain to you all the facts and issues of these exceptional circumstances, caused by the failure of Monarch Airlines.

Mike Billman  
EKF President.