

WCF Management Committee Report – December 2015

This report covers the year ended 31 December 2015

OVERVIEW

Membership

Membership of the WCF is currently 30, consisting of ten Full, eleven Associate and nine Observer Members.

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, WCF membership applications, the Rules of Golf Croquet and the WCF Statutes and Regulations.

1. WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

1.1 Under-21 Golf Croquet World Championship

The first WCF event of 2015 was the U21 GCWC which was held at the United Croquet Club in Christchurch, New Zealand from 1 to 5 February. Although the host nation produced a large squad, which bodes well for the development of GC in New Zealand, the favourites were Marwan El Sabarouti of Egypt and Harry Dodge from England. Conditions were very challenging with fast courts and very firm Atkins hoops. Marwan beat Harry in the semi-final but lost to New Zealand's Josh Freeth in the closest of finals, 7-6, 6-7, 7-6.

1.2 Golf Croquet World Championship

The eleventh GCWC was held from 7 to 15 February at Mount Maunganui in the Bay of Plenty area of New Zealand's North Island. Following the successes of Mark McInerney (IRE) and Reg Bamford (SAF) in 2011 and 2013, Egypt was especially keen to make a strong bid to recapture the title that it had held for the first eight GCWCs. Stephen Mulliner (ENG) and Chris Clarke (NZE) reached the semi-finals but lost to Ahmed El Mahdi (EGY) and Hamy Erian (EGY), thereby ensuring an all-Egyptian final.

The final was just as engrossing as the extraordinary 2013 final in which Reg Bamford recovered to beat Ahmed Nasr from 6-2 down in game 5. Hamy took a 2-0 lead and seemed to be heading easily towards his first senior world title. Ahmed then levelled the match at 2-2 but then appeared again to be heading for defeat when he fell behind 5-1 in the decider. Extraordinarily, he then scored the next six points to take the game and the World Championship, 4-7, 5-7, 7-4, 7-4, 7-5.

1.3 Women's Association Croquet World Championship

The second WACWC was held from 25 July to 1 August at the Nottingham Croquet Club in England. The event attracted 36 competitors from ten countries with the favourites expected to be the defending champion, Jenny Clarke (NZE), Miranda Chapman (ENG), Gabrielle Higgins (ENG) and Alison Sharpe (AUS). These four duly reached the semi-finals and Gabrielle made an excellent start in the final against Miranda, looking likely to lead 2-0 in the best-of-five final. However, although she led 2-1, Miranda had all the later play, winning -10, +4, -23, +26, +26tp.

1.4 Forthcoming Events

Two events are scheduled for 2016:

- The Association Croquet World Championship will be held at the National Croquet Center, West Palm Beach, Florida from 16 to 24 April 2016.
- The Golf Croquet World Team Championship will be held in England. Tier 1 will be played at the Surbiton Croquet Club in south-west London from 15 to 21 May while Tier 2 will be hosted jointly by the Bath and Camerton & Peasdown Croquet Clubs in the West Country from 15 to 20 May. It is also hoped that a four team Tier 3 event will be held in England from 18 to 20 May.

Event Hosts

The MC and its Event Sub-Committees are responsible for arranging and scheduling these events and handling entries and these involve considerable amounts of time and effort. However, it is the Event Hosts who do the hardest work of making World Championships actually happen by providing and maintaining lawns, appointing officials, seeking sponsorship, arranging catering and taking care of all the other practical arrangements that are part and parcel of holding a large tournament. On behalf of all the participants and other Members, the MC would like to express its gratitude to the 2015 Event Hosts, namely Croquet New Zealand (U21 GCWC and the GCWC itself) and the Croquet Association (WACWC) and to the clubs which provided the venues, namely Mount Maunganui, Kati Kati, Morrinsville, Rotorua and Whatakane in New Zealand and Nottingham and Nailsea in England.

2. DEVELOPMENT

The MC approach to development recognises that the WCF is not resourced to be a missionary organisation. It is instead founded on the principle of supporting national organisations because only they can provide the continuous support necessary for the growth of croquet at club level within their own domains. This support can take two main forms, namely providing coaching to Members and making capital grants to help develop croquet playing facilities.

Coaching can be in relation to improving playing and refereeing standards and in developing coaching skills so that Members can become self-sufficient. Coaching assistance can take place either by arranging for a coach to visit 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, typically England to date. One of the key goals is to develop more qualified coaches in those Members able to benefit from this.

During 2015, the MC arranged and supported a fact-finding and coaching trip to Georgia which led to its election as an Observer Member (see below). In 2016, another coaching course has been organised for smaller Members at the Croquet Academy at Southwick, England.

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 four full-size lawns to consider putting together a project which the WCF can part-fund. The WCF will always limit itself to match-funding which means that the Member must expect to raise at least 50% of the project funds itself.

The idea of a World Croquet Day has been endorsed by Members as a single day when croquet would be promoted or advertised worldwide. Experience has suggested that National Croquet Days are a worthwhile alternative which will allow Members to tailor the choice of day to their particular needs.

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

In December, the WCF Council voted by 58 votes to nil to elect the Georgian Croquet Federation as an Observer Member.

3. COMMUNICATION WITH MEMBERS

WCF 25th anniversary

The WCF Silver Jubilee was commemorated by the award of special medals generously donated by Amir Ramsis to the winners of national championships in AC, GC and US Six-Wicket Croquet held in the twelve months from July 2014 to June 2015. 24 medals were awarded in 2014 and a further eight in 2015.

Newsletters

Newsletters are published on the WCF website every one or two months depending on activity and are intended to ensure that all those interested in what the WCF and the MC are doing are adequately informed and kept up-to-date.

Website

The MC funded the development of a new WCF website based on Joomla 3 and hosted by a new Joomla-friendly ISP. Using Joomla 3 as the content management system has greatly eased website administration and development. The new website was launched in early 2015 and is now well-established. It has been designed to assist the marketing of the sport by including both video and still photographs on the front page.

Council decision-making

The Council took six decisions in the course of 2015. These were:

- 41: Approval of amendments to Statutes 300 to 309
- 42: Removal of Palestine from Observer Membership
- 43: Approval of policy relating to the application of WCF Regulations
- 44: Amendment of the Equipment Regulations
- 45: Amendment of the Event, Refereeing and Sports Regulations
- 46: Election of Georgia as an Observer Member

A further three administrative decisions had not been completed by the time of publishing this report, namely:

- 47: Approval of 2016 Business Plan
- 48: Appointment of Independent Examiner.
- 49: Approval of 2016 Budget

In addition, further amendments to the Equipment Regulations were approved on 25 December 2015 under the dot release procedure and incorporated in version 6.3 which is now available on the WCF website.

Elections

The terms of office of the WCF President and three members of the Management Committee end on 31 December 2015, thereby requiring elections for the four-year period from 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2019.

There were two candidates for the position of WCF President. Ian Burridge, nominated by the Welsh Croquet Association, received 19 votes but Amir Ramsis, the current WCF President, who was nominated by the Egyptian Croquet Federation, received 38 votes and was re-elected.

There were three vacancies on the WCF Management Committee. Following the election of Amir Ramsis, there were also three candidates so Luis de Gortazar, nominated by the Spanish Croquet Federation, Mike Orgill, nominated by the United States Croquet Association, and Samir Patel, nominated by the (English) Croquet Association, were all deemed to be elected.

4. ADMINISTRATION

WCF Regulations

The Equipment, Event, Refereeing and Sports Regulations have all been overhauled to bring them up to date and achieve stylistic and internal consistency. The Council has also agreed the policy that a WCF Event should be governed by the versions of the Regulations that were in force on the Invitation Date of that event.

WCF Statutes

A full review of the current drafting of the Statutes has been delayed to 2016.

Hall of Fame

There were no nominations in 2015.

Management Committee matters

2015 was a year without any unexpected issues. Three World Championships were held very successfully and steady progress was made in improving the ease of administering the WCF. The MC operated harmoniously and effectively and continues to make its decisions by e-mail, usually but not exclusively following discussion at regular Skype conference calls. These are held once a month and fortnightly if there is sufficient business to discuss. A total of 13 were held in 2015.

*The Management Committee of the World Croquet Federation
26 December 2015*