

MINUTES OF THE 37th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

WORLD SQUASH FEDERATION LIMITED

FAIRMONT SOUTHAMPTON HOTEL BERMUDA

SATURDAY 1st DECEMBER 2007

1. PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

The President welcomed delegates to the 37th Annual General Meeting and thanked the Bermuda Squash Racquets Association for kindly hosting the meeting, the WSF Conference and the Men's World Open Squash Championship.

a) AGM Programme, Voting Procedures and Appointment of Scrutineers

The Chief Executive informed the members of the AGM Programme, and outlined the Voting Procedures. The meeting appointed Chris Herridge and Dr. Anne Smith as scrutineers.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from the National Federations of Denmark, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Nigeria, Russia and Switzerland and from the World Deaf Squash Association.

Personal apologies were received from WSF Patron Tunku Imran, WSF Past President Ian Stewart and WSF Past Vice-President Joyce Buckley.

3. ATTENDANCE

a) MEMBERS REPRESENTED

Australia	- John Holland	Qatar	- Hisham Algosaiibi
Austria	- Howard Harding	Kuwait	- Yousef Ashknani
Barbados	- Craig Archer	Malaysia	- Leslie Ponnampalam
Belgium	- Hugo Hannes	Mexico	- Federico Serna
Bermuda	- David Gibbons	Netherlands	- Chris Stahl
British Virgin Is.	- Mark Chapman	New Zealand	- Jim O'Grady
Canada	- Joe Hattori	Norway	- Reidun Ribesen
Egypt	- Galal Allam	Pakistan	- Asim Suleiman
England	- Zena Wooldridge	Scotland	- Dr. George Mieras
France	- Jacques Fontaine	South Africa	- Vijay Gajjar
Germany	- Peter Köck	Sweden	- Ulf Karlsson
Guatemala	- Charlie Prentice	USA	- Kevin Klipstein
Hong Kong, China	- Chris Coulcher	Venezuela	- Francisco Paradisi
India	- Cyrus Poncha		
Ireland	- Angus Kirkland		

b) OBSERVERS PRESENT

Bermuda	- Ross Triffit	England	- Nick Rider
Canada	- Linda MacPhail	France	- Yves Hocdé
	- Dr. Anne Smith	Jamaica	- Karen Anderson
Ecuador	- Alberto Adum	CASA	- Ken Stillman
	- Fernando Gavilaves	Sweden	- Thomas Troedsson

c) OTHERS PRESENT

i. By Right

Jahangir Khan	- President
Heather Deayton	- Vice-President
Gerard DeCourcy	- Vice-President
Frank van Loon	- Vice-President
Susie Simcock	- Emeritus President
Vijay Gajjar	- WSF Regional Vice-President (Africa)
N. Ramachandran	- WSF Regional Vice-President (Asia)
Hugo Hannes	- WSF Regional Vice-President (Europe)
John Holland	- WSF Regional Vice-President (Oceania)
Sergio Rodriguez	- WSF Regional Vice-President (Pan-America)
Douglas Beckford	- President CASA
Jack Herrick	- Chairman PSA
Gawain Briars	- CEO PSA
Andrew Shelley	- CEO WISPA

ii. By Invitation

Howard Harding	- WSF Media Director
Chris Herridge	- WSF Technical Director
Christian Leighton (CL)	- WSF Chief Executive & Secretary General
Tracy Langton-Jones (TLJ)	- WSF Administration Manager

The total number of votes represented at the meeting by paid Full Members was 92.

4. APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Management Committee recommended to the meeting that the following nations, having properly applied for Full Membership of the Federation, should be upgraded from Associate Membership:

Ecuador
Sri Lanka

Motion Carried - Unanimously

The appointment of the two new Full Members was applauded.

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 36th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Approval of the minutes was proposed by South Africa and seconded by Scotland.

Minutes Approved - Unanimously

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE 36th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minute 6 c) Matters Arising from the Minutes of the 35th Annual General Meeting

Netherlands pointed out that the Management Committee elected at the 36th AGM would review the inclusion of a line item titled "Development Fund" in the Budget. The Chief Executive reported that this had been done and referred to the Budget 2007/2008.

Minute 8 b) New Zealand Motion

Netherlands queried whether WSF had embarked on a full review of its governance. ManCom responded that this had not been a priority in the past year and that it would consider the project in 2007/08.

Action: ManCom

Minute 13 a) Adoption of Audited Accounts for the Year to 30th June 2006

Barbados asked whether WSF was progressing the Coaching DVD for Beginners. ManCom responded that the Development & Coaching Committee had actively sought a resource during the year and identified two possible resources (one still in development phase) that may be suitable. The project would be progressed during the next year.

Action: Development & Coaching Committee

7. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2006 / 2007

The President thanked the Executive Committee and the Directors of the WSF Committees for their assistance in producing the Report. He then summarised the document and invited questions or comment.

Section 3.4 Scotland asked what the staffing plan was for 2008. The Chief Executive responded that no changes are planned vs. 2007 at this point.

Section 4.1 Netherlands corrected the Report in that WSF currently has 138 Members, not 141.

Action: TLJ

Section 7.2 Netherlands pointed out that the timeframe of the report for the Referees & Committee was not aligned with the rest of the Executive Report and queried what the target number of WSF referees should be per region. The Chief Executive agreed to pass the feedback to the Committee and request that targets be developed. He did emphasise that this task would require collaboration from Regional Federations.

Action: CL/Referees & Rules Committee

Section 10.8 c Sweden queried whether the WSF World Calendar continues to be produced. The Chief Executive responded affirmatively and acknowledged that the office had been behind schedule on edition # 73 but that it had been produced just prior to the AGM and that it would be online within a week of the meeting.

Page 29 Netherlands mentioned that in a couple of instances the Committee headings were not aligned with the Committee names agreed at the 36th AGM. The Chief Executive accepted that this was the case and noted that the Championships Committee had opted to keep this name rather than change to Competitions Committee as was discussed at the 36th AGM.

Acceptance of the Executive Committee Report 2006/2007 was proposed by Barbados and seconded by Kuwait.

Report Accepted – Unanimously

8. MOTIONS TO AMEND THE ARTICLES OF WSF LIMITED

a) MOTION – Egypt

Amend Article 32 to allow for “any person to be nominated for the post of President”. Egypt mentioned that the current criterion means that many capable individuals are not eligible and proposed the Motion.

Scotland pointed out that in fact not only the current Vice-Presidents, but also many others were eligible to stand for the position of President.

The proposal failed to be seconded and therefore the Motion was not carried.

Motion not carried

b) MOTION – Canada (shown as in Agenda)

b1) Amend Article 29 to read:

“All elections for President and Vice-Presidents of the WSF shall be for a term ending at the General Meeting, following completion of a period of service of 3 years (defining the period from one general meeting to the next general meeting as one year, as referred to in article 11)”.

Rationale

There are two issues here:

- The period of service. Under the current bylaws, the ‘period of service’ is defined as 18 months (article 29); which is meaningless - as under article 11 it is stipulated that a general meeting will happen in each calendar year and that a general meeting must happen no greater than 15 months since the last general meeting. It is suggested that the ‘months’ should be dispensed with, and the ‘years’ (as is the current convention) be adopted.
- The term of office. Under current convention, the WSF Officers term is through 2 AGMs (or 2 years, as defined above); and not 18 months as described currently in article 29). It is recommended that the term of office be 3 years. In an Association that meets as infrequently as the WSF, it is understandable that the Officer is only learning the scope of the Association business and their personal roles and responsibilities in two years. Thus, a 3-year term would allow all officers to acclimatize to the Association and their role, and accomplish some tasks within their mandate. Most NOCs, IFs and Regional Federations operate under the 4-year term of office (e.g. the Panamerican Squash Federation and the Canadian Olympic Committee has 4 year terms). It is anticipated that with greater continuity of the Management Committee, the capacity of the WSF will be enhanced.

AGM Discussion

There was much discussion. Comments were raised that many International Federations in fact had terms of office of four years. In this case, only two terms would apply. While there seemed to be agreement that terms of two years may be too short, Canada decided to withdraw the Motion to more carefully consider the feedback and look at the total strategy including term length, number of terms and benchmark vs. other International Federations.

Motion withdrawn

Action: Squash Canada

Amend Article 63 to read (should Motion b1 be approved)

“Subject to Article 34 (e) the President shall vacate his/her office after serving a maximum of three consecutive terms of office as set out in Article 29 above”.

AND

Amend Article 64 to read:

“Subject to Article 34(e) a Vice-President shall vacate his/her office after serving a maximum of three consecutive terms of office as set out in Article 29 above.”

Rationale:

Currently, Article 63 and 64 stipulate 3 terms of office, based on the 18-month period of service contained in Article 29. However, if the terms of office are 3 ‘years’, then it is proposed that the President or VP would serve a maximum of 9 years in that role (as opposed to the current maximum of 6 years).

AGM Discussion

Amendments to articles 63 and 64 were not considered as motion b1 was withdrawn.

Motion withdrawn

b2) Amend Article 34 j) to read:

“Once elected, the President/Vice-Presidents of the WSF must resign with immediate effect from the Presidency/Chairmanship, if held, of either or both of Regional Squash Federations and National Squash Federations”.

Rationale:

Currently, the article stipulates that the WSF President must resign the Presidency of Regional and National Presidencies (if held) while the Vice-Presidents must resign only from the Presidency of a Regional Federation. This appears inconsistent. The role of the President of any Federation is to represent that Federation. To hold any Presidencies at any other level would appear to place the incumbent in a position of conflict of interest. It is recommended that the same guidelines govern both the President and Vice-Presidents of the WSF; and that is that they hold their respective positions unencumbered from representation at other levels.

AGM Discussion

Netherlands raised the issue of whether the principle needed to be extended to CEOs. The Motion was proposed by Canada and seconded by Australia. As opinion was divided, the Chairman ruled that a secret ballot be held. The Motion did not achieve the ¾ majority required.

Motion not carried

9. MOTIONS TO CREATE AND AMEND RULES GOVERNING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

None submitted.

10. MOTIONS TO AMEND THE RULES OF SQUASH

a) Motion Doubles (ManCom) – shown as in Agenda (see AGM Debate)

COURT SIZE CHANGE

Amend Appendix 2 (‘The Dimensions of Doubles Court’) of the Rules of Squash

Increase the standard width of the Doubles court from 7,620 mm to 8,420 mm, while leaving the 7,620 mm width as an alternative.

Rationale:

Following the Commonwealth Games Melbourne 2006, it became clear that the Doubles discipline required an overhaul if it is to be successful at elite level. Some matches had lasted too long (up to 150 min) and rallies often resulted in lets; this made the event unattractive to athletes and spectators alike. Squash New Zealand set up a Task Force to identify changes in the rules that would address these issues. Widening the court to provide more room and angles to play winning shots was a key hypothesis and initial trials identified 0.8 metres as the ideal increment. This finding was corroborated by Squash Australia that tested the new width in the 2007 Australian Doubles Championships in July. Squash Australia also tested a number of rule changes and interpretations designed to complement the wider court, encourage more positive and exciting play and reduce the length of matches.

The vast majority of Doubles courts around the world have “moveable wall” technology and the new width can be accommodated with ease. This allows implementation at tournament level, particularly for World Doubles and Commonwealth Games and other tournaments of this stature, as well as for recreational purposes. We expect some players to continue enjoying Doubles in a Singles court when a purpose-built Doubles court is not accessible, or on the existing Doubles court where widening is not possible.

RULE CHANGES

Amend Rule 1 (The Game) and elsewhere as appropriate

Change terminology from “sides” to “teams” to designate two partners.

Amend Rule 2.2 (Scoring)

- PARS to nine will be the standard and PARS to 15 the alternative
- Remove the setting requirement, thus making it “sudden death” at 8-8

Explanation: This significantly shortens the game, and increases “excitement” if the game goes to “sudden death”

Amend Rule 4.1 and 4.2 (Service)

Alternate serve and replace “side out” terminology with “hand out”

Explanation: The nominated first server from each Team serves first, serving from alternate boxes until a rally is lost. Marker calls "Hand-out" and then the nominated first server from the other Team serves. When that Team loses a rally the second server from the opposing Team serves, and so on. This aligns Doubles terminology with Singles.

Amend Rule 9 (Ball Hitting an Opponent)

To encourage greater safety, a conduct penalty must be awarded against the striker if the striker hits an opponent with the ball and the referee decides the striker’s action is dangerous.

Amend Rule 13.1.3 (Distraction)

Allow for Off-court distraction as in Singles.

Amend Rule 16.1 (Bleeding)

To provide “a maximum of 30 minutes” instead of “such time as is reasonable and necessary” to stop bleeding and cover/change any bloodstained clothes.

Amend Guideline G6 (Appendix 1, Interference)

- If an opponent makes any reasonable effort to avoid interference, include Stroke provision where:

The outgoing opponent has played the ball back close to the body and then does not make a reasonable effort to avoid interference, particularly for direct access to the ball and preventing a reasonable swing; or

The outgoing opponent has played the ball close to the partner's body and the partner does not make any effort to avoid interference.

- If the striker refrains from hitting the ball owing to a reasonable fear of injuring an opponent, include provisions for:

Let if the outgoing opponent has played the ball back close to the body and there is a reasonable effort to clear, or Stroke if there is no reasonable effort to clear; or

Let if the outgoing opponent has played the ball back close to the partner's body and there is any effort to clear, or Stroke if there is no effort to clear.

Explanation:

In order to encourage more positive play and reduce the number of rallies resulting in lets, a greater obligation to clear is imposed on strikers who hit the ball back close to themselves (as opposed to close to their partner) such that strokes apply as detailed above.

There is also a strengthening in interpretation of the requirement to make a reasonable effort to avoid interference where a player has sufficient time and space to do so on the wider court, with again a stroke being the possible outcome.

These changes make the Doubles interpretations more similar to Singles interpretations than currently.

It is also important to note that interpretation of these changes should not encourage players to expect to be awarded strokes, in situations where they are able to play on, albeit after encountering some degree of interference. It is considered that part of the excitement of the Doubles game comes from players who choose to play through interference rather than stopping, and this should continue to be encouraged positively.

AGM Discussion

ManCom acknowledged that the Motion had been conceived with only elite athletes in mind and therefore recommended that the court width change be an alternative rather than the norm and apply to elite players only. This would be achieved by including a note to the Dimensions section of Appendix 2 in the Specifications for Courts, Rackets and Balls titled "Description and Dimensions of a Doubles Court". This "note" approach had been used to warn court-constructors "where events involve professional players the height above floor and top of the board (tin) may be reduced from 480mm to 430mm".

The proposal therefore was for the note to read "where events involve professional players, the width of court between playing surfaces may be expanded from 7,620mm to 8,420mm". This wording along with all the other amendments shown above was proposed by ManCom as a block Motion and seconded by Australia. Some members mentioned that it made more sense to reference "WSF events" rather than "professional players". Therefore a revised wording was proposed as follows:

"For WSF-recognised World and Regional events, the width of court between playing surfaces may be expanded from 7,620mm to 8,420mm". This wording along with all the other amendments shown above was proposed by ManCom and seconded by New Zealand. A show of hands was conducted for each element (court width and other amendments). In both cases, a clear $\frac{3}{4}$ majority was achieved and therefore the Motion was carried.

While the Chief Executive commented that the new rules for WSF events would become effective immediately after the AGM, it is acknowledged that some events under the umbrella of WSF Regional Federations may have already planned a Doubles competition with standard Doubles courts so ManCom will confirm if the new rules apply or not on a "case-by-case-basis".

Motion carried by majority

11. WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Chief Executive updated members on the World Championships that were available for bidding and mentioned that ManCom would be considering the expressions of interest and tenders received at the Conference the previous day.

Year	Team Men	Team Women	Open Women	Open Men	World Cup	Doubles	Junior Men	Junior Women	Masters
2007	India	-----	Spain	Bermuda	-----	-----	-----	Hong Kong	-----
2008	-----	Egypt	England	England	Available (*)	India	Switzerland	-----	New Zealand
2009	Available	-----	Available	Kuwait		-----	-----	India	-----
2010	-----	Available	Available	Saudi Arabia	Available	Available	Available	-----	Available
2011	Available	-----	Available	Available		-----	-----	Available	-----

(*) or 2009 – in which case, the 2010 edition moves to 2011 as it is envisioned as a biennial event

For the record, at the Conference tenders were received for the following events:

- World Men's Team Championship 2009 Denmark
- World Masters 2010 Germany

In addition, the following expressions of interest were recorded:

- World Masters 2012 Argentina (through G. Mieras)
- "A World event in Jan/Feb/Mar 2010" India (test-event for Delhi 2010)

Netherlands queried whether the AGM would not vote to decide on the tenders. ManCom responded that the award of World Championships for events that are less than four years away would continue to be handled by ManCom as stipulated in the Articles. The Chief Executive encouraged members to consider bidding in the future.

12. GENERAL BUSINESS

a) To receive the Forward Plan of the WSF for 2007/2008

Championships Committee.

Netherlands queried on the status of the Women's World Open beyond 2008. ManCom responded that the event was not allocated beyond 2008 and that WSF was in discussions with WISPA.

Development & Coaching Committee.

South Africa mentioned that development issues of emerging/developing nations were not being taken care of. As an example, he said that the WSF CEO Conference had not been of any benefit to Africa, as nations could not afford sending delegates. ManCom acknowledged the feedback.

Netherlands queried which Committee promoted the WSF Conferences. The Chief Executive responded that it was a joint effort by the Committee responsible for the event, the Host and WSF Head Office.

Referees, Rules & Disciplinary Committee.

Netherlands asked whether the number of events at which assessments are to be conducted should be raised from 12 as 15 were achieved in the previous period. The Chief Executive proposed to discuss this further with the Director of the Committee.

Action: Referees & Rules Committee

Netherlands queried the requirement that assessors come from other regions to assess aspiring World/International referees. The Chief Executive stated that ExCo had agreed at its 2007 meeting to remove this requirement.

Netherlands queried when the final elements of the CBTA would be available and the Chief Executive responded that the CBTA Working Group had set a new deadline of April 2008.

Action: CBTA Working Group

The President of ASF mentioned that it was very difficult to organise assessments in Asia and that this needed to be addressed. ManCom acknowledged the comment.

Action: Referees & Rules Committee/ManCom

Olympics & Major Games

The President of FPS mentioned that it was important not to change the composition of ManCom in 2008 as continuity was critical up to at least the 2009 IOC Session given our Olympic aspirations. Scotland suggested that ManCom is a team including the Chief Executive and that in this spirit continuity could be achieved.

The proposal to receive the Forward Plan 2007/2008 was made by Barbados and seconded by Austria.

The Forward Plan was approved unanimously

b) To receive reports from WSF Regional Vice-Presidents

The Reports had been circulated prior to the meeting and were duly received.

Additional comments:

Africa – The SFA President thanked the WSF for awarding Kenya a grant from the Development Fund and requested that WSF give priority to helping fund Regional Championships, send coaches to train local coaches and other development activities.

Asia – The ASF President highlighted the success of the Doha 2006 Asian Games, the lobbying work re: Guangzhou 2010 and the need to identify a suitable Test Event for Delhi 2010.

Europe – The ESF President thanked Chris Stahl for the excellent job he did in leading ESF up to 2007 and all delegates received this with a round of applause. Encouraging news was received in terms of the growth of the Junior Circuit. In addition, he acknowledged that ESF must acquire expertise in marketing and sponsorship.

Oceania – The OSF President provided a brief summary of the Report and highlighted the Regional Championships played under the umbrella of the South Pacific Games Samoa 2007. In future, this event will be called “Pacific Games and Pacific Mini Games”. Members were encouraged to promote the World Masters Christchurch 2008.

Pan America – Linda MacPhail highlighted the success of the Rio 2007 Pan American Games with the four gold medals going to four different nations, including first-ever gold for Colombia and Mexico.

13. WSF FINANCE

a) ADOPTION OF THE AUDITED ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR TO 30th JUNE 2007

Netherlands queried whether all nations voting at the AGM were fully paid up and the Chief Executive confirmed.

Adoption of the Accounts was proposed by Australia and seconded by Ireland.

Accounts Adopted - Unanimously

b) TO AUTHORISE THE OFFICERS TO APPOINT AND FIX THE REMUNERATION OF THE AUDITORS.

Authorisation for the Officers to appoint and fix the remuneration of the auditors was proposed by Barbados and seconded by New Zealand.

Authorised - Unanimously

c) TO RECEIVE THE BUDGET FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1st JULY 2007 to 30th JUNE 2008

Scotland asked whether the higher investment in the Marketing & Media Committee vs. 2006/2007 was a reflection of the “re-launch” initiative. The Chief Executive confirmed this.

The proposal to receive the Budget for 2007/2008 was made by Ireland and seconded by Barbados.

Budget approved unanimously

14. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

None.

15. OTHER WSF NEWS

The Chief Executive informed the members that the negotiating phase with Dunlop to extend the Agreement as “Official Ball of the WSF (and the Regional Federations)” for the period 2008-2012 had concluded successfully and read a statement by Toby Marcham (Indoor Sports Group Marketing Manager, Dunlop Slazenger International). He requested that all Regional Federations sign-off the corresponding contracts as soon as possible to formally announce the agreement. In addition, he encouraged all members to support all upcoming World Championships and Major Games.

Action: ExCo/CL

16. HOST PLAQUE PRESENTATION

The President thanked the Bermuda Squash Racquets Association for hosting the 37th WSF Conference & AGM in Bermuda alongside the Men’s World Open and presented the President, David Gibbons, with a plaque to commemorate the occasion. A round of applause ensued.

17. FUTURE MEETINGS

The President reported that the 38th WSF AGM & Conference would be held in Manchester, England, from 16 – 18 October 2008. Scotland expressed the concern that these dates will cause a problem for delegates wishing to attend the AGM and play in the World Masters 2008 in New Zealand and asked ManCom and England Squash to look into this.

The President closed the meeting by thanking everyone present for their support to the WSF and all Officers and WSF Staff for their support and assistance. The meeting started at 09:15 and finished at 12:30 hours.

