

Minutes of WCF Council Meeting – 17th July 2011



The meeting was held at Surbiton Croquet Club, starting at 1pm.

The paragraph numbering below follows the agenda.

0. Attendees

Charles Jones (chair), Ian Burridge (treasurer), Martin French (secretary-general), Keith Aiton, Stephen Mulliner (ENG), James Hopgood (SCO), Klaus Gollhofer (AUT), Tony Hall (AUS), Kevin Beard (AUS), Peter Freer (AUS), Amir Ramsis (EGY), Andrea Pravettoni (ITA), Simon Carlsson (SWE), Chris Wakeham (SAF), Christine Wakeham (SAF), Roberts Stafekis (LAT), Mrs Stafekis (LAT), Jonathan Kirby (ENG), Ian Lines (ENG), Chris Williams (WAL).

Choosing to vote by post: New Zealand, Ireland, Japan

Apologies: Spain, Denmark, India, Pakistan

1. Minutes of Council Meeting held on 23rd August 2010

Version 2 of the minutes, as circulated on 17th May, were taken as read. Proposed by Tony Hall, seconded Jonathan Kirby; carried. Matters arising:

Tony Hall asked why the MC hadn't organised the Women's AC World Championship, as agreed at the last Council Meeting. Martin French explained that there were a number of questions concerning events when he joined, and these had been dealt with together in the 10 Year Schedule consultation, and resolutions being considered today. The Women's ACWC was included in the 8 proposed event types and also in the proposed schedule, and it was intended to call for bids shortly for all events – including this one – for the next few years. [Tony Hall responded that it was most unfortunate that a clear direction by Council had been disregarded.](#)

Jonathan Kirby asked [about](#) progress on publicising major [championships run by the WCF's Members](#) on the website. Martin French pointed to the rather unsuccessful attempt at this on the current website and the intention to do better when the new website was available.

2. Reports

2.1 Report of the President

Charles Jones proposed his circulated report was taken as read. Jonathan Kirby seconded; carried. No matters arising.

2.2 Report of the Management Committee

Charles Jones moved the report be taken as read, Ian Lines seconded; carried. Matters arising:

Charles Jones encouraged Members to think of candidates to propose for the elections to the MC later this year.

Minutes of WCF Council Meeting – 17th July 2011



Martin French highlighted the success of the WCF Event Lead idea.

Charles Jones thanked the MC members for helping make the Under 21 GCWC happen – a very worthwhile event.

Stephen Mulliner spoke about Development. The WCF had been trying to make progress for some time, without attempting to “evangelise” in countries where no croquet organisation existed. Stephen emphasised the need for Members to ask for coaching assistance and funds for improving croquet facilities. It was, for example, slow going with the development grant of €5000 for Norway, to help build a four-lawn venue. The problem seemed to be their obtaining matching funding. The offer of getting an experienced coach to visit a country was repeated: the WCF pays the costs of getting the coach to the country and the host pays the in-country costs.

Chris Wakeham asked about filming of the GCWC. Stephen Mulliner reported that discussions had been held with 247.com but it would involve the WCF spending £4-5,000 in order to create footage that would be aired on TV channels like Weekend Bloomberg in order to show potential future sponsors what coverage they might expect. There would be no direct income. Ian Burrige asked the meeting what it thought about spending that sort of money for this purpose. South Africa and England expressed support and there were no objections. Jonathan Kirby asked for a brief statement of what we would be trying to achieve, to circulate to Members for comment.

AP2011/1 – Stephen Mulliner to produce such a statement for circulation.

Charles Jones described the benefits of the weekly Skype calls the MC were having, which improved communication and understanding within the MC. Tony Hall and Jonathan Kirby expressed their satisfaction at the improved communication within the WCF.

Ian Burrige summarised progress of the Tournament Group, and Keith Aiton the Regulations Group.

Tony Hall thought it would be very helpful if WCF Equipment and Sports Regs could advance to the point where countries wouldn't need their own regulations for singles top-class play (even if still required for doubles and handicap play). Chris Wakeham thought the Equipment Regs – which were nearly ready for publication - should include mallet specifications, instead of both the GC Rules and AC Laws.

AP2011/2 – Martin French to explore with the GC Rules Committee and International Laws Committee whether this would be possible.

2.3 Business Plan

Charles Jones moved the Plan be taken as read, seconded by Chris Wakeham; carried. Tony Hall thought the Plan was a “good job”. Matters arising:

Minutes of WCF Council Meeting – 17th July 2011



Jonathan Kirby thought, in response to the first challenge of further improving relations, that the Decision-Making proposal would help considerably.

Martin French pointed to the question in the second challenge about Development, that perhaps we could appoint say 3 development officers – Europe, Asia Pacific, and the Americas. Tony Hall pointed to a small group of players in Hong Kong – Charles Jones was visiting HK in 2 weeks and would try to make contact.

Chris Wakeham liked the target of reaching 40 Members, and the increased publicity opportunities that could be unlocked. Jonathan Kirby pointed to the more immediate need to strengthen some of the existing Members and to help some to progress to Associate and Full Membership.

3. Treasurer's Report

Ian Burridge presented his report and moved that the 2010 accounts be approved. Tony Hall seconded; carried. Ian invited members to inspect the signed copy of the accounts after the meeting.

For the 2012 budget, Ian Burridge walked through the changes and said that he intended we should review income and expenditure in two years, once the recent/new changes have had a chance to work through. Ian explained the reasons for the proposed increases in honoraria for the S-G and Ranking Officer and the introduction of an honorarium for the new post of Webmaster and drew attention to the proposal to pay 50% of World Championship entry fees to the host. It was agreed to defer approval of the budget until item 7.1, as the proposed budget included spending that was dependent on some of the up-coming Resolutions.

4. Applications for Membership

4.1 Croquet Federation of India

Charles Jones moved that the CFI be accepted as an Observer Member. Chris Wakeham seconded. Martin French gave the background to the application and his dealings over the last 8 months with Manoranjan Mishra (CFI President).

Tony Hall was concerned that the WCF had a very similar approach from India a few years ago. India were visited **at WCF expense** and found to have no real croquet activity or organisation – he was concerned this might be similar. After more discussion, the proposal was carried by 8 votes to 3.

4.2 Pakistan Croquet Federation

Charles Jones moved that PCF be accepted as an Observer Member. The S-G reported on his dealings with the PCF and the absence of recent contact. He was unable to give an assurance about the realism of the application based on the information available to him, **as no completed Information Pack had been received from Pakistan**. No-one was prepared to second the proposal.

Minutes of WCF Council Meeting – 17th July 2011



AP2011/3 – Martin French to contact the PCF and invite them to complete the process at the next Council Meeting.

4.3 Latvian Croquet Federation

Charles Jones moved that the LKF be admitted as an Observer Member, Simon Carlsson seconded.

Roberts Stafeckis from the LKF spoke in support of their application. The LKF was in its second season, with 3 clubs and around 50 players. 20 to 25 players took part in 10 tournaments held each year. Just last Friday, the LKF gained Latvian Government recognition as the single organiser of croquet in Latvia. Their aims were to grow the sport and improve their quality, and the LKF were particularly interested in coaching assistance from the WCF.

The admittance of the LKF to the WCF was carried unanimously.

5. Revisions of Association status

Nothing to report

6. 10 Year Schedule Resolutions

Martin French explained that there had been a good response to the 10 Year Schedule consultation, and that many of the aspects would be implemented through Regulations or Statutes changes. However, there were 3 specific questions that should be formally decided by Council and these were presented here as separated Resolutions.

Chris Wakeham wanted to add to the intent of Resolution 1 that event types could also only be deleted from the list of 8 with Council approval. [Tony Hall said that to require Council approval to delete an event is not relevant if no willing host country can be found.](#)

AP2011/4 – Martin French to ensure when the intention of Resolution 1 is translated into Regulations and Statutes, that any change (increase or decrease) to the list of recognised event types requires formal Council approval.

Tony Hall pointed out that moving the MacRobertson Shield from a 3.5 year to a 4 year cycle – to ensure there was an event in the Mac's Centenary Year of 2025 - had made this new 10 Year Schedule a possibility.

Resolution 1 – publication of 10 Year Schedule and 8 recognised event types: carried by 16 votes to nil.

Resolution 2 – Over 50s GCWC: carried by 16 votes to nil

Resolution 3 – License Fee reductions: carried by 16 votes to nil.

Minutes of WCF Council Meeting – 17th July 2011



7.1 Ratification of WCF Finance Regulations and Investment Policy

Ian Burridge introduced the Finance Regulations and explained the one area the MC had found contentious: the reimbursement of intercontinental travel costs for the President and S-G to attend Council Meetings, if they were not also playing in the associated WCF event. It was confirmed that such travelling expenses will be payable with effect from 1st January 2012.

Tony Hall thought the Auditor should be appointed by the MC rather than Council, as Council was in no position to do so. Ian Burridge pointed to this as a safeguard to Council that the MC was subject to proper scrutiny.

Tony Hall also thought (paragraph 8.1 from Investment Policy) that it would be better for the MC rather than the Council to make investment decisions. Stephen Mulliner explained that the MC would always aim to put to Council informed proposals on investments for Council's consideration. Keith Aiton raised the question of the 2002 Trustees Act, and the need for professional advice on both how the law applied to the WCF and on the investments chosen. We needed to understand the situation before implementing the Investment Policy. However, it was **suggested** that simply continuing to hold all the WCF's reserves as cash could also be seen as at fault under the Trustees Act.

AP2011/5 – Stephen Mulliner to obtain professional advice on what WCF should invest in.

AP2011/6 – Keith Aiton to obtain advice on whether the 2002 Trustees Act applies to the WCF and its implications.

Chris Wakeham suggested that in paragraph 6.1, investments in equities should be limited to 40% of the reserves, and only in Blue Chip companies. The 14 day limit in 6.3 should be changed to 60 days.

Resolution 4 – Ratification of Finance Regulations & Investment Policy was then carried by 14 votes to nil.

The meeting agreed the newly-ratified Regulations & Policy should be amended as discussed above.

AP2011/7 – Ian Burridge to apply the agreed amendments to the document.

Jonathan Kirby asked that in future years, could the outcomes from the previous two years be shown alongside the future budget items, for ease of comparison.

Ian Burridge then moved the 2012 Budget (item 3.2) be approved, seconded Martin French; carried unanimously.

AP2011/8 – Ian Burridge to add two past years' actuals to future budgets for comparison.

Minutes of WCF Council Meeting – 17th July 2011



7.2 Decision-making in the WCF

Martin French moved and Jonathan Kirby seconded the proposal for a 2 year trial of a new managed email process for WCF decision-making, following the earlier consultation.

Tony Hall explained Australia's concerns about this proposal. ACA wanted the MC to manage the WCF rather than, over time, the Members doing more and the MC less. The MC members had been chosen for their strength of contribution to world croquet and he did not want to see their input diluted.

Jonathan Kirby explained the CA's support for the proposal: it enables Members to be more involved but doesn't make it an obligation. It was a positive step forward, it was uncertain how it would develop, so a two year trial was a good idea.

Tony Hall worried that if it took off, the volume of emails between Members would be too great to manage.

Stephen Mulliner felt that the fundamental problem has been that the WCF is too cumbersome, and this proposal should improve things. This should aid the involvement of Members in the decision-making and avoid the current situation where at the annual Council meeting, 2 of the 4 largest Members were not even represented. With an email process, all can be aware and involved, without committing the resources to send the right delegates half way around the world.

Chris Wakeham said that SACA was also strongly in favour. The MC should still undertake most 'Business as Usual' while allowing the Members to be more informed and involved.

Carried by 11 votes to 3.

7.3 Changing the AC ranking system

Charles Jones moved, and Tony Hall/ Jonathan Kirby seconded, that the proposed change to the Dynamic Grade system be adopted from 1st October 2011.

Carried by 13 votes to 1.

8. Rule 206 or 207

Nothing to report.

9. Election of Auditor

Ian Burrige introduced his short paper explaining the merits of moving to an Independent Examiner instead of an Auditor. David Walters (Wales) had agreed to be the Independent Examiner.

Chris Wakeham seconded and the combined proposal (moving to Independent Examiner and appointing David Walters) was carried.

Minutes of WCF Council Meeting – 17th July 2011



It was pointed out WCF Statutes currently required Members to have audited accounts. The MC should look at whether this was reasonable and appropriate.

AP2011/9 – Martin French to ensure the Statutes are amended to talk of Independent Examiner rather than Auditor.

AP2011/10 – Martin French to ensure the MC reviews the current Statute requirement for Members to have audited accounts.

10. Other business of the WCF

Ben Rothman had been expected to announce the 2011 Hall of Fame inductees at the meeting, but was not present. This would be handled later by email and on the website.

The Golf Croquet World Team Championship (GC WTC) was raised. Australia, Egypt and South Africa have expressed interest but Egypt has insufficient lawns to host more than one tier of a multi-tiered event. The MC preference is to hold the inaugural event as a one-tier event in the interests of inclusivity. Discussions will be held with Australia and South Africa in the near future with a view to holding it in the second half of 2013.

Roberts Stafeckis presented Council with a Latvian flag, a mug with their croquet federation logo, and a bottle of Latvian liqueur.

It was agreed to schedule the next Council Meeting for Friday 27th April 2012, the day before the ACWC began, in South Australia. ~~With the new email process in place, the Council Meeting could become a more informal opportunity to discuss new ideas and issues, rather than the formal paper-based process it has been.~~

With no more formal business, Charles Jones declared the formal meeting closed at 3:15pm.

11. Feedback from Members to the Management Committee

Jonathan Kirby congratulated the MC on the high level of organisation for the meeting, typical of the past year.