

Open Letter to Croquet players in Western Australia

Today Saturday September 26th the West Australian Croquet Association held its Annual General Meeting.

Included in the Agenda were a number of motions.

The Motions included a motion aimed at changing tournaments, introducing conditions such as the Match Committee allocating sufficient days to play the number of games generated by entries, a motion to reduce the amount to be claimed for travelling to no more than 30 cents per kilometre as well as two other motions one of which, motion number 6 was withdrawn by the proposing Club as it contained an error of fact .

With unanimous Management Committee support, I had indicated I would rule motions 4-6 out of order, however the withdrawal of number 6 made it unnecessary to rule on this motion.

A motion of dissent to the ruling was proposed by a Club delegate and following discussion the motion of dissent was lost. However 7 Clubs voted in favour of the motion

As a result of this action a Club delegate left the meeting

After the meeting I had some discussion with a Club President who expressed concern that Clubs would not be able to have input into issues of concern.

This letter is in response to the concerns that he raised.

There are a number of points I would like to make:

- The Management Committee is elected from persons nominating for positions by delegates appointed by the Clubs, in other words the Clubs put the Management Committee in place.
- The business of the Management Committee is to manage the business of the Association.
- While input into Management issues is more than welcome, the Constitution provides an avenue for such input via the appropriate sub committees, such committees being the persons who should consider matters pertinent to their portfolio.
Recently the Referees Sub-Committee had a difference of opinion with the Management Committee over a matter that concerned the cost of obtaining refereeing qualifications. The Management Committee looked at the submission and amended the fees as requested.
- WACA Management Committee members give their time freely and consider matters involving the business and conduct of the association as worthy of serious consideration, however, there is a need for member Clubs to look at proposals they intend to bring forward and consider whether they are of genuine value to the sport. Typically any motion may involve Committee members in up to 4 hours of their time as well as phone calls and emails.
- Lack of preparation by the Management Committee may result in a motion that is poorly understood or obscure being approved by the AGM To the detriment of croquet

- Issues that rightfully should be before the AGM , those issues relating to direction and policy must and will be before that forum.

Ian Tarling
President
September 27 2009.

Vice President's Comment

At the time of the procedural dissent motion, I as Secretary of the Association was temporarily in the Chair. In the event the motion was defeated by 14 votes to 7.

However, had the vote gone the other way, I would have been faced with a somewhat difficult constitutional situation and would certainly not have felt able to allow the President's "out of order" ruling to be overturned,

As to where we would have gone from there is speculation and fortunately there was no need to address that issue at the time. However, regardless of any views on the merits or otherwise of the original substantive motion and whilst I recognise the concerns being expressed by the movers and others, the Constitution of the Association is absolutely clear.

"the interpretation of clauses of this Constitution shall be determined by the Chairman in Council Meeting or in any committee having regard to the Act itself."

The President who we have entrusted and appointed to make such decisions had ruled the motion out of order on constitutional grounds. No argument was or in my view could be put forward to say that this was inconsistent with the Associations Act.

Similar situations might well arise in future and frustrated "no voters" and other Council members need to recognise that displays of emotion will not help, only constitutional change as prescribed in Section 21 of the Constitution will if adequately supported by special resolution in general meeting change this situation.

There are reasons why many Associations have the same rule that we have. There are defined responsibilities dictating why Chairmen can not ignore rules, even if a substantial number of meeting attendees are not aware of these rules or find them inconvenient in a particular circumstance.

Brian Hadley

Vice President.27/09/09