

Report of the Tournament Regulations review group – Addendum

1. This report supplements the main report of the review group, and deals with the two outstanding matters.

Grade adjustments for seeding

2. On grade adjustments for the purposes of seeding, the group unanimously agreed that there should continue to be no adjustments made at present, but that this should be reviewed at the same time as grade adjustments for the purposes of allocation once the requested statistical analysis of the impact of breaks in play and small quantities of play has been completed. The Executive is asked to approve this recommendation. [Post-meeting note: approved.]

Allocation for Grade 1 Championships

3. The group agreed that the objective for Grade 1 Championships should be the strongest entry but was not unanimous on the best way to achieve that objective. The option which attracted the greatest degree of consensus was for allocation to be by the highest Dynamic Grade (“**DG**”) achieved in the last 12 months with a qualification of 10 games (for GC) or 5 games (for AC) played in the last 12 months (“**12mMaxDG**”), plus two places (one pair for Doubles) selected by the relevant Selection Committee without any minimum game requirement, to deal with hard but deserving cases (Option 5 below).
4. The option which attracted the second greatest degree of consensus was for allocation to be by the highest DG achieved in the last 12 months with a qualification of EITHER 10/5 games played in the last 12 months OR 30/15 games in the current and 3 preceding calendar years. If no games had been played in the last 12 months, the current DG would be used. (Option 7 below). This option was proposed in order to maintain a requirement to demonstrate some commitment to the relevant code, without necessarily requiring a minimum number of games to have been played in the 12 months immediately preceding allocation.
5. Both these options acknowledge the existence of a belief held by some that players who demonstrate commitment to tournament play in a particular code should have preferential treatment when entering Croquet England’s premier events. The Executive is asked to consider whether this treatment is appropriate for those events, as opposed to events in general. **The Executive is asked to choose which option to adopt. [Post-meeting note: Option 7 approved with the modification that there should also be one selection place for singles without a minimum game requirement, as well as two selection places (one pair) for doubles.]**
6. It was agreed that the chosen option should apply to both the AC and GC Open Singles and Doubles, but that other Grade 1 Championships should continue to be allocated by

highest current DG¹, like Grade 2 Championships, and **the Executive is asked to approve this recommendation.** [Post-meeting note: approved.]

7. Details of the options considered, and their advantages and disadvantages, are set out below.

1. Highest Current Dynamic Grade

8. This is the current allocation method for all Championships other than the GC Opens, and will remain so for all Grade 2 and Grade 3 Championships. It is also widely used for other events, particularly GC level play events of all standards and AC open events.
9. Using this method for all Championships, including the Opens, would have the benefit of simplicity and familiarity to players. It also uses the default ranking system which is most familiar to players. More substantively, it represents the best guess of most recent playing strength, and so might be thought to promote the strongest field.
10. However, it has a number of drawbacks.
 - a. 'Most recent' playing strength is not necessarily particularly recent. If a player stops playing, their DG is frozen. If they seek to return, even decades after playing their last ranked game, their historic DG will be used for allocation purposes. While GC data indicates that just over 20% of players improve after a break of 5 years or more, as might be expected nearly 80% get worse. There is therefore the risk that a returning player might be allocated a place at the expense of a currently active player and yet be considerably weaker than the currently active player.
 - b. Even without a long break in play, grades, and form, are volatile, yet this method looks only at the grade at one particular date.
 - c. As a result, there is also the risk that a player who has achieved a high DG could have an incentive not to play more games and risk losing them, in order to protect that DG. It is hard to tell if this risk is a real one. It does not seem to discourage play at levels where 12mMaxDG is not used. Some suggest that the reason some players do not play in consolation events is to protect their DG but there could be other reasons such as pressure of work, desire to get back to family, tiredness, not feeling well or simply wanting to get home earlier or even not enjoying playing badly. It could however be a particular risk for a returning player, who might avoid playing other events prior to the Allocation Date in order to ensure that their historic DG was used for allocation to the Opens.
11. Nonetheless, were it not strongly opposed by a significant number of top level GC players, this would be the preferred option for three members of the group (KA, BH, GH) on the basis that the evidence of the past suggests that the risk of players seeking to enter the Opens when their current playing strength will not make them competitive is low, and the disadvantages of the other methods are greater.
12. Of the 11 known instances where a player who had not played at least 10 games in the last 12 months successfully entered either the GC Open Singles or Doubles

¹ It was felt undesirable to have too many events with a minimum game requirement, since it could be too limiting for players seeking to achieve that requirement for the premier events.

Championship or the GC World Championship, in 10 they qualified for the knockout and in 4 they won the event. Further details are in Appendix 1. While it is possible that the player with the next highest 12mMaxDG, had there been one², would have done better, it seems unlikely in circumstances where no instances of a player ranked bottom of a block qualifying for the knockout.

13. In addition, the data for the first 20 games back of the 56 players who have played at least 20 games after a break of at least 5 years in GC indicates that most returning players choose to play events where the standard is lower than that of their historic grade, at least where their playing strength has declined:
 - a. The average difference between the Average Opponent Grade (AOG) for the first 20 games back and their own historic grade was -170 (i.e. the AOG was on average 170 points lower) for the 43 players whose Adjusted Performance Grade (APG) was lower than their historic grade (i.e. who got worse) but +148 (i.e. the AOG was higher) for the 13 players whose APG was higher than their historic grade (i.e. who improved).
 - b. Only 8 of the 43 players who got worse had an AOG higher than their own historic grade, and in only 4 of those cases was it more than 100 points higher than their own historic grade. A further 8 had an AOG up to 100 points lower than their own historic grade, and 27 had an AOG over 100 points lower.
 - c. For the 13 players who improved, there is a more even spread, with 4 having an AOG more than 100 points lower than their own historic grade; 3 having an AOG less than 100 points lower; 2 having an AOG less than 100 points higher; and 4 having an AOG more than 100 points higher.
 - d. This all suggests a generally good level of awareness of the appropriate events to enter on returning.
14. It would be the least favoured option for the other two members of the group (RB, CR), principally because of the risk in paragraph 10a, and in addition on the basis that if a player has not played recently, there is no evidence on which their current playing strength can be assessed, and some consider that players wishing to enter the premier Croquet England events should show some recent commitment to the relevant code.

2. Highest current dynamic grade adjusted for lack of recent play

15. Given the current lack of statistics on the impact of lack of, or little, recent play, and the forthcoming project to address this, this option was not seriously considered. It is recommended that it be reconsidered once the statistical data is available.

3. Highest grade held in the last 12 months

16. This option would resolve the problems identified in paragraphs 10b and c above. By looking at the highest grade held in the last 12 months, the prospects of achieving the strongest field are arguably increased on the basis that players who have recently

² In World Championships there is no minimum game requirement given the existence of Member Places; some cases the event was undersubscribed; in one or two cases there was a mistake in allocation through ignorance that there was a minimum game requirement.

reached a high level are more likely to be able to return to it than those who have not reached it.

17. There would be a residual risk that a returning player might avoid playing in other events prior to the Allocation Date, since if they lost all their games, their highest DG would be the DG after losing the first, which would be slightly lower than their historic DG, but this risk seems very small and would be countered by the benefit of practice before the event.
18. It does not resolve the issue identified in paragraph 10a, since if a player had played no ranked games in the last 12 months, their historic DG would need to be used.
19. As a result, this method is more complex than Option 1, since two different ranking lists would need to be consulted: the 12mMaxDG ranking list (with the number of games changed to 0) for all players who had played at least 1 game in the last 12 months; and the default ranking list (with the number of games changed to 0) for any who had not. This is because the 12mMaxDG ranking list shows a grade of 0 for players who have not played in the last 12 months.
20. It is also less familiar to players as a whole, although probably not to most players already at the top level. That said, there is potential benefit to getting prospective players in World Championships used to the concept.
21. Apart from the lesser simplicity and the returning player issue, the major potential drawback of this option is that even for currently active players, the form indicated by the grade used for allocation could be the form from 14 months before the event (the 12 month period looked at, plus 2 months between the Allocation Date and the event). The highest DG from the last 12 months could be 200+ points higher than current DG for a very active player with a run of poor results.
22. This could sometimes promote allocation to a player who is likely to do better in the event, and sometimes promote allocation to a player who is likely to do worse. In many cases, it seems likely that a player who has played at a high level in the recent past is more likely to be able to return to it than a player who hasn't reached that level at all in the recent past. For example, a player with a 12mMaxDG of 2350 and a current DG of 2200 is likely to perform better than a player who has only just reached 2201, but not necessarily likely to perform better than a player who has recently reached 2349. Those who did not favour this method therefore question whether it will reliably promote a stronger field.
23. A further, comparatively minor, advantage of this method is that it disadvantages overseas players who may be out of season on the allocation date to a lesser extent. Under Option 1, domestic players who see their current DG doesn't look high enough to get in can play more just before allocation to try to increase it; overseas players who are out of season can't. Under this Option, this will only work for domestic players whose current DG is close (or equal) to their 12mMaxDG.
24. Principally because of the continued risk of a returning player being allocated a place at the expense of a currently active player and yet being considerably weaker than the currently active player, this was the second least favoured option for two members of the group (RB and CR).

25. While more attractive to the other three members of the group, again on the basis that this risk was less likely to materialise than the risks of other options, it was less attractive than Option 1 on the basis that any benefits did not justify the additional complexity.

4. Highest grade achieved in the last 12 months with a minimum qualification of 10/5 games in the last 12 months

26. This is the method currently used for allocation to the GC Opens, both singles and doubles³. Were it to be applied to AC, it is recommended that the minimum qualification be 5 games, so that in both cases it matched the 12mMaxDG default setting in the grading systems.
27. In addition to the benefits (and drawbacks) of Option 3 over Option 1, the principal advantage of this method is that it mitigates the risk of a returning player being allocated a place at the expense of a currently active player and yet being considerably weaker than the currently active player.
28. However, while it substantially mitigates that risk, it does not wholly eliminate it, since a returning player who plays and loses 10/5 or more games prior to allocation could still be allocated a place at the expense of a currently active player and yet be considerably weaker than the currently active player, since their 12mMaxDG will be their DG after the first loss.
29. In addition, given the past evidence referred to in paragraph 11, it creates a different risk, of excluding players who are likely to be stronger than the currently active player but who, for whatever reason, have not played at least 10/5 games of the relevant code in the last 12 months.
30. The reasons why a player might not have played the requisite number of games in the last 12 months could be varied, including health reasons, family or caring responsibilities, work commitments including posting overseas, financial constraints or simply choosing to focus on the other code. However, it should be noted that the Allocation Date for the Opens will never be earlier than late April with the current standard dates, and so it is open to players to achieve their 10/5 games by playing a single tournament at the beginning of the season rather than needing any play the previous season. There is a risk that a player might seek to do so, only to find they are unable to because, for example, the event is rained off or a family funeral takes priority. Against that, it is said that if a player chooses to leave it to the last minute to achieve their qualifying games, they are choosing to take that risk, and there are multiple events available before the Allocation Date.
31. It should be noted that all but one of the examples in paragraph 11 were before it was clarified that a requirement for 10 games applied to the GC Opens. This was also the case for both of the known examples where a player/pairing was not allocated a place

³ Although it has already been agreed that for all doubles events allocated by any sort of grade-based procedure, there will be 2 selection places (1 pair), principally to mitigate the risk of disability discrimination.

for want of 10 games⁴. Had it been clearly stated in the conditions, as it was in 2024, the likelihood is that most if not all of those players would have made sure they had played the requisite number of games before the Allocation Date. It is forcefully argued that a requirement to play 10/5 games in 12 months is not onerous, and can be achieved in a single 2 day tournament.

32. The same issues arise as to whether this method has better prospects of identifying the stronger player as those discussed in paragraph 22 above. An additional issue arises of very high graded players. A player with a grade of 2500+ who has not played for several years seems likely to do better than a currently active player who has never achieved a grade higher than 2200. While it is uncontroversial that it is significantly more common for a player to play worse than they used to after a break, it does not necessarily follow that they will play worse than every other entrant.
33. A further advantage of the 10 game minimum is that it encourages players to have some recent play. It is argued that players should not play in the premier event if they are not willing to prepare for it. The arguments against this being a material advantage of this Option are that it should be for players to choose how they wish to prepare for an event, which could include tournament play between the Allocation Date and the event, club matches, private practise, play in the other code, watching live stream recordings, and reading tactical literature. While these may not provide the same preparation as ranked games, which offer greater pressure to perform physically and mentally under tournament conditions, and to learn from losses, they do nonetheless aid preparation. In addition, 10/5 ranked games nearly 14 months prior to the event may be of comparatively little help for preparation.
34. A final advantage is that it mirrors the WCF approach for Ranking Places for World Championships. However, there are two significant differences, namely that:
 - a. for World Championships, allocation often takes places 6 months or more before the event, as opposed to the 2 months for a domestic championship, so the current predictive value of a player's current DG is of even less relevance than for a domestic championship;
 - b. for World Championships, there is an alternative route to getting a place without having played 10/5 games, namely through Member Places.
35. This was the preferred option of one member of the group (RB), and ranked 2nd by another (CR). However, it was ranked 4th by GH, 5th by BH and 6th by KA.

5. Highest grade achieved in the last 12 months with a minimum qualification of 10/5 games in the last 12 months, but two selection places without a minimum qualification

36. This method has most of the advantages and disadvantages of Option 4 but mitigates the risk identified in paragraph 29, of excluding strong players who are likely to do well but have not played 10/5 games in the last 12 months. Some members of the group therefore thought this was an important adjustment to Option 4 to promote the

⁴ And in one of those, one of the doubles pairing did not have a DG at all, and so would not have been allocated a place even had the standard Option 1 applied.

objective of getting the best possible standard, and to promote Croquet England's mission statement of getting more people playing more croquet.

37. It also makes the method mirror the WCF approach more closely, by providing an equivalent of Member Places.
38. The Selection Committee would be able to consider the relative strength of the returning player and the player who is next on the 12mMaxDG ranking list after those initially allocated places, and also weigh the likely impact of the preparation which the returning player has done, and consider the reasons why the player has not played more recently. In many cases, they may choose not to award any places by selection, and instead allow the places to go to the players next on the 12mMaxDG ranking list.
39. While it substantially mitigates the risk, it does not eliminate it, since it is quite plausible that three or more such strong players, or two or more pairs, might seek to enter, in particular if there has been a World Championship in the other code the previous year. While it is hoped that players would not seek to rely on getting a place this way if they could play the requisite number of games given the risk that two other players might trump them, there is a risk that they might.
40. A further advantage of selection places for doubles is that it avoids the risk of disability discrimination, but as this is a risk for any form of allocation for doubles events based on singles rankings, it has already been agreed that there will be two selection places (one pair) for all such doubles events, regardless of the form of grade-based allocation. There is a theoretical risk of disability discrimination for singles events, if disability makes it substantially harder for a player to play 10 singles games in the 12 months before allocation but the effects of the disability will have gone or reduced by the time of the event itself, but it is hard to imagine the precise situation in which this risk might materialise. Nonetheless, this option would cater for that possibility should it ever arise.
41. A significant drawback of this option is the difficult decisions the Selection Committees will have to make. Should a very strong player, who will significantly strengthen the event and who could have played the requisite number of games but could not be bothered to, be preferred to a weaker, but still strong, player for whom it was very hard or impossible to play the requisite number of games? Should there be a different result if there is a disability angle for the weaker player? How can the strength of a returning player be compared with a current player in the absence of recent evidence as to their strength, and how great a differential in likely strength should be required for the returning player to be allocated the place, to take account of the increased uncertainty? The Executive will need to approve an appropriate Selection Policy, and the Selection Committees will potentially need to make some difficult decisions of a different nature from existing selection decisions.
42. Despite that drawback, this was one of the two options which attracted the most support: it was the preferred option of one member (CR); ranked 2nd by another (RB); ranked 3rd by another, but top for doubles with an indication that a top ranking for singles to promote consistency would be acceptable (BH); and 3rd by a fourth (GH). It is also the option favoured by the GCTC without Option 4.
43. The only member opposed to this option was KA, who was opposed to any option requiring 10 games in 12 months on the basis that it puts an unnecessary barrier in the

way of players who are good enough to get in but have not, for whatever reason, met that condition.

6. Highest grade achieved in the last 12 months with a minimum qualification of 30/15 games in the current and 3 preceding calendar years

44. This option seeks to honour the desire among many top GC players for a player to be required to have played recently, while allowing more flexibility for players whose circumstances do not allow them to play every year. This option prevents entry relying on a very historic grade, but caters in particular for top level players who don't have unlimited time or resources; who play both AC and GC at England representative level; and who need to devote their limited time to one code or the other for a season in order to perform at their best. There are several current examples of players in this category, with several young players who may soon join them.
45. It rewards recent play, by basing allocation for those who have played in the last 12 months on the highest grade achieved in those 12 months, but the grade they happened to end on for players who have not played at all in the last 12 months. Meanwhile, it requires a greater level of total commitment in order to enter the event, albeit over a longer period.
46. There remains a risk that a player could be allocated a place based on an inappropriately high historic DG from 3 years ago, but by limiting the length of the break, the risk of the DG being very inappropriate is mitigated.
47. Conversely, there remains the risk that a very strong player who has not played for more than 3 years could be excluded from the event in favour of a player who is likely to be weaker.
48. There is also a risk that a rapidly developing strong newcomer could be excluded by reason of not having played 30 lifetime games. Aston Wade had only played 41 lifetime games at the Allocation Date for the GC Open Championship he won in 2021, so it is easy to envisage a similarly talented new player reaching Open Championship standard on fewer games.
49. This method is also administratively more cumbersome even than Option 3, since after generating the 12mMaxDG ranking list, the player's full record would need to be checked not only for players who had not played a single game in the last 12 months but for all players who had played fewer than 30/15 in the last 12 months, to see if they had reached that minimum requirement if games played in the preceding three calendar years were added.
50. The group discussed whether, for a player who had not played in the last 12 months (and therefore would not appear on the 12mMaxDG ranking list even if the number of games were set to 0), the grade used for allocation should be the highest DG achieved during the preceding 3 calendar years, or the most recent DG. It was agreed that it should be the most recent DG, both to reward playing in the last 12 months by limiting the right to use the highest DG to those circumstances, and to avoid the risk of the Tournament Director needing to review several hundred games to identify the highest DG in the case of a highly active player who had had a single year off.

51. It should be noted that the two selection places (one pair) for doubles would be needed in any event.

7. Highest grade achieved in the last 12 months with a minimum qualification of EITHER 10/5 games in the last 12 months OR 30/15 games in the current and 3 preceding calendar years

52. This is a refinement of Option 6, which addresses the risk of rapidly developing newcomers and also ameliorates the administrative demands of allocation, since a player who had played more than 10/5 games but fewer than 30/15 in the last 12 months (which can be seen from the 12mMaxDG ranking list) would not also have to have played 30/15 games in total at some point over the current and 3 preceding calendar years and so the separate check would be needed only for the few (if any) players who had played fewer than 10/5 games in the last 12 months.

53. All members of the group preferred it to Option 6.

54. Overall, this option commanded the second greatest degree of consensus. In the interests of accommodating the desire for a minimum game requirement, it was the favoured option of KA. It was ranked 2nd by BH for singles, or 3rd for doubles and for singles if promoting consistency; and 3rd by RB and CR.

55. The least enthusiastic member of the group was GH, on the basis that it was too complex, particularly for doubles with the additional need to have 2 selection places (1 pair) in any event. RB shared these concerns and did not feel confident of implementing it accurately himself. He considered it the 6th least favourite option rather than the 3rd favourite. In addition, GH considered that although it avoided the drawback of Option 5 of limiting the number of players who could focus on different codes in different years, it did not resolve the issue of very strong players who had not played for more than 3 years.

8. Highest grade achieved in the last 12 months with a minimum qualification of BOTH 10/5 games in the last 12 months AND 30/15 games in the current and 3 preceding calendar years

56. This is an alternative refinement of Option 6. It increases the level of commitment required to that code. No member of the group preferred it to Option 7.

Feedback from the survey

57. The survey indicated a wide variety of views, with the comments showing that many of them are strongly held yet diametrically opposed.

58. Among respondents as a whole who expressed a view: 60 favoured Option 1 above; 60 favoured Option 3; 35 favoured Option 4; 64 favoured Option 5; and 15 favoured Option 6⁵. Thus 120 respondents favoured having no minimum game qualification and 114 favoured having one. Two comments favoured Option 2.

⁵ The figures were adjusted slightly to take account of comments which pointed to a different choice, for example the 6 respondents who selected 'I don't mind' but whose comments suggested that Option 4 would be preferred to any of the others.

59. Among respondents with a GC grade of 2000 or above who expressed a view: 12 favoured Option 1; 14 favoured Option 3; 12 favoured Option 4; 12 favoured Option 5; and 3 favoured Option 6. Thus among respondents of Opens standard (the cut-off having been roughly 2050 in recent years), 26 favoured having no minimum game qualification and 27 favoured having one.
60. Respondents with a GC grade of 2000 or above typically playing 50 or more games a year formed a relatively small sample of 21 individuals. Assuming all of those are regular entrants, they represent just less than two-thirds of GC Opens players. Of those who expressed a view: 2 favoured Option 1; 3 favoured Option 3; 11 favoured Option 4; 4 favoured Option 5; and 1 favoured Option 6. Thus 5 respondents favoured having no minimum game qualification and 16 favoured having one.
61. Overall, this gave little direction to the group, except that there was least support for any divergence from a 10 game requirement among the stronger GC players who play most.

Gabrielle Higgins (Chair)

Keith Aiton (Chair of the International Committee until 12 October 2024)

Richard Bilton (Chair of the GC Tournaments Committee)

Brian Havill (Chair of the AC Tournaments Committee until 12 October 2024)

Chris Roberts (Chair of the Handicap Committee)

November 2024

Appendix

Performance of players known to have played in top class GC events without having played 10 games in the previous 12 months. This detail is included to inform assessment of whether or not having the requirement seems more likely to strengthen or weaken the event. It is worth bearing in mind that in doubles the choice of partner can affect how well a player does in an event.

1. In 2011, Mark McInerney entered the GC World Championship. He had last played a ranked singles game in October 2006, ending with a DG of 2418. There were no requirements for any particular amount of recent play. He won the World Championship and was rebased, ending with a DG of 2844.
2. In 2017, Sue Lightbody entered the GC Open Championship. She played 9 games after allocation and before the event, and had played 5 games in May 2016, ending with a DG of 2135, but had not played prior to that since playing 9 games in June 2015. The last year in which she had played 15 or more games was 2014, which under the then Tournament Regulations would have meant her DG was adjusted for allocation purposes to 2035. It is not known whether the event was undersubscribed, or whether a 10 game minimum was not applied. She came 7th in her block of 8, winning only 1 match, and did not play in the plate. 13 of the 32 players in the event won only 1 or 0 matches in their block. During the 23 games she played in the event, her grade reduced to 2085. The MaxDGs of the other players at the allocation date is not known, but the DGs are recorded as ranging from 1832 to 2752 at the end of the block stage. The DGs of those who reached the knockout are recorded as ranging from 2038 to 2729 at the end of the event.
3. In 2018, Jamie Burch entered the GC Open Singles Championship. He had played 6 ranked singles games in October 2017, ending with a DG of 2484, but had not played prior to that since June 2016. The then Tournament Director did not understand the use of MaxDG to mean that there was a requirement for 10 games in the last 12 months (which was not then stated explicitly). He won his block with 5/7 wins and the best net game record, and reached the quarter-finals (second round) of the knockout. During the 23 games he played in the event, his grade reduced to 2404. The MaxDGs of the other players at the allocation date is not known, but the DGs are recorded as ranging from 1901 to 2752 at the end of the block stage. The DGs of those who reached the knockout are recorded as ranging from 2131 to 2785 at the end of the event.
4. In 2018, Chris Clarke entered the GC Open Doubles Championship with Euan Burrige. He had last played a ranked singles game in May 2016, ending with a DG of 2662. It is believed that the event was undersubscribed, and so players without a MaxDG could gain places. They won their block with 9/9 wins but lost 2-1 in the semi-final (the first round) of the knockout.
5. In 2019, Chris Clarke entered the GC Open Doubles Championship with Jenny Clarke. He had still played no ranked singles games since 2016. It is believed that the event was undersubscribed, and so players without a MaxDG could gain places. They won the Championship. Chris also won the New Zealand GC Open Doubles Championship that year with Josh Winter.

6. In 2022, Jenny Clarke entered the GC Open Singles Championship. She had played 6 ranked singles games in January 2022, ending with a DG of 2418, but had not played prior to that since June 2019. She is predominantly based in New Zealand and the Special Conditions gave the Tournament Director to reserve up to 2 places for overseas players, which may have been used. She came third in her block, qualifying for the knockout and reached the quarter-final (second round), losing 2-1 to Reg Bamford. The MaxDGs of the other players at the allocation date is not known, but the DGs are recorded as ranging from 1823 to 2608 at the end of the block stage. The DGs of those who reached the knockout are recorded as ranging from 2208 to 2610 at the end of the event.
7. In 2022, Ben Rothman, the winner of the 2019 GC World Championship, entered the GC World Championship. He had last played a ranking game in January 2020, ending with a DG of 2570. He could not be allocated a Ranking Place (as he did not meet the then requirement to have played 10 or more games in the last 24 months) and the USA chose not to award him a Member Place. He entered the qualifying tournament and won a Qualifying Place, with his grade reducing to 2530 during the event. He came joint fourth in his block in the Championship, requiring a play off to qualify for the knockout, where he lost in the first round to Reg Bamford. His grade reduced further to 2447 during the event. The DGs of those in the knockout at the end of the event ranged from 2199 to 2682⁶.
8. In 2012 and 2013, Reg Bamford and Charles Barlow entered the GC Open Doubles Championship. In each year, Reg had a DG in excess of 2600. Charles had never played a ranked singles game. The event was undersubscribed, and so players without a DG could gain a place. They won in both years.
9. In 2022, Reg and Charles entered again, won their block and reached the semi-finals of the knockout where they lost 2-0⁷. (However, in the same year, they also played in the Rainbow Doubles in South Africa, a weaker event, and performed poorly, coming 7th in a block of 10, including losing to several weak pairs.)
10. In 2023 Reg and Charles entered again, when the event was over-subscribed. Reg had a Max DG in excess of 2700, but Charles had (and has) still never played a ranked singles game. They were not allocated a place as Charles did not have a DG at all (and would not have been allocated a place under the general Tournament Conditions, even in the absence of the special conditions for the GC Opens).
11. In 2024, Chris Clarke entered the GC Open Doubles with Ian Burr ridge and, amidst much controversy, did play. He had still played no ranked singles games since 2016. The pair reached the knockout but lost in the quarter-final (first round).

⁶ The DGs of all players, including those who did not qualify for the knockout, includes some extremely low grades, for players from developing/improving countries.

⁷ Although it does not seem to be a top class event, they also played in the Rainbow Doubles in South Africa in 2022, and performed poorly coming 7th in a block of 10 including losing to several weak pairs.

12. There is one known example of a player who sought to enter the GC Open Singles without having played 10 games in the last 12 months and did not get a place. It is not known if there are any other examples of entries to top class events by players who had not played at least 10 games in the last 12 months. Nor is it known if other strong players have been deterred from entering the GC Opens.