

**2023 AC World Championship Player Survey – July 15-23, London**

**WCF Event Player Survey**

58 Responses out of 80 players. England 26, USA 6, Australia 5, New Zealand 3, Scotland 3, Ireland 3, Spain 3, South Africa 2, Austria 1, Canada 1, Germany 1, Iran 1, Latvia 1, Sweden 1, Switzerland 1

Question	Results	Comments
Were the pre-event procedures, such as entry and payment, satisfactory?	Yes = 53 No = 5	<p>Generally, everyone was happy with the pre-event information, although a mix of opinions regarding the usefulness of emails versus website for the sharing of information. Lots of positive comments that information was well shared, comprehensive. Sharing of information regarding transport links was liked.</p> <p>Areas for improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some qualifiers felt that they didn't receive information soon enough.</li> <li>- Several comments were made that the information about the timings for the Opening Ceremony and Player Registration was too late.</li> <li>- It was suggested that sharing player contact information early would enable more flat sharing.</li> </ul> <p>Extracted key comments:</p> <p><i>"The website was a little overwhelming with info"</i></p> <p><i>"All the information was there, but could have been concise, and in a single source rather than multiple emails"</i></p> <p><i>"I was aware of receiving quite a few emails. Maybe easier to have all the information on a single website, and just point to that."</i></p> <p><i>"I didn't receive the three early July pre-event information emails initially despite joining from the Replacement Ranking List on 10 May and I believe others who joined later also didn't receive it. I only found out through a croquet players WhatsApp group and contacted David Openshaw separately who rectified the error; I believe he hadn't received the most up-to-date player contact list. It would be useful to safeguard against this happening for future events."</i></p> <p><i>"I liked the '10 things you most need to know' idea. Start time could helpfully have been among them - but I guess from the fact that the players briefing and the programme had different information about start time that they hadn't really decided that."</i></p> <p><i>"It was the most comprehensive yet. The transport advice was crucial."</i></p> <p><i>"All entrants to the quals were kept very much in the dark. We had to ask during the quals for further information. Understood it should be for those who qualify, but only finding out the evening of the day before event start was difficult."</i></p>

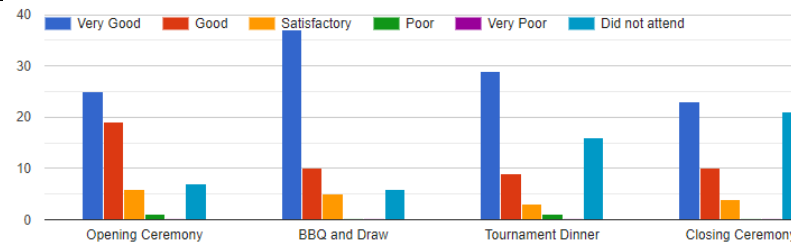
		<p><i>“Although the qualifiers didn't originally get the information, we had to ask for it”</i>  <i>“The only thing I might comment on was that I was not aware of who was playing before I had to decide to play.”</i></p> <p>MC Response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Qualifier information to be reviewed as part of wider review of WCF Qualification Events, to include updated guidance to managers and hosts.</li> <li>- Use of Google Forms generally worked well for collection and sharing of Player Information. However, an improved method of sharing updated contact details, when these change or new players are added is needed. The host organising team should be able to access live data directly from the Google Form, however, this Form needs to be amended to remove players who have withdrawn, and some method of notifying updates implemented. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ S-G to prepare one-pager guidance notes relating to the use of Google Forms to share with hosts.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Sharing of contact information between players. This is a good idea as would enable communication between players prior to the event for any number of useful purposes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ S-G to investigate feasibility. More explicit data protection permissions might be required up front to ensure this is legal. Also, care to be taken with respect to under-age competitors.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- One or two remarks seem to infer that players were unaware of the information available well in advance on the WCF website. Unclear which comments refer to the Event Website versus the WCF Event webpage. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ S-G to continue to publicise use of WCF website widely. This should be the go-to place for croquet players to find out months in advance about our events, such as the key dates, venues, who is playing, links to event specific websites and facebook pages etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Did you attend the player briefing? If so, was the information well-presented and useful? Was the scheduling of the briefing convenient?</p>	<p>Yes, it was good = 45  No = 3  Did not Attend = 9</p>	<p>Generally held to be a good briefing.  Several comments were made that the player briefing was unnecessary as it had all been present to players.  Some concern that the timing was inconvenient for those still flying in or still working.</p> <p><i>Extracted key comments:</i></p>

		<p><i>“that this being early evening on a work day made it difficult for some to attend”</i></p> <p><i>“I felt as though it was unnecessary as all players had been sent the information in advance.”</i></p> <p><i>“I didn’t learn a great deal more than what was already provided in briefing pack and other sources (Player WhatsApp groups). It requires extra holiday usage for not much benefit.”</i></p> <p><i>“Worked well indoors as easier to hear.”</i></p> <p><i>“There was confusion about the start time between what was pre-announced, what was said out loud by DKJO and what happened so I was late to the meeting having travelled specially for it.”</i></p> <p><i>“Too early in the day for anyone who was working first”</i></p> <p><i>“The briefing was convenient for me. But it was evident from conversation that a number of my UK colleagues had to take part or all of Friday as time off work in order to register or attend the briefing.”</i></p> <p><i>“I was unable to attend the briefing due to work and childcaring commitments. I think it would have been good to offer it as a hybrid briefing via Zoom/Google Meets etc given the technology exists.”</i></p> <p><i>“A little later would have been better for domestic players who work”</i></p> <p><i>“Tricky timing. Could it not have been later in the evening? Again, as a qualifier I only found out a few days before that I would need Friday afternoon off work.”</i></p> <p><i>“Question of start times could have been thought through more carefully ahead of time.”</i></p> <p>MC Response: Guidance to Bidders to be reviewed and updated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to suggest Opening Ceremonies and Registration timings are advertised well in advance so that players can plan their travel accordingly.</li> <li>- It will be difficult to avoid it clashing with workdays, as events that start on a Saturday must have practice and registration on the Friday.</li> <li>- Need for live player briefing to be reviewed. Due to Covid events during 2022 and early 2023 did not have in person briefings and this worked well.</li> </ul>
<p>Did you find the communications to players during the event to be effective? e.g. the use of Whatsapp and Croquet Scores Commentary</p>	<p>Yes = 58</p>	<p>All good feedback on this, with comments including “best yet”, “excellent”. Many commented that the various WhatsApp groups were a good idea, although a bit more notice of this would have been appreciated.</p> <p>One or two comments from people that they found it “impossible” to join the WhatsApp chat.</p> <p>MC Response:</p>

- Appendix to be added to Guidance to Bidders document, providing 'one pager summary' "Recommendations for use of WhatsApp to communicate to players" and including some basic instructions.

Were the official functions e.g .Opening and Closing Ceremonies, BBQ and Tournament Dinner well organised and enjoyable?

See table.



**Opening Ceremony:**

The flag ceremony and associated speech was well received.

Holding it indoors was generally held to be good.

One player had to deal with an inappropriate comment being shouted out from the audience. An apology was later received.

**Dinner:**

Several comments that people would have preferred no Seating Plan as they didn't know the other people at their table.

Extracted key comments:

*"Not a fan of assigned seats"*

*"I would have preferred no seating plan, as I didn't really know any of the other people at my table"*

*"I was disappointed that there was an empty space next to me at the dinner because the player concerned was (apparently) told that he couldn't attend as he didn't have a jacket, despite him having paid."*

*"I know a lot of thought was put into seating for the dinner, but ....wasn't good"*

**BBQ and Draw:**

Players were appreciative that the BBQ was complimentary and thanked the sponsor, Howard Sosin.

		<p>Some complaints regarding the Draw timing being earlier than advertised. As a result, some players involved missed it!</p> <p>Extracted key comments:  <i>"The BBQ was good. The draw was my biggest complaint of the entire event. If something is advertised on the programme as 'approx 6.30' it is unacceptable to bring it forward by a full half hour - which meant I missed it. If you want to have flexibility on the timing, advertise it as 'time tbc'"</i>  <i>"It would of been better to stick to the timetable for the draw and bbq , instead they made the draw earlier and then we had to go eat and try , listen to a demonstration of croquet at the same time , i felt people lost interest in the demonstration as they were queuing to eat.Food was good however. I heard that some people were upset re no notification of the change of times for the draw and were showering and then missed the draw.</i></p> <p><b>Closing Ceremony:</b>  Closing ceremony missed an "interview" and would have been so much nicer/better under the flags or nearby - weather was still beautiful.</p> <p>MC Response:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Guidance to hosts to be updated to suggest seating plans avoided, apart from maybe if one or two tables for key special guests, such as sponsors, are needed.</li> </ul> </p>
Was your number of games each day too many, not enough or about right?	About right = 53 Not enough = 5	Main comments were from those who didn't get through the blocks. Some still felt that there was not enough play, whilst others said more play than usual was available.
Was the overall duration of the event too long, too short or about right?	About right = 56 Too long = 2	<p>Few comments made.</p> <p>Key comment re the Qualifier:  <i>"Could have done with quals being at least one day over a weekend. The 4<sup>th</sup> day had one game as needed names for block draw – felt wasted time, already so much time off work"</i></p> <p>MC Response:  Qualifier event formats and guidance to hosts is being reviewed.</p>
Was the event well-managed?	Yes = 57	<p>All comments were very complimentary towards Mike's excellent Management.</p> <p>Two key suggestions for improvement:</p>

- i) to ensure the draw is done by two people, and if possible document and publish any swaps required.
- ii) Any swaps done should already ensure that the blocks are still balanced, but it was suggested that more attention is paid to seeds 3-6 which are the likely players who may/may not qualify. If the blocks were looked at just for these players, some blocks looked more difficult than others.

Key comments extracted:

*"Best management of the 5 ACWCs I've played"*

*"Brilliantly. Well done Mike."*

*"Kudos to Mike Town for his excellent management. The entire event was professionally run without being too regimented. Volunteers made the event special."*

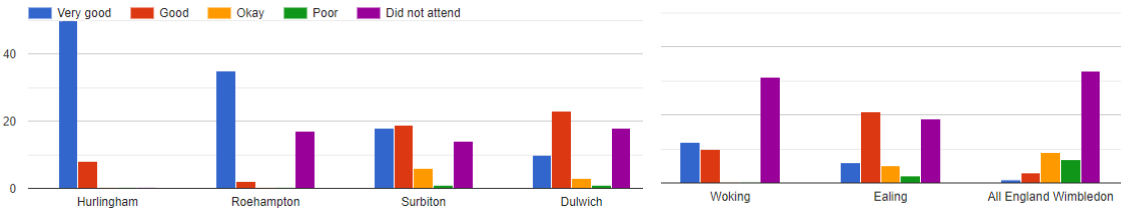
There were loads more appreciate comments made congratulating Mike Town on his excellent management, I have just extracted a few.

*"Perhaps consider whether the draw should be done by two people, with all the swaps documented and published - for the sake of transparency. Players will examine and critique it whatever."*

*"My only suggestion for change is that for a multi-venue event, I would prefer to have the block draw done a couple of weeks before the event, after entries to the Qualifier have closed. The top N entrants to the Qualifier could be slotted into the N spaces in the block draw using their current grades. Even if they didn't all qualify, this is unlikely to significantly unbalance the main draw. "*

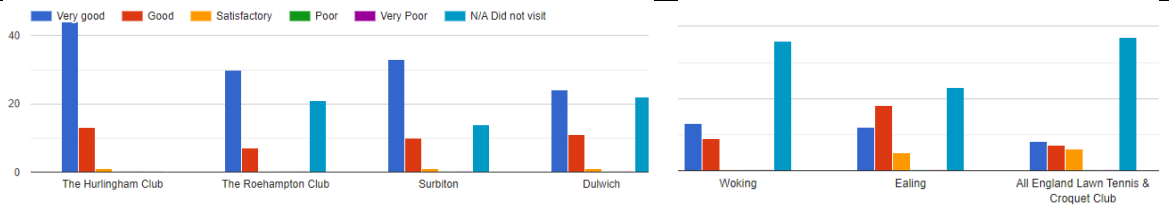
*"I think Mike (as the main manager) did a good job (as did the various local managers). However, there's one aspect that I really didn't like. The set up of the blocks was really poor, with some blocks clearly more difficult to qualify from than others. For instance, block C had 6 players from the top 36 of the event, whilst block E had only 4 players from the top 44. This clearly makes it more difficult for the block C number 4 (for instance, as that was me!) to qualify than the number 4 in block E (where they don't have any competition from a couple of others in the top 40 of the event). Given that numbers 1 and 2 in the block will usually progress to the ko with relative ease (this year, for instance, that applied for 15/16 of the top two), the balance of rankings of the 3-6 range is pretty important, and Mike acknowledged to me that he'd not thought about that (or tracked it) whilst working out the blocks. I've seen the blocks get done badly in every main AC Worlds in the last 10 years (feel free to ask me for more details); I'd flagged this up with the tournament director a week before the event (so you could also simply ask him for details!), and it*

		<p><i>still happened (again!). I didn't want to screw up the event (for people knowing where they were going, etc) so I didn't put in a formal complaint to get the blocks re-done ... but having then failed to qualify, despite our number 3 also going out, in hindsight, I wish that I had formally objected. In future, I would, because that for me was by far the most frustrating thing about the event which the WCF could have controlled (and didn't). I think the process of sorting out the blocks should be made transparent, so others can check it and come to the same block assignment -- that would also mean that there's less pressure on the event manager (Mike) on that aspect, because a couple of people could then do it independently, to check they get the same result. At present, there are multiple possibilities, so even when it's done in a really bad way (like this time), it's incredibly difficult to quickly prove that it's 'not right'."</i></p> <p>MC Response: World Championships provide players from around the world the opportunity to meet and play against their overseas colleagues. The WCF Sports Regulation includes country swaps to minimise players having to play those they already play often and to ensure as much fairness as possible. It would be unfortunate for instance if there were (say) 4 competitors from a country and they all ended up in the same block. In an ideal world, more time would be available to do the draw and review any swapping required. However, when a Qualifier is being held, there is also a need to limit the amount of time off work for such players, hence there is generally only 1 or 2 days between the end of the qualifier and the start of the main event.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Review of Sports Regulations</i> - The MC will review the mechanism used to see if it can be simplified or improved given the constraints.</li> </ul>
<p>Was the event well managed? Feedback relating specifically to the Qualifier</p>	<p>Yes = 56 No = 2</p>	<p>Several players commented that the Qualifier was a poor event. Specifically, that they felt like 'second rate' players, that there was 'no atmosphere', that the management was 'poor'.</p> <p>MC Response: Currently the Qualifiers are run by the host country with only minimal instruction from the WCF, namely guidance that the format must be able to provide a potentially changing number of qualifiers and instruction regarding some key dates.</p> <p>The MC intend to review the Sports Regulations to see whether to include more specific instructions in relation to Qualifier formats and also plan to provide updated guidance notes for the Event Hosts, specifically the Director and Manager.</p>

<p>Was the event well-referee'd?</p>	<p>Yes = 56 No = 2</p>	<p>Many expressions of thanks were made by the players to the referees, appreciative of the commitment made by them to take the time to attend and undertake this task.</p> <p>Generally, the feedback received was that the refereeing was excellent.</p> <p>Reference was made to one or two odd decisions, and a few of the referees appeared to have got the rules wrong once or twice, mainly at the satellite venues.</p>
<p>Were the courts of suitable quality?</p>	<p>See table</p>	 <p>All good feedback.</p> <p>Some lawns were acknowledged hillier than others, but generally the flatness and speed of the lawns was complimented. Many players were extremely pleased to be able to play at Wimbledon, despite the lawns still suffering from their recent tennis use.</p> <p>Key comments extracted:</p> <p><i>“Well done to all the groundsmen, all the lawns I played on were fast and true and a joy to play on.”</i></p> <p><i>“The facilities, particularly lawns, were outstanding”</i></p> <p><i>“Wimbledon was slow and had bare batches - but the reasons were obvious and well understood by all. Players still enjoyed playing at Wimbledon.”</i></p> <p><i>“Woking lawns were great, but a little more space round the edges would make a huge difference. Not sure it’s achievable though. Very exciting to play at Wimbledon, but the lawns were VERY slow. Shorter grass would have been really good, though again I recognise the challenge of getting them fit for croquet so soon after the championship. The speed of the Hurlingham and Roehampton lawns was fabulous.”</i></p> <p><i>“Many congrats to Hurlingham getting their lawns so much faster than usual!”</i></p> <p><i>“Playing on a variety of surfaces was a particularly enjoyable aspect of the event. The Roehampton lawns were almost unbelievably good, and the front lawns at Hurlingham nearly as good. The hoops at Surbiton were especially solid and well set.”</i></p>



		<p>MC Response: The MC would like to add our thanks to all the Clubs and their grounds teams for the excellent quality of the lawns.</p>
Were the balls of suitable quality?	<p>Yes = 56 No = 2</p>	<p>Generally, the players were appreciative that all attempts to avoid Humpties had been made and understood the wider issues involved. Several thought that a few had slipped the net and had been present.</p> <p>MC Response: We continue to liaise with Dawson balls and hope that they will be back in production soon.</p>
Were the hoops well set?	<p>Yes = 57 No = 1</p>	<p>Most comments were that they were too easy, although players understood that with the wet conditions and soft earth, setting tight hoops is difficult. Several requests for Quadways to be used more widely.</p> <p>Key comments extracted:  <i>“Generally the hoops were very easy. I think the ground was soft and it was therefore difficult to set difficult hoops.”</i>  <i>“Well set but very easy. Quadways throughout would have made it better”</i>  <i>“They were a tad easy, but can't be helped in soft ground”</i>  <i>“the ultra hoops are way too easy to run to be used at this level of competition...highly recommend quadway hoops throughout for hoop level tournaments”</i>  <i>“Would have been better with Quadways”</i>  <i>“Well obviously too wide for a tournament of this standard but appreciate it is difficult in UK conditions”</i></p> <p>MC Response: The Sports Regulations, clause 8.1.2, already provides for some Management discretion to set hoops:  <i>“Hoops must be set such that the clearance is as near as possible equal to, but not less than, 0.8mm. When conditions are considered “easy”, this clearance may be reduced to a minimum of 0.4mm if the TR and TM jointly agree that doing so is both practical and will not require the imposition of time limits that would otherwise have been unnecessary. When conditions are considered “difficult” in a GC event, this clearance may be increased to a maximum of 1.6mm for the block stage and any consolation event if the TR and TM</i></p>

		<p><i>jointly agree that doing so will reduce the likelihood of the imposition of time limits that might otherwise be necessary.”</i></p> <p>We believe this wording is satisfactory and that no change is required. S-G to remind WCF Event Leads to draw this clause to the attention of future Event Managers.</p> <p>Use of the Quadway Hoop is becoming more widespread, and the WCF encourage their use when discussing bids from hosts.</p>
<p>How would you rate the 3 club venues overall, including facilities and catering?</p>	<p>See table.</p>	 <p>Comments nearly all revolve around food! Dulwich and Surbiton in particular have received great feedback on the excellence of their catering.</p> <p>Too many comments to include them all:  <i>“Pierre's catering at Dulwich and George's delightful food at Surbiton were both unbeatable. “</i>  <i>“Very nice people at all the venues. Enjoyed seeing different places.”</i></p>
<p>The event was held at 7 venues, involving significant travel around London. How did you feel this effected your enjoyment of the Championship?</p>		<p>Very mixed responses.</p> <p>Some enjoyed the opportunity to visit many clubs and didn't find the transport difficult or off-putting. Others found the travelling a definite negative.</p> <p>There were many comments that it made is less attractive socially or for spectating, as some people didn't meet everyone because of being at so many different venues. They would have preferred more of a 'hub'.</p> <p>Overall, a preference for fewer venues requested.</p> <p>A few comments:  <i>“Surprisingly, I didn't mind the travel and I really enjoyed visiting some clubs I'd not been to before.”</i>  <i>“Massively reduced overall enjoyment. It felt like a virtual worlds. Need a bigger "hub"”</i>  <i>“I enjoyed the different clubs. Transport wasn't too tough”</i></p>

		<p><i>"Worked better than I expected."</i></p> <p><i>"I didn't see many players from the wider field. Having so many venues reduced the social aspect a little."</i></p>																								
<p>The event was held at venues. This was the only way to provide the 20 lawns needed for an 80 player event.</p> <p>Would you prefer fewer venues, even if this meant a smaller field, or would you prefer to keep to 80 players.</p>		<p>Almost everyone preferred that we keep to 80 players.</p> <p><i>"I like the size of the field. Representation from more countries and there are more ranking places available. The field would be even more polarised in that case."</i></p> <p><i>"Keep 80 players always but fewer venues to see everyone would be nicer"</i></p>																								
<p>MC Response to the 7 venue questions:</p> <p>The WCF is dependent on the bids our Members make for our events. Previous surveys have also requested single or fewer venues, but generally not at the expense of reducing the number of players.</p>																										
<p>Publicity. How would you rate the publicity, such as the Event Website, the WCF webpage and the Live-Streaming?</p>	<p>See table</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>Publicity Survey Results</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Very good</th> <th>Good</th> <th>Satisfactory</th> <th>Poor</th> <th>Very Poor</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Hurlingham Event Website</td> <td>28</td> <td>22</td> <td>8</td> <td>2</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ACWC WCF Webpage</td> <td>23</td> <td>22</td> <td>10</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Livestreaming</td> <td>48</td> <td>8</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>Hurlingham Event Website:</b> Feedback was mainly that it was good prior to the event, but was not updated during the event with scores, blogs etc. A Facebook page was requested.</p> <p>Key comments extracted: <i>"The Hurlingham website was great prior to the event in terms of providing pre-event information. However, there was no news or results during the event. The lack of a dedicated Facebook was a shame."</i></p>	Category	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Very Poor	Hurlingham Event Website	28	22	8	2	0	ACWC WCF Webpage	23	22	10	0	0	Livestreaming	48	8	0	0	0
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*"Having all the event info on the website would have been preferable (too many additional items of information came via separate emails)."*

**ACWC WCF Webpage**

Few comments made.

*"Greater prominence and ability to search for info from the main WCF home page would have been handy for some - both players and interested parties in other countries."*

**Livestreaming**

All extremely good feedback. The live-stream crew were especially thanked, including all the commentators. No criticism at all, just a few comments aimed at making it 'even' better, such as 'highlights', better publication to the croquet world, filming of more than one match at a time or switching to 'interesting' bits of other games.

Key comments extracted:

*"The livestreaming was marvellous!"*

*"To be able to livestream more than one game would be great. But it was impressive as it was"*  
*"The livestreaming of this event was brilliant. Several of my friends (both high handicap players and non players) tuned into this throughout the week. The accompanying commentary was equally good. But worth noting that, as this gains greater popularity and a wider audience, more explanation of jargon may be helpful. I had to explain TPO and STP to high handicap players after commentators used these terms."*

*"The livestreaming was truly awesome this time. I even had one of my work-colleagues (who doesn't play, but who I'd set up a simply fantasy team with) tell me today that she spent most of the day of the final watching it, feeling 'almost hypnotised, despite not really knowing what was going on'! That sort of thing is an awesome result, quite aside from the benefit to players."*

*"The quality of the live streaming commentary was outstanding with expert commentators. Commentators who provide "fluff" might be light entertainment viewed live, but create a less satisfying longer term record"*

*"Highlights package of the streaming. More awareness and advertising of the streaming to national bodies. Find ways of filming/streaming more matches. Even if it's just for highlight packages at end of the day."*

*"Showing lower profile matches live streamed would be good. I had feedback that not everyone wants to watch the highest ranked players."*

		<p>MC Response: Guidance to Bidders is to be updated to include recommendations for livestreaming of our events. The MC are aware that not all hosts will have the same levels of capability, or funding, available. Therefore our guidance on this matter will not be prescriptive, but only advisory.</p>
<p>How would you rate the event overall?</p>	<p>Very Good = 53 Good - 5</p>	<p>Note: where comments relate to previous questions they are included there, if the point raised has not already been covered.</p> <p><b>Event Merchandise</b> There were a few comments relating to the merchandise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It was too expensive</li> <li>- There were too few sizes</li> <li>- It should not have included the Hurlingham logo, given this was just one of 7 venues</li> <li>-</li> </ul> <p>Key comments relating to the merchandise: <i>“players should not need having to buy merchandise. every player should get it and promote it”</i> <i>“Advertising of merchandise was minimal. Completely unaware prior to the event that there would be any and only became aware via reading the programme. Caps were reasonably priced, the shirts were too expensive. (I only know of 1 player who bought one).”</i></p> <p><i>“it would have been nice to have shirts made to buy or preorder before the tournament like they have done in the womens world champs this year at a reasonable price, i felt the shirts they had were not exclusive to the competitors and anyone could buy them ,very expensive for what they were(i could buy 2-3 shirts with a logo embroidered for the same price. and they did not have much in the way of various sizes. i was not impressed with this.”</i></p> <p><b>Player bio/programme:</b></p> <p><i>“For the programme, I supplied a headshot with me pulling a funny expression, and supplied words that were amusing (but which I reckoned would offend no-one). I was then asked to re-do them, so I didn't stand out from the others and so it would all seem more 'corporate'. I was told that what I'd supplied was 'disrespectful'. I did as I was requested, though I felt (and still believe) that the WCF is missing the big-picture with this. During the event, I had numerous people (not</i></p>

*just players, but others, even including caterers) comment that they were disappointed that I'd not done anything amusing with my profile pic/words this time. Some still remembered my profile from 10 years ago --- that's the difference of having something amusing: people remember! There's no reason for any potential would-be sponsor to remember anything from the programme this year. The way to get real sponsorship is to have personalities. We've seen that time and time again since Muhammad Ali came along: John McEnroe, Ronnie O'Sullivan, Usain Bolt, etc. For the WCF to deliberate avoid having anything memorable/amusing about the players is, imo, very disappointing."*

MC Response:

The provision of player information is for a variety of reasons, not least for use by the event hosts in their attempt to attract sponsors and press. As such, the programme is managed and controlled by the host organising committee. Their requirements may therefore vary with each event. The MC does not disagree that inclusion of amusing items might be welcome, however, care must be taken to ensure that no potential offense can be taken. We would urge hosts to be cautious given the different cultures that are present within the world of croquet.

***Format improvement / seeding suggestions:***

- "1. Given the level of planning that goes in and attempts to ensure fairness, predetermined coin toss should be the case at the block stage.*
- 2. 5 minutes practice should be permitted before each block game. Moving courts each game on the first three days provided an advantage to local players. Knowing a boundary should not be an advantage.*
- 3. It's time block positions are considered for knock our positions. No other sport in the world to my knowledge re seeds to the level we do after the event has begun. I understand some of the historical reasons for this but I am not sure they exist anymore? Tuesday is the perfect day to playoff for all block positions. Not having to play on the Tuesday is yet another advantage allowed to the top seeds.*
- 4. Finding out blocks and venue information the day before is really not ideal. The qualifiers should not be holding the event up with this information, I appreciate the desire to seed the blocks correctly but it should be addressed in some way if at all possible"*

*"I have one significant bugbear, relating to seeding.*

*The purpose of seeding a draw is to try to ensure that the best players do not meet till the final rounds of the competition. In doing this it provides a great advantage to the seeds. (Of all the possible random draws, 'difficult' draws for the seeds have been removed.)*

*Some people still claim that seeding is 'fair'. It is self-evidently not.*

*The purpose of seeding is not fairness. Seeding is understandable in sports where there is a need to take account of TV coverage/schedules, spectator satisfaction, sponsorship, money, etc. These apply in only a limited way to croquet, in that the tiny number of people that follow AC croquet would like to see the 'best' players playing in the final rounds. In fact I'm not sure even that is entirely true. I think people would be quite excited to see an unfavoured player advance to the final. What people want to see is good croquet."*

*"It seems to me that there was an almost obsessive desire to seed the draw. I'd like to suggest that seeding is restricted to a maximum of the top 4. I would also like the WCF to justify their seeding policy, stating what purpose they are trying to achieve, and why they are trying to achieve it."*

MC Response:

Seeding is a contentious issue which has no 'right' or 'wrong' answer. There are different views, many of which are valid, depending on the perspective of the individual and the objectives for an event.

The MC are already in the process of reviewing the GC block seeding mechanisms following previous feedback.