

WCF Management Committee Report 2019

This report covers the year ended 31 December 2019

OVERVIEW

Members and Recognised Croquet Organisations

Following the amendments to the WCF Statutes dealing with membership in January 2019, the WCF now has ten Full Members and ten Associate Members and recognises eleven other croquet organisations.

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 and holding of regular world championships for individuals and teams 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, much of which revolves around the organisation of world championships, 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, the Laws of Association Croquet, the Rules of Golf Croquet and the WCF Statutes and Regulations.

1. WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

1.1 Women's Golf Croquet World Championship

The first WCF event of 2019 was the Women's Golf Croquet World Championship which was held at Heretaunga Croquet Club in Hawke's Bay, New Zealand from 2 to 9 February. 56 players from eight countries took part but the strength in depth of the Egyptian contingent was made apparent when Egypt filled six of the eight quarter-final places and three of the semi-final places. In the semis, Soha Mostafa (EGY) had a very close victory over Jenny Clarke (NZL) by 7-3, 7-4, 6-7, 4-7, 7-6 while Manal Khodeir (EGY) recovered from 2-0 down against 2007 champion Iman El Faransawy (EGY) to win 3-6, 6-7, 7-2, 7-6, 7-3. Soha and Jenny had been regarded as the two strongest players in the field and Soha justified her seeding in the final with a 7-1, 5-7, 7-3, 7-4 victory.

1.2 Under 21 Golf Croquet World Championship

The Under 21 GCWC was held at the Nottingham Croquet Club in England from 20 to 24 July. 24 players from eight countries took part. In the final, Edmund Fordyce (NZL) lost the first two games to James Galpin (ENG) but staged a great recovery to win 4-7, 5-7, 7-5, 7-5, 7-5.

1.3 Golf Croquet World Championship

The 13th Golf Croquet World Championship was held from 27 July to 4 August at the Sussex County Croquet Club in England, 15 years after the event was last held there in 2004. 80 players from a record 19 countries took part and played the block stage at the Compton (Eastbourne), Tunbridge Wells and West Worthing clubs as at Southwick. The younger generation took a firm grip on the event, assisted by the elimination of four previous champions on the Thursday morning.

The semi-final round featured a sensational battle between two young Egyptian stars, Mohamed Karem and Hamy Erian, the 2015 finalist. Karem made a superb start by winning the first two games 7-5, 7-4 but lost the third at hoop 13 after Erian scored the vital point with a magnificent seven yard jump shot. Unperturbed, Karem kept his composure and accuracy and took the fourth game 7-3. The other semi-final also saw one side start very strongly. 23-year old Josh Freeth (NZL) led Ben Rothman (USA) 7-2, 7-3 before Rothman got into the match by taking the third game 7-3 and then completing a notable recovery by winning the next two games 7-5, 7-5.

The final was a roller-coaster. Rothman took the first 7-5 but Karem then came back strongly to win the next two 7-2, 7-3 and lead 6-3 in the fourth. Rothman then clawed his way back to 6-6 and hit a vital long clearance before squaring the match. The fifth game went to 5-5 before Rothman claimed hoops 11 and 12 to take the title and become the first American WCF world champion.

1.4 Forthcoming Events

Five events are scheduled for 2020:

- the Golf Croquet World Team Championship Tier 1 will be held at the Nelson-Hinemoa Croquet Club, Nelson, New Zealand from 2 to 9 February.
- the Golf Croquet World Team Championship Tier 2 will be held at the real Club de Golf Vista Hermosa, Puerto de Santa Maria, Spain from 11 to 16 May.
- the Golf Croquet World Team Championship Tier 3 will be held at the Guildford & Godalming Croquet Club, England from 14 to 18 July.
- the Association Croquet World Championship will be held at the Victorian Croquet Centre, Melbourne, Australia from 15 to 23 February.
- the Women's Association Croquet World Championship will be held in Canterbury, South Island, New Zealand from 30 November to 6 December.

1.5 Event Hosts and the venues

1.5.1 The MC and its Event Sub-Committees are responsible for arranging and scheduling these events and handling entries and this involves significant time and effort. However, the Event Hosts and the host clubs have the heaviest burden by providing venues and maintaining lawns, appointing officials, seeking sponsorship, arranging catering and taking care of all the other practical arrangements that are an essential part of holding a world championship event.

1.5.2 On behalf of all the participants and the other WCF Members, the MC would like to express its gratitude to the 2019 Event Hosts, namely Croquet New Zealand (Women's GCWC) and the Croquet Association (U21 GCWC and GCWC), and to the clubs which provided the venues, namely the Heretaunga, Nottingham,

Compton, Sussex County, Royal Tunbridge Wells and West Worthing Croquet Clubs.

2. DEVELOPMENT

2.1 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.

2.2 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.

2.3 The MC remains willing to provide financial support for those who wish to attend coaching courses for players and coaches from smaller WCF Members at the Croquet Academies in England. The WCF pays for the course fees and provides a small travel grant for those travelling from outside the UK.

2.4 The other standard form of support is when the WCF funds the travel expenses of a coach from their home to the WCF Member where the coaching will take place. The cost of an economy air ticket is the main item. The Member is then responsible for meeting all the travel, accommodation and subsistence expenses of the coach inside the Member's country. In October 2019, Stephen Mulliner visited the Algarve Croquet Club in Portugal to provide coaching and support for Portuguese croquet.

2.5 The MC would also like to encourage any Member that does not yet have a top-class venue with at least **two** full-size courts 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. This offer used to be restricted to projects involving four courts but the MC has recognised that this will only occasionally be practical in the smaller Members.

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

3. COMMUNICATION WITH MEMBERS

Council decision-making

The Council took six decisions in 2019. These were:

- 75: Approval of the 2019 Budget
- 76: Election of Brian Havill as Independent Examiner for 2019
- 77: Amendment of the Refereeing Regulations
- 78: Amendment of the Statutes relating to membership
- 79/80: Amendment of the Statutes relating to other matters
- 81: Approval of the 2020 Budget
- 82: Election of Brian Havill as Independent Examiner for 2020

Elections

In addition to the annual election of the Independent Examiner there was an election for the post of WCF President made necessary by the retirement of Amir Ramsis (EGY) on the completion of his second term of office. Ian BurrIDGE (WAL) and Mike Cohn (AUS) were nominated by the Welsh and Australian Croquet Associations and Ian was elected by 42 votes to 18.

Three members of the MC also reached the end of a four-year term of office and Luis de Gortazar (ESP) and Mike Orgill (USA) decided not to stand for re-election. Four candidates were nominated for the three places. Samir Patel (ENG) and Harold (Hal) Denton (USA) received 44 and 41 votes while Amir Ramsis (EGY) and Begoña Elizaburu (ESP) received 37 and 36 votes respectively. Amir, Hal and Samir were therefore elected.

World Championships

Members receive direct email communication from the MC about all matters relating to the administration of championships, the key dates for Member action and player entries. The information is also posted on the WCF website.

Newsletters

Newsletters are published on the WCF website at least every three 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 WCF website continues to be hosted by SiteGround who have proved both reliable and helpful. Using Joomla 3 as the content management system has greatly eased website administration and development.

WCF Facebook page

The WCF Facebook page has continued to gain followers, and has a correspondingly growing reach with posts being regularly shown to over 1,500 people. World Championship previews have proved to be more popular than WCF news, with a "40 days to go" post relating to the Women's Golf Croquet World Championship receiving 378 reactions, comments or shares and almost 5,000 impressions.

The GC World Championship 2019 was used to test the idea of using the main WCF Facebook page for tournament news in order to reduce the workload of contributors and improve the speed at which news is posted to Facebook.

4. ADMINISTRATION

WCF Statutes and Regulations

The Refereeing Regulations were amended to reflect changes relating to forestalling that followed the adoption of the 5th Edition of the WCF Golf Croquet Rules. The Statutes were amended to implement the re-designation of Observer Members as Recognised Croquet Organisations and thereby increase the flexibility with which new croquet bodies could be supported. Further amendments clarified procedures for elections and limited the role of Secretary-General to two four year terms.

WCF Laws of Association Croquet

The WCF Association Croquet Laws Committee has been working on a 7th Edition of the AC Laws since early 2018 under the chairmanship of Graeme Roberts (NZL). A consultation draft was published in October 2019 and it is expected that the new edition will be published during 2020.

Hall of Fame

Bryan Dawson was inducted following nomination by the MC for his services to competitive croquet as the developer of the Dawson Ball, the premier competition croquet ball for over 20 years.

Golf Croquet International Grading System

The WCF has taken over responsibility for the administration of the Golf Croquet International Grading System ("GCIGS") on the same basis that applies to the Association Croquet grading system. A revised algorithm recommended by the Golf Croquet Ranking Review Committee was adopted with effect from 1 July 2019.

The GCIGS calculation program has now been rewritten in C++ which is a necessary precondition for moving to a system where results data can be input by national ranking officers instead of by just one person. Spreading the load is an important objective. The continuing growth of GC was reflected in over 33,000 ranked games being reported in 2019.

Management Committee matters

There were no matters of note to report. The MC continues to operate efficiently by email discussions and decisions with the added support of conference calls held on average every two months.

*The WCF Management Committee
[31] December 2019*