



WELLINGTON CROQUET ASSOCIATION

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE WELLINGTON CROQUET ASSOCIATION (WCA) REGARDING A STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONALITY TO ENABLE WCA TO SURVIVE IN THE CURRENT CRISIS

BACKGROUND

Current WCA Structure

WCA is an incorporated society, registered with the Registrar of Incorporated Societies (the Registrar), in terms of the Incorporated Societies Act 1908. WCA must adhere to its Rules, as lodged with the Registrar, and lodge annual financial statements with the Registrar, or risk being de-registered and thereby ceasing to exist.

The 10 greater Wellington area croquet clubs are members of WCA, and it forms the affiliation link between the individual members of those clubs and the national body, Croquet New Zealand (CNZ). WCA seeks to facilitate and grow the sport of croquet in its region through,

- fostering cooperation between clubs
- providing training in coaching, umpiring, refereeing, and tournament management, to maintain a pool of suitably qualified volunteers to officiate and run the sport.
- managing and running inter-club competitions between greater Wellington area clubs
- managing and running regional WCA croquet tournaments
- managing and running national and international tournaments on behalf of CNZ
- maintaining a player assistance fund to help with travel costs for players selected to represent their region or New Zealand
- maintaining a fund to assist clubs with lawn development.
- developing the sport in schools to encourage new younger players.

In order to facilitate these objectives WCA Rules provide for a comprehensive Committee comprising, President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Association Handicapper, Association Referee, Tournament Convenor, and 3 Regional Members elected by the Kapiti, Wellington and Hutt districts. There is the role Webmaster, outside of the Committee.

The Current Crisis Position

In recent years the majority of critical positions have been filled by a small core of volunteers, who are no longer available. For this financial year WCA has been operating with,

- no president
- no vice president
- an acting secretary who has extended her term out of generosity to WCA and will not serve past 31 March 21
- an acting treasurer who has extended her term out of generosity to WCA and will not serve past 31 March 21
- other less critical positions/roles are currently being performed to a lesser or greater degree.

With the exception of a Tournament Convenor the prognosis for filling the critical positions for the 21/22 year looks poor. This will result in WCA failing, both from an inability to deliver on functionality, and a failure to meet the legal requirements of an incorporated society.

The consequences of failure are,

- all greater Wellington area players will become unaffiliated to CNZ and will no longer be able to play competitive croquet. An unpalatable remedy may require Wellington area clubs to join the Manawatu/Wanganui Association
- the approximately \$42,000 that WCA has in cash reserves will not legally be able to be given back to its members, that is the 10 Wellington area clubs, and will be passed to CNZ or perhaps the Manawatu/Wanganui Association
- all centrally coordinated cooperation between clubs, promotion of croquet in the region, regional tournaments, and inter-club competitions, will cease.

A strategy to Manage the Crisis

At its September Special General Meeting WCA reached consensus that it needed to restructure with a reduced number of Committee positions and a reduced workload, thereby making it easier to attract volunteers to fill critical positions. This was to be achieved through,

- discontinuing less critical activities
- looking at existing processes to identify opportunities for efficiencies
- divesting responsibilities back to clubs.

A task force was appointed to undertake this review and report back to WCA with recommendations on how this restructure might be achieved. This is the report of that task force.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESTRUCTURE OF WCA

WCA Tournaments

1.1 All WCA tournaments are to be allocated to clubs. Clubs must be willing to take full responsibility for management. This includes advertising, setting and collecting entry fees, setting and paying prize money, retaining any profits and absorbing any losses, appointing tournament referees and managers, taking possession of and recovering trophies, engraving, catering, and dispute resolution. WCA has a procedure guide for resolving disputes and this will be made available to clubs through its website. Because CNZ expects WCA to have a dispute resolving process, hosting clubs may ask the WCA President to appoint an adjudicating individual or panel, where the club has not been able to resolve the dispute.

1.2 The Club that most recently hosted any particular tournament will have the right to host that tournament the next time. However the club will be under no obligation to do so. Clubs are expected to signal well in advance any intention to stop hosting and liaise with other clubs to try and find a replacement host. If there is no willing host then the tournament will be suspended. Two or more clubs may agree amongst themselves to rotate a tournament to spread the load. Clubs are encouraged to set up liaison systems within their local area (Kapiti, Hutt, Wellington) however how they do this is up to them.

1.3 CNZ requests to hold tournaments will be offered to clubs on the same basis as WCA tournaments. Apart from making the introduction WCA will have no involvement in the management of CNZ tournaments and hosting clubs will be liaising with CNZ direct.

WCA not managing tournaments will reduce the Tournament Co-ordinator's workload by 50% and also result in a major reduction of workload for the Treasurer and to a lesser extent other WCA positions.

Inter-club

2.1 Inter-club competitions will continue unchanged. The Tournament Co-ordinator will continue to be responsible for inter-club competition but may co-opt outside the formal WCA Committee a GC and/or AC manager/assistant to assist. The Tournament Co-ordinator will be responsible for co-ordinating any inter-club rule changes deemed necessary and bringing these to a WCA general meeting for approval.

2.2 Inter-Club entry fees will remain, and continue to be distributed to hosting clubs.

There is no alternative to a centralised administration of inter-club. There are advantages in centralising inter-club games and a disparity with some clubs participating but not hosting. It is only reasonable to provide compensation to hosting clubs. The WCA workload in collecting and disbursing entry fees is minor and does not justify asking players to pay increased tea or green fee money in lieu of an entry fee.

Finances

3.1 WCA Cash Reserves should not be disbursed back to clubs.

3.2 The next WCA Committee should undertake a review of policy to see if player travel support disbursement limits should be increased and if development grants should be extended to more than just lawns.

Cash as at 31/3/20 was Players Support Fund \$5,316, Lawn Development Fund \$10,573, Unallocated \$26,847. WCA has well documented policies in place regarding management and disbursement of support and development funds, and assessment and payment of applications is not onerous. Providing support to players and clubs is a laudable aim which should continue.

3.3 WCA will continue to collect national levies on behalf of CNZ.

This is an automated process that requires little work for the Treasurer. CNZ's agreement to deal directly with clubs would at best be reluctant.

3.4 WCA will continue to accept payment for and collate year/rule book orders.

It is anticipated that CNZ would refuse to deal with clubs direct.

3.5 For the foreseeable future WCA levies should be set at nil. This will of course be subject to confirmation at future AGMs.

WCA levies are not automated and setting these at nil will result in a workload reduction for the Treasurer. A nil figure will over time go someway to reducing the unallocated cash reserves, and also reflects that WCA will be providing a reduced service to clubs under the proposed new structure.

WCA Meetings

4.1 Excepting SGMs if required, WCA will only meet twice a year, in late April and June. The April meeting will be a co-ordination confirmation of which clubs are hosting which tournaments. There will be no need to hold a separate Club Captains meeting. The June meeting will be the AGM.

If club input is required outside the timings of these two meetings (eg CNZ remits) this will be sought by email and a discussion page will be put up on WCA's website to make it easy for clubs to share their views.

4.2 Any two of the President, Secretary, Treasurer, or Tournament Co-ordinator are to be given a delegated authority to approve and pay individual expenditure items up to \$500, or \$2,000 when in terms of a previously approved and documented policy.

4.3 There will be no scheduled formal WCA Committee meetings. The President or any two Committee members will have the right to call a one off meeting, which can be either physical or electronic.

Having to potentially only attend two WCA meetings a year will greatly reduce the workload of Committee members. The reduced WCA functionality, payment authority, and reduced Committee size (as detailed below) should avoid the need for scheduled Committee meetings.

Committee Structure

5.1 The WCA Committee shall consist of President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Tournament Co-ordinator. There will also be a Webmaster appointed, outside of Committee.

We are fortunate that the Association Referee position is currently being ably undertaken, however this might not always be so. Position should be disestablished from the WCA Committee as it is not essential to WCA continuing to function. A list of qualified persons for both GC and AC should be maintained on the WCA website and clubs can contact these people for assistance. If one or more of these people is willing they can be co-opted to undertake the duties of GC and/or AC Referee outside the formal WCA committee.

The Association Handicapper position is proving difficult to fill and no longer essential now that WCA tournaments will be run by clubs. Club tournament managers already have authority to adjust handicaps on the spot where necessary. Club Handicappers, generally the Club Captain, also have authority to adjust handicaps outside the AHS. Position should be disestablished. The WCA website should contain a list of suitably qualified people who are prepared to assist clubs assess players for handicap adjustments for GC and AC, if the Club does not feel competent to do this.

Given the reduced WCA functionality and reduced meetings a year the 3 Regional Member positions are not essential and should be disestablished. This may also free up 3 persons who might be persuaded to take up a more essential position/role.

Vice President is not essential and should be disestablished.

The Coaching Coordinator role does not exist in current structure but is an important function. There is a distinction between coaching rules, which is best done by a referee, and coaching play. A list of CNZ qualified coaches should be maintained on the WCA website together with the extent of their availability. Clubs can contact these people to seek assistance. If one or more of these people is willing they can be co-opted to undertake the duties of GC and/or AC Coach outside the formal WCA structure.

In the absence of a co-opted AC and GC Referee, and a co-opted AC and GC coaching coordinator, it is important someone takes responsibility for promoting training and participation so that the pool of qualified umpires, referees and coaches is maintained. The President will be asked to keep an overview of this.

Given the reduced Committee size, the appointment of a webmaster is critical to ensure that clubs have a resource detailing where to go for areas of specialist support. However as the role is primarily to receive and publish information, it is not considered necessary for this position to be part of the Committee.

5.2 Any or all of the positions of Secretary, Treasurer and Webmaster may be combined if they are unable to be individually filled, and there is a person willing to take on the combined role.
The combined role can not of course be both the first and second authoriser of payments.

5.3 If the combined or individual positions of Secretary, Treasurer and Webmaster can not be filled the President has authority to engage a person to undertake these duties on a contract basis at a cost not exceeding \$2000 per annum for Webmaster, \$2,000 per annum for Secretary and \$1,000 per annum for Treasurer, to be paid quarterly in arrears. This cost will initially come from unallocated cash reserves, however if ongoing will inevitably result in a reinstatement of levies sooner rather than later.

This is a last resort option, because even with this restructure and reduction of roles and workload there is no guarantee there will be volunteers for these critical positions.

Yellow WCA Directory

6.1 To be discontinued

Reduces the workload of production and more up to date information can be maintained on the WCA website

CONCLUSION

_When considering these recommendations please remember that these do not purport to be the optimum structure for WCA. That would be something like we have currently got, which we do not have the volunteers for.

You are choosing between "two evils". A reduced WCA, being the lesser evil, or a failed non-existent WCA. Half hearted tinkering around the edges will not work.

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PROPOSED STRUCTURE AND INFORMATION FLOWS FOR WCA

