

PROCEEDINGS OF THE WORLD CURLING FEDERATION
BEIJING, CHINA
22 - 25 MARCH 2017



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PREPARED BY:

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WCF Executive Board Meetings & Open Meetings 2017 Beijing, China

Executive Board

Kate Caithness	President	Colin Grahamslaw	Secretary General
Graham Prouse	VP Americas	Richard Harding	Curling Development Officer
Hugh Millikin	VP Pacific Asia	Keith Wendorf	Director of Competitions & Development
Bent Ramsfjell	VP Europe	Joanna Kelly	Broadcast Manager
Andy Anderson	Director	Chris Hamilton	Digital Media Officer
Hew Chalmers	Director	Cameron MacAllister	Communication & Media Relations Manager
Cathrine Lindahl	Director	Thelma Black	Financial Controller
Toyo Ogawa	Director	Liz Munro	Competitions Administrator
		Saskia Müller-Gastell	Projects Officer
		Ashley Melville	IT Officer
		Lesley McCrae	Broadcast Projects Officer
		Eeva Röthlisberger	Competitions & Development Officer
		Darrell Ell	Competitions & Development Officer
		Scott Arnold	Competitions & Development Officer

Representatives

Bruce Crawford	Scotland	Artis Zentelis	Latvia
Bob Kelly	Scotland	Ieva Krusta	Latvia
Bill Duncan	Scotland	Peter Prasch	Liechtenstein
Susan Kesley	Scotland	Marloes Fisscher	Liechtenstein
Josep Garcia	Andorra	Vygantas Zalieckas	Lithuania
John Anderson	Australia	Evelina Aleksejenko	Lithuania
Kim Forge	Australia	Alex Benoy	Luxembourg
Marcus Schmitt	Austria	Susanne Benoy-Göbel	Luxembourg
Liliana Schmitt	Austria	Rodrigo Velez Escudero	Mexico
Andrei Yurkevich	Belarus	Paula Herrero Moreno	Mexico
Inesa Pauliuchyk	Belarus	Jargalsaikhan Dorjsuren	Mongolia
Dirk Heylen	Belgium	Choiжkhuu Erdenetuya	Mongolia
Rose Van Doninck	Belgium	Alie Kramer	Netherlands
Marcelo Mello	Brazil	Carroll De Pape	New Zealand
Isis Oliveira de Souza	Brazil	Lorne De Pape	New Zealand
Antoaneta Dimova	Bulgaria	Dagfinn Loen	Norway
Nikolay Runtov	Bulgaria	Morten Søgård	Norway
Resby Coutts	Canada	Grethe Brenna	Norway
Hugh Avery	Canada	Beata Rek	Poland
Peter Inch	Canada	Janusz Duda	Poland
Maureen Miller	Canada	Ms. Mae Ali Al-Zaman	Qatar
Li Dongyan	China	Mr. Hassan Hissam Al-Hebabi	Qatar
Lei Yi	China	Diana Butucea	Romania
Neven Pufnik	Croatia	Dan Barna	Romania
Katarina Cadez	Croatia	Olga Zharkova	Russia
David Šík	Czech Republic	Michael Stepanjants	Russia
Karolina Frederiksen	Czech Republic	Olga Andrianova	Russia
Freddy Frederiksen	Denmark	Konstantin Zadvornov	Russia
Susanne Slotsager	Denmark	Dara Gravara-Stojanović	Serbia
Alison Arthur	England	Marko Stojanović	Serbia
John Brown	England	Pavol Pitonak	Slovakia
Marie Turmann	Estonia	Jasna Plazl	Slovenia
Fred Randver	Estonia	Gregor Rigler	Slovenia
Olli Rissanen	Finland	Beatriz Cureses	Spain
Katja Kiiskinen	Finland	Xavier Cherta	Spain
Alain Contat	France	Michael Marklund	Sweden
Karine Caux	France	Anette Norberg	Sweden
Zakaria Khechuašvili	Georgia	Stefan Lund	Sweden
Nino Petelava	Georgia	Sandra Stauffer	Switzerland
Bernhard Mayr	Germany	Patrik Loertscher	Switzerland
Christina Haller	Germany	Louis Moser	Switzerland
Georgios Smyrnaios	Greece	Jürg Andreas Wernli	Switzerland
Eva Mataranga	Greece	Eddy Y.T. Wu	Chinese Taipei
Rayad Husain	Guyana	Betty Chang	Chinese Taipei
Farzana Hussain	Guyana		

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Tzipi Zipper	Israel	Claire Foster	US Virgin Islands
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Ann Urquhart	Italy	Lisa Peters	Wales
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Tomoyoshi Kinoshita	Japan		
Viktor Kim	Kazakhstan		
Yekaterina Gorkusha	Kazakhstan		
Kyung-Doo Kim	Korea		
Jin-A Kim	Korea		
Besim Hasani	Kosovo		
Fierze Bajgora	Kosovo		

**MINUTES
of the Executive Board Meetings
held in Beijing, China
22 and 23 March 2017**

Attendees

Executive Board

Kate Caithness (KCA)	Scotland	President
Graham Prouse (GPR)	Canada	Vice-President (Americas)
Bent Ånund Ramsfjell (BRA)	Norway	Vice President (Europe)
Hugh Millikin (HMI)	Australia	Vice-President (Pacific-Asia)
Andy Anderson (AAN)	USA	Director
Cathrine Lindahl (CLI)	Sweden	Director
Hew Chalmers (HCH)	Scotland	Director
Toyo Ogawa (TOG)	Japan	Director
Colin Grahamslaw (CGR)		Secretary General
Keith Wendorf (KWE)		Director of Competitions & Development
Richard Harding (RHA)		Curling Development Officer
Liz Munro (LMU)		Competitions & Development Administrator
Saskia Müller-Gastell (SMG)		Projects Officer/Minute taker

Apologies

None

1. Welcome / Housekeeping

KCA welcomed everyone to China. The schedule of the forthcoming days was discussed.

2. Conflict of Interest / Disclosure (CGR)

A summary of relevant Conflicts of Interest of Board members had been compiled and distributed to the Board in advance and this was now discussed.

The following conflict of interest was amended:

Bent Ramsfjell
Coach of son's **junior** team, potential qualifiers for future WCF events

CGR invited the Board members to confirm any new or possible conflicts of interest when the respective item on the agenda is discussed.

3. President's Business (KCA)

President's Report

KCA provided a full report on her activities since the last meeting. A copy of this report is attached as an appendix to these minutes.

4. World Championship Formats (HMI/KWE)

Competition and Rules Commission Chair HMI reported that the commission had had a great meeting in Frankfurt and that the attendance of Nolan Thiessen (member of the Athlete Commission) had been very useful.

KWE gave a presentation on every single event that the WCF is involved in (see attachment).

HMI explained that at the Competition & Rules Commission Meeting in Frankfurt the commission members had discussed the various possibilities for restructuring the WWCC and WMCC. Various options, each of which having its own merit, had been developed. The presentation given at the meeting is attached to these minutes.

HMI invited Cathrine Lindahl (CLI) (WCF Director and Member of the WCF Athlete Commission) to present the recommendation of the Athlete Commission (AC) on this subject. She advised the Board that the Athlete Commission would recommend the adoption of a 13 Team, full round-robin Men's and Women's World Curling Championship. This format would add a strong team to the Championship while maintaining the highest performance standards and the integrity of the Championship.

Furthermore, the AC supports adopting a 6 team playoff format in conjunction with the above change. This would maintain the integrity of the round-robin while creating a more viable format for LOCs, our broadcasting partners, sponsors, media and curling fans. The AC likes the idea of teams playing hard through the end of the week for one of those top two spots and a bye to the semi-final, while still keeping the middle and bottom of the pack playing hard through the end of the round robin as more teams will have a path to the playoffs as the week progresses.

She closed by saying that with the support of the format change to a 6 team play-off system the AC would also support the removal of tiebreakers.

CGR explained that a motion on this subject would come forward from the Competition and Rules Commission in Bled.

5. Athlete Commission Report (CLI)

CLI explained that the purpose of the Athlete Commission (AC) was to attend championship events to collect information and solicit direct feedback from the athletes in order to provide recommendations and solutions that are in the best interest of the Curlers.

As the AC members wish to work professionally, actively and with passion they had put together a checklist of required items that would enable them to work successfully.

During their attendance at WCF championships and also in general the AC members will provide the following:

- Active visible participation and engagement with the athletes

- Creation of a player's forum
- Dialogue with every team competing at the championship
- Participation at coach's meeting
- Organization of an athlete's meeting
- Participation in any relevant dialogue regarding WCF championships
- Administration of athlete feedback survey
- Review and complete synopsis for discussion with AC commission and WCF Board

6. Brush Update (GPR)

GPR confirmed that the brushing situation had stabilized, there are currently no issues and the athletes had stated virtually unanimously and publicly that the situation has returned to normal.

The first applications for approval of brush heads had come in at the end of November and NRC (National Research Council of Canada) is doing the conformance checks for the WCF. There are still a few issues that need to be looked at in future, such as dirty brushes, non-conforming delivery and target brushes that are unintentionally used, balance devices, etc. and also footwear might become an issue. In general, increasing the knowledge through science will be important in future.

GPR explained that currently the manufacturers can apply for approval at any time of the year. In future this may be limited to different application time slots. WCF currently replies within six weeks but this timeline is difficult to keep if the equipment needs modification.

7. Competition and Rules Update (KWE)

KWE explained that the C&R commission had restructured its working process and all action/discussion items were now put into three different categories:

- Active (currently 18 items)
- Completed (currently 24 items)
- On hold (currently 4 items)

The presentation detailing the current topics is attached to these minutes.

8. Finance (AAN/CGR)

Management accounts

CGR explained that the Management Accounts for the end of January 2017 show the organization broadly in line with budget expectations. There are variances from the budget but at this point in time it appears that they will not result in any significant deviation from the end of year position.

CGR highlighted the following variances:

Income

The significant positive variance is caused by realized gains on sales of investments.

Expense

The costs for the Congress 2016 were slightly higher than budgeted. Also, there was an additional Board meeting in December. On the other hand there were some savings in the WCF President's travel expenses because combined trips had been realized.

On the operation's side Allen Coliban is resigning as of end of March 2017, additionally the two new staff posts were appointed later than had been budgeted for in the season.

The variance on the WJBCC expenditure relates to the cost of flights and a higher than anticipated entry for the event. It had been recognized that WJBCC locations are financially important and two flights (for example to Östersund) are of course more expensive. For WJBCC in Lohja there will only be one flight.

Balance sheet

Work continues on the build of the PCF with expectation that it will be completed by April 2017.

Budget

CGR explained that the final year of any Olympic cycle normally produces a deficit budget and that next season would not be an exception. The budget presented anticipates a deficit of approx. USD 960,000 and the vast majority of that could be attributed to costs relating to the Olympic season.

CGR highlighted the following:

There will be a moderate increase with regard to staffing. Following the departure of Allen Coliban at the end of March 2017 it is the intention to replace his part-time position with a full-time position. This is ahead of anticipated departures at the end of the 2017/2018 season. Continued efforts to find a part-time accounting assistant had failed. The budget proposes moving back to a full-time position.

Following a number of cyber-attacks WCF are investing in better protection and IT systems.

WCF is still in discussion with Eurosport about an extension of their contract and the Marketing expenditure reduction relates to the projected cost of the Commercial Airtime Package from Eurosport within such a proposed new contract.

It was proposed to approve the budget

*Proposed by Hugh Millikin
Seconded by Hew Chalmers
and carried unanimously*

9. Report from Olympic/Paralympic Test Events (KCA/KWE)

KCA and KWE reported that the Olympic and Paralympic test events (WJCC and WWhCC) had been extremely successful. They confirmed that the preparations are not only well on track but the preparations of POCOG are most advanced and professional due to their excellent work.

A joint TD report of both test events is currently being prepared.

The major issue that needs to be solved is the shifting and heaving of the floor which has resulted in cracks. Currently the ice has been removed and experts are looking at the floor which will be repaired or, if this is not possible, replaced. An additional test event might follow.

10. McLaren Update (CGR)

A detailed McLaren Update had been provided earlier to the Board and this was now discussed. CGR highlighted that Russia does not have a compliant NADA at the moment but it was hoped that this would be the case again at the end of the year. Currently WCF is not allowed to take events into Russia.

In the case of Curling there are three athletes identified in the McLaren Report. For all three athletes it is still unclear if there is sufficient evidence to move to a Hearing Panel.

Russians still remain suspended by the IPC and unless this situation changes they will not be allowed to participate in the PyeongChang Paralympic Games.

At this time the IOC have two commissions looking into the matters raised by McLaren and it is expected that these commissions will make reports on potential disciplinary action at an IOC level. It is not clear if this will have any impact on Russian participation at the Olympics.

11. Curling Equipment Programme (CGR)

CGR said that the Curling Equipment Programme (CEP) which is run by Darrell Ell (DEL) was put on hold due to the brush issue last year. DEL had prepared a report for the Board and it was now discussed if the programme should be reinstated or discontinued.

The CDO team as a whole had felt that the programme was very good but it was felt that the Member Associations could have made better use of the programme. Also, all equipment manufacturers had and would have the opportunity to get involved in the programme but not all manufacturers have conforming equipment. The difficult task of providing the same amount of equipment from each company to each camp was discussed. A solution to this might be to organize individual camps for individual sponsors. Taking all this into consideration DEL had suggested to permanently discontinue the programme. As the Board did not have a unanimous view it was agreed to postpone any decision until KWE and CGR have had further discussion with DEL.

12. Commission vacancies (CGR)

Finance Commission

Following the death of Gerrit-Jan Scholten there is a vacancy on the Finance Commission. The Board agreed to advertise the vacancy to the Membership and have it filled by the Board at its meeting in Bled during the Congress.

Governance Commission

In order to provide continuity to the Governance Commission in which all other members are newly elected, the Board agreed to extend Willie Nicoll's tenure on the Commission by another two years.

Hall of Fame Induction Commission

Following the last Board meeting approaches had been made to two individuals to join the commission. Patrick Hurlmann had accepted but no contact whatsoever could be made with 2nd individual. If this continues to be the case an alternative person needs to be approached.

General

The process of Commission membership and terms of office varies from Commission to Commission and the Board felt that there should be consistent terms and transition procedures for all Commissions. It was therefore agreed that the Secretary General prepare a review of all Commission Members for the Board meetings in Bled and that a formal decision is then taken to clearly indicate how long a term of office is and whether it is renewable or not.

13. DAP Update (HCH)

HCH reported that the proposals for change to the DAP scheme which were put forward to the Board in Basel were generally well accepted by the Member Associations at the Stockholm Congress.

The new proposal of allowing a single claim in the four year period of up to USD 48,000 will commence after the Olympic Winter Games 2018 in PyeongChang. Until then no changes to the existing dates or timing will be proposed.

Within the new scheme there could be circumstances where there may be a requirement for part of the funding to be paid in advance, before the completion of a larger project. Guidelines for any release of approved advance funding will be drawn up by the office in due course.

14. World Series Update (KCA/CGR)

A discussion paper on the areas of format, participants, locations and staffing of the future World Cup Series had been prepared and distributed to the Board. It was agreed that the content should be further discussed at a think tank later this year.

The general idea was to have an event with 8 teams per gender with one team per Member Association allowed in the initial stages. The event will be run through the WCF and also the main staffing will be WCF controlled.

Two host cities are already lined up ready to sign a contract but two more host cities (one in Europe and one in the Americas) are needed, so the MAs should be encouraged to talk to the WCF about hosting one of these events. The WCF has now got an investor who is about to sign a contract with the WCF. This means that the financial viability of the event is secured.

15. Youth Olympic Games Format (KCA/CGR)

CGR explained that as part of the IOC's agenda 2020 the format of the Youth Olympic Games (YOG) had been reviewed. As part of this review the IOC had approached the WCF with an offer to increase the number of teams competing at the YOG from 16-24.

KWE had produced a format that would work and deliver a competition within the dates for the 24 teams, it does however mean that the Mixed Curling portion of the event would be made up of 4 pools of 6 teams rather than 2 pools of 8 teams meaning the number of games each team is guaranteed is reduced. The increase in the number of teams would also inevitable mean the standard of the competition would drop. However it would allow 6 more of our Member Associations to experience the YOG and WCF had seen the impact that this can have with countries such as Brazil and Turkey.

The Board felt that having 24 teams at YOG was the right step forward.

16. Congress 2018 (CGR)

CGR explained that three bids had been received:

Canada – Mont Tremblant

Hungary – Budapest

Russia – Moscow

Given the current position with the McLaren report and the recommendation from the IOC not to take events to Russia at this time it was agreed not to take the Russian bid any further.

The full bid documents from Canada and Hungary had been circulated to the Board for information and these were now discussed.

There was a price difference between the Canadian and the Hungarian bid with Budapest offering a more favorable quotation.

It was proposed to award the 2018 WCF Congress to Budapest.

*Proposed by Andy Anderson
Seconded by Cathrine Lindahl
and carried unanimously*

17. Sport Presentation Report (HMI)

HMI informed the Board that he had spent a lot of time in Curling arenas, watching the sport from different perspectives. He added that there is a lot of technology/hardware (for example LED displays) at the WCF's disposal that is not efficiently used for the time-being.

The following comments/ideas for a better presentation of the sport were presented:

- Use of social media to elicit voting on shots or ask questions to WCF President or other key WCF officials
- Having background music at wheelchair events

- Reviewing
 - Uniforms
 - Venue Environment
 - Branding
 - Lighting
 - Carpeting
 - Pebbling – make it a ‘show’

The Board agreed that it would be good to see examples for the proposed ideas so the plan was developed to take the LED boards from Edmonton to Lethbridge for some further testing. HMI agreed to ask for a quotation.

18. Presentation by Infront on Future Relationship

The meeting was joined by the following Infront representatives:

Philippe Blatter, President and CEO
Bruno Marty, Executive Director Winter Sports
Andreas Biffiger, Director Winter Sports

Andreas Biffiger gave a presentation on “The story of the WCF and Infront” which started 10 years ago.

Following the presentation the following issues/aspects were discussed:

- WCF: Is there still a market for sports travel/tourism? Infront: Yes, if there is an event around (festival, fan mile, etc.)
- WCF: There was a tremendous increase with regard to TV exposure, but that levelled out in recent years. Infront: The World Cup series will generate much more exposure.
- WCF: The operations are Swiss oriented. Is there a possibility to add diversity? Infront: Yes, that will be one of the aims. People with different nationalities will be allocated from the Infront network for the special markets.
- WCF: Does Infront have people that can get to networks and negotiate. Infront: Yes, that is where we are best in and this is where our competence is.
- WCF: We are less than 12 months away from the PyeongChang Olympic Winter Games where a new discipline (Mixed Doubles) will be played. What is your prospective in making this new discipline sponsorable? Infront: The more touch-points we create with the outside world the better it is. We should leverage everything and pack it into one package towards sponsors and media partners and increase the visibility of the sport – this will make Mixed Doubles sponsorable.
- WCF: We are currently investigating our sports presentation especially for the Mixed Doubles. Also, there is some frustration as there are not enough people in the stands. Infront: We can consult as we have expertise in-house. We also work with other Federations not only to bring people to the arena and we would be happy to have a workshop on this topic.
- WCF: Compared with other sports Curling has a lot of ‘stopped motion’. Can this be used for marketing and if yes, how? Infront: Having microphones on the players is very good. Another important element are the commentators. Also, drawing possible

tactics on the screen is excellent. Also discussed was putting biometric technology onto the players or use additional in-stone technology.

- WCF: How can the US market be accessed? Infront: The US is a totally different market in terms of the brand and media landscape. There is a huge gap between traditional and digital sponsorship and the share of the latter is far higher. There is currently one person working on the US market but further staffing is being done out of the Omnidigit office in New York.
- WCF: What do we have to do to increase the number of people in the arena? Infront: The key role lies with the national MAs. It is much better to go to smaller places/cities because in big cities it is just one more event among many others whereas in smaller cities it is special!
- WCF: What happened to Edox? Infront: Financially they are having an extremely difficult time and also the watch industry is suffering. They have made a sponsorship offer however Infront has not yet said yes to that.

The Infront representatives thanked the WCF Board for the fruitful discussion and left the meeting.

19. Any other business

Delivery Stick Issues

The Board discussed the current problem and disconnect between the rule book and the devices that are in the field of play. The current rules say that WCF must certify all devices and that the devices may not provide mechanical advantage. However, there are a couple of devices that are currently used at world events which may be considered to be outside of that criteria. Another rule adds that devices must be commercially available. Instead of going through the same exercise like with the brushes (summit etc.) WCF had decided to catalogue all the sticks that were used at both the B and the A-championships (pictures were taken and a description was added as the sticks do get altered, taped etc.)

After having discussed this issue extensively it seemed that the fairest approach now is to allow all the equipment that was used at the current world championships (A-Division) plus the equipment used by Sweden and Slovenia (qualified for PWG 2018 but not present at the WWhCC 2017) for use at the 2018 Paralympic Winter Games. It was agreed to present this approach the next day during the Open Meetings. Also, a respective guideline would be drafted during the next weeks to be sent out to all Member Association.

KCA thanked the Board for their input and the staff for their work. The Board acknowledged and congratulated the President for her hard work and efforts over the past few months.

MINUTES
Open Meetings
held in Beijing, China
24 March 2017

President Kate Caithness welcomed the delegates to Beijing and said that she was looking forward to fruitful meetings and discussions.

Competition & Rules Commission – Overview of Competitions (KWE)

KWE explained that this presentation would be about every single event that the WCF is involved in.

His presentation is attached to these minutes.

The question was raised if there was a concrete plan to separate WSCC from WMDCC. KWE replied that the events would be together in the next two seasons and that it was the intention to carry on like this. It was also suggested to take into consideration a two-tiered system for the WMDCC but keeping both tiers at the same location and time.

At the end of KWE's presentation CGR added that the Competition & Rules Commission, which developed the above suggestions at their meeting in Frankfurt had had access to all the comments made by the delegates during the open meetings and the group sessions in Stockholm. These comments had been taken into account.

Competition & Rules Commission –
World Women's and World Men's Championship Structure Options (HMI)

HMI explained that at the Competition & Rules Commission Meeting in Frankfurt the commission members had discussed the various possibilities for restructuring the WWCC and WMCC. Various options, each of which having its own merit, had been developed. The presentation given at the meeting is attached to these minutes.

Graham Prouse (GPR), Vice-President Americas, explained that the financial loss for the WCF due to the fact that Japan was not playing at the current WWCC was around USD 200,000. CGR added that the lack of Japan does not only have a financial/ TV-dollar impact but it also has an impact on the marketing profile of the event and the WCF itself.

HMI invited Cathrine Lindahl (CLI) (WCF Director and Member of the WCF Athlete Commission) to present the recommendation of the Athlete Commission (AC) on this subject. She advised the delegates that the Athlete Commission would recommend the adoption of a 13 Team, full round-robin Men's and Women's World Curling Championship. This format would add a strong team to the Championship while maintaining the highest performance standards and the integrity of the Championship.

She explained that the AC had weighed the pros and cons of the formats. After critical and thorough evaluation the AC advocates keeping the full round-robin as it supports the highest performing athletes/teams. Maintaining the highest standard of play is vital to the success of our premiere annual event. She added that the AC understands the desire to grow the sport, but it is believed that growing the game can best be served by developing an additional path to the Olympic Games (i.e. a pre-Qualifier for the Olympic Qualifier). Creating a secondary Olympic path for all MAs having competed towards a World Championship during the quadrennial is felt to be real and sustainable development.

The AC also felt that using split pools always has the potential for inequities and the AC did not feel comfortable with this. Although Curling is one of the last remaining sports that has only one round robin, WCF should be proud of that and fight to maintain the equity of play that it provides. The World Championships is a tough event to obtain entry into. It will still be a challenge to make it to the World Championships and the AC thinks it should be tough to earn the right to compete in the World Championships.

Furthermore, the AC supports adopting a 6 team playoff format in conjunction with the above change. This would maintain the integrity of the round-robin while creating a more viable format for LOCs, our broadcasting partners, sponsors, media and curling fans. The AC likes the idea of teams playing hard through the end of the week for one of those top two spots and a bye to the semi-final, while still keeping the middle and bottom of the pack playing hard through the end of the round robin as more teams will have a path to the playoffs as the week progresses.

She closed by saying that with the support of the format change to a 6 team play off system the AC would also support the removal of tiebreakers.

The following questions/comments were asked/made:

- Peter Inch (CAN): Is 16 teams the biggest maximum at the worlds? HMI confirmed that at this point 16 teams is the suggested maximum.
- Peter Inch (CAN): What is the pool format? HMI explained that the allocation of teams into the pools is similar to every other event the WCF does. There are two (or more) pools and the teams are seeded into those pools based on the ranking of previous world events.
- Rick Patzke (USA): What does WCTV think of the options? CGR confirmed that from a WCTV point of view any of the formats can be adopted and a good TV coverage can be guaranteed.
- Beau Welling (USA): What are the pros and cons of a WQE? HMI explained that if there were no PACC and ECC the world event would probably have an A- and B-Division. However, it was felt that the PACC and ECC should be maintained as qualifying events as they are so successful, but when doing so there are certain limitations. The WQE would be a perfect tool to balance the flow of strengths of the regions. HMI added that one negative aspect is that another event must be scheduled which however seems workable. An additional event is financially not so significant for the WCF but the MAs will have to fund their participation. He added that right now WCF is looking at an 8-team-concept for the WQE.

- Yuhei Kusui (JPN): One of the concepts had been to bring forward countries from previous year's events. It was questioned why this was not part of the options being presented now. HMI replied that this had been discussed but did not find support.

HMI added that some input had been received by e-mail from 12 WCF Member Associations (Belgium, Netherlands, England, New Zealand, Ireland, Latvia, France, Estonia, Australia, Wales, Russia, Chinese Taipei). All of them indicated that they would be in favour of Option #5 – 16 Teams + WQE due to the following reasons:

- This is the best option to develop sport world-wide
- Provides balancing option for varying regional performance
- Enables better funding from governments
- It is a long-term solution for the American region

Two of the nations were concerned about their cost for a qualification event

CGR said that it was the intention to present the options available to the WCF delegates in a simple and most understandable format at the forthcoming WCF Congress in Bled so that the voting process would run smoothly. He added that a 75% majority of votes would be required at the Congress to pass an amendment.

After the coffee break HMI added some information to Option #6 – 13 Teams + WQE and explained that in this case the thought would be to have a WQE made up of 8 teams (1 host, 2 from Pacific region, 1 from the Americas and 4 Europeans). With two teams coming out of this WQE the teams at the worlds would be composed as follows:

American zone: 2 or 3

Pacific zone: minimum 2, maximum 4

Europe: minimum 7, maximum 9

Richard Harding (WCF) asked the delegates to remember that broadcasters like certainty.

Competition & Rules Commission - Discussion topics (KWE)

KWE explained that the C&R commission had restructured its working process and all action/discussion items were now put into three different categories:

- Active (currently 18 items)
- Completed (currently 24 items)
- On hold (currently 4 items)

The presentation detailing the current topics is attached to these minutes.

Delivery Stick Issues

HMI explained that currently there is a problem and a disconnect between the rule book and the devices that are in the field of play. The current rules say that WCF must certify all devices and that the devices may not provide mechanical advantage. However there are a

couple of devices that are currently used at world events which are outside of that criteria. Another rule adds that devices must be commercially available. Instead of going through the same exercise as with the brushes (summit etc.) WCF had decided to catalogue all the sticks that were used at both the B and the A-championships (pictures were taken and a description was added as the sticks do get altered, taped etc.)

After having discussed this issue extensively it seems that the fairest approach now is to allow all the equipment that was used at the current world championships (A-Division) plus the equipment used by Sweden and Slovenia (qualified for PWG 2018 but not present at the WWhCC 2017) for use at the 2018 Paralympic Winter Games.

The question was raised as to whether the stone handles used at the Paralympics are standardized. HMI replied that following feedback received at the World Wheelchair Curling Championships this year the WCF will confirm the handle type to be used at the Paralympics to all the competing teams. The handles that were used this year will be the handles that will be used at the 2018 Paralympics.

Presentation from Rock Solid Productions

CGR introduced Chad McMullan, owner and President of Rock Solid Productions, a WCF development partner. His products can be used for Curling promotions, where ice access is limited or not available at all. Chad confirmed that DAP-money could be used for purchasing his products. A presentation was made which you can find attached to these minutes.

Brush Update (GPR)

Graham Prouse explained that things have stabilized and there have been almost no brushing issues over the past season.

In addition to the motions passed at the WCF Congress a lot of work had to be done. Consultations with manufacturers had continued and a process by which they could have new products approved had to be implemented. The first applications came in at the end of November and NRC (National Research Council of Canada) is doing the conformance checks for the WCF.

The process now in place is as follows:

1. A potential manufacturer has to apply to be recognized as effective manufacturer. That means that conforming sweeping devices must be readily available to the general curling population and must be manufactured to a standard that ensures consistency of product over multiple and ongoing production runs.
2. Manufacturers must apply for a WCF product code and must be prepared to send products through a performance check.

Three new products were approved this year and these show up on the WCF homepage.

There are still a couple of issues that need to be dealt with in future. These are:

- Sliding brushes and target brushes: the risk of instinctively sweeping with the wrong brush is too high
- Some balancing devices may not meet the principle of “widely available for purchase”
- Footwear
- Manufacturer’s markings on brooms (possible conflict with Rule 50 of the Olympic Charter = rules on advertising, demonstrations and propaganda)

Currently the manufacturers can apply for approval at any time of the year. In future this may be limited to different application time slots. WCF currently replies within six weeks but this timeline is difficult to keep if the equipment needs modification.

GPR closed by saying that the WCF’s knowledge of what is happening between the ice and the equipment has increased significantly but more work is to be done in this sector.

With regard to the sliding/target brush Resby Coutts, CAN asked why WCF was worried about the curler taking the risk? GPR replied that there is a risk to the sport. One should imagine the second last shot before a gold medal shot, a draw is required and the skip uses the wrong broom by mistake. This is the risk WCF is talking about.

Bruce Crawford (SCO) asked if stabilizers give the athlete a performance advantage. GPR replied that this was not known so far but if there was a performance advantage it should be available for everyone. Bruce Crawford then suggested to only have 1 brush for each player. GPR answered that this might be one option for consideration

MINUTES
Open Meetings
held in Beijing, China
25 March 2017

Update for WMCC 2018 Las Vegas – Brian K. Krolicki, Lt. Governor of Nevada

Brian Krolicki started by welcoming the delegates to the WMCC 2018 at Las Vegas, USA. He said that Las Vegas had fallen in love with the sport of Curling and had already hosted the Continental Cup several times. The city cannot wait to have another international Curling event and ticket sales were already going strongly.

World series update

CGR explained that the basic concept had already been presented at the WCF Congress in Stockholm and an update on the progress since Stockholm is detailed in the attached presentation.

It was confirmed that the event was financially viable. An agreement in principle had been reached with an investment partner as well as with two potential host cities. Announcements would follow in due course. Arrangements for a consultation meeting with potential stakeholders are being put into place.

Hugh Avery (CAN) asked how much consultation the WCF has had with elite teams across the world as these are obviously the teams that are needed for this event. CGR replied that the Athlete Commission had had some initial conversation about this. However, the first job had been to make sure that the event was financially viable and that the WCF could afford it. Moving forward the WCF will conduct wider consultation. CGR added that the MAs will hopefully have some influence with their teams too as everyone in the room should be interested in developing this event.

Following a question from Rick Patzke (USA) CGR confirmed that there will be a hosting fee which however will depend on how much of the marketing inventory the host cities are interested in. The host city fee is not nearly as important as it was at the time of Stockholm because of the investment that the WCF had received.

KWE added that the idea was to build a brand loyalty: the host cities are supposed to host the event over a period of four years. This will allow the host cities to build a reputation.

World Women's and World Men's Championship Structure Options (HMI)

Hugh Millikin explained that the delegates present would now be divided into four groups to discuss during the following breakout sessions the six structure options of the future world curling championships. The groups would be accompanied by Graham Prouse, Bent Ramsfjell, Keith Wendorf and Hugh Millikin whose purpose was not to lead the conversation but to provide information if necessary.

After the breakout sessions the groups gave the following feedback:

“Group Graham”

Graham Prouse (GPR) reported that the group first of all had kind of a philosophical discussion about what the WCC should be and agreed that it should be a merit-based system. Challenges with marketability and broadcasting were recognized and should be taken into consideration. The group also agreed that more teams were not better and there was no general favour for 16 teams. The group thought that 13 teams is the best short term fix so that an additional Pacific/Asian team can be included. The possibility of having only one team coming out of a World Qualifier should be discussed as well.

When the 6 team play-off idea was looked at the question was raised as to why there are only 10 teams in the juniors? GPR then shared the following information on play-offs and tie-breakers of the past world men's and women's and junior men's and women's championships (a total of 160 events). Out of these events

- 62 events had no tie-breakers (4 teams to the play-offs)
- 72 events needed one tie-breaker (5 teams in the play-offs)
- 26 events needed two tie-breakers (6 teams in the play-offs)
- No event ever needed three tie-breakers

GPR explained that this shows that in almost every situation guaranteeing six teams into the play-offs gets more teams into the play-offs than tie-breakers will. In the group there was no resistance as to the 6 team play-off except with regard to the 10 team junior world event.

“Group Bent”

Bent Ramsfjell (BRA) reported that the group jumped to the option No. 6 of 13 teams + WQE as the most feasible solution. This option is what the athletes wish for as it keeps a full round robin and it also seems to be the best option with regard to the predictability of broadcasting. The group felt that before the WCF moves to 16 teams it would be good to see how it works with 16 teams in Canada. With regard to the play-offs there was a consensus about the 6 team play-off. There was a suggestion to look at rewarding the number 1 team after the round robin: having a quarter-final and the winner of that meets the number 1 after the round robin. It was clearly recommended that the tie-breaker is connected to the 6 team play-off only, so if we keep on with 4 teams in the play-offs the tie-breaker is still necessary. Talking about the 8-team qualifier it was recognized that there will be some challenges in selecting the teams and there might also be issues with finding host cities (must be an easily accessible key location). A qualifier would however give the members the opportunity to grow, on the other hand it is difficult to fit that into the schedule (maybe have WMxCC only every second year?) The importance of regional qualifiers (ECC, PACC) was recognized. The group thought that the team ranking procedures must also be looked at.

“Group Keith”

Keith Wendorf (KWE) thanked the group for a very harmonious and excellent discussion. The group had discussed the following four topics:

- World Qualifier Event (WQE)
- Play-off system
- Different WCC formats
- Olympic Pre-Qualifier

Starting out with the „easiest“ item KWE said that there was total consensus that the Olympic Pre-Qualifier was a really excellent idea.

The group also agreed that the WQE event is a good thing. No matter what system is selected a WQE should be tied into because it allows for the power shifting from zone to zone to be compensated for and there is always a chance for the best teams in the world to get there. This had led to a very interesting discussion as to whether it should be 4 or 8 teams in the WQE. The idea of 4 teams would be that the host gets in and then there is one team from each zone with only one team qualifying eventually. The advantage of that is that it is less expenditure for fewer nations, easier to schedule, you have men and women on the ice in a 4-sheet Curling Club at the same time. Another suggestion was to go with 8 teams and 2 qualifiers and without giving up the guaranteed European spot whichever zone finishes last at the previous worlds gives up one spot.

Regarding the play-off system the group was leaning towards the top 6; if it remains with the top four teams then there was no consensus on whether it should be the page play-off system or the Olympic system.

Out of the six WCC options only two were discussed: the 13 or the 16 team option both with qualifiers. The majority liked the option with 13 teams more, also because with 16 teams half of the teams are out in the middle of the competition. Also, with 16 teams broadcasting could only be set for the round robin and is not predictable for the rest of the event.

“Group Hugh”

Bruce Crawford (SCO) presented the feedback of the group.

The group had started with a philosophical discussion about why there was a world event and it was felt that the best performance environment should be created and the best teams in the world should attend. The WCC was not considered a development tool for Curling, the development of the sport should be done within the zones themselves.

The group agreed that the WCC needs an additional spot for another Asia/Pacific team or any other team from somewhere in the world to come in. Japan not being at the current WWCC had been the catalyst of the discussion currently taking place but it does not necessarily have to be them.

The time scale pressure was discussed as there is a small amount of time only to get documents prepared for July for the papers to go out to the members for the next WCF Congress. The dream of having a world A- and B- event was discussed but was put aside because of the time constraints.

The group had a unanimous agreement that there should be a WQE regardless of the number of teams. There was a general preference for 13 teams at the worlds, but there was also some preference for 16 teams. The last item discussed was the page versus the Olympic play-off system and the page system was the preferred among the group members.

CGR thanked the delegates for having participated in the discussions and confirmed that motions for the Annual General Assembly must be sent out at the beginning of July. If the

MA then think that there is still something missing there is still a chance for the MAs to submit amendments to those motions.

Finance update (AAN and CGR)

Andy Anderson (AAN) explained that everything that has to do with the WCF's finances was dealt with on a very professional basis thanks to the WCF's management, the staff – in particular Thelma Black - and the finance commission. He invited Colin Grahamshaw (CGR) as chief operating officer to report on the finances of the WCF.

CGR explained that the current financial position was broadly in line with the budget. There are no indications of a significant end of year negative variance. The weakness of the GBP has resulted in some savings against the budget but overall the foreign exchange variations have not had as big an impact as the last few years.

On the income side there are two main variances:

- Profit on investments that have been sold over the last 6 months (i.e. use of Olympic money), markets have increased partly due to the weakness of the GBP. WCF never budgets on profits of investments therefore this is shown as variance
- Income received from brush testing is offset on the expenditure side of the account with the costs of testing

On the expenditure side there are the following variances:

- The Congress in Stockholm was more expensive than budgeted and the Board held an additional meeting in December
- Savings in the President's Expenses as a result of some travel and accommodation costs being met by other agencies
- Employment costs influenced by the weak GBP
- Programmes and Services includes the costs for Brush testing and the 50th Anniversary celebrations
- WJBC costs higher with more entries and higher flight costs (due to second leg of flights to Östersund)
- Payment for the statistics service had happened earlier than budgeted
- In Finance there was a major cost for renewing WCF trademarks and copyrights

On the balance sheet there are three areas to draw attention to:

- The investment in the Portable Curling Facility (PCF) continues with a finish date of April 2017
- Our investments will continue to reduce during the course of the year as we drawdown on the 2014 Sochi Olympic monies
- The loan accounts reflect new loans made to Belgium and Scotland for new and green facility loans

Any other business

Hugh Avery (CAN) expressed his disappointment on the fact that only 11 nations had attended the Open Meeting in Beijing. He added that there would be no changes in Bled if the WCF had not had the meetings in China and therefore the WCF should consider having all nations at these meetings. Also, he felt more time should be spent on other topics such as development. The breakout sessions are 100% supported as eye contact helps communication and this is the form of meetings that the delegates want. He expressed his hope that other representatives would support his view.

CGR replied that when having meetings during an event there are of course other focuses as the WCF is on site to deliver a successful championship and is in the middle of the busiest period delivering Championships. He added that he felt that the Congress would be the right place to talk about development. He assured the delegates that value of a second meeting was recognized but it was down to individual members to decide whether they invested their funds attending the meeting.

Kate thanked the delegates for their participation in all the discussions and encouraged delegates, whose first language is not English, to raise their hand whenever they would like to say something. She thanked the Board, Keith Wendorf and Richard Harding for their hard work and contribution to the discussions. She also thanked the staff of the WCF for their fantastic work. As Allen Coliban had been elected to the Romanian Parliament and was leaving the WCF she wished him well for the future and thanked him for his work. Her special thanks go as ever to Colin Grahamslaw.

Hugh Millikin in return thanked President Kate Caithness for her hard work on behalf of all the delegates and the staff.

Welcome everyone.

Since our last meeting in December life as ever continues to be busy.

December – I was invited to speak at the opening of the third Season of Snow & Ice Sports for All in Beijing, at a Televised Gala Ice Show. There were only two speeches myself and the Minister of Sport and I was able to bring greetings from all the other Winter Sport Presidents. There were many dignitaries present including the Vice Premier of China, Madame Lui Yandong whom I had the honour of sitting beside.

During the two previous seasons, hundreds of events and clinics were held all over China. The sports included were speed skating, figure skating, ice hockey, skiing and curling. More than 30 million people participated in these annual events.

January –Time for a holiday with my family in San Diego but on my way home spent two days in Mexico City with the new federation. It was a real busy time as they wanted to show me prospective venues for curling and also the proposed new two sheet dedicated curling facility. I met Horacio de la Vega, General Director of sport together with his colleagues. We discussed the possibility of taking an event to Mexico City and they now have the relevant bid guideline documents.

The last day of January saw me head out to Lausanne for Board meetings of Sportaccord.

February–Early in the month I visited Tallin for the official launch and signing of the contract with Estonia to host the ECC 2018. I also was delighted to accept an invitation to dinner with the Prime Minister and the new President of Estonia Curling Federation.

The following week I travelled to Pyeongchang for the start of the World Junior Championships. The day after the official opening ceremony, I travelled to Sapporo Japan for the Opening Ceremony of the curling discipline which was making its reappearance in the Asian Winter Games. The curling was a huge success with the event a sell out. I was invited to a reception by the President of Oceanic Council of Asia –HE Sheik Ahmaed Alfayed al Sabah. We discussed the problems in Qatar and he said he would try to help as he was visiting the following week. He also told me that Kuwait now had a curling team! I also attended the Opening Ceremony and Reception of the Games.

Back to Seoul for the WJCC where I visited potential Hotel venues for Olympics 2018 and had many meetings with POCOG discussing of course the problems with the floor and the legacy for curling.

March -It was then home for a few days and then back to Pyeongchang for the WWhCC, the test event for the Paralympics. The 1st March is Paralympic Day and the Curling Venue in Gangneung had been chosen to host this special day. The celebration took place both inside and outside the curling hall prior to the start of the Championship. The President of POCOG attended, together with many Government Officials, and the event was a huge success.

President's Report, Beijing, China

During my time there I visited the Paralympic Village in Alpensia where our athletes will be housed and together with POCOG staff looked at the several hotel options on offer for our Headquarters Hotel for both our ITOs, staff and guests for next year's Games.

Home for three days and then to Beijing where there was a huge welcome reception organised for me both at the airport and the hotel. The LOC hosted a first class Opening Reception and the Opening Ceremony with some 8000 people in the audience was excellent.

This concludes my report to date.