

SOUTH WEST FEDERATION OF CROQUET CLUBS

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Sunday 24 November 2013

The Chairman, Roger Hayes opened the meeting by welcoming everyone.

- 1. Apologies:** Broadwas, Barnstaple, Caldicot, Fowey, Palace(Wells) and Lym Valley CC's.
- 2. Minutes** of the AGM held on 25th November 2012 were agreed and signed. Proposed by Roger Buckley and seconded by Klim Seabright.
- 3. Matters arising** There were no matters arising.

4. Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported that mindful of the very full agenda we have today his report would be shorter than that of his predecessor Bob Whitaker. He said that he would like to pay tribute to the recipients of CA Diplomas - Les and Alwen Bowker from Cheltenham, Sue Edwards, a past chairman of Cheltenham, who sadly is no longer with us and Neil Morrison from Swindon. Neil was unable to attend the CA AGM to be presented with his diploma, so he was pleased to present it to him today.

There were also many achievements by players from the South West most of which have been reported on the CA website and in the Croquet Gazette. Two of these players being on your Committee. Marcus Evans who was a member of the Great Britain team that retained the Soloman Trophy this summer against the USA. He also narrowly missed out in the play-off for the Chairman's Salver to Peter Trimmer, a former Chairman of the SW Federation. Derek Beard who won the Mary Robinson Challenge Shield on the Isle of Wight.

In Golf Croquet, Harry Dodge at just 17 was awarded the Spiers Trophy for the most improved Golf Croquet player of the 2012 season, earlier he had qualified as the youngest Golf Croquet referee in the country. He also won the Musk's Cup and the English National Doubles with his partner, 40 years his senior, Pierre Beaudry.

He said he would like to pay tribute to your Committee members who have toiled diligently over the past 12 months. Brian Shorney was Chairman of the Federation Working Party report, which reported to the CA Council in March of this year, we will hearing about and discussing in much greater detail this afternoon. He was sorry to say that two members of the Committee were standing down after the AGM - Derek Beard, who has been Treasurer since the 2007 AGM and Cliff Jones, who was Chairman from 2004 - 2007. He became Youth Officer from 2007 - 2008 and then Coaching Officer from 2008 to the present time, a role that he has developed for many, nationally as well as locally. Significantly Cliff Jones is also a CA handicapper for both Association and Golf Croquet. In this capacity he has been invited to be responsible for organising and fronting a possible Golf Croquet Handicap Conference along the lines of the Association Handicap Conference held a few years ago. This is because he had become aware of a sizeable area of concern, voiced at various levels, that suggests that there is disquiet within our Golf Croquet brethren over the disparity of Golf Croquet handicaps from club to club especially involving our Golf Croquet handicap league. He said that it is with considerable regret he was announcing that your Secretary, Julie Horsley has indicated her wish to step down at next year's AGM.

Finally, on a note of pure and unadulterated pleasure I extend to 91 year old Denise Johns of the Wells Club(one time member of Bath) our very special congratulations on the arrival of Ruby, her great, great granddaughter.

5. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer, Derek Beard, presented the accounts for the year, which had been circulated at the meeting.

There would be no change in fees for the coming year.

Seconded by Cliff Jones, the accounts were unanimously approved.

The Treasurer said that he would like express his thanks to the Committee for all their help.

6. League Secretary's Report

The League Secretary, John Grimshaw, had circulated his report at the meeting.

This season had seen league entries from 113 teams representing 26 clubs. This was an increase in teams, almost entirely due to the introduction of the Level Play Golf Croquet League, but a reduction by 3 in the number of clubs entering the competitions. Only 6 matches were conceded, the lowest number in his tenure as League Secretary.

This year he had received two telephone calls advising him that a player had inadvertently played off an incorrect handicap, this is the first time this had occurred in 9 years. One was in an Association match, in which he decided that the game results were such that it would not have made any difference to the outcome. The other was in a Golf Croquet match, where it was decided to award one hoop to the opponent and penalise the offending player one hoop. This changed the result of the match and the eventual winner of the block. He said that the offending team were wholly in agreement with the decision and he would like to commend the Tournament Secretaries involved for their honesty in bringing it to his attention in the first place.

Unfortunately teams have been getting slower in sending their results and score sheets to him. He requested that Tournament Secretaries inform their team captains of the necessity to send the results sheets to him as soon as the match has ended on the proper forms which can be downloaded from the website

The following trophies were presented:

- Parkstone Trophy Division 1 to Bristol
- Parkstone Trophy Division 2 to Bear of Rodbrough
- Parkstone Trophy Division 3 to Nailsea 2nd
- Federation League Trophy to Taunton
- Intermediate League Trophy to Abbey
- B League Trophy to Weston-super-Mare
- Golf Croquet Level Play League to Nailsea
- Golf Croquet League Trophy to Abbey

Congratulations to everyone.

The Short Croquet Team Event was won by Nailsea Trendlewood, making it four consecutive wins for this team. There was an increase in entries this year so there were now 4 divisions.

The League Secretary said that he would like to thank all the clubs who made their facilities available for tournaments and finals and to the people who gave up their time to prepare the lawns, provide teas, referee and report on these matches.

7. Regional Coaching Officers Report

The Regional Coaching Officer, Cliff Jones, reported that it had again been a busy year. Many clubs within the federation have been actively coaching in house and he had received excellent reports.

Richard Griffiths and others have given their services at Cornwall. Dave Kibble and Marcus Evans have organised Laws courses at Cheltenham. Sarah Burrow, Klim Seabright, Adam Moliver and others have also been very active coaching at Cheltenham. At Nailsea much coaching work has been carried out by a variety of members with Kris Chambers coaching at more advanced level. Budleigh Salterton, East Dorset, Kingston Maurward and Sidmouth and many other clubs have also held coaching courses. Camerton and Peasedown have been busy recruiting and coaching Golf Croquet with Ros Key-Pugh and Mo Boys.

He said that Klim Seabright deserved a special mention as he had travelled to India on behalf of the CA to coach a large and extremely enthusiastic group of new players there.

He said that he had been busy having done 21 courses - 13 within the federation. He said that he was resigning as South West Federation Coaching Officer after this AGM and would like to take the opportunity to thank the many clubs and coaches who have helped, organised and assisted with coaching during his time in office. He would like to add that he will continue with coaching with 14 courses firmly arranged for 2014.

8. Publicity Officer's Report

The Publicity Officer said that Swan and website continued much as last year. She said the cost of adverts in Swan had remained static for the past 25 years, the Committee had decided to increase the fee for adverts to £20 for a full page and £12 for a half page. SW Federation courses and tournaments can be advertised free on the website. She asked for clubs to notify her as well as the Secretary of any changes of club personnel.

9. Youth Officer's Report

The Youth Officer said that he was pleased with the development in youth and school croquet mainly in the SW but also in other parts of the country- West Buckland school still very enthusiastic.

The National Schools Championship will take place next June. He said that Harry Dodge who started playing croquet at Nailsea has become very successful in Golf Croquet.

10. Development Officers Report

The Development Officer North said that the role of Development Officers was in supporting new clubs. He was

pleased to report that Beckford CC was up and running with a membership of 26 in its first year. It has 1 lawn but there is room for expansion. Another new club is Llandoverly, where they play Golf Croquet.

Great Bedwyn on the Wiltshire/Berkshire border had decided to join the Southern Federation.

CA grants had been awarded to Nailsea CC and Cheltenham CC to improve the quality of their lawns.

The Development Officer South said that Barnstaple CC had 25 members but were struggling to raise the money to deal with their drainage problem, which needed sorting first. Plymouth CC which has 4 lawns over a SW Water reservoir had its licence with Plymouth council withdrawn this year and now are dealing direct with SW Water.

They can only use an electric mower and applied for a grant. The club has been energised and now has 28 members. Weston CC have received a grant to renovate their lawns. A new club has been set up in Newton Abbot. Robert Moss said that more clubs were applying for grants than there was money available, but all SW clubs had received something. He suggested that if a club was applying for a grant that they should speak to their SW Development Officer so that we can work out the best way to set about applying. There were only 2 meetings a year (spring and autumn) when grants were discussed. The CA were looking for genuine development proposals and not normal housekeeping. It was said that some clubs have very low subscriptions which do not give provision for replacement balls etc.. It was difficult for new clubs starting up and any help from existing clubs with balls and/or surplus equipment would be much appreciated.

Mike Tracey from Nailsea CC said that he would like to thank Robert Moss for his help with Nailsea's grant and would like to suggest that clubs form a business plan, which he felt would help them budget for future expenditure.

11. Golf Croquet Adviser's Report

The Golf Croquet Adviser said that she was pleased that there were enough clubs entering for the Golf Croquet Level Play League to take off this year. She said that she was disappointed that some players at both finals arrived without their handicap cards and felt that a firm stance should be taken on this. She was pleased that a Golf Croquet Handicap Conference is being proposed for the New Year, when it is hoped that all issues relating to Golf Croquet handicaps might be resolved. The coaching courses held at Budleigh CC were well attended. Two courses are already arranged for the coming season, one for beginners and one for improvers. If anyone is interested in a more advanced course, or if clubs feel they have need of a club coach or if members wish to improve their level of coaching, please contact her and she will try and organise one for next year.

12. Election of Officers

The Chairman nominated Norman Connor for Treasurer, this was seconded by Marcus Evans and approved.

As no nominations had been received for Coaching Officer, the Committee proposed Roger Buckley as Coaching Liaison Officer, this was seconded by Mike Tracey and approved.

All other Officers were willing to stand for another year. There were no other nominations.

This was seconded by Jane Hull and carried.

13. Proposal A from Bath Croquet Club (circulated with the Agenda)

This proposal was seconded by Peter Dyke and carried.

Proposal B from Bristol Croquet Club (circulated with the Agenda)

Bristol CC felt that if a team had won their division in the League for Advanced Play, they should not be able to decline promotion, which has happened in the past.

Peter Dyke proposed an amendment that instead of "no team may decline promotion" "... but the winning team may not decline promotion". This was seconded by Cliff Jones and carried.

The amended proposal was seconded by Paul Samson and carried.

Proposal C from Bath Croquet Club (circulated with the Agenda)

There was some discussion over this proposal in which the League Secretary said that how did one decide who was the better runner-up and for this reason he opposed the proposal. This was endorsed by Peter Dyke, who said that Nailsea were happy with the arrangements as they stood. There was no seconder for the proposal.

Proposal D from Cornwall Croquet Club (circulated with the Agenda)

Cornwall CC said they felt there was a disparity with handicaps if clubs had different starting points they felt that the starting point should be standardised nationally and that the SWF should align with CA Guidelines. There followed a discussion in which it was stated that by starting at 28, it was to give encouragement, but that a player's handicap should be set according to his/her ability. It was also stated that the maximum handicap had been misconstrued - this was not necessarily the starting point. New players should be allowed to play for about a month before being given a handicap which should probably be under the maximum handicap so that it gave room to move in either

direction. The overriding message was that players should play off their correct handicap and that club handicappers should be pro-active.

The proposal was seconded by Cliff Jones and carried.

Proposal E from Nailsea CC (circulated with the Agenda) and

Committee Amendment to Proposal E (circulated with the Agenda)

David Harrison-Wood said that he felt that the more suitable place for this proposal was to insert it in Rule 4 - Eligibility rather than Rule 13 - he proposed an amendment to the Committee Amendment that it was inserted as Rule 4d and Rules 4d and e became Rules 4e and f .

This was seconded by Marcus Evans and carried.

The committee amendment, with the amendment , was seconded by Mike Tracey was carried.

Proposal F from Nailsea CC (circulated with the Agenda)

Peter Dyke said that there were a number of games going to time, especially with doubles hence the proposal.

Roger Parsons said he would like to propose an amendment that the time limit for doubles be 55 minutes.

It was said that the increased time would make it very difficult for clubs with only one lawn.

The amendment was seconded by David Harrison-Wood and defeated.

The proposal seconded by Roger Parsons was carried.

Proposal G from East Dorset CC (circulated with the Agenda)

The proposal seconded by Doug Norfolk was carried.

Proposal H from Nailsea CC (circulated with the Agenda)

This proposal was withdrawn.

Proposal J from East Dorset CC (circulated with the Agenda)

Peter Dyke proposed an amendment that the Leagues be called:

1. The Golf Croquet Handicap League
2. The Golf Croquet Level Play League

This was seconded by John Grimshaw and carried.

The proposal with the amendment seconded by John Grimshaw was carried.

Proposal K from East Dorset CC (circulated with the Agenda)

There followed a full discussion over this proposal. The main points being: The best of 3 would, if all went to 3, make too long a day. The point was made that it had taken 3 years to get the Level Play League up and running, the proposal would discourage some clubs/players in entering as there would be little incentive in playing. It was felt that if the proposal was passed it would kill off the Level Play League.

The proposal was seconded by Keith Southern and defeated.

Proposal L from East Dorset CC (circulated with the Agenda)

It was felt that this was mainly editorial.

The proposal seconded by Marcus Evans was carried with the proviso that the Committee were in agreement with the wording when they went through it.

Proposal M from the Committee (circulated with the Agenda)

Ros Key-Pugh said that this had been put forward because of concerns that some players were not bringing their handicap cards to matches. and it was hoped this would focus their minds to bring the card. Klim Seabright said he felt frustrated that the CA had not made it mandatory for players to carry their cards with them at all times.

Brian Shorney said that there would be a change to Tournament Regulations next year making it mandatory for players to carry their card with them .

Nailsea proposed an amendment to be inserted under 5 "the onus of maintaining their handicap card is the player's" This was seconded by Des Honey and carried.

The proposal with the amendment was seconded by Helen Pryor and defeated

14. Any Other Business

The Tournament Secretary said that he would like a show of hands as to whether clubs playing in the Level Play league would prefer - 3 block of 4 or 2 blocks of 6. Two blocks of 6 won by 3 votes.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 1.00p.m.