



**MINUTES
of the WORLD CURLING Executive Board
Online Meeting #2025-1
on 28 January 2025**

Attendees

Executive Board

Beau Welling (BWE)	President
Kim Forge (KFO)	Vice-President
Morten Søgaard (MSO)	Vice-President
Helena Lingham (HLI)	Director
Sergio Mitsuo Vilela (SMV)	Director - partly
Rob Niven (RNI)	Director
Jill Officer (JOF)	Director
David Sik (DSI)	Director
Tyler George (TGE)	Athlete Commission Chair - partly
Colin Grahamslaw (CGR)	Secretary General
Saskia Müller-Gastell (SMG)	WCF Projects Officer/Minute taker

The meeting started at 13:00 CET.

Presidents Update

The President welcomed everyone and gave the following update:

- The 2025 Asian Winter Games in Harbin, CHN are coming up. The President will not attend but CGR will be there.
- World Curling continues to deal with sovereignty issues regarding India and Hong Kong
- The IOC President's race is amping up. World Curling is getting lots of communications about that even though we have no vote. The upcoming 144th IOC Session in March 2025 in Olympia, Greece will be attended by the President and CGR.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous Board meeting in Perth in December 2024 had been distributed in advance.

To approve the minutes of the Board meetings held in December 2024 in Perth, SCO

*moved by JOF
seconded by HLI
and approved unanimously*

CGR explained that minutes are only posted publicly once they have been approved by the Board and once CGR has made a final review.

Conflict of Interest

No changes

Commission and Committee Updates

Competition and Rules (RNI/JOF)

The minutes of the last two CnR meetings had been shared with the Board.

CGR explained that the proposed rule changes would now be shared with the MAs for comments and feedback. Also, there will be a corresponding session in Cortina as well as a webinar after Cortina for those who cannot attend the meetings in Italy.

For Board information RNI emphasized one more rule issue that is currently being discussed regarding Wheelchair Curling: After a request from the wheelchair athletes CnR had recommended to reduce the amount of games they are playing for welfare of the athletes. The CnR's proposal was to keep 12 teams but put them into two pools. The wheelchair athletes came back and confirmed they wanted less games but did not want to go from 11 to only 5 or 6 games which they felt is too few – they clearly want 9 games. CGR added that it is virtually impossible to go from 12 to 14 or 16 teams because the number of hotel rooms then makes it very difficult to find a venue. Even big cities are struggling to find enough wheelchair accessible rooms.

CGR explained that the wheelchair venue in Stevenston, Scotland had been damaged in the recent storms in the UK the previous week. However, the ice-rink side of the building is unaffected.

CGR confirmed that the updated Terms of Reference of the CnR had been dropped into the online folder for Board approval. RNI felt it would be good to have that document approved by 6 Feb 2025 so the Board was asked to give their feedback by then. HLI felt that the wheelchair group should be mentioned in the ToR. CGR agreed to add to the ToR that there is a wheelchair sub-group that the CnR consult with. RNI said that the equipment-sub group should be added, too.

CGR informed the Board that the Events Structure Presentation would be sent to the MAs on the following day (after having received Board feedback) along with meeting links and details about Cortina. The following comments were made / questions were asked regarding the Events Structure Presentation:

- When would an ECC-A stand-alone event be held? CGR: It would be earlier in the season which would also help with access to venues.
- In the document there is a pro- and con-comparison between the versions 2 and 3 and the current format. However, a comparison of 2 vs 3 should be added.
- The figures of 2023 are still used in the presentation but this should be updated to the 2024 figures. A comment should be added that the loss in the previous season was a little lower.

JOF expressed how urgent it would be to revise the entire event calendar. RNI added that a calendar change for WMDCC will be recommended. CGR explained the issues with the WMDCC: In January it would clash every two years with the University Games, every four years there are the YOG – if the event is moved into December there would be less clashes but one needs to look at the Olympic Qualifiers in CAN, USA and the one of World Curling. JOF suggested tiering the events based on points. CGR agreed that this would be a good approach but pointed out that this would not be possible until Cortina due to capacity problems.

RNI added that the issue of hog-line enforcement had also been discussed during the CnR meetings and the CnR Commission had given their full support of an official being more proactive in this. JOF said that the umpires should be empowered to actually pull a rock and this must be communicated appropriately in players' guides and at team meetings.

Sergio Mitsuo Vilela (SMV) joined the meeting.

Finance Commission (SMV)

SMV advised that the Q2 report and projections had been added to the Board shared folder. The current numbers are in line with the budget. A Finance Commission Meeting had taken place in the previous week and no major topics had been raised. Broadcasting is working hard to keep the costs under control.

SMV also explained that finally a response had been received from the lawyers that World Curling is now in a position to appoint EQ as external reviewers for the year. The review will now be done under international fiscal standards (IFRS), not UK standards anymore.

RNI raised the following two questions:

- The budgetary amount that is forecasted for Floor Curling is now zero. Is Floor Curling still going to bring in money? Reply SMV: There is a delay with the app. 75,000 had been budgeted as income and currently we do not expect zero but we do not know how much it will be. We prefer to budget zero and then make money instead of budgeting a high income and then having to explain why it is less.
- The GBP 10,000 from the European Legacy Fund – is that the money that went to Hyvinkää? Reply CGR: There were two payments: 5,000 went to Hyvinkää and 5,000 to Lohja.

To appoint EQ as Independent Accountants for 2024/2025

*moved by SMV
seconded by HLI
and approved unanimously*

SMV also advised the Board that conversations on the investment profile had been started. More benchmark information will now be gathered and JP Morgan will be asked to come up with a more aligned proposal. Once this has been received SMV would revert back to the Board with actual proposals and timelines.

Athlete Commission

No meeting had been held since the last Board meeting

Governance Commission

The next meeting will be on 30 January 2025. JOF asked about the current status with Independent Directors? CGR explained that Graham Prouse is setting up a meeting with the Nominations Committee soon.

Technical Commission (DSI)

The minutes of the meeting of 7 January 2025 had been added to the Board shared folder. Two smaller sub-groups have now been set up within the Technical Commission: one for facility strategy and one for electronic handles.

DSI elaborated on his update on electronic handles which had been distributed to the Board prior to the meeting. Two actions are being proposed:

- renovation of the Startco handles (recommendations for technical improvements had been collected from within the Technical Commission)
- a co-operation with CTU (Czech Technical University) in Prague is being sought regarding electromagnetic field research/analysis and recommendation for venue conditions/tools or handle renovations.

DSI summarised that the priority now is to put together a budget for the renovation of the handles (approx. 200 pieces) and to find a company to do the renovation. When JOF asked what the timeframe would be for organizing the handles and having them refurbished, CGR replied that handles could only be back in action next season.

TGE left the meeting.

Regarding the expenses for the refurbishment of the handles SMV explained that as soon as the costs for that are available this would be voted on by the Board as a non-budgeted expense. The only issue is that even if the Board goes through that process we may find ourselves spending a lot of money and eventually the handles might still not work.

Nominations Committee

The report from the Nominations Committee was still being awaited. This had been held up due to Graham Prouse's involvement with the Brushing issues.

Ranking Points Group

No further updates

Hall of Fame Committee

No further updates

DEI

No meeting since the last Board meeting

Sustainability

Due to meet on 5th February

Brush Issues

The Board was made aware of the issues that arose following a public statement by a group of players on the eve of the Slam event in Guelph, Canada. The group had indicated their opposition to the approval of the new style foams developed by Balance Plus and Goldline and had called on World Curling to withdraw the approval. A temporary solution was put in place by the players for the Slam event with the support of the Slam organisers. During the event with the support of the World Curling Athlete Commission an opportunity was put in place for the players to conduct a review of the new products and compare them to the old products on ice and on video.

This video was then provided to World Curling to indicate if there was evidence that the impact of the new style foam was too excessive and should result in the approvals being withdrawn. A group made up of CGR, Graham Prouse and Scott Arnold (who had been involved with the brushing approvals) plus JOF, RNI (CnR Chairs), TGE and Rob Gordon (World Curling Athlete Commission), BWE also joined a number of the calls, reviewed the submitted videos and concluded that there was not sufficient evidence to remove the new style foam from play at this time. A statement to that effect was made public on Friday 24th Jan. A response was also provided to the players group which further indicated our AC would continue to work with them on assessing the current standards and whether these need updated or reviewed and whether the impact of brushing has become too much.

The group is now looking at possible medium term (now until the Olympics) and longer term (post Olympics) solutions.

RNI asked that thanks be included in the minutes to all those involved for all the many hours of work at sometimes impossible times.

BWE added that TGE and the Athlete Commission (AC) really need to be helped so that the athletes truly feel that the AC is the vehicle to talk to World Curling. The President also thanked everyone involved for their great efforts and hard work and emphasised that this Brush Issue is a big thing for such a small federation as World Curling.

Strategy

The work had been summarised into a brief paper, the next steps will be to share this with the Senior staff and look at the actions required to work toward the initiatives over the next 12 months and include them in the budgets and work plans for next year.

The summary paper had been uploaded to the Board shared drive.

Big Ideas Update

Commercial

Floor Curling Update:

The Floor Curling platform is up and running with some minor bug issues being resolved. Korean Curling is working on a Floor Curling event in conjunction with the WWCC and this will hopefully be the first main test of the site and platform.

Athlete and Events

The bug issues with the Floor Curling site have had a knock on impact with the Athlete Licensing system and the programmers have not completed the work in time for us to feel confident about launching this for all the World Championships in the first half of 2025. What is now proposed is that a number of teams will be identified and invited to test the platform during this period so that a properly tested system can be ready for next season.

Re-branding

No further update

Stakeholder Engagement

A webinar to gain feedback on the proposed events structure has been scheduled. Board members should now be looking at the timing of the next members group calls.

Data and Digital

No further update

Facilities (DSI)

A report had been submitted by DSI on the SVS Project. He explained that bi-weekly meetings have now been set up. A series of documents have already been shared with SVS. These are currently being revised and the target is to publish a piece of the global facility strategy by end of March 2025. The biggest document still to be reviewed is a document called "Agreement with facility" and the approval of this document by the Board will be required during one of the next meetings. Also, the Board will be asked to approve the benefits and the fees (see document Global Facility Strategy status 24.1.2024)

The meeting ended at 14:45 CET.