



**The WCF
Management
Committee Report
2005- 2007**

Presented by the WCF Secretariat to the 12th WCF Council Meeting, to be held on 6th February 2008 in Christchurch, New Zealand, in pursuance of Article 107 of the WCF Statutes.

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The World Croquet Federation Management Committee Report

Foreword

This is the WCF Secretariat report covering the period 2005 to 2007 outlining all WCF Management Committee (WCFMC) activity since the date of the 11th WCF Council Meeting held on 9th August 2005.

Much work in the development of the organization has taken place in the 30 months since the last report and the decisions taken at the last council meeting.

This has largely been adopting processes and protocols to ensure that WCF is in a robust position to meet the aims and objectives laid down by its founding fathers in 1986.

A forward schedule for events until 2011 is in place.

An increased involvement in helping our smaller members with development has been started.

However, there are still a number of questions over the organisation's ability to function as an International Sports Federation, with "control" of the sport world-wide and eventually they will need to be addressed by the wider WCF membership.

These include the ability to:-

- control the Laws of the Games;
- control International matches played between members;
- adopt the World Anti-Doping Agency code;

WCFMC membership. August 2005 – February 2008

David Openshaw (England) – President (Retires by rotation December 2009)

Keith Aiton (Scotland) from 1st January 2008.

Carole Jackson (South Africa) (Retires by rotation December 2009)

Charles Jones (New Zealand) (Retires by rotation December 2007)

Max Murray (Australia) (Retires by rotation December 2009)

Amir Naguib (Egypt) (Retires by rotation December 2009)

Rhys Thomas (USA) (Retires by rotation December 2011)

Andrew Hope (Scotland) (Treasurer)

Brian Storey (England) (Secretary-General)

Kevin Garrad (Isle of Man) (Co-opted) from – 28th September 2006 – 31st December 2007

Gary Fox (Australia) to August 2005

Graeme Roberts (New Zealand) to August 2005

Peter Payne (Switzerland) to 28th September 2006

WCF Aims and Objectives – WCF Business Plan

At the inception of the WCF, the founders laid down specific aims and objectives that would enhance the organization, its wider membership and in particular the sport on a world-wide basis.

Some of these aims and objectives are the core business of the organization, some less so.

Focus needs to be maintained to ensure the further success of the Federation.

To identify the challenges WCF faces and the means to achieve success, the WCF Business Plan was adopted in 2005, with further amendments in 2006 and latterly 2007. Some of the aims and objectives required only short term measures for success. Others required more resources, and a small number a significant change of thinking amongst the wider membership, which is yet to materialise.

In the 30 months of existence, most parts of the Business Plan has achieved their designated outcomes and we can rightly say that the concept of the plan itself has been largely as successful as it can be at this time.

WCF Regulations

The WCF Council Meeting in 2005 passed a resolution allowing WCF to adopt Regulations to supplement the WCF Statutes. If the Statutes can be viewed as the skeleton to which WCF works, the Regulations can be seen as the meat on that skeleton, itemizing in more detail the work of the WCF, its processes and decision making techniques.

No Regulation is allowed to circumvent any WCF Statute and in the case of conflict the relevant Statute would maintain pre-eminence.

Together with the WCF Business Plan, the regulations that have been introduced have made our processes more transparent

The following Regulations have been introduced:-

WCF Management Committee Administration Regulations

This describes the administrative arrangements for the WCF Management Committee including elections. This includes how decisions are reached and the timetable for elections of the President and WCFMC members.

WCF Event Regulations

This describes how to organise a WCF event, the bidding process and criteria. These Regulations were derived from policy documents of a long standing nature and required minimal enhancement and no amendment.

WCF Sports Regulations

This describes the current requirements for the organisation of WCF Licensed events relating to the playing of the sport. These were a new concept. In 2005 the WCF council adopted a proposal for WCF to determine its own Tournament Regulations for its own events. Previously they had to follow the Regulations of the relevant host association. This had led to differences of approach and lack of consistency, incompatible with maintaining a high quality product on the lawn.

These Regulations are the result. Derived from research of member association's regulations, other International Sports Federations and governing bodies. The name was chosen to avoid any possibility of confusion with members Tournament Regulations.

WCF Equipment Regulations

Describes the current specification for equipment and contains a list of equipment models and manufacturers that are WCF approved.

WCF Development Regulations

Describes the manner in which the WCF Development Programme is controlled and managed.

WCF Hall of Fame Regulations

Describes the manner in which the WCF Hall of Fame mechanisms are controlled

The concept and vision of the WCF regulatory system is to ensure greater openness, better and consistent decision making, and a stepped approach to improvement of operations.

These regulations, albeit based on a sound footing, while still young in concept and largely untested over time, will form the basis of future operations. It is axiomatic that they are classed very much as living documents and, as such, with a regime that is capable of change over time.

Member associations are encouraged to make recommendations for the continued improvements of existing regulations or forming ideas for new ones.

WCF Events and Forward Schedule

Since the last council meeting in 2005, WCF has held, with the kind co-operation of various host associations, the following Championships:-

2 Women's GC (2005 - Cairo and 2007 - Dublin);
1 Open GC (2006 - Hawkes Bay)
1 European Team AC and GC. (2007 - Cheltenham)

In addition it has been involved in the planning for:-

2 AC (2008 - Christchurch) (this event) and 2009 – USA.
1 GC (2008 - Cape Town)

Also outline planning and consultation has taken place with potential or actual bidders for:-

1 AC (2011 – Preferred bidder - Australia)
1 GC (2010) – Still Open
1 Womens GC (2009 – Preferred bidder - Australia)

In addition support was given to the Egyptian Open GC Championships of 2005, 2006 and 2007.

All of these have carried with them a significant resource implication



not only for the host association but also the WCF Presidency and Secretariat.

All events held can be said to be successful and largely appreciated by the wider croquet playing community in terms of participation and the interest shown.

Another success is the financial formula used for hosting of WCF events. All sponsorship and donations go to the organising association and WCF receive a fee (Currently £1,000 GBP) plus the entry fees from the main event.

One of the features of such events is the opportunity given by WCF for players, spectators and host members to quiz members or the WCFMC on WCF policies and strategies. Also, the continued policy of seeking opinions on various aspects of the way in which WCF operates by way of a end of event questionnaire.

WCF has also forged positive relationships with its four largest members, (Australia, England, New Zealand and USA) who are also the organising bodies for the Croquet World Series for the MacRobertson Shield. The event is recognised as the World Team Championship by the WCF. The WCF has joined the organising committee as an observer member.

WCF Development Programme



The WCF is committed by its objectives to developing the sport of croquet around the world, and to assisting its members as they develop the game in their respective countries.

The WCF Development Programme, complements and supports the WCF Objective of "employing funds of the Federation as may be deemed appropriate" and provides a consistent source of support for all WCF Members, whereby, subject to regulation, it entitles each WCF Member to loans or grants of WCF resources for the purpose of developing croquet in their part of the world.

To date, WCF has given grant aid on 11 occasions to developing associations for projects as diverse as production of coaching and promotional CD's, translating coaching manuals into German, defraying the cost of coaching or laws courses and encouraging new members to "join the wider tournament scene".

A total of £4334 (GBP) has been awarded since inception of the Development Programme at an average award of just under £400 (GBP) each.

In that period one application was declined as it was retrospective in nature.

Currently budgeted is reasonable expenditure for the translations of AC Laws and GC Rules into languages other than English. To date the WCF GC Rules have been translated into French and in the pipeline are translations of AC and GC into Japanese. However it has been difficult to recruit suitably qualified persons to act as translators and it is likely to be a slow process before the main languages are represented.

In addition, a German Language coaching manual has been developed and financially supported.

The WCF Development Programme can rightly be viewed as the single most significant advance in WCF operations since inception and as a long term project will play a significant role in the development of the sport world-wide despite the scant resources available.

WCF Hall of Fame

Various studies have taken place within the croquet fraternity to analyse the make up of the typical croquet club in demographic terms. Broadly speaking the average croquet player is likely to be from socio-economic groups A – C1 with a larger disposable income than most, of higher education than the general population and most markedly, amateur in status. It is perhaps this make up that has meant that most outstanding performers in the sport have largely passed contemporaries by, without any formal recognition of the part they have played.

Whilst there are exceptions, with the occasional book and/or election to high office in member associations, in the main, many are just unrecognised.

The founding fathers of the WCF identified this feature and wrote into the WCF Statutes a requirement that – *“WCF makes awards to those who have contributed to the achievement of the Federation's aims”*.

The concept of a WCF Hall of Fame is not entirely popular, whether due to a connotation of North American influence or a natural reticence to avoid publicity. However what it does do is allow contemporaries the opportunity to show their appreciation to those that deserve it.

Although still young in operation, the WCF Hall of Fame also recognises those who are deceased, who nevertheless have played a significant role in the development of the sport, well before the inception of the WCF. By this means, their identity will hopefully live for all time, a testimony to their dedication and interest in the sport.

To maintain that special feeling of joining an exclusive “club” no more than 5 persons can be inducted in any one year with no guarantee that any induction at all will be made.

WCF is fortunate to have the services of the following panel members who have the difficult job of deciding who should or should not be inducted:

Rhys Thomas (USA) (Chairman); Prof Bernard Neal (England); John Prince, New Zealand) and Neil Spooner (Australia)

In these early days of the WCF Hall of Fame, it is likely that many prominent figures from yester-year will be inducted. After all, we have over 150 years of organised croquet history to catch up on!

WCF Web Site

All serious organisations now maintain web sites and we are serious. It allows us to reach a global audience with minimal cost and, importantly, with whatever message needs to be portrayed. Call it spin, call it information, it is an important link to the croquet playing community.



The WCF web site has been in existence for many years, but became dormant from 2002 to 2004.

In 2005 the new site was created and further developed to its current status. It allows WCF to carry all its main archive for public viewing and is fast approaching 1000 pages of information.

Although it is unlikely to be the first port of call for most croquet enthusiasts, (reserved for National Association web sites and prominent others), it nevertheless provides that extra service that is demanded in this day and age.

The resource implications for continued development, particularly in time are huge, but nevertheless, it is time well spent.

Greater interactivity is envisaged in the future with more motion content and facilities for members.

As one of those facilities, the WCF web site also hosts the sites of the members of Egypt, Palestine, France and Spain plus the Fédération Européenne de Croquet (FEC). It is largely dependent upon those organisations to provide material for their respective pages.



A significant feature of the site is the integration of a world-wide croquet tournament calendar, which is fully searchable by date, venue, country and miscellaneous text. A positive addition for members!

More and more multi-lingual documents are appearing on the site and with help and assistance of enthusiasts; more are planned for the future.



Aesthetic and practical improvements will continue to be made in the future.

Overall the development of the site can be viewed in positive terms and must remain as a long standing feature of future development of the WCF.

Laws and Rules of the Games

Whilst there are many variants of the sports, two are predominant, Golf Croquet and Association Croquet. The current situation is that Golf Croquet rules are maintained by the WCF and Association is maintained by four member associations whose decision is binding upon WCF.

With Golf Croquet, WCF has recently published the 2007 edition which will come in to operation for WCF events on 1st January 2008. Members are free, but encouraged, to adopt the Rules at their earliest opportunity.

The amendments were based upon previous models, particularly the 2005 edition, and surveys carried out at WCF events and other notable tournaments.

In addition, croquet enthusiasts were encouraged to feed-back ideas to the WCF GC Rules Committee for their consideration. All this advice and information was invaluable in forming the text of the new edition.

WCF is indebted to its GC Rules Committee: Gordon Smith (New Zealand), Tony Hall (Australia), Amir Ramsis Naguib (Egypt), Bill Arliss (England), Peter Millson (South Africa), Mohammed Kamal (USA)

In addition to that work, the President, David Openshaw, coordinated a re-write of Garden Croquet Rules in liaison with the CA (of England) and the Jaques Company. They are to place a copy of these rules with all future croquet set sales and in doing so, advertise the CA and the WCF.

The Garden Croquet Rules are a simplified version of the Association Rules variant with cross references to others.

There is motion by the Australian Croquet Association to bring the International Laws Committee for Association Croquet, under the remit of the WCF.

World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)

In 2005, the WCF Council asked the WCF Management Committee to make recommendations for adopting, or otherwise, WADA protocols and becoming a signatory to them.

Subject of a separate report and an agenda item for WCF Council consideration, it is mentioned here only in passing to indicate that a sizeable piece of work has been done to explore all the concepts and concerns expressed by members about this important issue.

The WCFMC will be recommending that no further action be taken at this time.

The outcome of any WCF Council decision will have important implications of how WCF develops and is perceived in the future.

Finances

WCF is no different to most organizations, with scant monetary resources, operating on a shoe-string budget.

Nevertheless, careful management, particularly by the Treasurer and the WCFMC, has maintained a good positive balance.

With encouraged increasing demand for WCF Development Programme funding, a careful watch must be maintained to ensure that the different income streams continue to meet WCF obligations.

Income 2003 – 2004 = £15,952

Income 2005 – 2006 = £24,667

Expenditure 2003 – 2004 = £4,508

Expenditure 2005 – 2006 = £6,805

It is hoped to present the 2007 Accounts at the WCF Council Meeting.

WCF Membership

At the 2008 WCF Council meeting, proposals will be made to formally admit to membership the Croquet Association of the Czech Republic. It was temporarily admitted by the WCFMC during in 2006.

On the downside, at the same meeting, the Council will be asked to terminate the membership of Guernsey who have ceased to operate. It is regretted that the member must be considered dormant.

The current membership totals 27 associations of all categories and it is unlikely that we will see much increase in these numbers in the foreseeable future.

This is despite strong links being made with the Denmark Croquet Association who boast over 6,500 members. They play a version of

one-handed croquet and regard two handed versions with disdain. To date they have declined to make an application to join the WCF.

Anecdotal evidence continues to suggest some croquet activity in India and Pakistan, however attempts to quantify those have met with prevarication and no reliance can be placed on individuals who have, thus far, asserted some suzerainty over the sport in those countries. To date there are three people in Pakistan each claiming to represent a strong and organized national body. None have been able to produce any evidence to support their claims that croquet is actually played on an organized basis at all.

Embryonic participation in the sport is evident in Uruguay and Greece (Corfu) with possible continued participation in Mexico and Bahamas.

There is continued evidence of the sport being played in many isolated pockets in the world, but not necessarily on a structured basis so that they could easily migrate to membership.

All efforts will continue to be made to encourage and assist emerging nations to reach membership status.

The long term goal must be to achieve membership of 40 plus members. That threshold will enable WCF to achieve membership of the General Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF) and through them, possible participation in the World Games.

It is highly unlikely that croquet will ever again achieve membership of the IOC and be an Olympic sport (It requires 75 members), but the World Games event can be viewed as a more realistic objective.

WCF Nationality and Eligibility

The current WCF Nationality and eligibility statute is, "not fit for purpose". They describe limitations only for International 26 point games, which by inference applies only to AC events. No mention is made of GC events at all.

Note:- WCF policy is to interpret the statute as also applying to GC events even though there is no mention of them in the text.

In addition, the 36 month limitation for changing a nationality was long thought by some to be onerous and did not easily reflect today's more transient society.

As a consequence, a WCF working party was set up to examine the Statute.

This reported back in late 2006 where a presentation of the recommendations was made to the MacRobertson Shield governing bodies in November that year. They agreed to examine the details and consider adoption for their use.

This agreement would inherently mean that it would be easier to gain the approval for change with WCF members in February 2008 and also ensure that all accredited WCF events of a World Championship standard were operating the same.

The WCF Council are to be asked to consider a number of proposals and alternatives that would clarify the extent to which the WCF statutes are binding on its members and in particular the operation of Articles 214.1 and 214.1.1.

They state:-

(214.1) Membership of the Federation shall constitute an agreement between the Federation and each Member Association to be bound by and to comply with:

(214.1.1) the World Croquet Federation Rules and any Regulations made under them, (each as amended, revoked or added to from time to time);

The substantive motion is to amend the eligibility text of Article 303 to include GC, revise the time period before a player can change their allegiance from 3 years to 1 year, attempts to deal with different levels of acceptance of the statute and deals with multi-association teams (e.g. Great Britain).

Conclusion

The WCF gathers strength, not only financially but in supporting its membership in practical ways.

However, these are testing times for the organization which finds itself at a cross-road of either being just another event holder or an International Sport Federation.

The matters that are to be discussed at the WCF Council meeting are of fundamental importance to WCF, how it is perceived now and how it will develop in the future.

Regards

Brian Storey
Secretary-General
World Croquet Federation
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