

WCF Management Committee Report – December 2013

This report covers the year ending 31 December 2013

OVERVIEW

Membership

Membership of the WCF is currently 29 divided into ten Full, ten Associate and nine Observer Members. No new Members joined during the year and Denmark withdrew as an Observer Member in November.

What the WCF does

The work of the WCF falls into four main categories, namely:

- (1) **World Championships** – from the perspective of the great majority of competitive croquet players around the world the organisation of world championships is by a large margin the WCF's most important function.
- (2) **Development** – the expansion of organised croquet throughout the world remains a key WCF objective.
- (3) **Communication with Members** – keeping Members up to date with WCF and WCF MC activities and seeking Council's approval of MC recommendations through the e-mail decision process.
- (4) **Administration and finance** – ensuring that the day-to-day running, periodic tasks and financing of the WCF are managed efficiently. Specific subjects requiring management include the 10 year Championship Schedule, the WCF web-site, the Hall of Fame, the Rules of Golf Croquet and the WCF Statutes and Regulations.

1. WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The tenth Golf Croquet World Championship was held in Cairo in April. It produced a final that has been widely acknowledged as probably the finest display of Golf Croquet prowess ever seen, happily recorded for posterity by several spectators and available on YouTube. Ahmed Nasr and Reg Bamford have been recognised for several years as the top exponents of the sport in Egypt and the rest of the world respectively. In 2008, Ahmed recorded a convincing 3-1 victory against Reg in South Africa. In 2011, Reg was knocked out by the Over-50's World Champion, Hisham Abu Osbaa, and was thereby thwarted in his ambition to become the first player ever to hold both the Association and Golf Croquet World Championships at the same time. Having successfully defended his AC title in 2012, the opportunity arose again in Cairo. In extraordinary circumstances, Reg recovered from a 6-2 deficit in game 5 to win the GC World Championship for the first time and achieve the feat of becoming the first simultaneous champion in both codes.

In August, the focus switched to the Association Croquet World Championship held in south-west London at the Surbiton Croquet Club, the Hurlingham Club, the Roehampton Club and (a little further away) Woking Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club. Would 20 year old Robert Fletcher from Australia, by then the top ranked player in the world, be able to get his revenge against Reg Bamford who had beaten him 3-2 in Adelaide in 2012? In the end, Reg was beaten in the semi-final by Paddy Chapman of New Zealand and Robert duly triumphed, setting an extraordinary record of not losing a single game in his journey to the title.

The WCF is very grateful to the Egyptian Croquet Federation and the Croquet Association for hosting these events so efficiently.

Forthcoming Events

Three events are scheduled for 2014:

- The Association Croquet World Team Championship
 - Tier 1: the MacRobertson Shield to be held in New Zealand (January)
 - Tier 2.1: to be held in Ireland (May)
 - Tier 2.2: to be held in England (May)
 - Tier 3: to be held in England (May)
- The Over-50s Golf Croquet World Championship to be held in Cairo (October)
- The Women's Golf Croquet World Championship to be held in Cairo (November)

2. DEVELOPMENT

The MC approach to development is founded on the principle of supporting national organisations while recognising that only they can provide continuous support for the growth of croquet within their own borders. The WCF is not resourced to be a missionary organisation. This support can take two main forms, namely capital grants to help develop croquet playing facilities and providing coaching. Coaching can be in play, refereeing or, especially, coaching itself so that Members can become self-sufficient. Coaching assistance can take place either in a Member's country or by offering courses for representatives of several of the smaller Members in one of the larger and more established Members.

In January, Dave Underhill (Switzerland) and Klim Seabright (England) undertook the first coaching trip to India with financial support from the WCF. This focussed on organising a GC tournament attended by over 100 teenagers from more than half of the states in India, some of whom had travelled 2000km to take part.

This was followed by the first international coaching academy at Southwick held from 29 April to 5 May. This was a great success and was attended by 13 representatives from seven European Members. It proved to be a most effective way of providing coaching and improving existing links between Members. In addition, coaching trips by experienced players from England were organised to Austria, Germany and Latvia.

The 2012 GC World Team Championship in Johannesburg, South Africa was filmed professionally and a promotional film of the event has been produced which is available on YouTube at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QJqAfUaqwtM&feature=youtu.be>

In relation to capital grants, the MC would like to encourage any Member that does not yet have a top-class venue with at least 4 full-size lawns to consider putting together a project which we can partly fund.

Any other ideas from Members for boosting Development are very welcome and will always be actively considered by the MC.

3. COMMUNICATION WITH MEMBERS

Newsletters

The practice of sending monthly newsletters to Members and to the wider croquet community is now embedded and hopefully ensures that all those interested in what the WCF and the MC are doing feel adequately informed.

Web-site

The new WCF web-site is now established and working better than the previous version although further development is warranted. We were fortunate to have the services of Rich Simes, a UK resident, as webmaster for much of the year for a very modest honorarium. The MC has recommended increasing the provision for web-site management significantly so that we can seek to appoint somebody on a reliable professional basis.

Council meeting

A Council meeting was held on 13 August 2013 at Surbiton CC during the 2013 ACWC. The agenda included discussions of Topics 19, 20 and 23 (see below) and the formation of a Governance Working Group to review the current governance structure of the WCF.

Council decision-making

The last quarter of 2013 has seen a flurry of WCF Topics that have required the use of the Statute 920-925 e-mail decision making process, not to mention the very recent MC elections. The response of Members has been very encouraging with almost all of the 20 voting Members taking part. To date, the decisions taken have included:

- Topic 16: Approval of revision of Statute 303 (country representation) (18 votes in favour, none against)
- Topic 17: Approval of Gateball policy (38 votes in favour, none against)
- Topic 20: GCWC Knock-out seeding method: a two –year trial of the Block Seniority method (version 2) was adopted (34 votes in favour compared to 15 votes for Block-Based Seeding).
- Topic 22: Ratification of new GC Rules (47 votes in favour, 2 against).
- Topic 23: Adoption of Financial Review and its recommendations (50 votes in favour, none against).

The following remain to be concluded:

- Topic 19: allocation procedure for World Championships
- Topic 24: extension of trial period for Statute 920-925 process to end 2014
- Topic 25: approval of 2014 budget
- Topic 26: election of Independent Examiner.

4. ADMINISTRATION

Hall of Fame

The 2013 inductees were Brice Jones, David Openshaw and Graeme Roberts and, looking back towards the beginnings of organised croquet in Victorian England, Walter Jones-Whitmore and Walter Peel. We are very proud to add them all to the WCF Croquet Hall of Fame.

Meritorious Service Award

The WCF Management Committee voted in 2013 to present Chris Hudson with a special award "in recognition of his major contribution to founding the WCF and of his twelve years' service as its first Secretary-General, from 1989 until 2001." The award was presented to Chris by Col. Tony Hall, a past president of the WCF, on 3 August 2013.

WCF Regulations

In the past year, we have focussed on two areas where interpretative uncertainty is particularly undesirable, namely country representation and the allocation of places in World Championships. These are subjects that probably matter more to individual players than any other aspect of the WCF statutes and regulations.

Statute 303 has been fully re-written. It covers qualification and eligibility to represent a country and how a player may change their affiliation. This is quite a complicated issue and the statute is necessarily quite lengthy. It was approved by Council in May 2013.

Appendices 1 and 2 of the Sports Regulations deal with the allocation of places in World Championships. Two new alternative versions have been submitted to Members for consultation with a view to choosing one as a permanent revision. Much thought has gone into making the new regulations as clear as possible so that the scope for misinterpretation is reduced to the absolute minimum and, hopefully, eliminated.

Management Committee matters

We said farewell to Martin French as Secretary-General at the end of August after three years of greatly valued service. His relaxed and methodical approach and commitment to improving communications with Members were highly appreciated by his colleagues and Members alike. Ian Burrige resigned as Treasurer in July. He not only discharged his specific functions with great efficiency but was also an active participant to all MC discussions and made especially valuable contributions in relation to the organisation of championships and the relevant regulations. Stephen Mulliner stepped up to take over from Martin and Gabrielle Higgins, a London barrister and now England's leading woman AC player, agreed to replace Ian.

There will be three new faces on the MC from 1 January 2014 following the recent elections. We say goodbye to Stephen Meatheringham and Gordon Smith who retire at the end of their four-year terms of office and thank them for their wise counsel and also, in Gordon's case, for his chairmanship of the WCF Golf Croquet Rules Committee and the production of a new edition of the Rules of Golf Croquet in November 2013.

Management Committee elections

As at 31 December 2013, the membership was as shown below. Stephen Meatheringham and Gordon Smith retire on that date and the names of the successful candidates in the recent MC elections are set out below.

Name and office	Country	Retires
Amir Ramsis, President	Egypt	31 December 2015
Stephen Mulliner, Secretary-General	England	31 August 2017
Gabrielle Higgins, Treasurer	England	31 December 2017
Keith Aiton	England	31 December 2015
Stephen Meatheringham	Australia	31 December 2013
Mike Orgill	USA	31 December 2015
Gordon Smith	New Zealand	31 December 2013
Chris Wakeham	South Africa	31 December 2015
Elected with effect from 1 January 2014		
Pete Landrebe	Australia	31 December 2017
Roberts Stafeckis	Latvia	31 December 2017
Geoff Young	New Zealand	31 December 2017

*The Management Committee of the World Croquet Federation
December 2013*