World Croquet Federation
Global Player & Games Database
Feasibility Study

PROGRESS REPORT

1   Management Overview

A copy of the current Global Player & Games Database (GP&GDB) Feasibility Study Terms Of Reference is attached. At his request Rod Templeman has been replaced by Keith Ebden as an observer member of the working party representing New Zealand.

Initial data gathering and investigation is complete. System scope has been established through discussion. Initial draft database design to better focus further discussion is in an advanced state of production.

In terms of database design and data and transaction volumes, the required system is neither large nor complex, and hence at this stage looks eminently feasible. Some complexity is/maybe imposed by data protection and on-going support considerations. A natural phasing of an implementation project suggests itself, which in turn should afford a relatively low risk implementation strategy.

The remainder of this report focuses on areas identified to date as requiring particular consideration.

2   Data Protection Issues

The study has focused on what will be required to conform with the EU's Global Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), these being the most stringent of any identified. In Australia the minimum size of organisation required to conform to formal data protection standards is far larger than any national croquet organisation in existence or the WCF itself. New Zealand is working on a standard, but with no known timescale for introduction.

In essence organisations are entitled to hold such data as is required to carry on their normal business without requiring explicit consent from its subjects. Not clear that e.g. the existing ranking and results systems, and the proposed automatic handicapping systems are formally part of the WCF's normal operations, but that can no doubt be clarified fairly easily by amending its Statutes. Similarly National Governing Associations (NGAs) and (clubs?) can include the right to use entrants data for these purposes in their standard tournament entry conditions, as I believe the CA has done.

Slightly less clear is for example to what extent general player data can be made available to the world at large. So for example a natural extension of player information held for ranking & handicapping system purposes would be contact information (email addresses, phone numbers) so as to provide a central, global Player Directory and, since players per se are not members of the WCF might require explicit individual player consent.

This area probably requires further, particular investigation and confirmation prior to implementation, there being potential significant legal implications.

3 Development & Implementation

As noted above the required system is not that big or complicated and is eminently suitable for a phased approach to implementation. Obvious candidates for phases being:

- Phase 0 - Detailed system design
- Phase 1 - existing AC & GC Ranking systems implemenatation
- Phase 2 - further formal systems support:
    - 2a: existing Croquet Results system (Croquetscores)
    - 2b: proposed AC & GC Automatic Handicapping systems
- Phase 3: additional systems support:
    - Tournament managers
    - NGA Membership systems
    - General games recording
    - General database enquiry (e.g. of the Cricinfo Stats variety)

The system will be developed using a standard SQL based relational database platform, of which there are many providers. There will be relatively small amount of screen based processing software required. Choice of tools will form part of the first implementation phase.

The current Croquetscores implementation is based on a Content Management System oriented database. Subject to detailed investigation with Tim Murphy (system developer) there might be the opportunity to re-implement using a standard relational database technology.

System development should be sufficiently well defined and of sufficiently appropriate scale to be accomplished by suitable resources drawn from within the croquet world. The project could afford a good opportunity to develop and implement a methodology capable of reproducibly and reliably developing supportable small to medium sized systems using such resources.

4 Post Implementation Support

Pure post implementation running of the system should not pose significant issues. On the other hand there will be significant effort required by some Database Administrator (DBA) type resource to ensure on-going data integrity. By way of example games will be uploaded onto the system initially in provisional form and such automatic data validated as is possible performed. Then a largely human based player identification is performed in order to avoid e.g. multiple occurrences of the same player in the database. The GC Rankings system has already implemented the concept of Regional Ranking Officers (RRO) who in effect perform this DBA role as currently required. The RRO approach can probably be implemented similarly for AC, and the RRO roles extended to include additional DBA responsibilities for other systems as they become supported. A single DBA officer would be required for oversight purposes and to act as a general design authority.