

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE WORLD CURLING FEDERATION
BLED, SLOVENIA
14 - 18 SEPTEMBER 2017**



INDEX

	<i>Pages</i>
Board Meetings	4-13
Open Meetings	14-20
Minutes of the Annual General Assembly	21-40
President's Report	41-44

*PREPARED BY:
THE SECRETARIAT (SMG)
3 ATHOLL CRESCENT
PERTH PH1 5NG*

WCF Executive Board Meetings & Annual General Assembly 2017 Bled, Slovenia

Executive Board

Kate Caithness	President
Graham Prouse	VP Americas
Hugh Millikin	VP Pacific Asia
Bent Ramsfjell	VP Europe
Andy Anderson	Director
Hew Chalmers	Director
Cathrine Lindahl	Director
Toyo Ogawa	Director

Staff

Colin Grahamslaw	Secretary General
Richard Harding	Curling Development Officer
Keith Wendorf	Director of Competitions & Development
Joanna Kelly	Broadcast Manager
Chris Hamilton	Digital Media Officer
Cameron MacAllister	Communication & Media Relations Manager
Thelma Black	Financial Controller
Liz Munro	Competitions Administrator
Saskia Müller-Gastell	Projects Officer
Jorge Vazquez Monroy	World Series of Curling Manager
Eeva Röthlisberger	Competitions & Development Officer
Darrell Ell	Competitions & Development Officer
Scott Arnold	Competitions & Development Officer
Paddy Käser	Competitions & Development Officer

Representatives

Bruce Crawford	Scotland	Mamanov Kanybek	Kyrgyz Republic
Bob Kelly	Scotland	Jaanbai Kyzy Aijan	Kyrgyz Republic
Bill Duncan	Scotland	Raimonds Vaivods	Latvia
Susan Kesley	Scotland	Ieva Krusta	Latvia
Azizullah Noori	Afghanistan	Peter Prasch	Liechtenstein
Bahara Mahboobi	Afghanistan	Marloes Fisscher	Liechtenstein
Josep Garcia	Andorra	Vygantas Zalieckas	Lithuania
Ana Arce	Andorra	Evelina Aleksejenko	Lithuania
John Anderson	Australia	Alex Benoy	Luxembourg
Kim Forge	Australia	Susanne Benoy-Göbel	Luxembourg
Marcus Schmitt	Austria	Paula Herrero Moreno	Mexico
Liliana Schmitt	Austria	Rodrigo Velez Escudero	Mexico
Andrei Yurkevich	Belarus	Choiikhuu Erdenetuya	Mongolia
Inesa Pauliuchyk	Belarus	Jargalsaikhan Dorjsuren	Mongolia
Dirk Heylen	Belgium	Alie Kramer	Netherlands
Sarah Megens	Belgium	Lorne de Pape	New Zealand
Sergio Mitsuo Vilela	Brazil	Carroll De Pape	New Zealand
Anne Akemi Shibuya	Brazil	Grethe Brenna	Norway
Antoaneta Dimova	Bulgaria	Dagfinn Loen	Norway
Nikolay Runtov	Bulgaria	Morten Søgård	Norway
Resby Coutts	Canada	Janusz Duda	Poland
Hugh Avery	Canada	Beata Rek	Poland
Peter Inch	Canada	TBA	Portugal
Maureen Miller	Canada	Mr. Hamad Salah Al-Baker	Qatar
Li Dongyan	China	Allen Coliban	Romania
Lei Yi	China	Diana Butucea	Romania
Neven Pufnik	Croatia	Konstantin Zadvornov	Russia
Katarina Cadez	Croatia	Olga Zharkova	Russia
David Šik	Czech Republic	Michael Stepanyants	Russia
Karolina Frederiksen	Czech Republic	Olga Andrianova	Russia
Freddy Frederiksen	Denmark	Patricia Paine	Saudi-Arabia
Kirsten Jensen	Denmark	Alastair Fyfe	Saudi-Arabia
Alison Arthur	England	Marko Stojanvic	Serbia
John Brown	England	Dara Gravara-Stojanović	Serbia
Marie Turmann	Estonia	Pavol Pitonak	Slovakia
Fred Randver	Estonia	Gregor Rigler	Slovenia
Olli Rissanen	Finland	Jasna Plazl	Slovenia
Katja Kiiskinen	Finland	Xavier Cherta	Spain
Alain Contat	France	Beatriz Cureses	Spain
Karine Caux	France	Stefan Lund	Sweden
Zakaria Khechuashvili	Georgia	Michael Marklund	Sweden
Nino Petelava	Georgia	Anette Norberg	Sweden
Bernhard Mayr	Germany	Jürg Andreas Wernli	Switzerland
Christina Haller	Germany	Sandra Stauffer	Switzerland
Georgios Smyrnaiois	Greece	Patrik Loertscher	Switzerland
Eva Mataranga	Greece	Louis Moser	Switzerland

Distribution of Minutes

Rayad Husain	Guyana	Betty Chang	Chinese Taipei
Farzana Husain	Guyana	Eddy Y.T. Wu	Chinese Taipei
John Li Shek Chong	Hong Kong	Ozgur Bostanci	Turkey
Julie Morrison	Hong Kong	Seyda Topuz	Turkey
Andras Rokusfalvy	Hungary	Alex Perevezentsev	Ukraine
Dr. Zsuzsanna Bukta	Hungary	Nataliia Menzhega	Ukraine
Hallgrimur Valson	Iceland	Jennifer Stannard	USA
Liney Rut Halldorsdottir	Iceland	Beau Welling	USA
John Burns	Ireland	Mark Swandby	USA
Carolyn Hibberd	Ireland	Leland Rich	USA
Sharon Cohen	Ireland	John F Foster	USA
Tzipi Zipper	Israel	Claire Foster	US Virgin Islands
Luigi Alvera	Israel	Beau Welling	US Virgin Islands
Ann Urquhart	Italy	Adrian Meikle	Wales
Terri Johnston	Japan	Lisa Peters	Wales
Yuhei Kusui	Japan		
Tomoyoshi Kinoshita	Japan		
Viktor Kim	Kazakhstan		
Yekaterina Gorkusha	Kazakhstan	All Member Associations	
Jin-A Kim	Korea		
Heung-Gi Youn	Korea		
Fierze Bajgora	Kosovo		
Peter Andersen	Kosovo		

MINUTES
of the Executive Board Meetings
held in Bled, Slovenia
on 14 and 18 September 2017

Attendees

Executive Board

Kate Caithness (KCA) - partly	Scotland	President (18 th Sep)
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
Hew Chalmers (HCH)	Scotland	Director
Toyo Ogawa (TOG)	Japan	Director
Cathrine Lindahl (CLI)- partly	Sweden	Director (14 th Sept)

Colin Grahamslaw (CGR)	Secretary General
Keith Wendorf (KWE)	Director of Competitions & Development
Richard Harding (RHA)	Curling Development Officer
Joanna Kelly (JKE)	Broadcast Manager
Saskia Müller-Gastell (SMG) - partly	Projects Officer/Minute taker (14 th Sep)
Liz Munro (LMU) – partly	Competitions & Development Administrator / Minute taker (18 th Sep)

14th September 2017

Apologies

See above

1. Welcome / Housekeeping

CGR welcomed everyone to Bled and chaired the meeting on 14th Sep due to the absence of the President (IOC Session Lima, Peru). 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 conflicts of interest were added/deleted:

Cathrine Lindahl
Deleted: Deputy Auditor in the Swedish Curling Association

Toyo Ogawa
Added: Doping Control Officer at Paralympic Games Pyeongchang 2018

Hugh Millikin
Added: Involved in LOC of PACC 2017 / Playing in WMxCC 2017

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

A summary on WCF Decision Limits had been compiled and distributed to the Board in advance. On this document the contracts signed since the Board Meetings in Beijing were listed. These are:

- Eurosport until June 2020
- WJCC 2018 Aberdeen, SCO
- WJCC 2019 Liverpool, CAN
- Agreement with CCA (extension of 2 years)
- Facility Loans: Belgium (Facility and Plant Loans)
- Green Loan agreed but still to be signed: Murrayfield, Edinburgh, SCO
- Stones: NOR x 2; GRE; SUI; USA x 4
- Scrapers: FIN x2; NOR; AUS

3. President's Business (KCA)

a) President's Report

CGR provided, on behalf of KCA, a full report on her activities since the Board meeting held in Beijing. A copy of this report is attached as an appendix to these minutes.

Regarding the Olympic Winter Games 2018 at Pyeongchang, KOR, CGR confirmed that WCF is insured against the cancellation of the Games. Should that happen the current financial reserves of the WCF and the insurance pay-out from the IOC Policy would provide the Federation with finance to cover 2.5 years at full operation. CGR also confirmed that the IOC have made clear there is no plan B for an alternative venue.

4. Competitions Updates (HMI/KWE)

a) YOG Qualification System

KWE confirmed that the third winter YOG edition would take place in Lausanne, SUI in 2020 with the Curling event taking place in Morges. The IOC have proposed to increase the number of teams from 16 to 24.

The following principles will be used to produce the qualifiers:

1. Same geographical representation as last YOG for the first 16 teams (1 Host, 2 North America, 1 South America, 3 Pacific Zone, 1 Oceania, 8 Europe)
2. WCF fills all those spots using the points gained from 2018 and 2019 WJBCCs and WJCCs.
3. First, the reserves from a region fill any spots for that particular region that are not taken by the qualified NOCs.
4. WCF then finds the last 8 teams and any other spots that need to be filled by looking at the Junior World Rankings, alternating from gender to gender. By looking at the genders separately this would allow a NOC with a strong women's or men's programme, but a very weak programme in the opposite gender, to still have the chance to qualify. It also represents a qualification process that is based on equality in the genders.

The WCF Board supported this qualification system and agreed that the Member Associations be informed that this is the proposal that will be made to the IOC for the Qualification System for the 2020 Youth Olympic Games.

b) Future Hosts

KWE confirmed that all venues were set for the upcoming season 2017/2018 except for ECC-C 2018. The Board discussed why it was difficult to find venues for this event and talked about potential solutions to this problem (e.g. abandon the funding of junior flights to WCF events and support ECC-C instead, etc.) The Board agreed not to take any steps in the aforementioned direction as of yet but to continue the search for a venue for ECC-C 2018 and perhaps increase the support to the event financially due to the shortened preparation time.

KWE stressed that in general WCF would like to receive more bids for its events, especially for PACC, ECC-C and WMxCC. The respective Vice-Presidents (HMI and BRA) as well as the whole Board (for WMxCC) were asked to actively encourage potential host cities to present their bids.

c) Changes to format of WCF Competitions / Rules changes

KWE elaborated on the proposals relating to changes to the format of WCF Competitions:

i. Introduction of a Pre-Qualifying Event for the Olympic Qualification Event

This is intended to keep the window open for all Member Associations to be able to qualify for the Olympic Winter Games. This proposal is supported by both Commissions i.e. the Competition and Rules and the Athlete Commission.

ii. To increase the number of teams in the World Wheelchair Curling Championship to 12

WCF is receiving more and more entries to WWhBCC and the more teams you have at one event the more difficult it becomes to get enough wheelchair accessible rooms. By increasing the number of teams at WWhCC WCF would both match what is happening at the Paralympics (12 teams) and WCF would balance the WWhBCC. This proposal is supported by both Commissions.

iii. To increase the number of teams in the World Curling Championships (Men and Women) to 16

This proposal is not supported by either Commission.

iv. To increase the number of teams in the World Curling Championships (Men and Women) to 13

This proposal is supported by both Commissions.

KWE added that two motions had been received (one from the CCA and one from the RCCC) both for a new format of the WMDCC.

KWE then elaborated on the proposals relating to changes to The Rules of Curling and Rules of Competition to be presented to the AGA.

He also reported on various other policies that would be presented at the Open Meetings and which will be put into place shortly.

5. McLaren Update and Panel Appointments (CGR)

A McLaren and Anti-Doping update had been compiled and distributed to the Board in advance and this was discussed.

CGR explained that the IPC now had allowed Russian athletes to compete as 'neutrals' in the Paralympic qualifying events. A decision on the Paralympics itself had not been taken so far. It is anticipated that RUSADA may regain compliance by the end of 2017.

The current chair of the WCF Hearing Panel Joseph De Pencier had indicated that he wished to stand down from that role. He had offered to continue supporting the WCF as a volunteer advisor on Anti-Doping and WCF will take up that offer. He had provided the credentials of a suitable replacement and CGR recommended the appointment of that person, Ms Catherine Ordway. Her CV and Profile had been distributed to the Board in advance.

It was proposed to appoint Ms Catherine Ordway as chairperson of the WCF Hearing Panel.

*Proposed by Graham Prouse
Seconded by Andy Anderson
and carried unanimously*

CGR also explained that the WCF had received the report from WADA following the Code Compliance Audit being conducted on all Anti-Doping Organisations. There were a number of minor items that they had recommended the WCF to look at to ensure best practice. CGR said that these would be adopted over the next 12 months.

6. Development Update (HCH)

HCH reported on the camps and courses that had been conducted in the 2016-2017 season. The Füssen (GER) and Sweetlake (NED) junior camps again were very successful and also the Prague adult camp had been full. The 'Business of Curling' seminar had visited three cities and the Olympic Celebration Tour took place in five different countries (USA, MEX, LAT, ESP and EST).

CGR reported that Paddy Käser of Switzerland had been offered the position of Curling Development Officer to replace Allen Coliban from Romania. Paddy had been chosen from a pool of approx. 130 applicants and will start working for WCF as of 01 January 2018.

7. Governance Issues

a) AIOWF Governance Standard (CGR)

CGR explained that governance standards in International Federations is currently a topic receiving much attention.

ASOIF (the Association of Summer Olympic Sports) have developed a self-assessment system which is then reviewed by an independent consultant expert in governance. The long-term plan is that this system be developed into a formal standard IFs need to comply with. The IOC like the idea and have suggested the winter sports go through this assessment as well. WCF have gone through the self-assessment process and presented its scores to the independent consultant experts who then monitored and/or adjusted the scores.

A report on the self-assessed and moderated scores had been compiled and distributed to the Board in advance and this was now discussed. CGR had added to the report the actions that WCF could take to improve the score or not.

Overall:

- World Curling is in the middle group in comparison with the members of AIWOF / ASOIF
- The increase in the score of +4 after moderation contrasts with an average change of -19 across all IFs (only 3 out of 35 were marked up)
- It could be argued that in some of the cases where there are low scores, the extent of activity is proportionate to the needs of the sport (e.g. action to protect against competition manipulation in the Integrity section)

The Board approved taking the actions recommended by CGR to improve the WCF score. The report was passed back to the Governance Commission for further consideration.

b) Commission Membership Rotation (BRA/CGR)

A summary on the current commissions had been compiled and distributed to the Board in advance and this was now discussed. The Board agreed on the following commission membership and rotation:

Finance commission

Composition: 3 members plus Board member (Andy Anderson)
Term of office: 4 years, maximum 2 terms, must be re-nominated for 2nd term by MA
Eligible: If possible WCF representatives, unless a skill is missing. If the commission member is a representative he/she will lose membership when not a representative anymore
Genders: No missing gender rule
Staggered membership: Marcus Schmitt until 2018, John Anderson until 2019, Hugh Avery until 2020

Governance commission

Composition: 3 members plus Board member (Bent Ramsfjell)
Term of office: 4 years, maximum 2 terms, must be re-nominated for 2nd term by MA
Eligible: If possible WCF representatives, unless a skill is missing. If the commission member is a representative he/she will lose membership when not a representative anymore
Genders: No missing gender rule
Staggered membership: Willie Nicoll until 2020, Replacement of Susanne Slotsager until 2022, Jennifer Stannard until 2024

A replacement for Susanne Slotsager will be advertised for.

Competition and Rules commission

Composition: 6 members plus two Board members (Graham Prouse/Hugh Millikin) and Director of Competitions
Term of office: 4 years, maximum 2 terms
Staggered membership: HMI and KWE will work out rotation proposal

Athlete commission

Composition: 2 men, 2 women, 1 Mixed-Doubles player, 1 wheelchair player plus one Board Member (The two members coming off this year – Cathrine Lindahl and Kozuke Morozumi - will not be replaced)
Election: Election process for positions currently held by Ann Swisshelm and Kelly Scott will be opened after Olympic Winter Games 2018

Hall of Fame Induction Commission

The current members are Kay Sugahara (USA), Mike Haggerty (SCO/Media), Patrick Hürlimann (SUI) and Leland Rich (USA). An additional person has been approached to serve as a member of the Commission to fill in the vacancy but despite numerous attempts no response has been received.

The Board agreed to extend Mike Haggerty's term until the end of the current season and will discuss this commission further at the Board Meeting in Las Vegas.

The Board also agreed that all commission members should be asked to complete a Conflict of Interest declaration.

The Board then discussed the procedure if a non-Board member loses their position as an MA representative. The Board agreed that that person should stop their service immediately unless there is a skill set requirement. This will be determined by the Board with the approval of the respective MA.

The WCF Commissions have become a “Board Training Programme” with the exception of HMI and TOG all elected Board members since 2012 have previously been a Commission member. However, there should be a procedure to describe what happens to a Commission member who is elected a Board member. It was agreed that if commission members become Board members they should be able to stay on the commission as long as the rules for the number of Board members on a Commission are not broken, if this is the case the Board will review which member will serve on the Commission.

8. Finance (AAN/CGR)

AAN elaborated on the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2017 and explained that the variances had been positive. He reported that the audit was clean and that the auditors had complimented the WCF staff on their co-operation. The Federation is in good shape financially.

CGR confirmed that the property prices in Perth had gone up and that the WCF property would be re-valued every 4 years. AAN added that the WCF currently has a 4% return income on investments. This is not huge and WCF could do better by increasing the risk factor, however the Board agreed to retain the current risk profile for the investment portfolio.

9. Forward Plan Update (CGR)

A Forward Plan Update had been compiled and distributed to the Board in advance and this was now discussed.

CGR highlighted that currently there are only three red areas where the WCF had not achieved its goals. These were:

- Development: To help one MA per year to start wheelchair Curling. This was not achieved last year.
- Facilities: To develop a catalogue of previously used blueprints for Curling facilities. This needs additional work but priority had been given to completing PCF.
- Facilities: To train two technical advisors and project leaders each year. The course(s) to do so would need to be developed first. WCF will consider deleting this requirement as it is very hard to achieve. Also, rather than training people WCF would prefer to supply the advice and expertise it has at hand.

Any other business

a) Korean Curling Federation (KCF)

CGR explained that there had been an issue with KCF. The election process for the KCF President had been declared invalid. The Korean Olympic Committee has put in place an interim management committee until new elections are held. Young C Kim, as representative of the interim management committee, is attending the Congress.

b) New Member Associations

The following new conditional members will come up for discussion by the Board following the AGA: Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Portugal.

c) Confidentiality agreements

The Board discussed whether there was a need for commission members to sign confidentiality agreements. The Board agreed that this was desirable and asks the Governance Commission to take this matter forward.

d) Marco hacks

HMI informed the Board that the founder of the Marco Hack company had recently passed away and asked the Board for permission to approach the family to discuss a possible collaboration. The Board agreed to a preliminary inquiry.

e) WCF exchange programme

HMI told the Board how successful and important it had been for New Zealand Curlers to live a certain time in a community of Curlers overseas and learn from them. He therefore suggested that the WCF should consider creating a WCF exchange programme where a couple of young curlers (17/18 year-old pupils) are immersed into another country (for example SCO, CAN, SWE). This programme could initially be used in New Zealand and Australia. In a second phase such a programme should be put in place for other developing countries. Some of the Board felt such programme already existed, it was agreed that the CDOs should investigate what is already available in this area.

18th September 2017

10. World Series Update (KCA/CGR)

The Broadcasting team presented a possible format for the World Series.

KCA thanked the team for putting together a good starting point. It was agreed that a copy of the contract should be distributed to the Board.

CGR indicated that the event does not have to be called World Series, but whatever is suggested needs to be available as a domain name so if any one has any ideas just let him know.

BRA had concerns about the timeline, perhaps there is now not enough time to organise a think tank. The Bid Guidelines should be sent out soon to all Member Associations. Discussions are required with the stakeholders – athletes, Member Associations, existing tours and broadcasters.

KCA confirmed that Jorge Vazquez is the successful candidate as Project Manager. He was Sports Manager at Rio for cycling and has just finished an event in China for UCI. He has no curling background but he has curled, but his event management skills are of the highest level.

Infront have the rights outside of China and have offered to help Kingdomway if they wish. The WCF will require to sign a contract with Infront for specific services.

HCH had concerns over Infront in North America as they have not made any inroads at all, and questioned why WCF are using them. If Infront are looking to extend their contract with WCF they need to advise how they are going to get into North America. If they do not come back with a

serious suggestion then perhaps WCF have to look for another agent. A separate marketing agent could be used in North America. A place will be found for Infront with this Series but for specific services.

CGR stated the preference for location would be the same place for 4 years to build up relationships. The event will improve year on year as lessons are learned.

There is already interest from various countries to host a Series event.

KCA thanked the group for their hard work in putting together the presentation.

11. Olympics 2022 Technical Update (TOG)

A written report from the Beijing Organising Committee (BOCOG) was circulated. BOCOG has requested feedback on their report.

Hans Wuthrich and TOG had visited the structure test site in April 2017. TOG felt that BOCOG had met all the necessary requirements. The WCF point of contact now is directly with BOCOG and not the owner. All information should be filtered through BOCOG.

The venue should not be constructed to suit public skating after the event.

The preferred option is the steel frame as the support system and the prefabricated concrete blocks (larger pieces) at the support subfloor for the conversion of the curling sheet.

TOG to continue working with BOCOG to make sure all is going to plan.

TOG had received a summary report on the air-conditioning system from the venue manager. A full report will be sent to the WCF from BOCOG.

An official letter will be drafted by TOG and CGR and signed by KCA stating the preferred option.

The WCF requires to provide details on who the Technical Delegate and Head Ice Maker to BOCOG soon.

12. Conditional Membership Applications (CGR)

A report on each applicant had been distributed and all meet the requirements for conditional membership.

Kyrgyz Republic – a representative attended the congress and had meetings with the WCF - conditional membership was approved unanimously.

Afghanistan – have been curling in Turkey and Kazakhstan. No representatives could attend the congress due to visa issues – conditional membership was approved unanimously.

Portugal - conditional membership was approved unanimously.

Saudi Arabia - conditional membership was approved unanimously.

13. DAP Update (HCH)

A report had been issued in advance. HCH explained that it is difficult to measure the success of the DAP funding. Another issue is how to get accurate figures on the number of curlers and number of ice rinks dedicated to curling and sheets of ice.

Perhaps looking at a loyalty card type idea for each curler in each Member Association to identify better the number of curlers in each MA. CGR/GPR will follow up with contacts in the loyalty card business.

The annual return to MAs asking for number of rinks and curlers each year is to be extended to ask more questions. It was agreed members must complete and return this to the WCF before they can access DAP funding.

AAN questioned the need to pay hosts of World Championships in future. The C&R Commission will review this as part of a wider review of WCF Events.

14. Delivery Stick – Next steps (HMI)

A meeting of the Athlete Commission and the Competition and Rules Commission took place during the congress. The key dates were laid out and the two projects are the Mixed Doubles Working Group looking at the format. The working group set up is being refined to incorporate all the necessary skill sets.

The equipment certification process including the stick for the year is being put together. HMI will draft a plan to put to the Board. A working group for the certification will be put together to include all relevant people.

The Competition and Rules Commission will meet from 19-23 January, ahead of Las Vegas.

Any other business

a) Facilities & equipment case study (TOG)

TOG made a presentation to the Board.

TOG would like to identify exactly what Member Associations require to help them build dedicated facilities. This would include research on existing facilities, a questionnaire to MAs and site visits.

The questionnaire would have to be refined to ask all the correct questions. This could be coordinated with the questionnaire regarding DAP etc.

Blueprints are required to share information with the Member Associations.

A lot of desk top research would be required before visiting sites.

TOG should contact Leif Ohman to see what information he has available. Check what information is held in the office in Perth.

TOG to come back to the Board with a plan once all the information is in place.

BRA had a request during the European Zonal Meeting regarding increasing the facility loan money. This is something that will be looked at with next year's budgets.

b) Manufacturers (GPR)

A manufacturer had previously suggested that the WCF considered holding some sort of a tradeshow in conjunction with World Championships where manufacturers could have samples of their equipment. At the time it was thought not to be appropriate. GPR had again been approached and had been asked if the WCF would reconsider this option.

It was agreed that the arrangement should be made with each LOC and manufacturer as this was part of the rights granted to the LOC.

KCA thanked the Board and Staff for their work in delivering another highly successful Congress, the sport remains in good shape and everyone is looking forward to a successful Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The Board thanked KCA for her continuing work in her role as President and Ambassador for the sport especially during the intense travel schedule she had faced in the run up to this Congress.

MINUTES
of the WCF Open Meetings
held in Bled, Slovenia
on 15 and 16 September 2017

The President welcomed the delegates to the Open Meetings.

Forward Plan Update (CGR)

A Forward Plan Update had been compiled for the second time and this was now presented by CGR. In order to make the performance of the WCF visual the red, amber and green traffic lights symbols had been used.

CGR elaborated on the amber and the red areas but highlighted that currently there are only three red areas where the WCF had not achieved its goals. These were:

- Development: To help one MA per year to start wheelchair Curling. This was not achieved last year.
- Facilities: To develop a catalogue of previously used blueprints for Curling facilities. This needs additional work but priority had been given to completing PCF.
- Facilities: To train two technical advisors and project leaders each year. The course(s) to do so would need to be developed first. WCF will consider deleting this requirement as it is very hard to achieve. Also, rather than training people WCF would prefer to supply the advice and expertise it has at hand.

Morten Soegaard said that in future it would be better to have this report in advance as this would enable the Member Associations to ask some intelligent questions.

CGR confirmed that the WCF would work diligently to resolve the “red matters” over the next 12 months – with the biggest challenge being the course for Technical Advisers.

Development: Building from the Olympic and Paralympics (DEL)

Darrell Ell, WCF Curling Development Officer, explained that the purpose of the session was to help generate ideas about what Member Associations (MAs) could be and should be doing in order to capitalize the interest that we are going to see with the Olympic Winter Games coming up.

DEL reported that during the summer he had contacted various MAs as to what their plans were and what activities they had planned in order to take advantage of the Olympics. A number of these plans were presented to the meeting. (For more details please see presentation 15 Sep Open Meetings).

DEL said that one of the programmes that have been very successful in helping the MA clubs to increase membership was the Olympic Celebration Tour (OCT) where an Olympian is brought to a Curling Club/Member Association. OCT applications can be found online on the WCF homepage. Rodrigo Velez Escudero reported on the success of an Olympic Celebration Tour that they had in Mexico City.

World Women’s and World Men’s Championship Structure Options

Hugh Millikin (HMI) presented the principles for any changes. These are:

- Best teams in the world
- Consistent with IOC values
- Regional representation
- Good show
- Maximize marketing opportunities
- Desirable event to host
- Completed in a 9 day window
- Good & fair competition
- Proportional representation from each zone

After that both the details and the pros and cons of the 13 and 16 team format (with and without World Qualifying Event - WQE) were presented (see presentation 15 Sep Open Meetings). The key dates of a WQE would be as follows:

- If using a WQE then teams qualifying through PACC, Europeans and Americas Challenge need to be decided by November 30th
- Teams invited and confirmed for the WQE by December 15th
- WQE completed by January 31st

The following comments/suggestions were made:

- It should be considered hosting the WQE directly preceding a World Championship (Reply CGR: This would create uncertainty for TV broadcasters and there would be no chance for the teams that come through to be on TV as time is too short to prepare a broadcast then)
- If there are two pools, the seeding is extremely important
- Curling is only sport not having pools, so pools seem to be very important and can be very successful
- There is concern that when having pools the first part of the championships is less interesting
- A question on process was raised: How many member nations had attended the meetings in Beijing? How many nations were interested in attending but were not able to be there? Did the Beijing discussions influence today's debate? If the answer is yes, is it fair that the richer Curling nations affected and shaped WCF policy whereas the poorer Curling nations were not able to do so? If the answer is no, is there any point of having a meeting in Beijing? Decisions must be reached in a fair way for all WCF Member Associations.
- Even with two pools the top teams will play against each other

World Mixed Doubles Championship Format

Kim Forge, Mixed Doubles Representative of the Athlete Commission informed the members that she had attended the WMDCC 2017 in Lethbridge, Canada and reported of the feedback she had received from the athletes of 35 out of 39 member associations playing at this event. She commended Canada and Scotland on promoting new ideas for the Mixed Doubles format. All the players want one event and every country has to have a path on paper to win the event in every particular year. The competitive integrity must be insured, WCF needs to make sure the play-off system is vigorous enough so that the best teams are getting through. What is success? Getting best teams to the Olympics? Selling out arenas? Happy athletes? Making money? More countries playing the sport? So many factors need to be considered. This is only the beginning of the process.

HMI explained that there was a Mixed Doubles Working Group with the following members:

Hugh Millikin

Keith Wendorf
Jeff Stoughton
Graeme Thompson
Kim Forge
Darrell Ell

Both the Canadian and the Scottish proposal to change the WMDCC format were presented by representatives of the respective nations. (see presentation 15 Sep Open Meetings)

The President explained that a proposal for 16 teams in the Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games programme will shortly be sent to the IOC. This proposal will then be forwarded to the IOC Programme Commission. Thereafter that commission will make a recommendation to the IOC Executive Board and a decision will be taken in June 2018.

The following comments were made:

- Having two Mixed Doubles competition might be difficult as the Curling calendar is already very crowded
- Are there any plans to split WSCC and WMDCC? HMI replied that there is no such plan currently also because host contracts had already been signed for the next years.

Break-Out sessions

The delegates were split into six groups to discuss the following topics:

- WWCC and WMCC format
- WMDCC format
- Development opportunities from the Olympics and Paralympics

After the sessions the delegates gathered again in the main meeting room. HMI confirmed that there was a general consensus regarding the WWCC and WMCC to expand. However, one issue was the voting process that the delegates were not clear about.

CGR explained the voting process to the delegates but it was felt that the process as recommended by the Swiss lawyers was not ideal. CGR offered to speak to the lawyers again for further advice and confirmed that during the AGA he would guide the representatives through the appropriate voting process.

The facilitators summarized their breakout sessions:

Group Graham Prouse

There was a strong consensus to expand to either 13 or 16 teams and either would be better than the status quo. There was also a strong consensus that the WQE was preferred but several members raised concerns about finding hosts and about resources it would take to host it. A question was raised as to what is the process for evaluating events going forward? GPR said that WCF considers to be an ongoing process.

Group Keith Wendorf

Keith Wendorf (KWE) thanked the three groups for the most interesting discussions on Mixed Doubles. He said it was a worthwhile exercise and some excellent comments had come out of these discussions. The groups did not have a consensus on the proposals.

Group Kim Forge

It was reported that the groups felt that more time is needed for consideration of all options. There was a huge dilemma between the development and the performance philosophy of changing this competition. The time line was critical that we have something in place for implementation in 2019. All three groups considered the importance of television and having a guaranteed time-line and being able to say who what countries are playing when. There was a strong view that Mixed Doubles is moved very quickly and that we are reacting without thinking about the process and the rationale of the championships.

Proposals relating to changes to the formats of WCF Competitions (KWE)

- i) Introduction of a Pre-Qualifying Event before the Olympic Qualification Event

This was generally supported.

- ii) To increase the number of teams in the World Wheelchair Curling Championship to 12

This was generally supported

Proposals relating to The Rules of Curling

KWE presented the rule change proposals to the meeting and offered the opportunity to the members to comment or question each proposal. The issues raised were as follows:

- iii) Rule R6 (b) Changing from a 4-stone Free Guard Zone to a 5-stone FGZ

Nolan Thiessen (Athlete Commission) explained that scoring should go up with this rule and at the same time blank ends should go down.

- v) R13 (d) Delivery Stick

Recommendation: Effective 1 October 2017 only head assemblies used during the 2017 World Wheelchair Curling Championships will be allowed to be used during the 2017/18 season in WCF Controlled Wheelchair Curling Events, including the 2018 Paralympic Winter Games.

It was confirmed that the officials would be responsible for the control of the sticks. It was suggested that the reference to years should be deleted so that rule would apply to the future, too.

Changes to The Rules of Competition

- ii) Rule C3 (a) Fix Light and Dark Colours for team uniforms

Alex Benoy (LUX) explained that “predominantly” is not clear or precise therefore it should be replaced by a certain percentage.

- iii) Rule C4

Recommendation:

Effective from 1 October 2017 only players will be allowed to deliver stones during all practice sessions.

Supported by the C&R Commission – YES (withdrawn)

Amendment:

Effective from 1 October 2017 with the exception of Mixed Doubles only players will be allowed to deliver stones during the pre-event and evening practice sessions.

Supported by the C&R Commission – YES (withdrawn)

Ann Swisshelm (Athlete Commission) explained that the Athlete Commission does not support the recommendation anymore as further investigations are needed.

vi) Rule C8 Last Stone Draw

Recommendation: Effective 1 October 2017 where a team plays an entire event with only 3 players, the LSD stone requirements of the missing player is shared amongst the other players. Amendment: For the sake of clarity the word 'equally' should be inserted between 'shared' and 'amongst'. C&R – prefers the word to be “equitably”

Clarification on the “missing player” was requested depending on the fact if it is a 4 or 5 person team.

Competition and Rules Matters

KWE explained that in addition to the items identified in the papers for the Annual General Assembly for voting, the following matters would be raised at the Open Meetings for discussion. Policy matters do not require a vote and can be implemented by the WCF, but WCF seek MA feedback on these matters. Items marked for discussion are areas which are to be discussed at this year's Congress to help decide if a future rule or policy change should be implemented.

1. WCF ruling on people wearing shorts - Yes, shorts can be worn, but same style of clothing for single gender teams; and mixed teams can have a mixture, but the same gender has to have the same style of clothing. If supported place in Dress Code Policy.

The question was raised as to what extent the knee would damage the ice, so this should be a concern for both athletes and ice-makers. Would shorts really look nice?

2. Only medal winners on the ice for closing ceremonies. Should this be implemented immediately or from Season 2018/2019?

3. Players will be allowed to depart from a competition after being eliminated. For events where a per diem and / or function tickets are provided these will not be provided after a player has departed. Should this be implemented immediately or from Season 2018/2019?

4. Welcome Receptions: Organising Committees will no longer be forced to have these receptions, but if they want one, they must supply a proper meal to the athletes. Should this be implemented immediately or from Season 2018/2019?

5. MD Power Plays will be marked on the scoreboard and the hammer sign moved each end.

6. Currently coaches must leave the ice during Last Stone Draw stones. Propose that in wheelchair curling a coach be allowed to stay on the ice and clean and place both LSD stones for their team.

7. Clarify that there are no minimum age restrictions for WCF events, except for the Seniors.

8. For able-bodied curling, before the pre-game practice, we give one minute ice access time to cool sliders. During this time, we do not allow sliding or touching the stones, and now want to add to this 'no sweeping between the back lines'.

9. Under the current rules no communication is allowed between the bench and the field of play and no communication technology is

10. The Qualification charts in the allowed on the field of play, although not explicitly mentioned this includes the use of smart watches. Rule Book will be re-worded to make clear that it is the Member Association / Federation that is qualified for an event not an individual team.

11. Currently teams can nominate two team officials. To have a third official, that person must be a professional and special approval has to be obtained from the WCF. This policy will be relaxed and special approval will no longer be required from the WCF. The Mixed Doubles discipline remains

with a maximum of two team officials. In future MAs may identify the two people sitting on the coach bench.

12. A policy for papering and maintaining stones during the events has been approved.

KWE added that there are more discussion topics on the radar such as:

- Minimum age
- Play-offs
- Time-outs
- Brushing policies

Various

CGR advised that he had spoken to the legal advisors again and he explained the voting process that would apply during the AGA.

Bruce Crawford (RCCC) explained that the RCCC proposal regarding the new format of the WMDCC is withdrawn due to lack of support in splitting the event into an A- and a B-Division. He added that the RCCC would now support the Canadian proposal.

World Series Update

The President was proud to confirm that the WCF had signed a funding agreement with a China based company, Kingdomway Sports, who are to invest more than \$USD 10 million over a four-year period. These proceeds will be used for the World Series and to develop curling worldwide in the lead up to the 2022 Olympic Winter Games, in Beijing, China.

Mr. Wu Lei, CEO of Kingdomway Sports, addressed the meeting and said that it was an honour to become the funding partner of the inaugural World Series of Curling. Mr. Wang Zhili, Vice-President of the Chinese Curling Association said how much they appreciated President Kate's and the World Curling Federation's trust in the Chinese Curling Association.

The initial concept for the World Series of Curling had been developed by the World Curling Federation and its marketing partners, Infront Sports & Media. The World Series of Curling will have one leg hosted in each of the World Curling Federation's regional zones. The first leg will be hosted in China, in the Pacific-Asia Zone, the second leg in the European Zone and the third leg will be in the Americas Zone. The series will conclude at a Grand Final, in Beijing, China. China hosting two of the four legs is part of the funding agreement.

The next steps will be:

- Finalise the event format and dates with the various Stakeholders
- Consultation with players through the Athlete Commission
- Further discussions with existing Tours on dates
- Seek host cities in the Americas and Europe

Olympic Winter Games

Both POCOG 2018 and BOCOG 2022 made their presentations on the current status of their preparations for the Olympic Winter Games.

Finance

Management Accounts to 30 June 2017

CGR highlighted the following variances:

Income Variances

- Gains on sales of Investments (USD 200,000 surplus)
- Broadcast rights income from PACC / WMDCC
- Significant broadcast rights income from NHK for the WMCC for the first time
- Satellite transmission fees
- Income from brush testing / off-sets with expenditure

Expenditure Variances

- Savings in Board expenses off-set the holding of an additional Board meeting and the increased costs of Congress 2016
- Savings in Operations mainly due to favourable exchange rates from USD to GBP
- New staff took up posts later than had been budgeted for
- DAP claims were higher than budgeted
- Costs associated with the 50th Anniversary were higher than budgeted
- Although competitions were overall lower than budgeted the Junior-B event was higher than budgeted due to the costs of flights
- Broadcasting costs were slightly higher as additional investments were made to service the broadcasters who were paying rights fees. The increase in costs is lower than the additional income received
- Both Athlete and Competition and Rules Commissions were more active than had been budgeted for this year
- There are unbudgeted costs relating to irrecoverable VAT and foreign exchange fluctuations

Balance Sheet

CGR explained that the cost of the Portable Curling Facility is carried on the balance sheet, and this will be leased to the club on completion. The level of investments has dropped over the last 12 months as monies are released for the day to day running of the Federation. As at 30 June the WCF have just over \$770k available for facility loans.

CGR summarized that there is an annual surplus of \$695k versus a budgeted surplus of \$34. This is due mainly to investment income gains and broadcast income. The WCF has had a successful audit and a clean bill of health. CGR thanked both Thelma Black, WCF Finance Controller, for her outstanding service. He also thanked the Finance Commission who review the Management Accounts on a quarterly basis on your behalf.

Budget 2017/2018

The budget for the current year has a deficit of just under \$1m which is normal for an Olympic/Paralympic season. All other costs are broadly in line with the previous seasons. The new Eurosport contract has given a saving of \$77k per annum. The costs associated with Olympic and Paralympic Activities amount to \$867,500. Potential influences are: Broadcast income including OQE; Sponsorship sales for WMCC in Las Vegas; Exchange Rates

CGR added that there also had been changes on the staff side. Allen Coliban had left the Federation, Keith Wendorf will do so at the end of June 2018. At the same time he welcomed and introduced Paddy Käser as new full-time Curling Development Officer as of 1 January 2018.

MINUTES
of the Annual General Assembly
held in Bled, Slovenia
17 September 2017

I Reading of Notice of Meeting

As per the Constitution the notice of this meeting was provided on 27th April 2017, the agenda and papers have been circulated within the stipulated timeframes allowing the Annual General Assembly to be held today the 17th September 2017.

In order to allow the registration desk to finish the registrations and counting of votes CGR proposed to slightly change the order of the agenda and to start with item No. 8 of the agenda which is the President's report. This was accepted by the meeting.

8 President's Report - Kate Caithness

KCA provided a full report on her activities since the last Annual General Assembly held in Stockholm, Sweden. A copy of this report is attached as an appendix to these minutes.

2 Report on Credentials of Representatives and Quorum

The following attendance was recorded:

Executive Board

Kate Caithness OBE (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
Richard Harding (RHA)	Curling Development Officer
Keith Wendorf (KWE)	Director of Competitions & Development
Eeva Röthlisberger (ERÖ)	Competition & Development Officer
Darrell Eil (DEL)	Competitions & Development Officer
Scott Arnold (SAR)	Competitions & Development Officer
Joanna Kelly (JKE)	Broadcast Manager
Liz Munro (LMU)	Competitions & Development Administrator
Saskia Müller-Gastell (SMG)	Projects Officer
Chris Hamilton (CHA)	Digital Media Officer
Cameron MacAllister (CMA)	Communication & Media Relations Manager
Ashley Melville (AME)	IT Officer
Lesley McCrae (LMC)	Broadcast Projects Officer

Representatives of Full Members

RCCC	Bill Duncan Bruce Crawford Susan Kesley Bob Kelly
Andorra	Josep Garcia
Australia	Kim Forge
Austria	Marcus Schmitt
Belarus	Andrei Yurkevich Inesa Pauliuchyk
Belgium	Dirk Heylen
Brazil	Sergio Mitsuo Vilela
Bulgaria	Nikolay Runtov Antoaneta Dimova
Canada	Peter Inch Resby Coutts Hugh Avery Maureen Miller
China	Li Dongyan Lei Yi
Croatia	Neven Pufnik
Czech Republic	David Šik Karolina Frederiksen
Denmark	Freddy Frederiksen Kirsten Jensen
England	John Brown Alison Arthur
Estonia	Fred Randver
Finland	Olli Rissanen Katja Kiiskinen
France	Alain Contat
Hong Kong	John Li Shek Chong
Hungary	Dr. Zsuzsanna Bukta Andras Rokusfalvy
Ireland	John Burns
Israel	Sharon Cohen
Italy	Luigi Alvera
Japan	Yuhei Kusui Terri Johnston
Latvia	Raimonds Vaivods
Lithuania	Vygantas Zalieckas Justina Zalieckiene
Luxembourg	Alex Benoy Susanne Benoy-Göbel
Netherlands	Alie Kramer
New Zealand	Lorne De Pape Carroll De Pape

Norway	Morten Søgård Dagfinn Loen Grethe Brenna
Poland	Janusz Duda Beata Rek
Qatar	Rashed Al Sulaiti
Romania	Allen Coliban
Russia	Konstantin Zadvornov Olga Zharkova
Serbia	Marko Stojanovic
Slovenia	Gregor Rigler
Spain	Frank Gonzalez Beatriz Cureses
Sweden	Stefan Lund Michael Marklund
Switzerland	Louis Moser Sandra Stauffer Jürg Wernli Patrik Loertscher
Turkey	Özgür Bostanci Seyda Topuz
USA	Leland Rich Mark Swandby Jennifer Stannard Beau Welling
Wales	Lisa Peters

Representatives of Provisional Members

Chinese Taipei	Eddy Y.T. Wu Betty Chang
Greece	Georgios Smyrnaio Eva Mataranga
Georgia	Zakaria Khechuashvili
Kosovo	Peter Andersen
Slovakia	Pavol Pitonak
Ukraine	Natalia Menzhega

Representatives of Conditional Members

Guyana	Rayad F. Husain
Mexico	Rodrigo Velez Escudero

Proxies

Member Association	Representative	Proxy Holder
Australia	John Anderson	Kim Forge (AUS)
Belgium	Sarah Megens	Dirk Heylen (BEL)
Brazil	Anne Akemi Shibuya	Sergio Mitsuo Vilela (BRA)

Annual General Assembly

Croatia	Katerina Cadez	Neven Pufnik (CRO)
France	Karine Caux	Alain Contat (FRA)
Ireland	Carolyn Hibberd	John Burns (IRL)
Latvia	Ieva Krusta	Raimonds Vaivods (LAT)
Russia	Michael Stepanyants	Olga Zharkova (RUS)
	Olga Andrianova	Konstantin Zadvornov (RUS)
Slovenia	Jasna Plazl	Gregor Rigler (SLO)
Sweden	Anette Norberg	Michael Marklund (SWE)

Observers

Canada	Katherine Henderson
	Sandy Prouse
	Nolan Thiessen
China	Wang Yanxia
	Zhao Wang
Estonia	Harri Lill
Georgia	Nino Petelava
Korea	Young Chul Kim
	Mok Eun Lee
	Jong Gil Choi
	Yun Hee Kim
Italy	Lorenzo Piatti
	Violetta Caldart
Scotland	Willie Nicoll
	Jim Cullen
	Liz Cullen
	David Murdoch
Sweden	Paul Ahlgren
Switzerland	Andreas Biffiger
	Rafael Buchli
USA	Brian Krolicki
	Jon Killoran
	Rick Patzke
	Chad McMullan
	Ann Swisshelm

Attendance and Proxies

Representatives present	72
Representatives by proxy	11
Votes present	180
Votes by proxy	23
Total votes present and proxy	203
Members present	41
Provisional Members present	6
Conditional Members present	2
Zones present	3

Presentation of Medals etc

The following representatives received their WCF medals and badges

Andorra	Josep Garcia
Belarus	Andrei Yurkevich Inesa Pauliuchyk
Brazil	Sergio Mitsuo Vilela
Bulgaria	Nikolay Runtov Antoaneta Dimova
Canada	Maureen Miller Resby Coutts
Croatia	Neven Pufnik
Hong Kong	John Li Shek Chong
Latvia	Raimonds Vaivods
Norway	Grethe Brenna
Romania	Allen Coliban
Spain	Beatriz Cureses
Turkey	Özgür Bostanci Seyda Topuz

CGR advised MAs that there was a quorum. He also informed the MAs that the tellers who had been appointed, in case of any votes at the meeting, were Rick Patzke (Chief Teller), Liz Munro, Willie Nicoll and Lesley McCrae.

3 Exclusion / Suspension of a Member Association

None

4 Approval of Agenda

*Proposed by Terri Johnston
Seconded by Alex Benoy
and carried by majority*

5 Reading of the minutes of the last General Assembly and approval thereof

The minutes were taken as read.

*Approval proposed by Bruce Crawford
Seconded by Sergio Mitsuo Vilela
and carried unanimously*

6 Business arising out of the Minutes

No business arising.

7 Minute of Remembrance for Friends and Colleagues no longer with us

Everyone was asked to be upstanding to have one minute's silence for friends who have passed away since the last meeting in Belgrade.

9 Report of the Executive Board and Committees

a) Competitions (KWE)

With regard to future competitions KWE highlighted that a host city is still needed for ECC-C 2018. He explained that this event is good for developing countries and invited the Member Associations (MAs) to present their bids. A host city is also needed for WMxCC 2018. Also here MAs were invited to present their bids.

Regarding the Olympic Winter Games 2018 at PyeongChang, KOR he presented charts about the qualification points (Men, Women, Mixed Doubles and Paralympics). Referring to the 2020 Winter Youth Olympic Games at Lausanne, SUI he confirmed that there would be an increase from 16 to 24 teams (age of players: 15-18 years, birthdays between 01 Jan 2002 and 31 December 2005)

KWE eventually presented charts on the medal winners of the 2016/2017 season as well as charts of the medal winners of the past 10 years (2008–2017).

KWE finally commented that the WCF's competitions are extremely good and professional and he had forgotten to thank all the people who are involved in making them such a great success. He especially thanked

- the Member Associations
- the athletes, who are all role models
- the Organizing Committees and their volunteers who give their time and energy
- the professional broadcasting crew
- his colleagues Eeva Röthlisberger, Darrell Ell and Scott Arnold
- the office staff

b) Operations and Integrity (CGR)

Operations

Following the Board's approval to split the IT and New Media Officer post into two positions (Digital Media Officer and IT Officer) Ashley Melville had been contracted as IT Officer and Chris Hamilton had become Digital Media Officer. The WCF had also hired Lesley McCrae (Broadcast Projects Officer) and Paddy Käser (Curling Development Officer) as of 01 Jan 2018. The new members of staff were introduced to the assembly.

Allen Coliban had left the WCF as he had become a Romanian Senator.

CGR added that the appointment of a new World Series Manager would be announced shortly.

CGR expressed his thanks to the staff for their hard work and efforts throughout the year and on behalf of the staff thanked the Board and the President for their unstinting support.

Anti-Doping

CGR informed the members that there had been no adverse analytical findings, no missed tests and no Anti-Doping Rule Violations in the past year (82 tests had been conducted in and out of competition).

WADA had supported the Outreach Education Programme at the VOiP Defender WJCC 2017 in Korea and there had been a good social media coverage using #curlclean.

CGR explained that WADA and the IOC are currently working on the development of the new Independent Testing Authority. This would be in place for PyeongChang 2018. He also advised that the results management in PyeongChang would be handled by CAS not IOC and would therefore be independent.

McLaren Update

CGR reported that there had not been any conclusion as yet. The two IOC disciplinary commissions are expected to report in October. IPC had decided that the Russians will be allowed to compete as neutrals in Qualifying events but no decision has been made on Paralympics.

WCF is now working together with the Russian Curling Federation to put in place a robust independent testing programme for Russian curlers. All evidence relating to curlers named in the McLaren report is now being handed to the Independent Hearing Panel to assess whether there is any evidence for an ADRV against any of the athletes. In general, WCF is working closely together with IPC, IOC and WADA on the next steps.

Integrity

CGR advised the meeting that at the last Olympics Curling had been the second most betted sport. He added that the adoption of the Olympic Movement Code on the Prevention of Manipulation of Competitions would be proposed later in the meeting. WCF had continued to use the IOC's Monitoring System for irregular betting patterns and there had been no adverse reports at WCF events.

c) Marketing (CGR)

CGR presented a summary of the WCF sponsors in the season 2016/2017.

He explained that the contract with Curling Canada, the WCF's marketing agent in Canada, will be extended through to the World Women's Curling Championships in 2020. Out of Canada Infront & Sports Media is WCF's marketing agent. The total income generated per season is around 1.3 million US-dollars.

Looking into the future CGR said that the ECC 2017 was sold out, but for the Men's World Curling Championships 2018 some packages were still available. Given the increased broadcast commitment WCF is now also looking at how to generate sponsor revenues from the PACC and WMDCC

d) Governance Commission (BRA)

BRA introduced the members of the Governance Commission: Willie Nicoll and Jennifer Stannard. Laura Lochanski had stood down following the end of her time on the Board and Susanne Slotsager had not been reelected as president of the Danish Curling Association and had resigned from the commission.

Commission meetings had been held during the Congress and also in Beijing (for those members who were present). During these meetings various aspects in the Terms of Reference of various Commissions had been reviewed and recommendations and advice had been given to the Board on term limits, Board representation in the various commissions and requirements for commission membership. Also, the updating of the WCF's Rules on Betting and Manipulation of Results in alignment with the Olympic Movement Code will be proposed and hopefully approved at this congress. BRA was glad to report that the IOC had referred to the WCF's Harassment and Bullying Policy as an example of best practice.

BRA also reported that an independent group had benchmarked the performance of International Federations on the Governance sector. 28 International Sports Federations including the 7 Winter Sports Federations were asked to self-assess their performance by completing a questionnaire which then in return was reviewed by that independent consultant expert in governance. The questionnaire covered the following five topics:

1. Transparency
2. Integrity
3. Democracy
4. Development/solidarity
5. Checks and Balances / Control Mechanisms

The results of the WCF were very satisfactory:

The self-assessed total score (93) was lower than the moderated score (97). The average self-assessed total score of all IF's was 19 points higher. In total WCF is ranked in Group B (A-C) and is ranked No. 4 among the seven Olympic Winter Sports.

The benchmarking is a valuable tool for the Governance Commission as well as the Board, which identified areas for some improvements. The Board had indicated that 120 points is an acceptable and achievable target for the next review which will be made in four years.

The next steps for the WCF Governance Commission will be:

- Call for nominations to fill the vacancy within the Governance Commission
- Hall of Fame Induction Commission (Finalize the review of the Terms of Reference)
- Produce Governance Templates for MA's
- Increase awareness for Governance Importance among our members

e) Development (HCH)

DAP

HCH reported that a total of USD 452,000.00 had been spent for DAP projects in the 2016-2017 season. 46 Member Associations had asked for support and a total of 141 DAP applications had been administered.

Camps & Courses

HCH presented a summary of the camps and courses that had been delivered during the past season. He also presented details on the stops of the recent Olympic Celebration Tours.

HCH thanked Keith Wendorf and Eeva Röthlisberger for all the work they do in looking at and debating over the many DAP applications over the year.

f) Facilities and equipment (TOG)

TOG reported that the first Portable Curling Facility (PCF) in Turku, Finland will be officially opened on 30 September 2017. Although it took a longer time to finish it is now a great model that can be replicated.

TOG also reminded the members of the following loans/support programs that are available from the WCF:

- Energy Efficiency Loans (energy saving >50%)
- Facility loans (loans for a new Curling rink)
- Economic support for equipment (stones, scrapers, ice plants)

Dirk Heylen (BEL) explained that they had used WCF loans for building an ice rink in Belgium. He emphasized that this money had helped them to persuade the banks to give them money as well.

Allen Coliban (ROU) recommended that the amount allocated per sheet by the WCF should be reviewed.

g) Broadcasting & Webcasting / HD Lite (GPR)

GPR reported that in the season 2016/2017 WCTV had produced over 300 hours of TV coverage which was viewed by over 400 million people in 100 countries.

GPR then reported on the evolution of the NBC broadcast coverage of the World Curling Championships since the first Curling Night in America (CNiA): After three years of CNiA TV coverage had more than doubled! Therefore, the investment in the CNiA was not only about creating a TV opportunity for the promotion of Curling in the USA but it also had resulted in more coverage of the Men's and Women's World Curling Championships.

GPR then elaborated on the evolution of the NHK Japan broadcast coverage of World Curling Championships. Cooperation started in 2007 when the WWCC took place in Aomori, Japan. The first time that a WMCC was covered was in 2014 in Beijing and since then both WWCC and WMCC were covered on a yearly basis. The chart presented proved

- That it is important for broadcasters that their national teams are competing
- Once a relationship with a broadcaster is established coverage can even be increased when those national teams are not competing
- It needs a long time to build a relationship with broadcasters

GPR was pleased to announce that a new WCF-Eurosport contract was in place (2017 – 2020) and that Eurosport had returned to broadcast coverage of both world championships.

GPR added that with Mixed Doubles poised to make its Olympic debut, the 2017 World Mixed Doubles Curling Championship from Lethbridge had seen live and delayed coverage of the event on: TSN in Canada, NBC in the USA, NHK in Japan, Match TV in Russia, YLE Finland and the Olympic Channel. Already for the 2018 event there is broadcast interest and commitment from Canada, USA, Japan, China, Russia, Korea and Switzerland.

GPR closed by saying how grateful he was to have the privilege to work with professional people and thanked Joanna Kelly, Richard Harding and Lesley McCrae for their excellent work.

President Caithness added that during the Olympic Winter Games the sport of Curling would have more broadcast time than any other sport. During the Paralympics there are now 3-draw days and there will be a full coverage there, too. Also, WCF had now been involved in the selection of commentators and we are very happy with the list that has come forward. The President also expressed her thanks to the WCF's professional media staff.

h) Athlete Commission (BRA)

Ann Swisshelm introduced the members of the Athlete Commission and explained that the IOC encourages all International Federations to have such a commission.

The key activities of the last year had included:

- Election of five new members to the Athlete Commission
- Athlete Commission meeting in Glasgow during ECC
- Interaction with Athletes through attendance at major WCF events
- Ongoing meetings through Skype calls
- Proposal of 5 rock Free Guard Zone rule
- Providing feedback on proposals from the Competitions and Rules Commission

In the next season the Athlete Commission will continue to support the WCF and its member associations in achieving their overall mission which is "... to communicate the interests of the Athletes in cooperative support of the WCF achieving its mission".

The Athlete Commission Members will also continue to interact with their target audience through presence at major WCF events, and to encourage continuous open communication channels with the athletes.

i) Americas Zonal Report (GPR)

GPR reported that at the American Zonal Meeting three of the five members attending are relatively new members. Two of those three new members (Mexico and Brazil) will be involved in the TV broadcast from Pyeongchang 2018.

Discussion continues on an Americas Club Curling Championship and on a Canadian US-Tour.

During the meeting the following was discussed as well:

- When motions are presented it would be helpful to have some background information on their financial impact
- Operation principles should be established
- For the representatives it is difficult to represent their National MA on the one hand and WCF on the other hand. However, all representatives should act in the best interest of Curling
- WCF should establish a Consultation Policy
- What is WCF's plan for the Americas?

j) European Zonal Commission Report (BRA)

BRA advised that the European Zonal Commission has the opportunity to meet twice a year: at the Congress and at the ECC and he thanked the MAs who participate in these meetings. The purpose of these meetings is to share information (e.g. about facilities, sponsorship potentials etc.) and best practices and he thanked all those who made a presentation at the recent European Zonal Commission Meetings,

He reminded the audience that there is a fund from the former European Curling Federation and that principles had been developed how this money should be used. For example, the Nordic Junior Tour had been granted some funds.

k) Pacific Asia Zonal Commission Report (HMI)

HMI reported that the Pacific Asia Zonal Commission is a very active zone and they had a very dynamic meeting.

He added that three new countries have applied for membership: Afghanistan, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Kyrgyz Republic.

I0 Report of the Auditors (AAN)

The clean report of the auditors had previously been distributed. There were no requirements for changes of policy or reporting methodology. AAN thanked Thelma Black, WCF Financial Controller, for her outstanding work.

I I Receive the Finance Report, Audited Statement and Discharge to the Board (AAN)

AAN presented the Final Accounts for the year end 30 June 2017 for the approval of the members and discharge to the Board.

Proposed by Hugh Avery

*Seconded by Bill Duncan
and carried unanimously*

AAN thanked the Finance Commission who review the Management Accounts on a quarterly basis on behalf of the WCF Members.

12 Appointment of the Auditors (AAN)

It was proposed that Mazars, Edinburgh be re-appointed Auditors for the year to 30 June 2018.

*Proposed by Terri Johnston
Seconded by Alison Arthur
and carried unanimously*

13 Presentation of the Budget (CGR)

CGR explained that the budget 2017/2018 had been presented the previous day during the Open Meetings. He again summarized the parameters as follows:

- There is a budgeted deficit of just under \$1m which is normal for an Olympic/Paralympic Season (Costs associated with Olympic and Paralympic Activities amount to \$867,500)
- Other costs are broadly in line with previous seasons
- New Eurosport contract has given a saving of \$77k per annum
- Potential influences – Broadcast income including OQE; Sponsorship sales for WMCC in Las Vegas; Exchange Rates

There were no questions from the floor.

14 Approval of Annual Subscriptions (AAN)

There will be no increase in annual subscriptions.

*Proposed by Susan Kesley
Seconded by Kim Forge
and carried unanimously*

15 Resolutions

a) Update to WCF Anti-Doping Rules

Resolution:

For Anti-Doping Rule Violations committed at the Olympic Winter Games 2018 the World Curling Federation agrees to accept the authority and procedure of the IOC Anti-Doping Rules in force for the 2018 Olympic Winter Games and the process of the Arbitration Rules of the CAS Anti-Doping Division. The WCF agrees to recognise any verdicts delivered by the CAS Anti-Doping Division relating to the curling event at the 2018 Olympic Winter Games. This resolution supersedes the current WCF Anti-Doping Rules for the period of the 2018 Olympic Winter Games.

*Proposed by Marko Stojanovic
Seconded by Alison Arthur
and carried unanimously*

b) Update to the WCF Sports Betting and Manipulation of Results Rules

Resolution:

Effective immediately the WCF will replace its existing rules on Sport Betting and the Manipulation of Results with the Olympic Movement Code on the Prevention of Manipulation of Competitions.

*Proposed by Peter Inch
Seconded by Louis Moser
and carried unanimously*

c) Proposals relating to Changes to the Format of WCF Competitions

i) Introduction of a Pre-Qualifying Event before the Olympic Qualification Event

Recommendation:

The WCF shall introduce an Open Pre-Qualifying Event for the 2021 Olympic Qualification Event for Men and Women. Two teams shall qualify from PQE to the OQE in each of the Men's and Women's competitions.

Supported by the C&R Commission – YES

Supported by the Athlete Commission – YES

*Proposed by Marko Stojanovic
Seconded by Sergio Mitsuo Vilela
and approved by majority*

ii) To increase the number of teams in the World Wheelchair Curling Championship to 12

Recommendation:

From the World Wheelchair Curling Championship 2019 increase the number of competing teams to 12 from 10, with 3 teams promoted and relegated from the B-Championship each season.

Supported by the C&R Commission – YES

Supported by the Athlete Commission – YES

*Proposed by Yuhei Kusui
Seconded by Konstantin Zadornov
and approved unanimously*

iii) To increase the number of teams at the World Curling Championships (Men and Women) to 16

Recommendation:

From the World Championships (Men and Women) in 2018 increase the number of competing teams to 16 from 12. The 16 teams would be made up as follows: 2 from the Americas Zone, 4 from the Pacific-Asia Zone and 10 from the European Zone. The host would automatically qualify and would be allocated one of the places from their home zone. The format is as outlined in appendix two to these papers. (page 47 Congress booklet)

Supported by the C&R Commission – NO

Supported by the Athlete Commission – NO

*Proposed by Marko Stojanovic
Seconded by Allen Coliban*

1st amendment – Belgium:

Adjust the game schedule to remove the free mornings during the week to avoid the potential for teams to have to play four games in 27 hours and introduce ranking games for places 9-16.

*Proposed by Dirk Heylen
Seconded by Alex Benoy
and approved by majority*

The 1st amendment was now part of the main motion.

2nd amendment:

Additionally, from the World Championships (Men and Women) in 2019 introduce a World Qualifying Event.

*Proposed by Sergio Mitsuo Vilela
Seconded by John Brown
and approved by majority*

The main motion now included two amendments.

iv) To increase the Number of Teams at the World Curling Championships (Men and Women) to 13:

Recommendation:

From the World Championships (Men and Women) in 2018 increase the number of competing teams to 13 from 12. The 13 teams would be made up as follows: 2 from the Americas Zone, 3 from the Pacific-Asia Zone and 8 from the European Zone. The host would automatically qualify and would be allocated one of the places from their home zone.

Supported by the C&R Commission – YES

Supported by the Athlete Commission – YES

*Proposed by Peter Inch
Seconded by Bruce Crawford
and approved by majority*

There was the following amendment to the motion:

Additionally, from the World Championships (Men and Women) in 2019 introduce a World Qualifying Event

*Proposed by Susan Kesley
Seconded by Sergio Mitsuo Vilela
and approved by majority*

The amendment was now part of the main motion.

Both motions (iii and iv) were now dealt with at the same time. With the approval of three Member Associations (Switzerland, Scotland and Luxembourg) the meeting moved to a written ballot.

During the vote counting the following presentations were made:

- WMCC 2018 Las Vegas
- Swedish Curling Association video
- Canadian Curling Association on their social campaign on getting new customers

The results of the vote counting were:

Motion iii) to increase the number of teams at the World Curling Championships (Men and Women) to 16 including the Belgian amendment and a qualifier event was defeated (Votes in favour: 95/ Votes against:

108)

Motion iv) to increase the Number of Teams at the World Curling Championships (Men and Women) to 13 including a qualifier event was approved by majority (Votes in favour: 161/Votes against: 42)

v) Motion from Curling Canada for New World Mixed Doubles format

Full details of the proposal are on pages 51-59 of the Congress booklet.

Proposed by Peter Inch

Seconded by Bruce Crawford

The motion did not reach the required majority.

vi) Motion from RCCC for New World Mixed Doubles format

Full details of the proposal are on pages 61-63 of the Congress booklet.
The motion was withdrawn.

d) Proposals relating to The Rules of Curling

i) Rule R3 d (i) – Injured player returning to the Field of Play

Recommendation:

As of 1 October 2017 rule R3 d (i) should be changed to indicate that a player who has left the game as they are unable to continue may only re-join the game at the start of an end.

Supported by the C&R Commission – YES

Supported by the Athlete Commission – YES

Proposed by Patrik Loertscher

Seconded by John Burns

and approved unanimously

ii) Rule R5 – Wrong team delivering the first stone of the end

Recommendation:

Effective 1 October 2017 to adapt the existing Rule R5 as follows:

If the error is discovered after only the first stone has been delivered, the end shall be replayed.

If the error is discovered after the 2nd stone of the end has been delivered, play continues as if the error had not occurred.

Supported by the C&R Commission – YES

Supported by the Athlete Commission – YES

Proposed by Alie Kramer

Seconded by Gregor Rigler

and approved unanimously

iii) Rule R6 (b) Changing from a 4-stone Free Guard Zone to a 5-stone FGZ

Recommendation:

Effective 1 October 2018 Rule R6 (b) be changed to the following:

If, prior to the delivery of the sixth stone of an end, a delivered stone causes, either directly or indirectly, an opposition stone to be moved from the FGZ to an out-of-play position, then the delivered stone is removed from play, and any displaced stones are replaced, by the non-offending team, to their positions prior to the violation taking place.

Proposed by the Athlete Commission, supported by the C&R Commission

*Proposed by Alison Arthur
Seconded by Resby Coutts
and approved by majority*

iv) Rule R11 & C5 Playing the Minimum Number of Ends vs Arithmetically Eliminated

Recommendation:

Effective 1 October 2017 adapt the rules to ensure that a minimum number of ends are played regardless of the score, once the minimum number of ends have been played a team that has been arithmetically eliminated may complete the current end but no new end may be started. However, if a team is arithmetically eliminated in the last end of a game, the game should stop when this occurs and the end will not be finished.

Supported by the C&R Commission – YES

Supported by the Athlete Commission – YES

*Proposed by Jörg Wernli
Seconded by Katja Kiiskinen
and approved by majority*

v) R13 (d) Delivery Stick

Recommendation:

Effective 1 October 2017 only head assemblies used during the 2017 World Wheelchair Curling Championships will be allowed to be used during the 2017/18 season in WCF Controlled Wheelchair Curling Events, including the 2018 Paralympic Winter Games.

Supported by the C&R Commission – YES

Supported by the Athlete Commission – YES

*Proposed by Gregor Rigler
Seconded by Dr. Zsuzsanna Bukta
and approved by unanimously*

e) Changes to The Rules of Competition

i) Rule C2 (j) Allowing a Team to start a competition with 3 players

Recommendation:

Effective 1 October 2017 the initial 3-person panel shall be the WCF Director of Competitions or representative, event Technical Delegate and event Chief Umpire. If required an appeal would be heard by the WCF President or their representative.

Supported by the C&R Commission – YES

Supported by the Athlete Commission – YES

*Proposed by Lorne de Pape
Seconded by John Burns
and approved by majority*

ii) Rule C3 (a) Fix Light and Dark Colours for team uniforms

Recommendation:

Effective 1 October 2018 unless otherwise approved by the WCF a light-coloured uniform will be predominantly white or yellow in colour. Approval for any alternative colour must be requested at least 8 weeks prior to an event or may be requested at the start of a season for multiple events.

Supported by the C&R Commission – YES

Supported by the Athlete Commission – YES

Proposed by Susan Kesley

Seconded by John Brown

There was the following amendment to the motion from Luxembourg:

Using the word 'predominantly' is not clear or precise, therefore 'predominantly' should be replaced by 'a minimum of 75%'

Proposed by Alex Benoy

Seconded by Dirk Heylen

Alex Benoy asked the meeting to accept a change in the amendment from 75% to 66%, as 75% is probably a too high figure. It was suggested that the original wording should be kept and that the definition of predominantly should be defined by the Competition & Rules Commission and put in a policy rather than in a rule. The amendment was therefore withdrawn and the original motion was approved by majority.

iii) Rule C4

Recommendation:

Effective from 1 October 2017 only players will be allowed to deliver stones during all practice sessions.

Supported by the C&R Commission – NO

There was the following amendment to the motion:

Effective from 1 October 2017 with the exception of Mixed Doubles only players will be allowed to deliver stones during the pre-event and evening practice sessions.

Supported by the C&R Commission – NO

There was no proposer for this motion and therefore the motion fell.

iv) Rule C6 (a) Mixed Doubles Thinking Time

Recommendation:

Effective from 1 October 2017 thinking time for Mixed Doubles will increase from 22 minutes to 24 minutes.

Supported by the C&R Commission – NO

Supported by the Athlete Commission – NO

There was no proposer for this motion and therefore the motion fell.

v) Rule C6 (j)(i) Placement of Stationary Stones in Mixed Doubles

Recommendation:

Effective from 1 October 2017 where players are responsible for placing the stationary stones before each end then 30 seconds will be added to the time between ends.

Supported by the C&R Commission – YES

Supported by the Athlete Commission – YES

Proposed by Yuhei Kusui

Seconded by Marko Stojanovic

and approved by majority

vi) Rule C8 Last Stone Draw

Recommendation:

Effective 1 October 2017 where a team plays an entire event with only 3 players, the LSD stone requirements of the missing player are shared amongst the other players.

Supported by the C&R Commission – YES

Supported by the Athlete Commission – YES

Proposed by Louis Moser

Seconded by Alex Benoy

1st amendment:

For the sake of clarity, the word “equitably” should be inserted between ‘shared’ and ‘amongst’.

Proposed by Terri Johnston

Seconded by Alex Benoy

and approved by majority

The 1st amendment was now part of the main motion.

2nd amendment:

The recommendation does not cover the situation where a team starts the competition with a complete team but then circumstances change. It is therefore proposed that if a team starts a competition with a complete team as per the rules but then for any reason a player cannot fulfil their minimum LSD requirements, then the maximum of 199.6cm will be recorded for each of their missed LSD stones.

Proposed by Mark Swandby

Seconded by Resby Coutts

and approved by majority

The main motion now included two amendments and was approved by majority.

vii) Rule C9 (b) (iv) Draw Shot Challenge

Recommendation:

Effective from 1 October 2017 where there is more than one group and these groups are of differing sizes to ensure the Draw Shot Challenge is calculated in the same way only the Last Stone Draws from the first ‘equal number’ of games will be used.

Supported by the C&R Commission – YES

Supported by the Athlete Commission – YES

Proposed by Terri Johnston

Seconded by Alex Benoy

and approved by majority

viii) Tie-Breaks and Play Off Systems – Rule C9 (c)(d)(e) etc

Recommendation:

Effective from 1 October 2017 (except for events where playing schedules and broadcast commitments have been initiated) in competitions with a round robin pool of more than ten teams six teams will progress to the knock out stages of the competition. The two top ranked teams will progress to the semi-

final stages with the four next highest ranked teams playing in quarter-finals (3v6 and 4v5), the winners of these games progressing to the semi-finals. i.e. The semi-finals would be as follows:

1 vs the lowest ranked team left following the quarters

2 vs the highest ranked team left following the quarters

In competitions with a round robin of ten or fewer teams the Olympic semi-final system will be used.

There will be no tie-breakers and in competitions with more than one pool teams will be placed into the play-off games based on their ranking (Rule C9).

Supported by the C&R Commission – YES

Supported by the Athlete Commission – YES

*Proposed by John Burns
Seconded by Marcus Schmitt*

There was the following amendment to the motion:

The six-team play-off system should be used in competitions with a single round robin pool of more than eight teams. With the Olympic semi-final system used where there are single round robin pools of eight or fewer teams.

Amendment supported by the C&R Commission – NO

Amendment supported by the Athlete Commission – NO

There was no proposer for this amendment and therefore the amendment fell.

The main motion was approved by majority.

ix) Rule C9 – Ranking teams after tie-breakers

Recommendation:

Effective immediately teams that have qualified for the playoffs and do not need to play in tie-breaker games, keep their ranking for the playoff games as was determined after the round robin.

Supported by the C&R Commission – YES

Supported by the Athlete Commission – YES

*Proposed by Stefan Lund
Seconded by Sandra Stauffer
and approved unanimously*

x) Glossary of Terms – recognition of left-handers

Recommendation:

In the next edition of the Rule Book insert at the end of the in-turn definition “for left-handed curlers it is a counter-clockwise rotation” and the out-turn “for left-handed curlers it is a clockwise rotation”.

Supported by the C&R Commission – YES

Supported by the Athlete Commission – YES

*Proposed by Dirk Heylen
Seconded by Resby Coutts
and approved unanimously*

16 Further business

None

I7 Elections

The following WCF Board members were elected:

Graham Prouse (CAN), Vice-President Americas

Elected by acclamation

Graham Prouse thanked both Curling Canada and the other Member Associations of the American Zone for their support and confidence. He added that it is a privilege to serve the sport of Curling and being able to work with an incredibly dedicated group. He added that behind every successful man there is a strong woman and he thanked his wife Sandy for all her support.

Hew Chalmers (SCO), Director

Elected by acclamation

Hew Chalmers thanked the members for his election and said that it was an honour and privilege to work with the WCF Board and also to serve the WCF Member Association.

I8 Acceptance of a new Member Association

CGR explained that there are four new applicants for conditional membership:

- Kyrgyz Republic
- Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- Afghanistan
- Portugal

As the Board is responsible for those applications these would be dealt with at the Board Meeting the next day.

However, there are two members who were granted conditional membership last year (Guyana and Mexico) and he asked the Assembly to now ratify their move from conditional to provisional membership.

For Guyana

*Proposed by Sergio Mitsuo Vilela
Seconded by Resby Coutts
and approved unanimously*

For Mexico

*Proposed by Mark Swandby
Seconded by Resby Coutts
and approved unanimously*

Both Membership Associations thanked the Assembly for accepting them as provisional members.

I9 Date and location of next General Assembly

Open Meetings for Member Associations will be held in Las Vegas, USA on 6 and 7 April 2018.

The 2018 Annual Congress will be held in Budapest, Hungary from 6-9 September 2018 with the Annual Assembly to be held on the 9 September 2018. (Arrival of delegates on 6 September, departure of delegates on 10 September). A presentation of Budapest and the Congress Hotel (Danubius Hotel Helia) was shown. It was also confirmed that the hotel offers the same room rates 3 days before and 3 days after the event.

CGR then took the opportunity to thank the staff, the Board and the President for their hard work.

Bent Ramsfjell said that the Congress had again proven that the WCF is in good shape and said that President Kate Caithness is a huge contributor to this success. He thanked her on behalf of all members, the Board and the staff for her hard work and dedication.

President's Closing Remarks

Well as always this has been an excellent few days with great interaction.

Over the past twelve months there has been so much happening and all very positive:

- Multi million \$ Contract signed for the World Series of Curling.
- Contract with our partners Curling Canada through to 2020
- World Champions Canada Men & Women teams –undefeated –this is a first!
- Korea junior men's team –winning gold - another first
- Very importantly completing our 4 year Olympic/Paralympic Cycle with 18 months operating capital as requested by IOC
- Finding new sponsors.
- Close to 500 million TV viewing audience throughout the year
- Curling returning to Asian Winter Games and being a total sell-out.

And so I think we can all agree Curling is in great shape but we can never sit back and be complacent and so we must continue to work hard together for the future of our sport.

I have so many people to thank for their support over the past year –none more so than my hardworking board and staff and of course as always my right hand man – Colin, but at this juncture I should wish to make special mention of our Director of Competition Keith Wendorf who is attending his last Congress. He has taken the decision to leave the Federation at the end of June next year and both Keith and Sue are I know looking forward to their retirement together.

Keith has been around Curling – FOREVER. His time as an employee began some 18 years ago at the same time I became involved as the Disabled Project Leader. In that time he has been the 'engine room' of the Federation in regard to all things related to Competition and Development and everyone knows how the federation has grown within this period in a very professional way which is due in no small part to Keith. He was the instigator of the Füssen Camp which next year celebrates 20 years and has been his baby over the years. He started and developed Curling in so many countries which to be honest are too many to mention. In fact in New Zealand their National trophy is the Wendorf Trophy. There is no one more respected within our sport than Keith and in Las Vegas we will do a formal farewell and so at this time it is not good bye.

The final words must go to you our delegates – you are the people who make our sport great and work so hard within each of your Associations and so please continue to do what you are doing, travel safe and I look forward to seeing you all over the coming season.

With the Assembly showing its appreciation CGR closed the meeting.

Good Morning Everyone,

Before I give my Annual report many of our curling friends have passed away over the past 12 months and I would wish to make mention of our hall of Fame inductee Chuck Hay, Gerrit-Jan Scholten who was a serving member of our Finance Commission and also Christine Black from England who served as a WCF Representative for many years and also WCF Junior Convenor in the early 90s.

I know there will be many from your own Associations and in their memory as is the custom can I ask you to stand for one minute's silence.

The following is a report of my activities as your President since last year's AGA in Stockholm.

In **October** Colin and I joined the other Winter IFs together with the IOC Co-ordination Commission for meetings with POCOG in Pyeongchang. As well as visiting all the Sport Locations, Colin and I visited several proposed hotel locations for the WCF Officials and Guests for the Olympics and Paralympics.

At the meetings with the IOC and POCOG I once more raised the question of legacy and also had a separate meeting with the Governor of Gangwon Province to discuss this further.

I travelled from there to Beijing to attend my first meeting as part of the 2022 IOC Coordination Commission. Three days were spent visiting the proposed venues and attending meetings and dinners with BOCOG. The Water Cube which will be renamed the Ice Cube for the games is to be honest the envy of our fellow Winter Sports Associates. We will have challenges regarding the floor and I did have separate meetings with the venue owner and BOCOG. They are working towards a solution as they wish to return the venue to the Water Cube following 2022 –fully understandable. Following the Commission meetings I was invited to attend a workshop together with IOC staff members to give an Initial Sport Briefing to the BOCOG staff –and this was well received.

Next it was off to Shanghai accompanied by David Dongyan and Mr Wang, Vice President of CCA, to meet with Andreas Biffiger prior to our presentation of the World Series of Curling to the Shanghai Sports Bureau. The following morning it was back to Beijing to present to the Beijing Sports Bureau and was delighted when they informed me that they wished to finance the Series. This obviously was to be the beginning of negotiations. That evening I enjoyed a formal dinner with BOCOG officials and Mr Ni, President of CCA.

The next two days were spent attending the high ranking 2016 World Winter Sports Expo in Beijing where I gave a welcome speech at the Gala Dinner with some 500 guests and the following day a Keynote Speech. I attended many side meetings and on my final evening in Beijing was invited to dinner at the Water Cube.

From there I travelled to Kazan to attend the last three days of the first class World Mixed Curling Championship. My itinerary was full on, including a meeting with the President of the Republic of Tatarstan, meeting with the Minister of Sport and presentations from the Russian Curling Federation's various regions in Russia. The Championship was quite outstanding.

A few days at home and then it was off to Inverness to attend the re-opening of Inverness Ice Centre which was supported by our Green Loan programme.

In **November** Colin and I were off to Lausanne for the IF Forum with President Bach in attendance. The morning of the Opening I attended a Board Meeting of Sportaccord and for the next couple of days it was very busy with the AIOWF annual meeting and joint meetings with the IOC and WADA. We also had a presentation from YOG 2020 which will now have 24 curling teams participating. The following week of course was the start of the ECC Championships in Braehead – an excellent event.

December – The Board held meetings to coincide with the 100th Anniversary Celebrations of the Swedish Curling Association and we also enjoyed a short curling game against the president of SCA followed by a wonderful Anniversary dinner.

Later that month 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.

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. While there I also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with CCA regarding the World Series with both Andreas and Colin present.

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 discussing the future of our sport in Mexico

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 Sheikl Ahmaed Alfayed al Sabah where I discussed with him curling in his part of the world and I was pleased to hear that Kuwait now had a curling team and hopefully will join the Federation soon! While there I also attended the Opening Ceremony and Reception of the Games.

Back to Seoul for the WJCC where I visited more potential Hotel venues for the Olympics 2018 and took the final decision on the most suitable – Maple Beach Hotel -12 klms from the curling venue. We had many meetings with POCOG discussing of course the problems of the floor which had been discovered at the start of the Juniors which was the Test event for the Olympics. We also discussed once more 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.

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- We decided on the St John's Hotel which is under construction and close to our venue.

Home for three days and then to Beijing for the World Women's Championship. The LOC hosted a first class Opening Reception and Opening Ceremony with some 8000 people in the audience. We hosted meetings with our MAs who were present and these were well received and of course the minutes of these meetings were circulated to everyone. The Board was hosted by BOCOG to a

dinner held in the Water Cube and we were shown the start of construction ideas to convert the venue into curling for the games in 2022.

April – I missed the Opening of the World men's championship which coincided with Sportaccord in Denmark and so from there I travelled to Edmonton halfway through the Championship –another first class event with the Championship being the final event to take place in Northlands Coliseum.

The last 10 days of April the WMDCC and WSCC took place in Lethbridge where both Championships took place under the same roof in the spectacular ATB Centre. The Championships were made extra special when Team Richardson was inducted into the Hall of Fame.

May – A few days home and then off to Lausanne to the IOC Programme Commission meetings and later in the month I attended the BMX Freestyle Championship in Montpellier on their behalf for possible inclusion in Tokyo 2020 – and this has been successful.

June - Saw me in Beijing for the second visit with the 2022 IOC Co-ordination Commission. Following the meetings and venue tours I travelled to Harbin together with the Chairman of Wanda whom I had dinner with during the WWCC. He had told me about a conference centre he had built in Harbin in the shape of a curling stone which is part of a huge shopping complex which includes dedicated skiing, ice hockey and curling venues. While in Beijing I was honoured to be awarded an Honorary Professorship of Beijing Sports University –the largest in China - by President Chi Jian and thereafter gave a lecture to the students.

At the end of the month it was back to Lausanne for meetings of the Board of Sportaccord which has now changed its name to GAISF –Global Association of International Sports Federation.

No trips in July giving us office time planning for next season and holding interviews for the position of Project Manager for the World Series.

August saw us have meetings with the Sponsor of the World Series and the Chinese Curling Association in our office in Perth.

The end of the month Colin and I spent in Pyeongchang together with the IOC Co-ordination Commission which was the final visit prior to the Games next year. We had a tour to the new train station and the Athlete village in Gangneung. Had many meetings with POCOG together with the IOC and had separate meetings with the IOC and AIOWF. There is still work to be done for the Games and from our perspective, once our final test of the new floor, together with the de humidification and air handing system is completed in December, we will be on track for the start of the Games.

September – Off to Abu Dhabi for the IPC Congress where voting took place for the New President and Board. Colin attended for the first two days together with Eeva and I joined Eeva for the final three days of meetings and carried the WCF Vote. The complete Board were to be elected. Andrew Parson from Brazil was elected for President in the first round standing against 3 other candidates. Thereafter there was voting for the Vice President and 10 Board Members. Prior to the Congress we were invited to put forward a candidate for the new APSO Committee – Association of Paralympic Sports Organisation. Colin agreed to stand and we were delighted that he was elected as one of the 5 person committee.

Home for 16 hours and then off to Lima for 3 days to attend the IOC session where I also attended meetings with the IOC and AIOWF, YOG Lausanne 2020 and a separate meeting with President Gou – NOC President of China together with Mr Ni President of Chinese Curling Association in relation to the Contract for the World Series of Curling.

From there I travelled here to Bled and in time for the start of the Open meetings and now here for our Annual General Assembly.

In closing I should add this past 12 months have been hectic but as always with everyone's support enjoyable – Thank you once more for allowing me the honour to represent you.

ABBREVIATIONS

AIOWF	Association of International Olympic Winter Federations
BOCOG	Beijing Organising Committee for the Olympic Games 2022
IOC	International Olympic Committee
IPC	International Paralympic Committee
ITO	International Technical Official
NOC	National Olympic Committee
POCOG	PyeongChang Organising Committee for the Olympic Games 2018
WADA	World Anti-Doping Agency
YOG	Youth Olympic Games