



Attendance List

WCF Zoom Webinar May 2020

Kate	Caithness	WCF President	Raimonds	Vaivods	LAT
Bent	Ramsfjell	WCF Vice President	Vygantas	Zalieckas	LTU
Hugh	Millikin	WCF Vice President	Susi	Benoy	LUX
Graham	Prouse	WCF Vice President	Karen	Wauters	LUX /SRG Commission
Toyo	Ogawa	WCF Director	Rodrigo	Velez	MEX
Hew	Chalmers	WCF Director	Arnoud	Strijbis	NED
Beau	Welling	WCF Director	Daniel	Damola	NGR
Cathrine	Lindahl	WCF Director	Dagfinn	Loen	NOR
Colin	Grahamslaw	WCF Sec. Gen.	Grethe	Brenna	NOR
Eeva	Röthlisberger	WCF Head of Comp.	Pal	Trulsen	NOR
			Hans	Frauenlob	NZL / Comp. & Rules Comm.
Kim	Forge	AUS	Lorne	DePape	NZL
Veronika	Huber	AUT	Pedro	Farromba	POR
Dirk	Heylen	BEL	João	Fidalgo	POR
Inesa	Pauliuchyk	BLR	Cristian	Matau	ROU
Anne	Shibuya	BRA	Olga	Zharkova	RUS / Comp. & Rules Comm.
Sergio	Vilela	BRA /SRG Comm.	Ekaterina	Galkina	RUS
Donna	Krotz	CAN	Rob	Niven	SCO
Paul	Addison	CAN	Susan	Kesley	SCO
John	Shea	CAN	Bruce	Crawford	SCO
Amy	Nixon	CAN	Gregor	Rigler	SLO
Katherine	Henderson	CAN	Tom	Seger	SUI
		CAN / Athlete			
Nolan	Thiessen	Comm.	Freddy	Meister	SUI
Jill	Officer	CAN /MTV Comm.	Chantal	Bugnon	SUI
Li	Dongyan	CHN	Alison	Kreviazuk	SWE
Jenny	Guo	CHN	Stefan	Lund	SWE
Neven	Pufnik	CRO	Murat	Akin	TUR
David	Sik	CZE	Utku	Yalcin	TUR
Karolína	Frederiksen	CZE	Nataliia	Menzheha	UKR
Alison	Arthur	ENG	Courtney	Schmidt	USA
John	Brown	ENG	Leland	Rich	USA
Xavier	Prat	ESP	Richard	Lepping	USA
Harri	Lill	EST	Jennifer	Stannard	USA
Juuli	Liit	EST	Jeff	Plush	USA
Lauri	Ikävalko	FIN	Lisa	Peters	WAL
Katja	Kiiskinen	FIN	Adrian	Meikle	WAL
Manon	Harsch	GER			

Rayad	Husain	GUY	Gill	Amatt	WCF
Jason	Chang	HKG	Scott	Arnold	WCF
Kelvin	Cheung	HKG	Belinda	Bantle- Carboni	WCTV
Anna	Müller	HUN	Thelma	Black	WCF
György	Nagy	HUN	Emily	Dwyer	WCF
Blanka	Dencső	HUN	Darrell	Ell	WCF
Abhishek	Joshi	IND	Christopher	Hamilton	WCF
John	Burns	IRL	Rhona	Howie	WCF
Carolyn	Hibberd	IRL	Susan	Keith	WCF
Ippolito	Sanfratello	ITA	Ashley	Melville	WCF
Eros	Gonin	ITA	Saskia	Müller-Gastell	WCF
Tomoyoshi	Kinoshita	JPN	Liz	Munro	WCF
Terri	Johnston	JPN / SRG Comm.	Jiri	Snitil	WCF
Yuhei	Kusui	JPN	Karri	Willms	WCF
Alastair	Fyfe	KSA			



MINUTES of the WCF Webinar #1 on 12 May 2020

President's Welcome

“Hello Everyone and thank you for joining this meeting today. I sincerely hope you are all continuing to keep safe and well and our heartfelt thoughts go out to the people who have lost loved ones during this dreadful time.

I very much look forward to the future when we can all be together once more, but in the meantime and during this worldwide pandemic we, like everyone else, must find solutions of communicating face to face and today is the first of these to take place.

These past weeks have been particularly challenging regarding the Cancellation of our 4 World Championships, the ECC – C Championships and also our Füssen Summer camp and courses and more recently cancelling our Prague Adult Camp. At this point in time there is uncertainty as to the future and of course we are closely monitoring the situation in the event we may have further cancellations which would have an impact on the 2022 Beijing Olympics and Paralympic Winter Games. Hopefully this won't happen but should this be the case we will be in consultation regarding contingency plans.

We must remain positive and as I already informed you our Staff continues to work from home and the Board is in regular contact through our Zoom meetings. There are many exciting times ahead for the Federation and we are presently working together with the World Curling Academy who have been pushing ahead with the launch dates for online courses which we will share with you shortly.

Our CDOs are also working with the participants from the first Athlete Pathway Programme assisting them in their development plans and implementation strategies with two more Athlete Pathway Programmes currently planned. One in the fall for more mature Member Associations and one in 2021 for new Members.

Now to focus on today. Regrettably we could not be together in Glasgow for our Open Meetings and so this call will give us the opportunity to share with you the presentations which would have taken place at that time and also discuss a couple of items which were on the Agenda and require to be addressed.

We will start with Hugh and Eeva who will present the Rules Changes, the proposed new World Wheelchair Mixed Doubles Championship and finally the proposal for merging the PACC and the Americas Challenge which of course cannot take place until after 2022 Olympics.

We will then ask Bent to present the current situation with the Polish Curling Association. Thereafter Beau will give an update on the Structural Review and this will be followed by Graham presenting an update from the group set up to discuss Maximising the Value project.

Colin will finish this meeting with a Finance update and also where we are regarding our Congress which is scheduled to take place in St Petersburg.

Let's get started. Colin can you now explain the procedure for today's meeting."

Colin Grahamslaw explained that everybody would be able to ask questions in writing via the Q&A section on the screen.

The full presentation made during the webinar is attached to these minutes.

Competition Update (Eeva Röthlisberger - ERÖ)

Eeva Röthlisberger gave an update on competitions. ERÖ also announced that the ECC 2020 A- and B-Division would take place in Lillehammer, NOR. An official announcement would follow shortly.

The following questions were asked and answers were given:

Rules changes

Questions submitted in advance:

Will WCF change the rules of the game due to the Covid virus outbreak?

WCF reply (CGR): WCF is looking closely at the World Health Organisation (WHO) regulations to see if there are any temporary measures that need to be considered during the pandemic. If there are changes required to meet WHO guidelines or those of local health authorities (this could vary from country to country) then WCF will look at these and will consult through the Competition & Rules and the Athlete Commission. WCF will in such a case inform the MAs as soon as possible of any changes that may need to be put in place.

Adrian Meikle (WAL):

What is the reason for changing the maximum width from 5m to 4.75m? Is there a risk that some venues may become non-compliant with the rules and feel forced to change?

WCF reply (CGR): This proposal had come from the Technical Commission. In fact no competition at world level is currently run on 5 m wide sheets due to the size of walkways etc. Toyo Ogawa added that the current proposal reflects the consensus of the Technical Commission. CGR added that this rule should apply to all Curling events, not just WCF events.

Sergio Vilela (BRA):

Is the Competitions & Rules / Athletes Commission discussing the use of masks, gloves etc (if required/recommended by the health authorities)?

WCF reply (CGR): WCF is assessing the ongoing advice given by WHO and other local and national health authorities and WCF may find different regulations depending on the rules in different countries.

Competition dates

Questions submitted in advance:

What are the dates for the re-arranged European C-Division?

WCF reply (CGR): This is the only event that WCF is trying to re-arrange as it has implications regarding promotion to the European B-Division. WCF is currently working with the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) to assess what dates are possible but this will depend on the virus position across Europe and the ability of teams to travel as well as of the LOC's possibility to host the event. At the moment all WCF can do is to ask for flexibility of all parties concerned. WCF will provide information as soon as it becomes available.

What is happening with next season's events? When will WCF be able to inform the MAs if the events are happening?

WCF reply (CGR): WCF has received the latest WHO and IOC guidelines. WCF is also reviewing the steps that other sports are taking to try and restart their seasons. Through the LOCs WCF is in contact with the local and national health authorities to see what their positions are in the respective host countries. In addition, WCF also needs to assess potential restrictions on international travel and quarantine periods. This guidance is changing on a regular basis and WCF's first events are not until October. WCF will continue to review the position during the summer and will provide regular updates. As advised on the entry forms that were sent out, MAs need to be aware of the situation and need to take that into account before making any final arrangements. The time period for any final decisions will depend on the rules within the respective host country.

Hans Frauenlob (NZL):

Are there interim dates in advance of competitions where they would be evaluated on go/no go?

WCF reply (CGR): This will depend on the host country and the respective situation. WCF will keep the MAs updated on a regular basis throughout the summer as the situation develops. Decisions will depend on the region of the world and the type of competition.

Abhishek Joshi (IND):

Will there be any curling camp? As being new to curling it will help us to develop and improve

WCF reply (CGR): Currently all WCF camps and courses that are usually run over the summer are cancelled. WCF will monitor the situation through the season. If WCF is able to change things it will – but at the moment no additional camps/courses are planned.

Wheelchair Curling Mixed Doubles (Eeva Röthlisberger - ERÖ)

Eeva Röthlisberger introduced the idea of implementing a WWhMDCC in 2020. The reason for implementing this new event already this year is that a world championship must be held prior to applying for inclusion of this new discipline in the Olympic Winter Games in 2026. If the event is not held this year any application to the IOC would be too late. A presentation was made on the details of such a championship.

The President added that the request for implementing this event had in fact come from the athletes because of their desire to have another discipline in the Paralympic Winter Games.

The following questions were asked and answers were given:

Bruce Crawford (SCO):

Can the first iteration of this event be held at the end of the coming 2020-21 season. The wheelchair community is of the view that November is too soon, especially since many ice rinks are currently closed due to covid-19 and opening dates are not known, some countries are suggesting closure till the end of the year (after this event) and so it will not be possible to organise a qualifying competition before November, let alone do some practice and gain some experience.

We fully understand the thinking in holding the event at the proposed time; to limit the cost for smaller nations by holding it straight after the WWhBCC at the same venue, and to hold a World Wheelchair Mixed Doubles Championship this season to enable inclusion in 2026, but we still feel that it would be better to host the event after the 2021 WWhCC. Traditionally, there are not many events held after the WWhCC and therefore this may be an opportunity to extend the season and not impact on a team's preparation for WWhBCC/WWhCC.

WCF reply (CGR): The important thing is to have an event that is well attended. WCF cannot run the event back to back with the WWhCC in Beijing because that is a test event in the Paralympic venue and WCF would also potentially have some concerns about the number of teams involved. The rationale for hosting the event around the B-event was that teams from the B-event would be more likely to stay on at that point than travelling to a stand-alone competition. Also, the more teams that are involved the stronger the case WCF has with IPC. It also minimizes the cost to WCF and for some of the competing teams which is an important consideration in the post-Covid situation. If WCF got to the point of having this discipline in the Paralympics the events would be run back to back, too.

Bruce Crawford (SCO):

From a rules point of view we would prefer as little input from "On Ice Assistants" as possible therefore would suggest that if an athlete needs buddying it should only be done by their teammate, foregoing having a skip in the head to give ice. The less external interference the better in our view.

WCF reply (CGR): The rules are back and forward with the Competition & Rules Commission at the moment. They were developed with the athletes who were involved to the test programmes. The final rules will come to the Annual Assembly for approval.

Dagfinn Loen (NOR):

Have you considered the risk that introducing Wheelchair Mixed Doubles championships might have an impact on maintaining 4-person teams in countries which have a limited number of disabled athletes?

WCF reply (CGR): The demand for this event has come from the athletes themselves so WCF is really following the athletes' demand here. WCF hopes that this event gives them an additional opportunity to compete rather than being in an "either/or" situation. WCF hopes that they will not choose one over the other.

The President added that the only thing that it might impact is the athlete quota for the Paralympics. It might happen that WCF is requested to reduce the number of teams in the 4-player competition from 12 to 10 in order to be able to add the new Mixed Doubles discipline.

World Women's and World Men's Championship Structure (Hugh Millikin – HMI)

HMI gave a presentation on the World Women's and World Men's Championships Structure.

The following questions were asked and answers were given:

Katherine Henderson (CAN):

A couple of questions about Hugh's presentation: 1. When do you anticipate this will happen? What will be the timing of the event. 2. Have we reviewed this with broadcasters? 3. I understand that this would be "temporary" until other nations had matured. Would we be assured that this would be reviewed on a going basis to ensure it's reaching the objectives stated?

WCF reply (CGR): 1. This question has already been covered during the presentation. There are a couple of possibilities around the timing of when the change could take place. WCF will come back with more details by the time of the Congress. Regarding the timing WCF would be looking at the same time of the year as the PACC and America Challenge are currently held (around November). 2. It has been reviewed with the broadcasters only in the broadest terms. However, the concept of another important competition that has value and puts the teams into a competitive environment is something that was attractive to them. More details will be discussed with the broadcasters prior to the Congress. 3. **(HMI):** WCF is constantly reviewing its World Championships and the Qualification Events. As Curling gets adopted by more and more countries and as we live in a dynamic world it will for sure change again at some point in the future.

Sergio Vilela (BRA):

As Hugh mentioned the principle of keeping the Zones (as the amalgam would only be for competition purposes), would it be possible for WCF to run the championship together, but release zonal results/rankings? Like 1st, 2nd 3rd in Pacific, 1st, 2nd and 3rd in Americas and 1st in Africa?

Our proposal for the Americas Championship had to do with funding (results in the Pan American Championships is one of the criteria for official funding in Brazil).

WCF reply (HMI): There is no problem in using multiple tier ways to rank teams' zones. This idea will be taken back to the Competition & Rules Commission for further discussion so that it works for everybody.

Rayad Husain (GUY)

Is there a potential to revisit the number of teams qualifying to the WCC? The Continental Championship would have five very dominant mature MAs, and will be very difficult for teams on the cusp (eg. New Zealand) to get to the Worlds to gain exposure and potentially further funding?

WCF reply (HMI): This is a very important question with a lot of controversy attached to it. The issue will be taken back to the Competition & Rules Commission for further discussion. A plan will then be presented at the Congress.

Arnoud Strijbis (NED):

There are many ways of looking to this issue. Let's take the commercial view. The higher the level, the higher the contributions from sponsorships and so on. Does this contribute to raise the level worldwide?

WCF reply (CGR): Yes, WCF believes it does. WCF thinks that this would be a competition attractive to sponsors and broadcasters. There are a good number of high-level teams in there that will be able to produce an attractive product. This is one of the reasons why WCF thinks this is the way to go.

Rodrigo Velez (MEX):

Will the Continental zone be divided into A and B divisions or only 1 division?

WCF reply (HMI): It will be an A- and a B-Division.

Bruce Crawford (SCO):

Looking at the amalgamation of Americas and Pacific into Continental Group....think that's a good idea. Given current world ranking for both men and women, this new continental group/zone would have 5 in the top 13 but the next down in both Men and Women is ranked 21st. So, it would seem that the sensible allocation is: 8 Europe and 5 Continental.

WCF reply (CGR): The Competition & Rules Commission will come back to the Congress with justifications for what will finally be proposed.

Lorne DePape (NZL):

Pls email Hugh's very busy numbers chart asap, because it is different than was sent out.

WCF reply (CGR): Yes, there had been a typo. The corrected chart will be sent out as soon as possible after the webinar.

Kim Forge (AUS):

Are we sold on the "13" number for the number of countries at the WCC? Is it worth revisiting 16?

WCF reply (HMI): Yes, this is something that is always being looked at. However, WCF feels that 13 is the right number for the next quadrennial. As the situation changes and unfolds WCF will vet if this is the right number going forward.

Arnoud Strijbis (NED):

Maybe I have missed it, but this is only for men and women?

Or also for mixed, mixed doubles, juniors?

And wheelchair?

WCF reply (CGR): This is only for men and women.

Alastair Fyfe (KSA):

If the WCF struggles to get host countries for the PACC, will the new Continental competition default to being in North America?

WCF reply (CGR): We expect that this is attractive any will encourage bids from across the new area.

CGR added that there had been a question from the African zone:

If there are another four or five African countries can we have an African zone?

WCF reply (CGR): If WCF gets to this point WCF will have to review this on a regular basis both within the Competition & Rules Commission and within the Structural Review Group.

Update on suspension of Polish Curling Association (Bent Ramsfjell – BRA)

BRA gave an update on the reasons behind the suspension of the Polish Curling Association, its implications and the further process.

The following questions were asked and answers were given:

Lisa Peters (WAL):

If the Polish Curling Association does not have either a President or a Board, who is the WCF liaising with to try and resolve problems?

WCF reply (CGR): WCF is dealing with the Chair of the Audit Committee.

The President reported that Polish athletes had approached her many times to ask her and the WCF for help. She added that the WCF had not come to the decision lightly to suspend the Polish Curling Association. She expressed her hope that the fellow MAs would understand the reasons for WCF's decision. WCF certainly has to help its athletes. The President thanked Bent Ramsfjell, Willie Nicoll and the Governance Commission for all their work during this lengthy process.

Update on Structural Review Group (Beau Welling – BWE)

Beau Welling gave an update on the work of the Structural Review Group.

The following questions were asked and answers were given:

Arnoud Strijbis (NED):

Please be aware of “obligations” to MAs. MAs also have many demands from NOCs (and in some countries also the ministry of sports / national authorities). We should be able (at all levels) to invest time in the curling sport. The athletes count and they have to stand in the middle. Always!

WCF reply (CGR): The roles and responsibilities of the MAs will be discussed during the next call of the Structural Review Group.

The President thanked Beau Welling for leading this group. She added that being one of the very few female international sports leaders it had been hard at first being accepted. However, on the other hand it had been good for the sport having a female President. The IOC set a high value on gender equality and this she believes gave her the opportunity to sit on several commissions which meant Curling was brought more into focus. She added that regarding her successor she would be very happy to try and introduce potential candidates to the international sports world e.g. by having them attend Sport Accord or the IF Forum.

Update on the Maximizing the Value Working Group (Graham Prouse - GPR)

Graham Prouse gave an update on the work of the Maximizing the Value Working Group.

The following questions were asked and answers were given:

Hans Frauenlob (NZL):

Can the Nielsen Media Research data be shared to MAs?

WCF reply (CGR): Had the WCF meetings taken place in Glasgow the media numbers and sponsorship research data would have been presented to the MAs. The entire report cannot be shared as it contains confidential information but WCF is able to share with the MAs as much of it as possible. **(GPR)** added that this would be done so that the MAs have a better understanding of what the marketing and broadcast strategies are.

Daniel Damola (NGR):

What happens to other countries like Africa on this broadcast hence we want this sport viewed in the continent?

WCF reply (CGR): WCF works with any broadcaster who wants to broadcast the sport. WCF has not yet been in contact with a broadcaster in Nigeria but WCF speaks with broadcasters on a regular basis in many countries and WCF will try to provide an effective solution. Also, the Olympic Channel is used to provide coverage in those countries where there is no current broadcast partner. WCF also uses its own YouTube channel to provide coverage into other countries.

Financial Implications of COVID-19 (Colin Grahamslaw – CGR)

CGR reported on the financial implications of Covid-19.

No questions were raised.

Congress 2020 (Colin Grahamslaw – CGR)

CGR explained that the 2020 Congress is currently under review. Legal options are being discussed for moving it online. WCF is working with the Russian Curling Federation on the possibilities of hosting the event. However, WCF needs to consider not only the practicality of hosting the event but also the practicality of attendees travelling. IIHF are due to hold their Congress in St Petersburg in September. WCF will take a decision by the end of May.

Lisa Peters WAL)

Please also consider that some delegates may be reluctant or unable to travel if they have health conditions.

WCF reply (CGR): CGR confirmed that this issue is part of the discussions.

Pal Trulsen (NOR):

IF CAS maintains WADA's decision to ban Russia for 4 years, will WCF still hold the Congress in St. Petersburg?

WCF reply (CGR): WADA's decision has no impact on congresses. It only impacts on World Championships that are leading to the Olympic and Paralympic disciplines. There is no impact on any other events that the WCF operates.

Bruce Crawford (SCO):

The first event in the new season will be World Mixed. When will a decision be made on that?

WCF reply (CGR): CGR referred to the answer given earlier in this webinar. WCF is consulting with LOCs and local/national health authorities to see what is possible. Updates will be given through the summer on a regular basis.

President's final remarks

"Well this is our first meeting together through the wonders of technology and I hope you will agree it has worked well.

You have all been given the opportunity to comment on any of today's discussion items and presentations and of course we will continue to host meetings as required and keep you updated on future developments.

Every sport is facing the same challenges and we are in constant communication with our colleagues and the IOC as to how we can best work together during this crisis. Yesterday I was involved in a meeting with the IOC Programme Commission and next week will be in a Webinar call with the Beijing Organising Committee and the 2022 IOC Co-ordination Commission regarding the preparations for Olympics and Paralympic Winter Games.

Of course at present the focus is on the postponed Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Summer games but be assured that we are continuing to work together with BOCOG and the IOC on the delivery plans for our Winter Games in 2022.

Finally - Can I wish you all to remain safe and well and sincerely hope that this lockdown finishes soon and we can have the opportunity to meet together once more."