

Dear WCF Member Association,

The WCFMC is proposing to hold a new World Championship in Golf Croquet for Seniors (Over 50) in October 2010.

Over the last four years we have had requests from a number of players supporting such an event. World Championship Seniors Events are common in many sports.

The Egyptian Croquet Federation is a strong supporter of this event and will host it in Cairo in October 2010. They believe it will benefit both the development of the game in Egypt and also help to further development the game in a number of other countries around the world.

WCF Immediate Past President, David Openshaw comments, "during my time as President I have had expressions of interest from players from Australia, England, Egypt, Ireland, South Africa and USA. I see such an event will attract a strong entry of players so that play will be of a high standard and justify a World Championship title".

The WCFMC considered two different age cut off points over 50 and over 60. We recommend over 50 because:

1. this is the age range within which many of the interested Egyptian players fall,
2. the event is likely to be stronger with an Over 50 limit,
3. even with this lower age cut off there would be very little overlap between the best players in this event and the best players in the WCF Singles World GC Championship event,
4. this age range is strongly supported by the Egyptian Croquet Federation.

Before approving this event WCF would like to know the following:

**Do you have any comments you wish to make for the WCF Management Committee regarding this proposed tournament prior to them making a final decision?**

**To enable invitations to be sent and entries to be received in a timely manner, please reply as soon as possible and no later than 16th March 2010.**

Please note all responses will be made public on via the WCF web site.

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Further details of the proposal:

If it is to take place, the event to be held 8th – 15th October 2010 in Cairo, Egypt.

The proposed event would use two venues in Cairo:  
The Egyptian Federation Croquet Center (3 lawns) and El Gezirah Sporting Club (3 lawns)  
(All within walking distance of each other)

56 players – single - open  
Playing times : Daily from 09.00 am until 09.00 pm or until the daily schedule is completed.  
WCF Rules of Golf Croquet 2007 edition will apply.

The Egyptian Croquet Federation will bear the following costs related to this event:

- 1- Referee cost in all the matches
- 2- Scorers and balls boys in all matches
- 3- Opening reception including soft drinks, food for all the players
- 4- Championship Cup and medals
- 5- Closing ceremony include a gala dinner
- 6- Please Note:
  - a. Additional Food and beverages are available for purchase at both venues,
  - b. An entry visa to Egypt is required upon arrival at cost 25 USD per player
  - c. All players can be met and assisted at Cairo airport and transferred to their chosen hotel at 25 USD per player
  - d. Various hotels with different rates will be available,
  - e. Tours and sightseeing will be available upon players request.

regards  
Brian Storey  
WCF Secretary-General  
1<sup>st</sup> March 2010.

## **Responses to the Consultation:**

### **Australia**

Australia supports the proposal and would probably be nominating two people at this stage.

### **Austria**

Great idea!

### **England**

On behalf of the CA, [...] make the following points:

- we appreciate the commitment and effort shown by Egypt in being willing to host the proposed Championship;
- we recognize concerns expressed about the proposals for new World Championships without an overall strategic plan in place to guide the overall development of world croquet. In particular, even if a proposed new championship has an initial host, this does not guarantee the ongoing feasibility of the event;
- we note that different views are possible on the likely participants in a championship for over-50s. We recognize that Egypt has a strong representation in the open World GC Championship from those who are under 50. However, other nations have a greater representation from those who are over 50. We are disappointed that the WCF has not provided some analysis on the potential impact of creating the new Championship. We are happy to see additional players gaining the opportunity to compete when they would not otherwise be able to but suspect that many players will face playing in both events;
- on balance, we believe that sufficient English players would have an interest in competing in such a Championship and that Egypt will make an ideal host for the event. Thus, we have no desire to oppose the proposal, which we consider likely to be successful.

### **Italy**

The Italian Croquet Association will support this event.

### **New Zealand**

At the Croquet New Zealand Executive meeting held on 13th March, the Executive agreed to make the following comments:

- New Zealand does not agree with 50+ as being an appropriate cut-off for "seniors" competition. We think that 60+ would be a more appropriate basis for a seniors event. The rationale for this is that "seniors" events in other sports are segregated by age as a proxy for difference in skill level/physical ability, and so we do not believe that 50+ is the most appropriate cut-off point in croquet (for example Bob Jackson is still playing at the top level at age 79). In addition, 60+ (or 65) is more likely to co-incide with retirement age in the majority of member countries.
- New Zealand also believes that the international calendar is quite full and any proposal made to satisfy a small interest group is not ideal.
- However, should the tournament proceed, New Zealand will encourage players to attend to make sure there is as much representation from member countries as possible.

## Scotland

1. Proposal for the WCF Over 50's World GC Championship
2. Consultation for the WCF WCF Women's Association Croquet Championship

The SCA was initially intending on responding to the first championship proposal, but the consultation on the latter meant that it seemed sensible to respond to both simultaneously. Moreover, it is difficult to assess the proposals and consultations when it is unclear how many more Championships the WCF might propose.

The recent proposal and consultation seemed independent of one another being received separated by just a week apart. It would seem appropriate that both the proposal and consultation are simultaneously placed within the context of all the WCF World Championships in both AC and GC, taking account of:

- the WCF's overall objectives for the development and promotion of croquet;
- the ability of players to take part in so many championships when they have to take time off work and family and fund the expense themselves;
- the ability to schedule the championships evenly, avoiding clashes or near-clashes;
- the ability of the WCF to find host organisations;
- consideration of the financial structure of World Championships and whether the burden of hosting a championship is too much for an individual country.

In particular, there are concerns that:

- There are already too many World Championships (both AC and GC) as it is, with events occurring too frequently. In GC there is already the main championship, the Women's championship and the Under 21 championships. These events each occur roughly every two years. Indeed, in 2011 the main GC championship and the women's event are less than a month apart.
- It is arguable that there would be little overlap between the main championships and the "Over 50's" event. How many of the competitors at the last World GC champs were over 50?
- A major concern is that establishing an "Over 50's" event would tend to reinforce the public view that croquet is not a game for young people (i.e. a game for older generations), and therefore make it even more difficult to recruit young people in the game. Although there might be an argument that the fact that there is an Over 50's event in itself must mean that young people dominate the main event, the publicity around the event will of necessity focus on the age bias within the sport.

Despite these concerns, the **SCA is not against the proposed event**, but questions whether all WCF events have to have the title "World Championships". Perhaps if the event was renamed to something else (the Senior Championship, Masters, or whatever other sports might have come up with), that might help and it will avoid devaluing the title "World championship". The phrase "World Championship" should really be the *Champion of the World* and not conditional on a whole lot of other conditions. That said, the SCA sees justification for U21s (to promote the sport amongst young people) and Women's Golf.

## South Africa

The South African Croquet Association Executives are not opposed to the proposal. However, some members are not enthusiastic about it.

## USA

The USCA and our International Committee remain lukewarm to the proposal.

We support Amir and his outstanding efforts to promote and advance GC among WCF members.

We oppose the addition of another "world championship" because we believe by doing so the WCF dilutes the championship brand. We also believe over-50 players are adequately represented in the existing WCF GC World Championship.

That stated, we are not against the event. At this time, if this event is held, the USCA would likely nominate three players.

## Wales

The Welsh CA are not against a Worlds Over 50 GC event per se, but we feel that there are too many events called Championship.

Our only player likely to go and he said

"Since the better players are over 50. It is just another bash. Nothing wrong with that. It can act as a sort of filler event in the years when there is no World championship. (can there be too much croquet?) I would take part. "

... there are becoming far too many events being called World Championship and it will really dilute the brand if they continue to proliferate. The WCF needs to put together a realistic timetable and one that does not allow similar Worlds to be less than 2 years, and preferably 3 years apart. The 2009 Worlds in Florida was far too soon (15 months) after the Christchurch event. I know the difficulty is caused when countries wish to hold it, which is why there wasn't one between 1997 and 2001 and then there was one 16 months later in 2002.

Looking back it should have been either

2005 August UK  
2008 February NZ  
2011 May USA

or even  
2005 August UK  
2009 February NZ  
2012 May USA

17<sup>th</sup> March 2010