

GUIDEBOOK – WSC & WPC

A detailed guide for WPF members interested in hosting the prestigious double event

Note: These are meant to be ‘guidelines’ and not rules, unless explicitly mentioned otherwise. However, if hosts wish to explore decisions that may not follow the guidelines, they are expected to notify the board and facilitate a prior discussion up to 180 days before the event.

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1. WSC/WPC Host

- The decision on the delegation of the right to organize the World Sudoku/Puzzle Championship (WSC/WPC) is made at the WPF Congress two years in advance.
- Any member country which has been an active WPF member for at least 2 years and has fulfilled all its obligations to WPF can be a candidate for hosting the WSC/WPC.
- Candidacy notification is to be put forward 30 days prior to the WPF Congress or at the Congress itself.
- The notification must include the following:
 - Venue
 - Date (length)
 - Transportation
 - Participation fee (all types, i.e. WSC/WPC, WSC only, WPC only, guests, A teams, captains, B teams, single rooms)
 - Competition hall - size and possible number of players
 - Maximum number of representatives from each country
 - Puzzle authors
 - WPF help (puzzle authors, financial support)
- Voting on the candidates is carried out by ballot. The winner is the candidate with more than a half of the votes. Only votes casted in favor of one of the candidates are deemed valid. Abstaining from voting is not considered as a valid vote.
- In case none of the candidates receives more than a half of the votes, another round of vote takes place. The candidate(s) with the lowest number of votes received in the first round do not participate in the second round.
- The winning candidate is to set forth all the information about the location, dates, transport issues, participation fees and time schedule at the Congress which takes place 1 year prior to the actual World Championship.
- In case the winning candidate, for whatever reason, is not able to organize the World Championship or if there are any other obstacles creating risk for the organization of the World Championship, an alternate candidate is to be chosen by the WPF Board.

2. Participants rules

- One can participate in the championship as competitor (A/B team), captain, member of team delegation (WPF delegate or guest) or organiser. A team consists of 4 members.
- Only WPF members can compete at the championship
- The participation in the championship depends on national criteria and conditions. Member countries representatives` contacts can be found on the webpage of the World Puzzle Federation in the section "Members" (www.worldpuzzle.org/members)
- Any member country is to inform the organiser whether or not it is going to send its delegates to the competition no later than 180 days prior to the WSC/WPC. In case the organiser does not receive this confirmation, or the delegates waive their right to choose the representatives for the WSC/WPC, the organiser has the right to give priority to registering other applicants from that respective country.
- All participants are obliged to register in advance by completing the registration form which is to be made on a special WSC/WPC website.
- Registration of competitors may start 1 year prior and ends 30 days prior to the WSC/WPC. The organiser has the right to extend this registration period.
- The participation is subject to payment of the participation fee according to the special rules.
- The official competitor rate applies to all competitors who are part of any A and B team, competitors from countries with fewer than 4 participants, team captains, WPF board members, WPF Congress members
- The organiser has the right to set the maximum number of competitors at the WSC/WPC.
- One captain can be nominated per one team.
- The captain does not participate in the competition.
- It is allowed for any competitor to hold also the position of captain; in that case he takes into consideration that it may not be possible to carry out both positions adequately.
- Member of team delegation is an direct participant in the event.
- The number of participants is limited by hotel capacity and the size of the competition premises selected by the organiser.
- Conditions of participation for the members of delegations are set by the organiser
- In case the number of participants exceeds the limits, the organiser gives priority to equal representation of all countries.

Age Criterias for special prizes:

As defined at the WPF General Assembly in 2012, the U-18/O-50 eligibility is as follows:
The age at the end of the year must be either 18 and less or 50 and more respectively.

3. Financing

Point 1

A. Hotel – Bedrooms (single and double rooms), meals (full board + 1 opening ceremony dinner and 2 closing ceremony dinners), conference rooms (competition hall, markers room, WPF GA meeting room), equipment (projectors, screens to display puzzles during the Introduction session, to relay timings and for the purpose of the play offs, TV to display actual results, PA system, lighting).

B. Organisers - Hotel Costs - Accommodation , meals and possible reward for the volunteers.

Rough Percentage of budget for Point 1: 65-75%. The Hotel costs may be reduced by the following measures –

- a) Have a secondary hotel for accommodation nearby, which provides a cheaper option.
- b) Look for a hotel where the majority of the rooms will get taken for the event – this means you are the sole customer, which means they do not have to consider things like check-ins and check-outs of other customers beyond the event and the services around that
- c) If a hotel can provide two competition halls it may be worth exploring splitting official and unofficial solvers, this may also be cheaper on the same principle as point b.

Point 2

A. Transport – Coach hire for arrival and departure, only first and last day of each championship the transport will be provided for free from well in advance specified airports/stations. The host needs to adapt the coach schedule to the arrivals/departures of participants.

B. Rest day trip – Attractive sightseeing or program needs to be arranged for the whole day. Lunch served out or packed lunch to be provided by the hotel.

Rough Percentage of budget for Point 2: 5-7%. The transport costs may be reduced by having a hotel near the airport but that is minimal to the event and reducing hotel costs should be the priority.

Point 3

A. T-shirts and name badges – T-shirt with the championship logo to be given to all the participants and organisers. Size of the T-shirt should be specified by the participants in advance. Name badge for each participant needs to include name, country and role. The badge will be worn during the whole event.

B. Goodie Bags – every participant to receive a bag upon arrival that includes at least the name badge, T-shirt, Instruction booklet, championship schedule and the WPF Newsletter. Any other souvenirs like pencils, maps, etc. are optional.

C. Medals/Trophies/Certificates – for both championships the trophies should be prepared for the following categories – 3 top individuals, 3 top teams, 3 top Under 18, 3 top Above 50. Best newcomer or any other category can be rewarded, too.

Rough percentage of budget for Point 3: 5-7%. Of course, this can increase depending on the quality of materials, but going by past data, the range is fine for a good deliverance.

Point 4

A. Printing - Printable materials for each championship – Instruction Booklet (30-50 pages), Championship schedule (1-3 pages), Competition puzzles (cca 150 pages), Solutions (10-20 pages), Solutions for markers. The paper type should be 80 gsm (markers, pencils, pens should be tested if visible).

B. Stationery – markers to be available during the whole event, along with material like scissors, glue, staplers, a printer, etc. in case of emergencies.

C. Publicity at for/event – web page, banners, backdrops.

Rough percentage of budget for Point 4: 5-10%. This again depends on many factors. The number of rounds and the creative necessity of them impacts 4a. Whether the resources are already available or provided by the hotel can impact 4b. The level of promotion decided on by the hosts can impact 4c.

Point 5

A. Puzzle Preparation Costs - To allow for puzzle authors and other costs of puzzle verification or puzzle making (e.g. team round puzzles).

B. Income – Within the structure, the participation fee is the only form of income. However, if the hosts wish to explore avenues of income and exposure using evening events & content sales they may do so.

C. Participation Fee – the ideal limit for the participation fees are: WSC only – 300 EUR, WPC only – 400 EUR, WSC/WPC - 600 EUR. A supplement fee to be charged for single rooms and guests. Any increase needs to be approved by the WPF. The host needs to provide an option for lower participation fee (accommodation, meal and transfer excluded). The average number of participants is 200-250.

D. Sponsorship - TBD (local, international sponsors, barter) on a per-event basis

E. WPF Financial Aid – The WPF is ready to assist to the host if needed. If a potential host is falling short of an affordable bid and there are no other candidates for the year, the WPF can offer financial aid to the host that can be reviewed after the event based on expenses made. This will be decided on a per-event basis.

Rough percentage of budget for Point 5: Unknown. All of these matters need to be dealt with on a per event basis.

6. Miscellaneous costs – This could include volunteer costs, event insurance, additional lighting and other necessities for the competition hall, technological equipment, additional food and drink, additional entertainment, paying for volunteers, or reimbursing them for their transport and food, etc.

Rough percentage of budget for Point 6: 3-5%. All of these matters also need to be dealt with on a per event basis, but there is some precedence in past years to estimate it a little closer than point 5.

4. Site selection

Hotel – at least 3* hotel required

Competition hall – preferably in the hotel area, size – large enough to accommodate approx. 180-200 examination style tables or 100 double partitioned tables (sample photo below, if not owned by the hotel, may be hired from a local school), the size of the tables should be min 50x50 cm, without cloth, lighting - visit at the same season preferred and if needed extra lighting to be ensured, no noise, AC,

Meal – full board, buffet style preferred.

Refreshment – during the competition refreshments to be provided, coffee, tea, during the coffee breaks. Water to be available all the time.

Equipment – projectors, screens, TV, PA system, computers, printers, flip charts, mast for the WP flag to be ensured.

WI-FI – available for free to all the participants.

5. Time and Schedule

Date of event – the WSC/WPC can be held anytime in the year (Autumn is preferred due to lower airfares, hotels' off season and sufficient time to host the national championships).

Length of event – the length of the event is not firmly done but the proven length is 2 days for WSC and 3 days for WPC.

Schedule – any changes to the schedule should be discussed with the WPF

Recommended schedule:

Day 1 – WSC Arrival – Opening Ceremony - WSC Q&A

Day 2 – WSC – Sudoku GP Finals

Day 3 – WSC – WSC Play off – Open GA - Prize giving dinner – WPC Arrival

Day 4 – Rest Day (Sightseeing) – Members GA - WPC Q&A

Day 5 – WPC – Puzzle GP Finals

Day 6 – WPC

Day 7 – WPC Play off – Free Time (Football match) – Prize giving dinner

Day 8 – Departure

Day Trip - Attractive sightseeing or program needs to be arranged for the whole day. Lunch served out or packed lunch to be provided by the hotel. During this day also team photo session to be arranged. Photos of all the teams and all the participants to be distributed ideally during the closing ceremony.

GA Meetings – the host is asked to provide a hall for the Open GA, and a meeting room for the WPF congress (30 – 40 people) during the WSC/WPC. The detailed time schedule will be provided by the WPF director once the WSC/WPC schedule is set. The projector and screen to be available.

Q&A – at the Question and Answers session the organisers together with the puzzle authors go through the whole Instruction Booklet, explain unclear puzzles and answer players' question. The projector and screen to be available. The WPF committee and the organising team should be presented there, too.

Gala evenings – during the opening ceremony the WPF flag to be raised and at the closing ceremony to be handed over to the next WSC/WPC host.

Evening program – any funny or attractive program (games, competitions) for the players can be prepared by the host for the free evenings.

WPF Sudoku/Puzzle GP – a competition hall to be available for the GP Finals. The same equipment as for the WSC/WPC to be available, the seating plan can be kept as during the competition with 10 seats for the finalists.

6. People Requirements

Organiser

- The role of the organiser is to assure the event in the spirit of Olympic ideas, friendship, equality, respecting the fair play principles and WPF statute.
- The organiser is responsible for the regularity of the competition in favor of himself and also all competitors.
- In the rules of the competition, the organiser sets the methodology for advancing into the play-offs or the final respectively, based on the proposed competition structure, procedure applied in case equality in points occurs, etc.
- In case of unforeseeable circumstances, which affect the competition, the organiser has right to change the time schedule and competition criteria. They shall inform all captains of the teams about this and make sure all the participants are aware of it.
- The core team of organisers should be introduced at the Q&A session

Markers - it is recommended to have a sufficient number of markers (i.e. 20% of number of participants). Each solution needs to be checked at least by two people and these should always sign their checked solution.

Proctors – during the whole competition proctors should be available in the hall and at the most critical moments (distribution of puzzles and collection of solutions) extra people (markers) need to be invited to assist. A special care should be provided during the play off, the proctors should be professional and experienced, detailed training to be provided in order to avoid unnecessary mistakes.

7. Web page

Web page – The site should be launched 10 months prior to the championships

Content – organiser, schedule, location, registration fees, contact, list of participants, results, FAQ, contact, forum, logos, partners of the championships

8. Media

The organiser makes all his effort to introduce the championship to national media and provides all the materials to the WPF members so that they can advertise the event in their country. Press release to be prepared before the championship.

9. Rules of the Competition (Puzzles)

Competition Hall Rules

- Unless specifically stated for any round permitted items which may be taken into the competition hall and used are: Pens, pencils, erasers, rulers, instruction booklets (optionally annotated with notes regarding puzzle instructions and preparation notes) and blank paper. Drinks and snacks will also be allowed so long as they don't disturb other competitors.

- Each competitor must switch off his mobile telephone. Ringing and using the mobile telephone during the competition is found to be breaching the rules of the competition and shall lead to the disqualification of the competitor or his team in the particular round.

- It is strictly forbidden to use electronic devices such as music players and headphones of any type or any type of calculator. Use of such equipment may lead to the competitor being disqualified from the competition.

- Any other items brought into the hall must be left in a bag on the floor under the desk, so as not to block the aisles.

- Each competitor must sit at their pre-allocated desk to take part in individual rounds. Teams must work at their pre-allocated desks/areas for team rounds.

- Every competitor is obliged to state his name on his solving sheet (the code of his team-country in the team round). Without these data, the solving sheet can be evaluated with zero points.

- Competitors should ensure that they are at their desk ready for the start of each round. Late arrivals may not be permitted to enter the competition hall to take part in a round (at the discretion of the organisers).

- Once the signal to start a round is given competitors may open their booklet and begin solving the puzzles.

- For each round there is a particular time limit, which can be used for the solving. At the moment of end of this time limit, the competitor is obliged to finish the solving and to put away the writing instruments. Any additional writing after the limit as well as looking at the solving sheet before the competition will lead to the disqualification of the competitor or his team in the particular round.

- During each individual round competitors must remain silent, unless declaring completion of a round.
- During team rounds team members may talk amongst themselves, but should do this with respect to other teams that may be near them.
- If declaring a round complete, the competitor must close his booklet, clearly state 'finished' and raise his arm until the booklet has been collected.
- If any competitor needs to leave the competition hall prior to the end of a round, they will not be allowed to take any further part in that round.
- Once the signal to finish a round is given, competitors must immediately stop solving, close their booklet and put their pen/pencil down and be ready to hand their booklet in for marking.
- At the end of the round competitors must remain seated until all puzzle booklets have been collected.

Marking

Once a round has been fully marked booklets will be returned to team captains at a specified location. If the team captain is not available, any team member can pick up the booklets but needs to add his signature as a proof.

Results

- Partial results are being declared continuously, usually after all solutions of one part have been checked. The corrected solution sheets together with the author's solutions must be made available to all competitors. If reduction in numbers of competitors is going to happen (e.g. advancing to play-offs or just a change in the way of solving dependent on the order of resolvers), before this reduction takes place any protests or challenges must be resolved. Until such a time the competition must not continue.
- Overall results are usually declared after all partial blocks of tasks have been finished. After this starts the set time period for any potential queries or challenges. Only after this period is over and all queries have been answered and all challenges have been settled, the results may be declared as final or the preliminary results may be confirmed as final.

Protest

- In case of protest, the organiser is obliged to take it into consideration and discuss it with the captain of the particular team. If the captain does not agree with the decision, the organiser shall convene the WPF Committee.

- The captain can place a protest on behalf of his team. In case of disapproval with the organiser's decision is obliged to prepare a written statement for the WPF Committee. WPF Committee is an advisory body, which will be convened in case of disapproval with the organiser's decision regarding the protest. The Committee shall be assembled from 5 captains from different teams (apart from the team placing the protest) and the organiser as a submitter (without the right to vote). The protests shall be submitted to the Committee without stating the name and nationality of the competitor or team with the statement of the submitter and organiser. The decision of the WPF Committee is final. The WPF Committee will be established in advanced by the WPF and announced at the QA session.

Play off

- system of play off is not set, the organiser can select his own.
- the organiser may choose to have an alternative to playoffs but this must be communicated with the WPF Board at the start of the year of the Championships.
- a special care should be provided, the proctors should be professional and experienced, detailed training to be provided in order to avoid unnecessary mistakes,
- if there is a protest after or during the play off, the WPF committee decides how to proceed
- spare set of puzzles to be prepared by the organiser in case the play off needs to be run again.

Scoring and Time bonuses

Points will be awarded only for 100% correctly solved puzzles. There will be no partial credit. A time bonus should be awarded for the solution submitted before the time limit.

Puzzles

- Number of puzzles and difficulty should be carefully checked based on the feedback of the puzzle testers. The organiser should contact more testers when preparing the puzzles, ideally at least one of them should be a top 10 solver at a previous WSC/WPC respectively. Points assignment, time limit for each round, content of each part should be done by a very experienced tester.

- In case a flawed and/or objectionable task is discovered during the competition, the instruction for such a task must not be announced in any way as this would make it advantageous for those competitors who have not yet dealt with this task as opposed to those who have already spent great deal of time trying to

solve it. If the competitor discovers a flawed puzzle and enters „no solution“ he gets the points for this puzzle.

- In case of a puzzle with multiple solution any correct solution is accepted but a competitor gets points only for one solution no matter he indicates more of them.

- Colour puzzles can be used but an example should be given in order to avoid different perception of colours.

Instruction Booklet

- Instruction Booklet must be available at minimum 14 days before the championship. The organisers should enable a forum where all the questions are raised and answered. If any questions are repeated and seem to be unclear, the puzzle should be presented again at the Q&A session

- Content of the booklet – introduction, schedule, general rules, play off system, puzzle rules and examples, points assignment.

10. Composition of WSC

Round structure

This section will be updated with percentage breakdowns of a suggested WSC based on the principles outlines in the “What is a Sudoku?” report by Tom Collyer. The principles are listed below. The percentages will be added in a later edition.

What a classic sudoku “looks like”

I. The puzzle must be solved on a grid made up of an array of cells. Cells must have a finite number of well-defined edges, with each edge intersecting a maximum of one other cell. Within the grid there must be at least two distinct types of subdivisions of cells.

II. At least one type of the subdivisions should behave like “Rows and Columns”:

A. Each such subdivision must be a one-dimensional group of cells, made up of a chain of consecutive pairs of cells sharing at least one edge. Each “Row and Column” must have a clear sense of direction.

B. Any two such subdivisions must have a minimal overlap of cells.

III. At least one type of the subdivisions should behave like “Regions”:

A. Each such subdivision must be a clearly marked group of cells.

B. Substantially all such subdivisions must have a clear sense of being contiguous.

C. Substantially all such subdivisions must not substantially overlap with any of the “Row and Column” type subdivisions.

IV. Substantially all cells in the grid must belong to:

A. At least two different subdivisions of the “Rows and Columns” type, with each having a clear sense of independent and divergent direction.

B. At least one subdivision of the “Regions” type.

V. The puzzle must be solved so that each cell contains a symbol from a set S of N different symbols, with exactly one symbol placed per cell.

VI. When the puzzle is solved, each of the “Rows and Columns” type and “Regions” type of subdivisions must contain:

A. Substantially all of the N different symbols placed within their constituent cells.

B. Substantially no repeats of any of the N different symbols placed within their constituent cells.

What a classic sudoku “solves like”

VII. There must be exactly one way to place the symbols in the set S so that the solution of the puzzle satisfies Principle VI, together with any additionally defined constraints on the placement of symbols.

VIII. Additional constraints must be related to fundamental properties of the symbols, and must not introduce solving techniques necessary to solve the puzzle that are fundamentally equivalent to techniques that do not involve the placement of symbols.

For example:

A. Path/loop drawing.

B. Placement of other objects, including symbols other than those contained in the set S or combinations/strings/words of symbols contained in the set S.

C. Shading.

D. Region Division.

E. Physical manipulation of the grid.

IX. Any additional constraints should be well-defined, stated simply and clearly and restricted in scope to one of:

A. Clearly marked additional decorations or regions in the grid.

B. Individual “Rows and Columns” or “Regions” subdivisions.

C. Locally related cells (e.g. adjacent, knight’s step).

D. Clearly marked individual cells.

X. Principle VI gives rise to classic sudoku solving techniques allowing the placement of symbols using the “Rows and Columns” and “Regions” types of subdivision. Where additional constraints introduce further solving techniques, they should:

A. Be complementary to classic sudoku solving techniques.

B. Not be entirely separate from classic sudoku solving techniques.

11. Composition of WPC

Round structure

- All material included in this section is in the form of suggestions and guidelines as the WPF does not want to heavily impact creativity and innovation of the organizer. However, we suggest that the organizers include a page explaining the composition of ‘their’ WPC in relevance to the below points, along with their official web page release. This is mainly so that participants have a good idea of what to expect from the hosts and can make an informed decision on attending the Championships.
- There must be at least one round entirely devoted to Classic Puzzles. Classic puzzles can be defined as puzzles appearing frequently in past WPCs and in the WPF Puzzle Grand Prix, and not having more popular simpler iterations of their rules.
- Each round can have a duration varying from 20 to 120 minutes. It is advisable not to have consecutive lengthy rounds unless they are the last round of day 1/day 2 and the first round of day 2/day 3.

WPC-style puzzles

- The primary goal of the WPC is to be a neutral puzzle event that is not restrictive against any solver. To this end, all puzzles in the WPC must be culture neutral, and should not require extensive academic knowledge.
- It is advisable to have some puzzles, it can be a small percentage, in the Championship which are not the standard grid-based constraint satisfaction puzzles.

Borderline puzzles

Since the guidelines and definitions are subjective it is always possible to have puzzles where organizers are unsure whether they fall within the guidelines or not. In general it is advised that such puzzles only take up a small percentage of the WPC. Also, it is advised to keep such puzzles as part of a larger round where there are other options, and not in a single-puzzle round where the solver’s only option is to tackle such a puzzle.

Reason for guidelines

As mentioned above, the WPF does not wish to impact the creative input for a WPC. However it is also important to use the WPC as a fair and just international competition to choose the world’s best Puzzle solver, for the most part unimpacted by their cultural experiences or academic background. This is important for legitimacy of the event and the host’s cooperation is highly appreciated.

12. Amendments

Amendments in updated version on 29/12/2020:

1. Page 1 – Index page added, along with summary line and important note.
2. Page 3 – Special Age Category prize criteria definition added.
3. Page 4-6 – Many points expanded, along with inclusions of budgeting considerations based on past data.
4. Page 8 – Minor changes through the page.
5. Page 14 – In first paragraph of 'Puzzles' section, changed "the top 10 solver" to "a top 10 solver at a previous WSC/WPC respectively".
6. Page 16-17 – Added Composition of WSC.
7. Page 18 – Added Composition of WPC.
8. Page 19 – Added a section for Amendments to past version(s).