

# WCF OPEN MEETINGS

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## FRIDAY 24 MARCH 2023

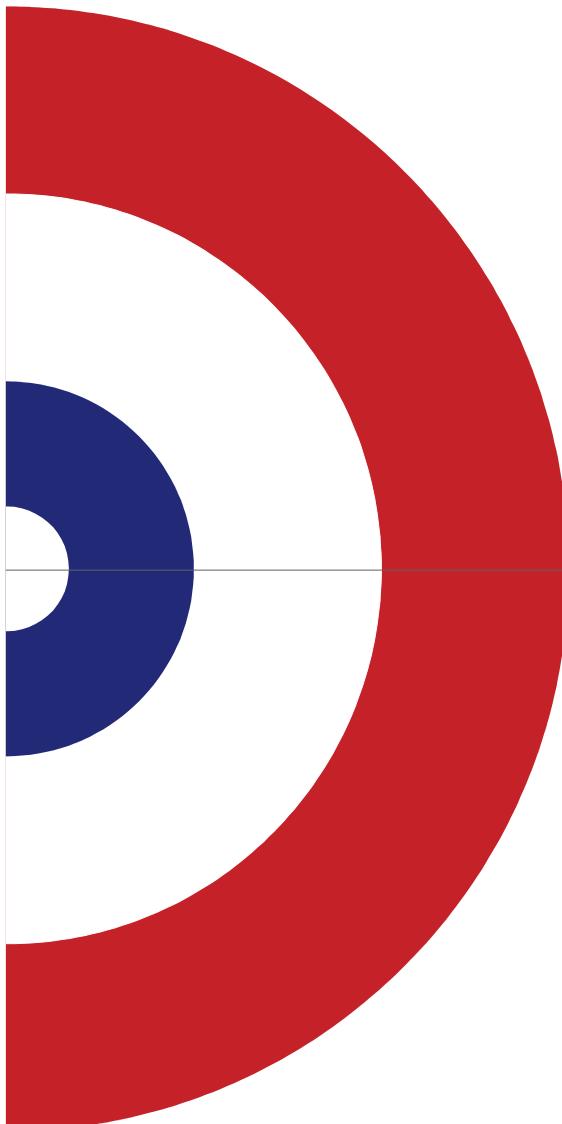


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**WORLD CURLING FEDERATION**





## Motion – 2022 Annual General Assembly

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The WCF Board brings forward concrete proposals on both the number of ends in a championship curling game and the format of World Championships well in advance of the 2023 Annual General Assembly and no later than June 30, 2023



# WOMEN'S AND MEN'S WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP STRUCTURE OPTIONS



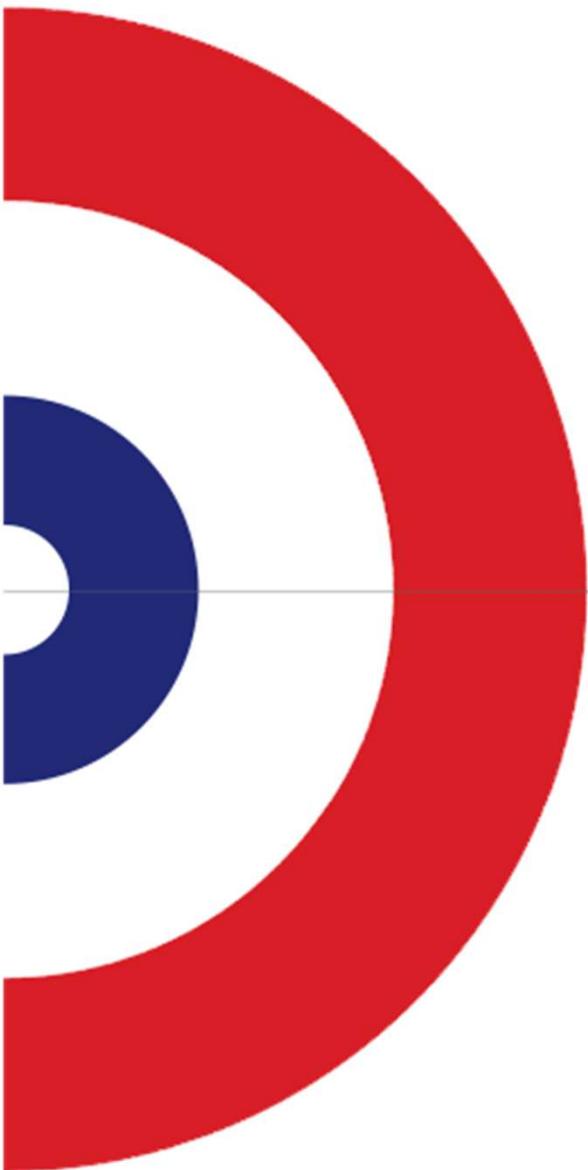
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## 2022 CONGRESS FEEDBACK

- Members want the WCF to investigate expanding the World Championships to add additional teams from the ECC and PCCC
- One of the MA suggested best format would be a 16 Team WCC.
- The C&R met in Calgary, November 2022 immediately following the PCCC to investigate all options including the 10 + 10 format outlined at Congress
- This presentation is a summary of that review and recommendation

# PRINCIPLES FOR ANY CHANGE

- Worlds Best Teams
- Consistent with IOC Values
- Regional Rep
- Good Show
- Maximize marketing opportunities
- Desired event to host
- Completed in a 9 day window
- Good and fair competition
- Positive Financial impact

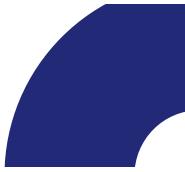


## CURRENT – 13 TEAMS

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13 Team RR populated by  
teams from the PCCC  
and ECC

# 13 TEAMS



## Teams:

- 5 PanContinental Championships
- 7 Europe Championships
- 13<sup>th</sup> spot allocated to PCCC or ECC based on 5 team aggregate performance in WCC (2023 – 5 PCCC teams and 8 ECC teams)

## Playoff System:

- Single Round Robin
- 6 Teams qualify, 1&2 advance to semi-finals and play the winners of 3-6 and 4-5 in the quarterfinals

# 13 TEAMS – ADVANTAGES AND ISSUES

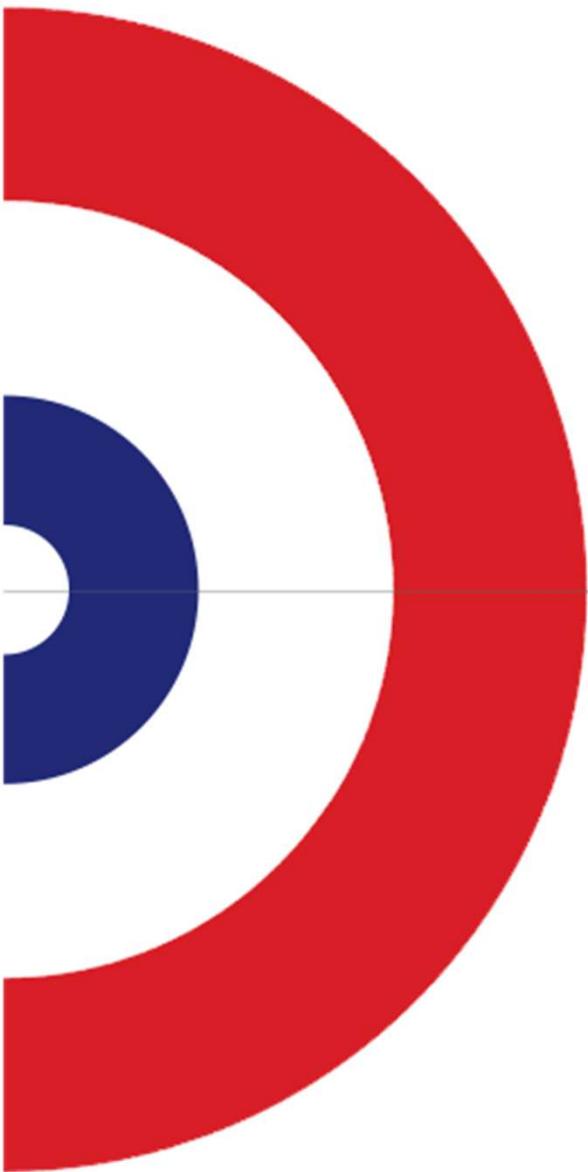


## Advantages:

- Single Round Robin – play all teams
- 13<sup>th</sup> spot determined by performance
- Simple and clear to determine Olympic points
- Provides opportunities to teams new to the WCC to develop additional skills and confidence
- Proven financial model – positive impact on CC & WCF

## Issues:

- Long tournament, Athlete fatigue?
- Clear desire from the MAs to add more teams to the WCC



## OPTION 2 – 10 + 10 TEAMS

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## OPTION 2 – 10 + 10 TEAMS

Two 10 team pools that are separate, but run at the same venue/time.

The winner of second tier advances to playoffs on first tier

# 10 + 10 TEAMS



Teams for each pool:

- 4 from the PCCC
- 5 from the ECC
- 1 additional team based on performance(TBD)

Playoff System:

- A & B separate round-robbins to determine pool rankings
- 5 Teams from A qualify for the finals
- 1 Team from B qualify for finals (6<sup>th</sup> place in the playoff draw)
  - A 10 team RR would normally have a 4 team playoff, this format allows for an extra A team to advance as well as the B winner

## 10 + 10 TEAMS – ADVANTAGES



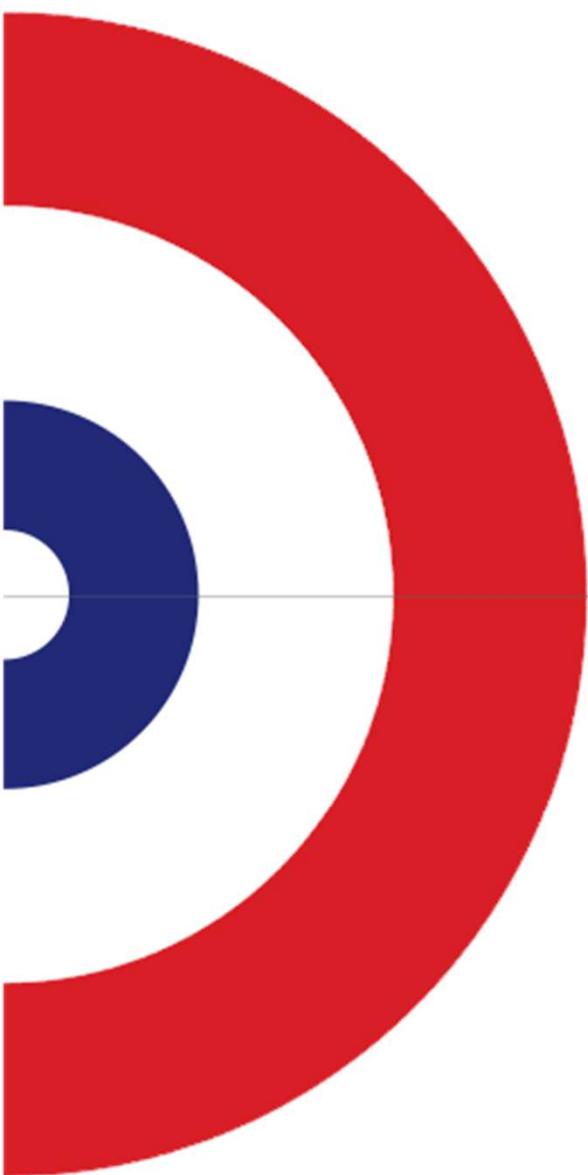
### Advantages:

- Better competitive contests in each round-robin
- 20 MAs involved in the World Championship
- Additional potential revenue/marketing opportunities (Host/LOC)
- Host benefit would be if they would no longer pay for team accommodation
- Potentially all 20 MAs get Olympic Points \*\*\*
- Safety valve for a leading team not making the A pool
- Potential Cinderella situation

## 10 + 10 TEAMS – ISSUES

### Issues:

- Larger event to organize
- Fewer MAs capable to host, potentially less attractive to host
- Unknown financial model – potential loss of revenue to Host & WCF
- Increased costs for participating MAs for hotels
- Playing conditions with 4 draw days(requires 2, 4 draw days)
- Except for larger MAs, volunteer costs may be higher if they need to import additional personnel
- CC estimates this format will result in decreased walk-up ticket sales of approx. \$75k



## OPTION 3 – 16 TEAMS

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## OPTION 3 - 16 TEAMS

Expand the Worlds from 13 to 16 teams by adding additional entries from the PCCC and ECC

# 16 TEAMS



## Teams:

- 7 PCCC
- 9 ECC

## Playoff System:

- Two pools of 8 with a RR of 7 games
- Top 8(4 from each group) play a RR against the cross-over teams
- 6 Teams qualify for the finals, 1&2 advance to semi-finals and play the winners of 3-6 and 4-5 in the quarterfinals

## 16 TEAMS – ADVANTAGES



### Advantages:

- Additional 3 teams compete at the WCC
- Financial model could work with the additional 4 cross-over games
- May offer more marketing/revenue opportunities
- Possible increase in broadcast opportunities

# 16 TEAMS – ISSUES

## Issues:

- No balancing option for ECC/PCCC
- Broadcasters are not assured of specific game times and dates
- All broadcasters only guaranteed 7 games of their national team
- Cross over games unknown participation until after initial RR
- Potentially more costly if host MA pays for hotel cost
- Potentially more lopsided scores
- Two separate Round-robbins – do not play all teams
- Pool seeding may be an issue\*
- Possible need to renegotiate existing contracts

# C&R RECOMMENDATION

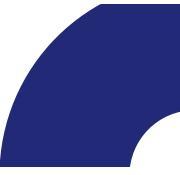
1. Stay with existing 13 team format through the end of the Quad (2026)
2. The 10 + 10 format is preferred over the 16 team format as it will add more MAs to the WCC (7) and have less negative financial impact.
3. Complete additional investigation into eliminating or minimizing the negative impacts of the 10 + 10 format including:
  - Improve and refine the financial model with additional sponsorship and reduced costs
  - Ensure no new contracts are signed that would restrict format changes
  - Ensure agreement on pool seeding
  - Pace of play and fan engagement improvements
  - Overall improvement of Host experience to encourage additional larger venues

**Target to present a new WCC format with additional participating teams for Congress 2024. The new format would be planned to be implemented in the next quad.**

APPROVED AND SUPPORTED BY THE WCF EXECUTIVE BOARD



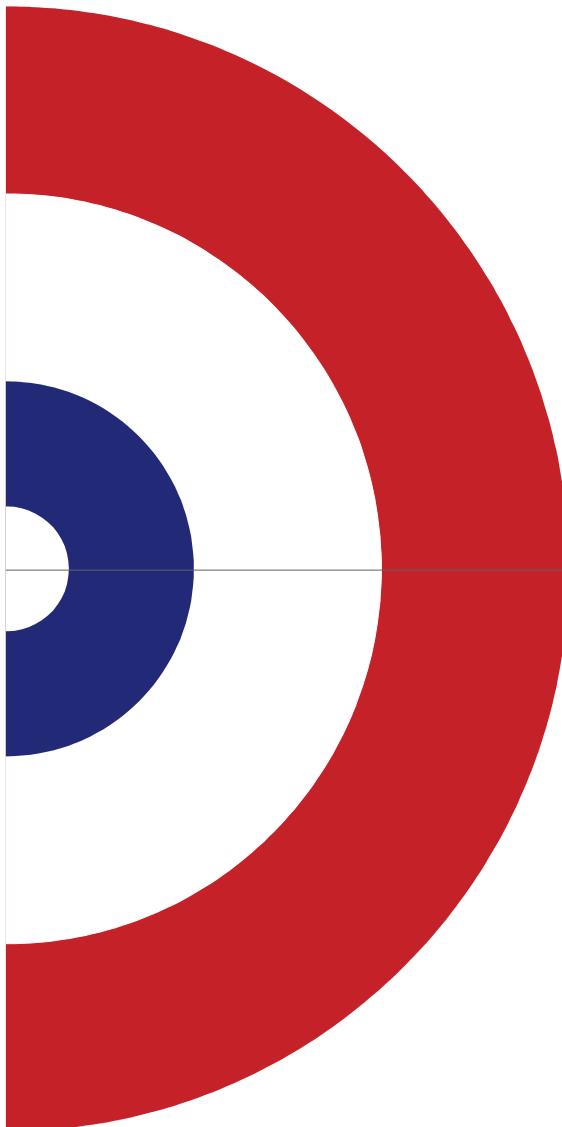
Questions?





Thank You





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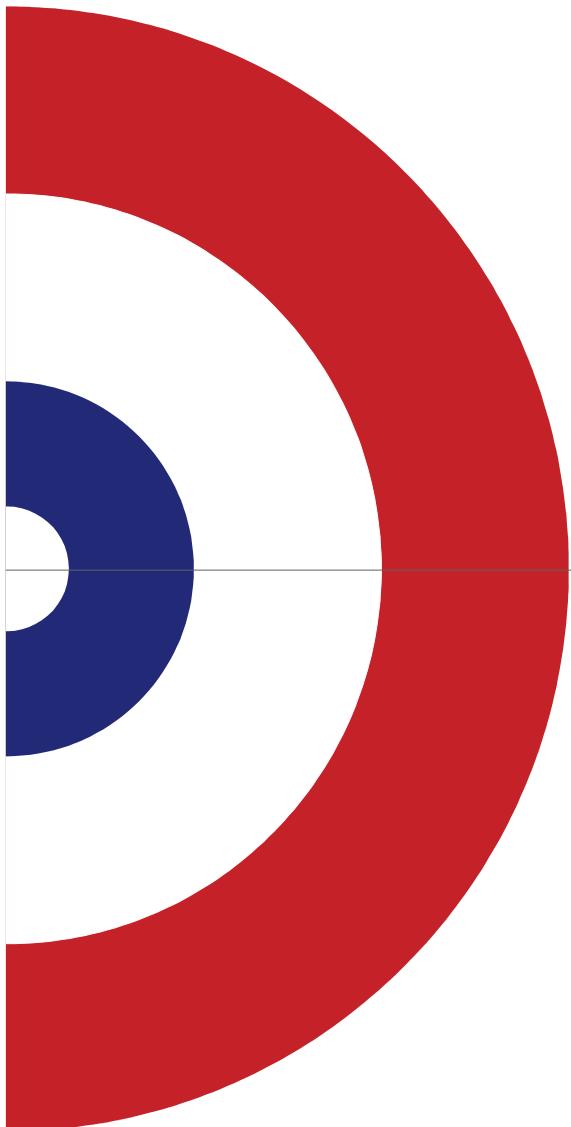
**MTV Update**

# MTV Objectives

1. To better understand what is most important to curling's stakeholder  
Original Scope was to study the 8 v 10 question.
2. To identify the most important factors in maximizing the value of curling as  
a sports entertainment property
3. To determine the likely impacts of decisions affecting the value of curling as  
a sports entertainment property
4. To provide the WCF and its Member Associations with the best information  
to make well-informed decisions affecting the value of curling as a sports  
entertainment property
5. To analyze, consider and recommend potential enhancements

**Goal: Create Maximum Entertainment Value**



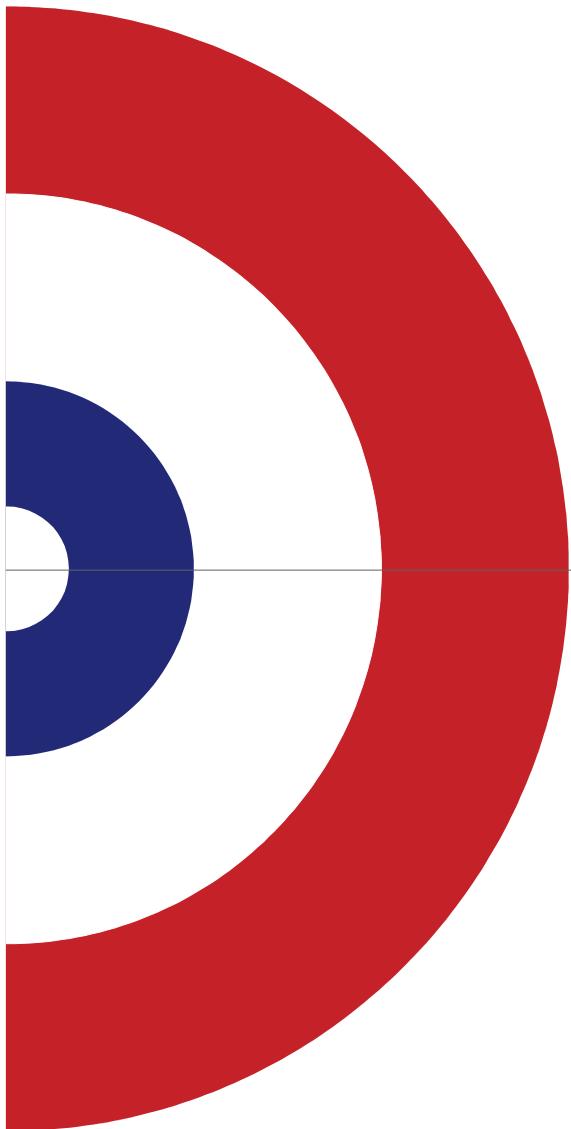


## Competition Subjects

- Ensure compelling competition
- Maintain competitive integrity
- Determine Ideal Length of Game, Competition and Season

## Maximising Business Opportunities

- Increase Broadcaster Interest and Media Rights Revenue
- Increase Sponsor Interest and Marketing Revenue
- Increase TV and Digital Audience Interest
- Increase Spectator Interest



## Athlete Engagement

- Ensure athlete opinion was included in the MTV process – Athlete Surveys
- Determine most important factors impacting athlete well-being

## Stakeholder Engagement and Research

- Broadcasters consultation
- Fan Survey
- Data analysis – both game and media
- Business impact analysis
- Feedback on trial rules

## MTV Identified Challenges

1. Inconsistent game duration
2. Deciding tied games
3. Inconsistent length of ends
4. Keeping fan engagement throughout the game
5. Reduce outcome predictability
6. Ensure comeback potential

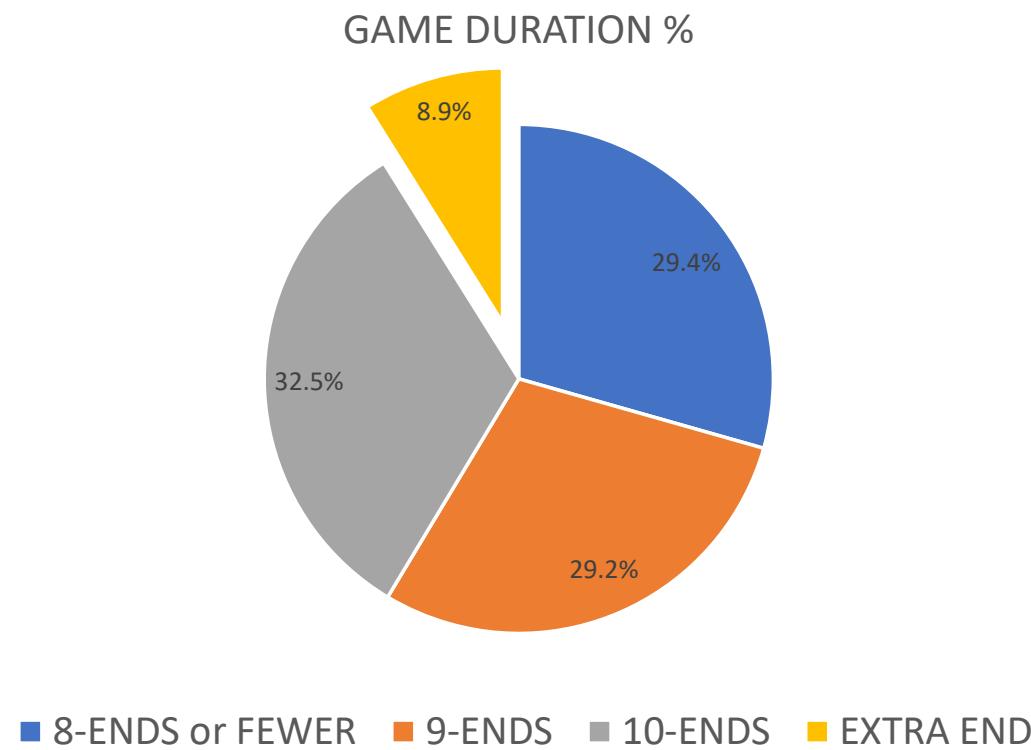
## For Example...

Data from WWCC and WMCC since the adoption of the 5 rock Free Guard Zone, through the 2020 season

	Win Predictability - Since 5-Rock FGZ thru 2020	
	WWCC	WMCC
Start Game with Last Stone	58.3%	64.6%
Score First	61.9%	66.2%
Score 2 First	68.9%	82.6%
Score 3+ First	86.0%	96.4%
Tied after 8th End with Last Stone	62.1%	67.9%
1 point up after 8th End with Last Stone	84.6%	90.9%
Tied Extra End with Last Stone	61.9%	85.2%

## For Example...

Data from WWCC and WMCC since the adoption of the 5 rock Free Guard Zone, through the 2020 season



## Why is this important...

- Audiences want brisk and exciting competition
- Attract new and younger audiences
- Audiences switch off if there is little chance of a comeback
- Audiences switch off if it is too predictable

*Curling is in competition with every other sport for fan, audience, media, broadcast and marketing attention.*

*These conditions exist regardless of the length of a curling game in ends.*

## MTV Next Steps

1. Trial ways of better controlling the length of the game
2. Leverage technology and data to build a better experience
3. Create commercial opportunities that create win-win situations

**Still with the Goal: Create Maximum Entertainment Value**





**8 v 10 – Where are we?**

## 8 v 10 Considerations

1. Athlete views and wellbeing
2. Broadcaster feedback
3. Financial Implications

**Still with the Goal: Create Maximum Entertainment Value**



## Broadcaster Feedback

1. 8 ends will not result in them showing more games
2. Consistency in length of broadcast and compelling competition is the key to increasing coverage
3. Consistent pace of play maintained throughout the game

**To replace the lost broadcast time we would need to increase the audiences by around 20% - would reducing from 10 to 8 ends do this?**



## Financial Feedback

1. Events in Canada face 20% reduction in marketing revenue if we go to 8 ends
2. Events outside of Canada face between 4% and 17% reduction in marketing revenue
3. Key broadcast right fees contracts could be reduced by reduced by 16%

Approximate impact is USD\$200,000 per annum – or to put it another way the flight to the World Juniors or about DAP dropping to about \$7000 from \$12,000

## **Current thoughts**

**After reviewing all the existing evidence the Board is not yet convinced there is a compelling reason to reduce to 8 ends, in fact it would seem to cause more harm than good at this time.**

**If there is any evidence you feel has not been considered please let us know – the decision is not final yet**





2023 Open Meetings  
Sandviken, SWE

Proposed Rule Changes

## **Glossary additions**

There are a few terms we use in our rules which are not clearly defined and we would like to add them for clarification:

- Start and end of a competition
- Start and end of a game
- Field of Play: Define the FOP but at the same time separate into an Athlete FOP and an Official FOP



## No-Tick rule

We had no negative feedback on the no-tick rule and would like to include that into the next rule-book – no longer as a trial rule.

There will be two clarifications to the rule:

If the stone is moved from the centre line to an out-of-play position, then the Free Guard Zone (FGZ) rule R6 (b) applies.

The NTZ rule does not apply for Wheelchair Curling or for Mixed Doubles competitions.



## **Sweeping - Rule R7 (a)**

The current rule says: The sweeping motion can be in any direction (it need not cover the entire width of the stone) must deposit no debris in front of a moving stone and must finish to either side of the stone.

More and more curlers do not really have any sweeping “motion” as such and it is felt that this rule needs some clarification if we do not insist there is a “motion”.



## Sweeping - Rule R7 (a)

### PROPOSAL

The Sweeping motion can be in any direction (it need not cover the entire width of the stone), the brush head must not be raised in front of a moving stone, must not deposit debris in front of a moving stone and sweeping must finish to either side of the stone.



## **Participating Teams – Rule C2 (m)**

The current rule says that a team is referred to by the name of the Association / Federation and by the name of the skip.

We would like to remove this completely as it is a competition rule and irrelevant for our competitions.

Team Ranking lists are defined separately and therefore are not affected by this change.



## **Team Time-Outs (C7)**

By the current rules, only the team that called a team time-out is allowed to communicate with their coach. We would like to adapt this rule and allow one person from the team that called the time-out to meet with their team in the athletes FOP; at the same time we would like to allow the team that has not called the team time-out to talk with their coach on the bench, if the venue layout allows.



## **Technical time-outs (C7)d**

Our rules do not define who can attend a technical time-out. We do not want alternates or coaches running into the FOP when there is a technical time-out and therefore would like to define who can attend.

### **PROPOSAL**

Only players on the ice can attend a technical time-out. Team officials or alternate players can only attend at the discretion (invitation) of the Chief Umpire.



## **Team choices in Post Round Robin play (C8)**

In C9 we define how teams are ranked. Once they are ranked, it can be that a team which is ranked lower still gets the choices in post round robin play due to the result of their round robin game or due to their DSC result.

It is felt that once teams are ranked, the higher ranked team should have the choice(s). Depending on one or multiple groups that could either be LSFE and stone colour one of the two choices.



### Standings after Round Robin

Rank	Team	Games	Wins	Losses	>OG	w1	DSC	27.39cm
1	SCO - Scotland	8	6	2				
2	KOR - Korea	8	6	2	Q	w1	DSC	34.27cm
3	JPN - Japan	8	6	2	Q	w1	DSC	34.61cm
4	LAT - Latvia	8	4	4	Q	w1		
5	ITA - Italy	8	4	4		w0		
6	GER - Germany	8	3	5		w1		
7	TUR - Turkey	8	3	5		w0		
8	EST - Estonia	8	2	6		w1		
9	CZE - Czech Republic	8	2	6		w0		



## **Teams withdrawing vs teams with no-show**

Currently, a team that does not show at an event gets relegated one division. If an MA withdraws early from an event, the competition is filled from the next lower division(s) and the MA gets relegated to the lowest division.

In our mind that is not fair and invites MAs to simply not show up instead of informing us early.

This is not an issue when there is only 2 divisions. But as soon as there is more than two divisions, we believe an MA should only be relegated one division per season.



## **Eligibility - Sport Nationality**

We currently say that an athlete has to be national of the country they represent (residence anywhere) or

Resident of the country they are representing for at least two consecutive years immediately prior to the start of the competition.

We then also say that an athlete who has represented a country in any WCF competition, or played in an international qualifier for a WCF competition, that athlete, may not represent an other country until the athlete fulfils one of the above criteria and a period of two consecutive years has elapsed.



## **Eligibility - Sport Nationality**

We need to define what competitions are considered at WCF competitions or international qualifiers for a WCF competition

We are also wondering to adapt the rule to be more in line with other sports and here we would like your input:

- 3 years instead of 2 years to change sport nationality
- An athlete can only change sport nationality once in their life-time



## **Sweeping / delivering LSD stones as alternate**

The current rules say (C8-b):

A player (alternate) that delivers or sweeps an LSD stone does not have to play in that game.

This “alternate” was added to the original rule to allow a team to fulfil the minimum requirements.

We were asked if a player not on the game line-up can not deliver stones but only go and sweep the LSD stones. – That is not the intent of the rule and we will reword the rule so that this is clear.

To be allowed to sweep LSD stones, an alternate has to deliver an LSD stone for that game.



## Host Spots at WCF events

The WCF board is considering to offer a host spot to MAs for the following two competitions:

- WMDCC
- ECC-A/B – here the spot would be offered for the ECC-B if the team has not already qualified for either event







# MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIZATION

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## CURRENT SYSTEM

- Votes based on self-reported number of registered curlers
- No consistent definition of who constitutes a “curler”

# THE CONCEPT

- Tier Member Associations based on quantifiable criteria and data
- WCF support and AGA voting could be based on tier status

# THE CONCEPT

- Tier status based on 6 sets of criteria:
  - Demographics
  - Facilities
  - Governance & Administration
  - Marketing & Communications
  - Participation
  - Performance

# THE CONCEPT

- Data sourced from:
  - MA Numbers Return
  - Governance Survey
  - WCF World Rankings
  - WCF Championship Data
  - WCF Membership Data
  - Media & Marketing Review

# CONSIDERATIONS

- Criteria and weighted values can be adapted
- Date for annual categorization would need to be formalized

# CONSIDERATIONS

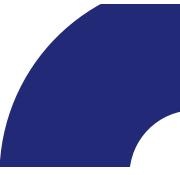
- More work required by MAs to complete multiple surveys
  - Not all need to be annual
  - Would need to be transparent
  - Audits?

## BENEFITS

- More accurate representation of age/stage of Member Associations
- Tailored development assistance
- Easier to customize reporting to MAs, Board, and Commissions/Committees
- Incentive for MAs to grow the sport

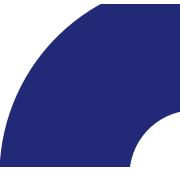


Questions?





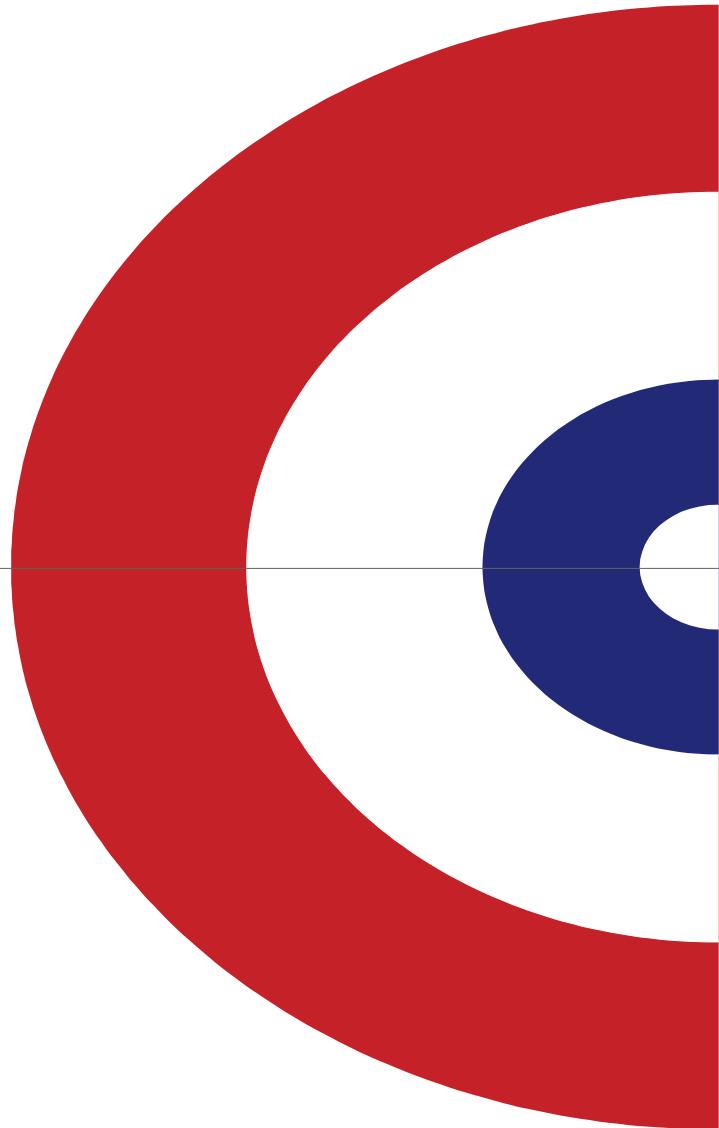
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## **WORLD CURLING FEDERATION**

Participation of Russian Athletes



## Current Position



### **Rule C1(b)**

The Board of the WCF may remove a team or Member Association from any WCF event if in the sole opinion of the Board their presence at the event would damage the event or put the safety of the participants or the good order of the event at risk.





## IOC Position

- To provide practical and financial support to Ukrainian athletes
- To continue the current approach to excluding athletes from Russia and Belarus
- To begin to explore routes back to participation for athletes from Russia and Belarus as neutral participants



- IBA – Boxing – allowed Russian and Belarussian athletes to compete under their own flags and uniforms
- ATP/WTA – Tennis – allowed to compete as neutral athletes
- FIE – Fencing – allowed competition but as neutral athletes



- IIHF – Ice Hockey – teams from Russia and Belarus excluded until the end of the 2023/24 season
- IBU – Biathlon – Excluded from activities indefinitely
- WA – Athletics – continued the ban from competition due to the invasion yesterday

\*These are a sample of positions



## DISCUSSION



