

## **WGMA Open Evening**

In the late afternoon of Friday 28th June WGMA invited members and friends to an open session to put names to faces and to discuss plans for the future. Hosting the gathering on behalf of WGMA were John Willmott, Jaap Quarles van Ufford, Pepe Borrell, Dave Ferguson and Adrian Stephenson. WGMA Secretary Jawed Khan was umpiring and Linda Skelton was playing for the LX Ladies.

Pepe Borrell introduced some friends from San Sebastian and there were discussions about the possibility of San Sebastian hosting a small weekend tournament following the successful visit of Thierry Dujardin's French team last year. It was agreed that smaller clubs, who would never be able to stage big festival tournaments, should be encouraged to hold invitation events. A format was suggested whereby the host club might invite teams to make a four-team tournament over two adjoining age groups lasting perhaps three days and probably over a weekend. Each team would play the other three in the group on a league basis making a total of 12 matches across the two age groups. A club with two pitches could organise the playing over two days or if there was only one pitch there would be three playing days with four games on each day.

It was emphasised that the host should decide which age groups were most appropriate and issue invitations to elected teams. Such tournaments should not be announced as available to all.

Kenji Hamanaka explained that he had stepped down from any administrative role in Japan Masters and that the contact in future should be Junichi Sekiya. The future of the Asian Cup was discussed and it was agreed that the Over 60 element which had been so successful in WGMA days was likely to disappear unless organisers were found to stimulate participation in Singapore, Malaysia and Korea, none of whom participated at Grand masters level in the 2023 Asian Cup. The previous success had been built by a network of enthusiasts which no longer existed. It was suggested that a festival event in Vancouver might be attractive to the Asian countries as well as the Australian, American and European countries participating at The Hague.

The LX Festival at Nottingham in June/July 2025 was discussed and WGMA agreed to encourage participation on a similar level to The Hague. Southern Cross had expressed concern that some of their members might prefer to take part in the SoM event attached to the European Cup in Monchengladbach but it was hoped that some SC teams would be at Nottingham. Further festival tournaments were discussed and it was hoped that something might be arranged in North America for 2026.

Adrian Stephenson  
WGMA Director