



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Mosconi Cup 2010
Date:	12 August 2009
Reporting Officer:	Marie-Thérèse McGivern, Director of Development ext. 3470
Contact Officer:	Tim Husbands, Head of City Events and Venues ext. 1400

Relevant Background Information

The Mosconi Cup is an annual nine-ball pool tournament contested between two five man teams representing Europe and the USA since 1994. In the past, the tournament has taken place in cities such as London, Rotterdam, Malta and Las Vegas. The tournament is played out over 4 days in a series of matches promoted by Matchroom Sports Ltd in Essex, England and broadcast live by Sky Sports in the UK.

Matchroom Sports is currently seeking bids to host the 17th Mosconi Cup in 2010. The Event Manager of Matchroom Sports met recently with Belfast City Council in April 2009, where it was considered feasible for Belfast to bid to host this event in December 2010.

The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Members to submit a bid to bring the Mosconi Cup to Belfast in December 2010. In addition, agreement to financially support the event is requested, should the bid be successful.

Matchroom Sports estimate that a host city would need to contribute approximately £100,000 to host the event, with the following key elements being covered, including:

- venue hire
- seating
- players accommodation
- PR and marketing opportunities

Belfast City Council can provide significant in-kind support to the PR and Marketing element of the event and as per the Northern Ireland Trophy, a Council venue, the Ulster Hall, has been earmarked for hosting the event.

Key Issues

Identifiable Benefits

The identifiable benefits for staging the 17th Mosconi Cup is to present Belfast as a city capable of hosting major sports events and as a key tourism destination. If successful the event will indicate that Belfast has the capacity to host a world class event. Other key benefits to Belfast would include:

- World-wide television exposure via Sky UK and DSF Germany
- Additional tourism related activity via organisers and supporters
- Bringing a world class sports event to the newly refurbished Ulster Hall
- Global on set (TV) signage for Belfast City Council, with additional Council branding at press conferences/venue locations/players kit etc
- Positive coverage of Belfast portrayed through a multitude of publications and websites across the world

Resource Implications

The cost of staging international sports events requires significant investment. In this case the estimated expenditure to successfully host the Mosconi Cup is approximately £100,000.

Based on previous experience, it would be the intention to offer the following as part of the city's bid:

- Ulster Hall as the venue, plus auxiliary rooms, and additional technical support services (representing an internal recharge within the department – value £30,000)
- Additional seating at the venue (approximately £10,000)
- Accommodation for the Matchroom team and competing teams of players (approximately £15,000)
- PR and Marketing of the event via existing channels, a portion of which will be at no cost to Belfast - £15,000
- Further support of approximately £30,000 to host the project, should this be required (additional marketing, hospitality, logistical costs)

In summary, if the bid is successful, Belfast City Council could be asked to allocate up to a maximum value of £100,000 to the hosting of the Mosconi Cup 2010; although up to £40,000 of this would be internal recharging within the department. The level of funding required is currently within the City Events Unit budget, a proportion of which would have having been previously allocated to the NI Snooker Trophy, and which will not take place in 2010 due to the unavailability of a suitable venue for the dates required.

Officers will also pursue other funding opportunities, both commercially and within the public sector, in an effort to reduce this allocation.

Recommendations

1. Members are asked to endorse the bid for Belfast to host the 2010 Mosconi Cup
2. Approve the level of funding, to a maximum of £100,000, should the initial bid be successful.

Decision Tracking

Following ratification of the recommendation, a bid will be submitted to host the Mosconi Games:

Timeframe: November 2009 Reporting Officer: Tim Husbands

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – Mosconi Cup XVII Host Venue Prospectus

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Appendix 1

Mosconi Cup XVII

December 2010

Host Venue Prospectus

2010 Mosconi Cup - Host Venue Prospectus

Introduction

Since Matchroom Sport originated the Mosconi Cup in December 1994, the event has steadily grown in stature year by year to become the biggest, most prestigious team pool event in billiards history.

Pitting two sides representing America and Europe respectively, the Mosconi Cup is pool's high octane version of the Ryder Cup, where no quarter is given or asked.

Played out over four days in a series of singles and doubles matches, the Mosconi Cup is televised live in its entirety by Sky Sports in the UK.

Staged traditionally as the final event of the year in December, the first eight runnings of the Mosconi Cup took place in the UK, home to promoters Matchroom Sport and host broadcasters Sky Sports.

It moved to Las Vegas in December 2003 and in its last running at the MGM Grand, Las Vegas in December 2007, Team Europe, lead by a tournament winning performance from Malta's Tony Drago, won for the first time in five years amid scenes of glory.

In 2002, Team USA regained the trophy in front of sell-out crowds, following defeat in London the previous year – Europe's first victory since 1995.

The following year, Dutch interests ensured the event took place at the coastal town of Egmond, just a short distance from Amsterdam.

In 2005, the Mosconi Cup once again took place at the MGM Grand where the Americans proved worthy winners.

In 2006, the Mosconi Cup moved again, this time to the Dutch city of Rotterdam, where the teams played out a 12-all draw and in 2007 in Las Vegas, Team Europe finally took the honours with a handsome 11-8 win.

Team Europe consolidated their dominance in December of last year with a comprehensive 11-5 victory which left the Americans four years since their last victory.

2010 Mosconi Cup – The Event

Pool in its various forms is now one of the most popular participation sports in the world with millions of players competing on a regular basis. While the global spread is strong, the major areas for professional competition are North America, Europe and the Far East.

The professional game is administered by the World Pool Association, an Olympic-recognised umbrella organisation whose continental federations oversee competitive pool across the globe.

For the individual player, the pinnacle is the annual WPA World Pool Championship but when it comes to team play there is only one event..... the Mosconi Cup.

In short, the Mosconi Cup is the Ryder Cup of the blue baize. Taking place over four days, the tournament pits two five-man teams representing the USA and Europe respectively in a series of singles and doubles matches.

The two teams are selected from tour rankings as well as wild cards to ensure that all of pool's marquee names are centre stage.

Each side is captained and coached, generally by an ex-player and their job is to select the running orders and pairings and keep their respective teams on the boil. Similarly to golf's Ryder Cup, the team captain's job is of critical importance.

The matches start out as 'scotch doubles' whereby the players compete in pairs playing alternate shots, and culminate in the last day singles where it becomes a real test of nerve.

Each match carries one point for the winning side the first team to reach 11 points carries off the famous Mosconi Cup.

2010 Mosconi Cup – The History

Since its inception in 1994, it's fair to say that the Mosconi Cup has belonged to Team America. With 10 wins in 15 starts, the USA has certainly got the measure of the Europeans.

Despite the American successes, most years of the Mosconi Cup have been close run affairs, with the action maintaining right down to the wire.

Europe have enjoyed increased success in the past three years, holding America to a nail-biting tied match in '06, then winning for the first time since 2002 in Las Vegas in '07 and consolidating their position with victory in Malta last year.

In total 32 players have represented America over the 15 years of the event, with 30 players having worn the colours of Team Europe.

Top of the tree is American legend Earl Strickland with 39 victories in 60 matches over 13 Mosconi Cups. In the European camp, Germany's Ralf Souquet, the 1996 World Pool Champion, takes the honours with 36 wins in 59 starts through 13 years of competition.

2008 **Europe 11 – 5 USA**, Hilton Hotel, Malta

2007 **Europe 11 – 8 USA**, MGM Grand Hotel, Las Vegas, USA

2006 **USA 12 – 12 Europe**, Cruise Terminal, Rotterdam, Holland

2005 **USA 11 – 6 Europe**, MGM Grand Hotel, Las Vegas, USA

2004 **USA 12 – 9 Europe**, Hotel Zuiderduin, Egmond aan Zee, Holland

2003 **USA 11 – 9 Europe**, MGM Grand Hotel, Las Vegas, USA

2002 **Europe 12 – 9 USA**, York Hall, Bethnal Green, London, England

2001 **USA 12 - 1 Europe**, York Hall, Bethnal Green, London, England

2002 **USA 12 - 9 Europe**, York Hall, Bethnal Green, London, England

1999 **USA 12 - 7 Europe**, York Hall, Bethnal Green, London, England

1998 **USA 13 - 9 Europe**, York Hall, Bethnal Green, London, England

1997 **USA 13 - 8 Europe**, York Hall, Bethnal Green, London, England

1996 **USA 15 - 13 Europe**, Goresbrook Leisure Centre, Dagenham, England

1995 **Europe 16 – 15 USA**, Festival Hall, Basildon, Essex, England

1994 **USA 16 – 12 Europe**, Rollerbowl, Romford, Essex, England

2010 Mosconi Cup – Television

With the inaugural Mosconi Cup having taken place in December 1994, there has been one constant throughout its illustrious history – year on year live television coverage.

Its European host broadcaster has been Sky Sports who are renowned throughout the world as one of sports television's premier broadcasters. When it comes to the Mosconi Cup, Sky Sports apply the production values of major league sports.

Using a multitude of camera positions, every ball of every rack is live and the resulting programming has made the Mosconi Cup the biggest televised pool event of the year.

In 2007, the Mosconi Cup produced 20 hours of live programming and was subsequently packaged as 19 x one-hour highlight shows by Matchroom Sport. In '08 that figure was 17 hours live and 12 x one-hour highlights.

In 2006, for the first time, DSF, Germany's major cable sports channel, took the event live and have continued to do so.

In the USA Fox Net took a five hour highlights package which runs on consecutive Sundays in January and February.

Over the years, more and more stations around the world have picked up on the Mosconi Cup and for 2008, the event was scheduled to be distributed to the following stations:

Live

BSkyB (UK) – 7.8 million homes

DSF (Germany) – 32 million homes

Highlights

Fox Net (USA) – 81 million homes

CCTV (China) – 302 million homes

NTV (Russia) – 32 million homes

TSN (Canada) – 7.6 million homes

IKO (Slovakia, Czech Republic, Serbia, Romania) – 3 million homes

Fox Australia – 1.8 million homes

Sport 1 (Hungary) – 1.54 million homes

Supersport (South Africa) – 1.4 million homes

Measat (Malaysia) – 1.3 million homes

Sky Network (New Zealand) – 630,000 homes

Measat (Indonesia) – 500,000 homes

ART (Middle East) – 400,000 homes

Star Hub (Singapore) – 371,000 homes

I Cable (Hong Kong) – 682,000 homes

Videoland (Taiwan) – 4.3 million homes

Solar (Philippines) – 2.2 million homes

Melita Cable (Malta) – 105,000 homes

2010 Mosconi Cup – Host Venue Benefits

International Television Exposure

The Mosconi Cup produces approximately 20 hours of live broadcast as well as up to 20 hours of highlights. The host venue will receive numerous verbal and captioned mentions throughout the programming including mentions from the MC prior to every game as well as name checks from the commentators.

In addition, the broadcast will include inserts filmed around the host venue for inclusion in the programming. All in all this adds up to an impressive media evaluation.

On set Signage

The host venue will have the right to display two signage boards in prime positions on the TV set. These are approximately 40cm x 40cm and can be for your own use or any sub-sponsors you may engage.

Players' Images

The host site will have the opportunity to use participating players' images as well as TV footage from previous events for promotional and advertising purposes. It will also have the right to use the Official Event Logo for the same purposes.

Mosconi Cup Players' Reception

Taking place the evening before the event starts is the now traditional Mosconi Cup Players Reception. This is for media, TV, sponsors and VIPs etc. You will have the opportunity to host this occasion and mingle with the players in a unique way and create PR opportunities.

Website

www.mosconicup.com is the events official website and attracts a substantial number of users throughout the four days of the tournament and the weeks leading up to it. The host venue will have prominent exposure on the site including click-throughs to the venue's own website.

Media Profile

Being a high profile international sporting event, the Mosconi Cup is well attended by the international sports media, giving the host site positive coverage in a multitude of publications and websites around the world.

Press Conferences

The host site's logo will be on prominent display at all post and pre-event press conferences.

Promotional Material

To promote the Mosconi Cup a large amount of promotional material is produced for distribution across Europe and throughout America. This includes posters, flyers as well as various event-specific promotions. All will carry the host venue's logo.

2010 Mosconi Cup – Don't Take Our Word For It!

"Any sporting contest between teams from Europe and the USA attracts big interest, and we have been happy to support the Mosconi Cup since its inception in 1994. We show every rack live over the four days, and the standard of play – and the excitement generated – has lived up to all our expectations."

Rory Hopkins, Executive Producer, Sky Sports

"The Mosconi Cup is already part of the rich history of pool. I believe in what it stands for and only players of great integrity and character can succeed in it. To play in the Mosconi Cup you have to be the best and it is a tremendous honour to play for your country and represent the American people."

Earl Strickland, leading all-time Mosconi Cup points scorer and three times WPA World Pool Champion

"Hands down the most exciting event in pool... nothing in professional pool can match the raw intensity and drama that the Mosconi Cup delivers."

Mike Panozzo, Publisher, Billiards Digest

“The Mosconi Cup does for pool what nothing has ever done for snooker. As the Ryder Cup of golf has proved, nothing can duplicate the atmosphere of America v Europe in international team competition and in a quality venue, live on TV, the Mosconi Cup works perfectly.”

Phil Yates, sports correspondent, the Times of London.

“After all the years of playing snooker as an individual with very little team play, the Mosconi Cup was like a breath of fresh air with a level of exhilaration I hadn’t experienced before. Never in my wildest dreams did I think you could create so much excitement for players and fans alike. An incredible event!”

Steve Davis, six times World Snooker Champion, 11 Mosconi Cup appearances

"The Mosconi Cup has become pool’s premier 'excitement event'. The pressure of playing for their country has been known to rip some players’ nerves to shreds and raise others to levels of greatness otherwise unknown. The audiences at the Mosconi Cup are a tremendous factor and they have an impact on the outcome that is never seen at any other billiards event. "

Jerry Forsyth, Editor AZBilliards.com and Sky Sports commentator