

Allocation for Singles World Championships Consultation Document – February 2009

By: The Croquet Association

For: The World Croquet Federation and its members

Background

The Croquet Association has just completed a review of its international policy, and has decided to consult with the WCF and its other member associations on this and other issues. We hope that this consultation will result in agreement at the WCF Council meeting in May 2009, although we recognise that the time-scale is quite tight.

The Current Situation

The method of allocation of places to countries for World Championships is specified and implemented by the WCFMC. The regulations governing the allocation (WCF Sports Regulations Appendix B) are quite complicated, and there has not always been agreement as to what they mean. In the last two AC World Championships, the allocation has ended up with 16 and 14 wildcards being allocated by the WCFMC, which has meant that the actual allocation process apart from the wildcards has been largely irrelevant, and that all the borderline decisions have been made by the WCFMC, a committee which is not elected to play the role of a selection committee (even if it does take recommendations from national selection committees).

Allocation Objectives

We believe that each World Singles Championship should primarily be for the strongest available players, subject to each WCF Full and Associate Member being represented, and there being some places available to provide a stimulus for the growth of croquet in countries where it is not yet well established. We also recognise that there should be extra places awarded to the host nation, and that the current guarantee of six places for the five leading countries (GB, Australia, New Zealand, USA, and Egypt for Golf Croquet) is a reasonable recognition of the work they do for croquet generally. The allocation objectives as stated in the WCF Sports Regulations are broadly the same as these, but are less specific and allow for a lot of flexibility in interpretation, which we do not believe is helpful.

Moving Forward

We would like to move to a simpler and more transparent process for the allocation of places for World Championships. We believe that, in Association Croquet, the world rankings are well enough established to form the basis of an allocation process. The recent WCF Ranking Report found no evidence to support the assertion that the rankings are unfair to any country. Although rankings are not perfect as a measurement of playing strength, we believe that any problems associated with this would be outweighed by the extra simplicity and transparency of a rankings-based process. There would also be a number of wildcards which could be used, as at present, to cover any odd cases or apparent injustices.

In Golf Croquet the rankings are not as well established, but a similar process should work, perhaps treating Egypt differently as their games are not all included in the rankings.

Our Proposal

We would like to propose that:

1. For Association Croquet World Singles Championships, the rankings-based allocation method described below is used.
2. For Golf Croquet World Singles Championships, and Womens' or Junior World Championships in GC and AC, a similar, mainly merit-based allocation method be used, the details yet to be decided.

We believe that this method will result in a very similar allocation to that achieved by the present method, but that it will involve much less work and players will appreciate the extra transparency.

Rankings-based Allocation Method

On the Invitation Date: The WCF invites entries from players. It should disseminate the invitations via its member associations.

On the Closing Date - three months later: Closing date for entries. Places are allocated as follows:

The world ranking list on this advertised Closing Date is used.

- a) Each country with at least one entrant has their highest ranked player accepted. (Exception - for observer members this is at WCF discretion.) The top 6 ranked entrants from each Mac country are all accepted.
- b) All but 13 of the remaining places are allocated by ranking.
- c) The next 5 ranked players from the host country are accepted. If there are fewer than 5 additional players from the host country then the extra places are allocated by ranking.
- d) 4 wildcards are allocated by the WCF. The WCF could perhaps solicit nominations from countries.
- e) 4 places remain for a qualification tournament.

Feedback

We would be very happy to receive comments and suggestions on these ideas, preferably by the end of February to allow motions to be put to the WCF Council meeting in May 2009. Please feel free to contact Jonathan if you have any questions.

Feedback can be sent to: Jonathan Kirby, Chairman, CA International Committee, at pjkirby@gmail.com
and copied to Brian Storey, WCF Secretary-General, at secretary@wcfcroquet.org