

Review of the detailed arrangements for the World Team Championship in 2010 by the World Croquet Federation Management Committee

26th November 2009.

World Croquet Federation Management Committee:

David Openshaw - President - Chairman
Keith Aiton
Andrew Hope - Treasurer
Carole Jackson
Charles Jones (QSM JP)
Max Murray
Amir Ramsis
Brian Storey – Secretary-General
Rhys Thomas

*Players of member associations at WCF World Team Championship (WTC) involving “The MacRobertson Shield”;
Interpretation of the requirements of WCF Statute: Article 214.2, relating to: “competitions”.*

Findings:

By a unanimous decision, the World Croquet Federation Management Committee (WCFMC), has today agreed to changes to the proposed entry criteria for the World Team Championship. This follows feedback from a number of member associations either directly to the WCF Secretary General (in particular the Scottish and Welsh CAs) or through consultation with members of the Management Committee.

WCF original conditions stipulated, that in relation to a proposed World Team Association Croquet Championship (WTC), it has been unanimously agreed that while the team of “Great Britain” continues to be a team that play in the MacRobertson Shield, no country being a constituent member of that team (England, Scotland, Wales, Jersey and Isle of Man) would be allowed to compete in tiers 2 to “n” of the WTC.

The decision is amended to read:

The conditions for the 2010 WTC are as follows:

1. Tier 1 (The MacRobertson Shield) will be competed for by Australia (ACA), Great Britain, New Zealand (CNZ) and USA (USCA).
2. Tiers 2 and 3 are open to all member countries, except England, that do not have any players selected to play in any of the teams in Tier 1 at the time that their primary player selection is made.
3. Therefore this means that Scotland, Wales, Jersey and Isle of Man are able to enter teams only if they have no players in the “Great Britain” team at the time that players are initially selected to play for “Great Britain”.
4. For clarity, after that date, if “Great Britain” do select another player from any of those member countries to cover for the withdrawal for a player already selected, through

- injury, illness or other reason, he/she cannot play in Tiers 2 or 3 of the WTC, but their member country may, if not already disqualified.
5. The Croquet Association (of England) (CA) acting as agents for team "Great Britain" and as organisers of the 2010 MacRobertson Shield, have indicated that they are likely to announce the selected "Great Britain" players on or about 15th February 2010.
 6. It is emphasised that each of the entrants for the 2010, Tiers 2 and 3, agree to recognise the one off nature of this compromise condition and that they specifically agree that no precedent is set for future WTC events.

The Facts

1. The WCF has, for some years, recognised the MacRobertson Shield as WTC as a result of a request from the four participant countries made in 1996.
2. During the WCF Council Meeting in Florida 2009 there was discussion and a number of motions relating to the relationship between the WCF, the MacRobertson Shield and the WTC. During that meeting no motions were passed relating to this subject.
3. However the WCFMC recognised that there was demand for an expansion of the WTC, so they discussed and agreed a way forward which focussed on the holding of an expanded event rather than on the structures and procedures which had been the subject of the Council Meeting.
4. The WCFMC agreed unanimously to propose the expansion of the WTC to include those members not playing in the MacRobertson Shield. It was felt that this proposal should first go to the four participant MacRobertson Shield members for their comments.
5. This proposal to expand the WTC was put to the MacRobertson Shield Committee during their meeting on 14 May 09 and received their support.
6. Following that it was announced to all WCF member countries on 19 May.

"Email 19 May 2009 to All Member Associations

Dear WCF Member Association,

I am pleased to announce that the WCF Management Committee has announced the expansion of the World Association Croquet Team Championship.

This has received support from the Members of the MacRobertson Shield Meeting held in Florida on 14 May. The CA are willing to host this event and will be working jointly with the WCF to arrange full details of the event.

The full announcement is attached. Also attached is a questionnaire for those countries wishing to participate in the new event. This should be completed and returned to Brian Storey as soon as possible and at the latest by 8th June.

Best Regards

David Openshaw"

"Details of the attachment

Proposal by the WCF Management Committee for the expansion of the WCF World AC Team Championship in 2010

The WCF is proposing to expand the World Team Championship in 2010. We propose that the CA be asked to host the expanded event. This would comprise of the MacRobertson Shield (The existing World Team Championship) and further events open to non MacRobertson Shield Countries.

1. *The MacRobertson Shield will be run and organised by the CA on behalf of the ACA, CA, CNZ, USCA. The winner of this event will be the World Team Champions. The MacRobertson Shield will be held in England from Sunday 1 August to Sunday 22 August 2010. The teams consists of six players;*
2. *An event / events for those member countries whose players are not eligible for the MacRobertson Shield. This would probably be in two sections a stronger event for teams of four and one for teams of two. This event to be held if possible during the final week of the MacRobertson Shield and run jointly by the WCF and the CA.*

The WCF will hold detailed discussions with both the CA and with the member countries eligible for the additional events to agree their length and format and to find suitable venues. We would also consult all member countries to establish how best to integrate the events with for example a joint closing event.

David Openshaw 19 May 2009

For the record

Copy of Minute 8 from the MacRobertson Shield Meeting Florida 14 May 2009

8. Expansion of the World Team Championship in 2010

David Openshaw proposed that the WCF should organise second and third tiers of the World Team Championship in England at the same time as the final week of the MacRobertson Shield in 2010, subject to the agreement of the CA. The 4GB (Four Governing Bodies) representatives all expressed their support."

7. *The WCF received the support of many other members. But in addition the issue of representation within the expanded event by the UK member countries was raised.*
8. *On 18th August 2009, the letter below was received by the WCF from the Scottish croquet Association.*

"Re. "WCF World Team Championship (WTC)"

I am writing to you as Secretary-General of the WCF on behalf of the Scottish Croquet Association (SCA).

The SCA has agreed that:

1. Scotland wishes to remain part of Great Britain (GB) for the purpose of the 2010 MacRobertson Shield (MacRob);

2. Scotland **will not** enter the 2010 WTC if it means GB becomes England for the 2010 MacRob;

3. Scotland **will**, however, enter a team in the 2010 WCF World Team Championship if permitted by the WCF Management Committee (WCFMC) subject to our position regarding GB in Statements 1 and 2 above.

The SCA realises that this decision only partially helps in the planning of this event.

The SCA would like to clarify how it arrived at this decision, and to put forward the case for the WCFMC to reconsider the decision it took at its Thursday two-part Committee Meeting in Florida.

- The SCA is very keen indeed to enter a team to the 2010 WTC. It strongly believes that the Organising Committee will arrange an excellent event this time that will be well managed and ideally lead to future similar events. However, despite the huge potential for the WTC, the SCA has to accept that it is essentially an unproven event which, even if successful, has an unclear future. The SCA appreciates that the Organising Committee has been very forthcoming regarding the timing of the first event, its format, and its locations, but what happens in 2014 and beyond is unknown.
- The SCA cannot justify breaking up Great Britain, even if it only applies to the MacRob in 2010, solely to facilitate Scottish players playing in one more event in the Croquet Calendar. The long-term disadvantages of Scotland leaving the GB team do not come close to outweighing the advantages that current Scottish players may gain in the short-term. This is especially true since the breaking up GB today means it is unlikely it will be reunited. Breaking up GB might have a major impact on one or two of our current players, and maybe one or two players in future.
- The Tiers in the WTC other than the MacRobertson Shield will probably consist of Croquet playing countries that will not be in a position to mount a challenge for a MacRob place in the next decade, perhaps more.

The SCA notes that these countries, which would probably form the second Tier, already play one another in international matches every one to three years. The WTC would provide an opportunity for these WCF member associations to play one another in a single event, and would consolidate the multiple ad-hoc matches already being played, thereby providing an event that would maximise the amount of Croquet played while minimising the expense and time involved.¹

It is unclear to the SCA how the second Tier could cause consternation to the large MacRob playing countries when the teams playing are much weaker. Simply put, the WTC event would benefit many of the smaller WCF member associations, whether parts of Great Britain (BLOBs) or not, and the SCA believes the WCF **must** find a way to facilitate the BLOBs to play in this event.

- As a result, the SCA believes that the WCFMC should ask the MacRob playing teams whether they will accept GB to play in the MacRob **and** allow the BLOBs to participate in the second Tier, for as long as there is no other team in that Tier strong enough to mount a realistic chance of promotion into the MacRobertson Shield. Until the day that Scotland or Wales is strong enough to mount a challenge to the top-Tier of the WTC, Scotland believes that it is in nobody's interest not to allow the BLOBs to play.
- The only exception to the above statement concerns the position of England; there may be several solutions to this, including, for instance, placing a restriction on the strength of the English team, perhaps specifying that it can be no stronger than the weakest team in the MacRob (on average grade).

- *In addition, the SCA believes that the original WCFMC decision was unconstitutional, because no motion to this effect was passed at the WCF General Meeting. The original Motion, which failed to get the required majority, covered both the transfer of power for the MacRobertson Shield and the setting-up of further Tiers. There was no amended or substantive Motion that authorised the setting up of further Tiers regardless of the location of the power to organise the MacRobertson Shield, and specifically no amended or substantive Motion that authorised setting up such Tiers to exclude four WCF full Members from taking part, contrary to Statute 214.2. The contention that, during discussion, the concept of setting up such an event was unanimously supported is interesting but bears no constitutional force.*

In conclusion, the SCA believes the WCFMC needs to reconsider its position regarding allowing BLOBs to play in the 2010 WTC, both to ensure that the second Tier is viable, and to allow all WCF member associations the opportunity to play in the WTC.

*Given the numerous discussions that have taken place on this issue, the SCA is firmly of the view that the issue must be referred back to the WCF, and that the **SCA will not consider withdrawal from GB until a WTC has a proven track record, and the WCF has resolved the situation with regard to its control of the MacRobertson Shield.***

The SCA realises that this issue could have been raised months ago, but it was only when realistic concerns about the viability and longevity of the WTC were raised that the SCA realised that breaking up GB is too big a decision to make now, based on an event that is still yet to be established.

Yours sincerely,

*Hon. Secretary of Scottish Croquet Association
James R. Hopgood*

¹ *A case in point is that both Wales and Scotland were unable to play Canada this year due to the expense of going for two days of Croquet, yet a single organised multi-team event would have made the trip worth while. Addressing issues like this should surely be of some concern to the WCF!"*

Consideration:

9. This has proven to be a very complicated and controversial subject, given that to allow member associations that are inherently part of "Great Britain" to play in tiers 2 or 3 would effectively be giving them two opportunities to play in the same event. Yet this stance also did not accommodate the position that may arise if such a member association did not have any players selected to represent "Great Britain", but was nevertheless barred from competing in the event.
10. It was re-iterated that WCF attempts to be inclusive, allowing member associations and their players opportunities to play in its events whenever possible beyond the scope of WCF Statute 214.2. Such a policy is not only good for the event and organisation but also for the sport.
11. After much discussion the WCFMC agreed to ask the CA to consider entering England in the MacRobertson Shield rather than Great Britain.
12. Again the complex nature of this problem was brought up. The CA has recently indicated that such a change would have many implications and does not necessarily have support for it from within the CA and from some other UK associations. They will therefore remain as Great Britain for the 2010 competition. The CA has committed to use its best

endeavours to try and broker an agreement with the other home countries, and propose any necessary constitutional amendments, before the 2014 MacRobertson Shield.

13. In the meantime a joint WCF/CA committee was set up to organise the tiers 2 and 3. They have now found two suitable major venues and want to progress to invite teams to enter so that further organisational work can continue.
14. The proposed World Team Championship consists of the MacRobertson Shield and Tiers 2 and 3. Australia, Great Britain, New Zealand and USA will compete in Tier 1(The MacRobertson Shield), whilst WCF will invite all members who are not competing in the MacRobertson Shield to compete. But what about Scotland, Wales, Jersey and IOM?
15. The issues involved in the various components of UK croquet are complex and it is considered that they cannot be resolved in time for WCF to hold a full WTC (Tiers 1, 2 and 3) in 2010. In addition, there are divergent views within the WCFMC about the application of Statute 214.2 to the World Team Championship and that will also take some time to resolve.
16. Yet 2010 is a unique opportunity to play this event as an integrated tournament given that the MacRobertson Shield is being played in England, in close proximity to the majority of WCF member association based in Europe. It was considered that if the 2010 event was not held then it might not be until 2025 before another suitable opportunity may arise.
17. Additional constitutional issues raised were: Is the CA solely responsible for English Croquet as a WCF member? Can it do this and maintain its current domain? Are the WCA, JCA and IOMCA allowed under WCF statutes to be members of the WCF if the CA maintains its current domain? Which body is responsible for Northern Ireland? Should a Great Britain governing body be formed to represent all croquet in the United Kingdom?
18. In relation to the interpretation of Statute 214.2 which states: "*For the avoidance of doubt, all Full Member Associations and Associate Members shall have the right to compete or send representatives to compete in all competitions of the Federation.*" needs clarification. How does it apply to a World Team Championship and to groupings of members (eg "Great Britain", "Rest of the World" etc)? Also, whether it applies to events organised jointly with other bodies, i.e. the World Team Championship partly organised by the four governing body MacRobertson Shield countries and partly organised by the WCF. Furthermore, WCF may wish in future to hold events which we DO NOT expect all members to be represented .(e.g. a Best 8 event or an invitation event or a match like the 2008 Golf Croquet Egypt v RoW).
19. The WCFMC concluded that the sum total of the many of the views and arguments for or against various positions were outside the scope of its powers in that it was not necessarily an interpretation that was required of previous decisions or existing statutes, for which it is competent, but a wholesale exploration of the constituent membership of WCF was required, plus the expectation of Full and Associate Member Associations relating to all WCF competitions, for which it was not.
20. After discussion it was therefore agreed unanimously that WCF should adopt a two phase approach:
 - 20.1 Agree conditions which apply for the World Team Championship in 2010 ONLY, and are not to be regarded as a **precedent**.
 - 20.2 Set out all the relevant issues raised by WCFMC members and by WCF Member Associations which relate to the Great Britain wide representation in the World

Team Championship and to the interpretation of Statute 214.2. These issues to be resolved before a 2nd World Team Championship is organised including:

- 20.2.1 Consideration of the relationship of the various WCF member associations from the political entity "United Kingdom", namely the Croquet Association (CA), Scottish CA (SCA), Isle of Man CA (IOMCA), the Welsh CA (WCA) the Jersey CA (JCA) to each other and, within the WCF, and the question of jurisdiction for Northern Ireland.
- 20.2.2 Consideration of the interpretation of WCF Statute 214.2. As applied to all our competitions including World Championships, other competitions e.g. European Team Championships, WCF competitions involving groupings of member associations, and individual players playing in selection events

The Benefits

21. By adopting such an approach to the 2010 event, the following are beneficial:
 - Post 2010, The CA has committed to use its best endeavours to try and broker an agreement with the other home countries, and propose any necessary constitutional amendments, before the 2014 MacRobertson Shield;
 - It clarifies the position for 2010 without the need to resolve a number of contentious issues;
 - It allows WCF to make headway with a major expansion of the World Team Championship with The MacRobertson Shield as part of it;
 - The playing strength of tiers 2 and 3 will be increased which a number of non UK/ non Mac members who want to compete in 2010 see as an advantage (for example Canada, Sweden and Spain.)
 - It will allow WCF to hold, in conjunction with the CA, a major development in our tournament schedule.
 - WCF specifically state and confirm that the arrangements for 2010 should not be regarded as a precedent:
 - It creates time for the resolution of some complex issues particularly the application of Statute 214.2 and the issues around the UK constituent WCF members.

Further Development of WCF / WTC / MacRobertson Shield

22. Separately from the above issues, WCF would also propose that following the experience of the 2010 event the WCF would undertake further discussions with the Mac Countries regarding the status of the WTC as a WCF event, for example whether (and how) the MacRobertson Shield could be brought under the WCF "umbrella".
23. WCF should also discuss whether in the long term it is appropriate to have teams in the WTC and other events that are "composite", i.e. representing more than one of our members, or whether the WTC should only be open to teams representing individual nations.

26th November 2009.