WORLD CROQUET FEDERATION

**WCF TOPIC 69**

PROPOSAL FOR THE FUTURE ADMINISTRATION OF

THE GOLF CROQUET RANKINGS

1. The MC wishes to propose to Council that the WCF should assume responsibility for the Golf Croquet International Grading System (“GCIGS”) in the same way that it has taken responsibility for the AC Croquet Grading System. This paper explains the rationale and the steps that the MC believes to be necessary.

2. This proposal has been prompted by two considerations, namely the report of the Golf Croquet Ranking Review Committee (“GCRRC”) (completed in November 2017), and the wish of the current GCIGS administrator to retire or at least greatly reduce the time he devotes to the role.

3. The GCRRC (Paul Billings, Chris Clarke, James Hopgood, Stephen Mulliner and Louis Nel) has been in session since 2012. It has reviewed the issues involved in GC rankings in detail and, mainly due to the work of Louis Nel, has analysed a large range of possible algorithms and systems. It concluded that there were significant differences between GC and AC in relation to rankings. These were associated with the nature of the two games, the much higher volume of GC games, the higher number of new players coming into GC and the greater uncertainty surrounding both their start grades and their rate of progress in relation to their start grade.

4. Input processing

4.1 The popularity of GC has led to consistent growth in the number of results being reported each year. In 2017, 27,000 ranked games were processed which is approximately double the number of AC ranked games. The current volume of GC results requires significant time to process, particularly in relation to the checking and cleansing of input data (because players’ names are frequently reported in a form other than that used in the GCIGS database).

4.2 This factor and the need for back-up in the case of indisposition strongly suggests that GC rankings administration should be based on appointing Assistant Ranking Officers (“ARO”) in each of the major regions, namely Australia, Egypt, New Zealand, USA and Europe/Rest of World. Each ARO would be responsible for processing GC results for their geographic area. This will spread the load and allow easier checking of the identities of players and the spelling of their names, which, as noted above, is the main source of input error. The GC Rankings Officer would have overall responsibility and might also serve as one of the AROs.

4.3 The implementation of such a “distributed input” model creates new coding requirements because the current system, which depends on a high level of familiarity with Excel spreadsheets and macros, is not readily transportable. The need is to code an input module similar to that used for the AC CGS which can accept results data in mass form (i.e. one event as a whole) and allow easy checking and amendment of player names.

4.4 The new system will also require coding to prevent simultaneous input to the database on the web server by different AROs.

5. Calculation approach

5.1 The GCRRC proposes (a) that a new algorithm be adopted for calculating grades (similar but not identical to that used in AC Dynamic Grading) and (b) to institute continuous automatic adjustment of all start grades until a new player has played 30 ranked games. The latter will involve the calculation module being operated multiple times whenever the rankings are recalculated and requires that the calculation module should be recoded in a language (such as C++) which will run very much faster than the current program which is written in Excel Version 4 macro language.

5.2 It is envisaged that the calculation module will reside on the web server instead of locally on a ARO’s PC and will be capable of being activated only by someone with a form of administrator access, namely an ARO or the GCRO.

6. Recommendation

6.1 The MC recommends to Council that the WCF should:

(a) assume responsibility for the administration of GCIGS;

(b) adopt the recommendations of the GCRRC Report; and

(c) approve any necessary expenditure up to a maximum of £5,000 to implement the recoding required to implement the above.

6.2 The MC appreciates that it may be possible to achieve the required recoding using volunteer resources from the croquet world at no cost or at a much reduced cost and it will investigate this possibility promptly. This is particularly the case in relation to the calculation module because the AC CGS calculation module performs a very similar function. This is not the case with the distributed input aspect and reliance on volunteer goodwill is likely to be more time-consuming and an end point will be more difficult to guarantee. The MC believes that it is highly desirable that this project should be completed before the end of 2018.

6.3 The MC also recognises that a distributed input system would have similar benefits for the administration of the AC rankings. Accordingly, as part of this project, the MC proposes to consider whether such an input system should be extended to encompass the AC rankings as well, either simultaneously with its adoption for the GC rankings or at a later date.

6.4 The Closing Date for this vote is midnight BST on **Sunday, 8 April 2018.**

# WCF Management Committee

# 15 March 2018