

NORTH WEST FEDERATION OF CROQUET CLUBS

MINUTES OF THE 2011 AUTUMN MEETING

The Meeting was held on Saturday 5 November 2011 at 10.00 am
at Culcheth Sports & Social Club, Charnock Road, Culcheth, WA3 5SH.

The Meeting was attended by 38 people representing:

Bowdon:	Ken Cooper; Francois Garcia; Barry Keen; Steve Reynolds; John Saxby.
Bury:	David Barrett; Jean Hargreaves; Paul Rigge; Barbara Young; Geoff Young.
Chester:	Janet Davies; David Guyton.
Culcheth:	Pat Barlow; Alison Charters; Eric Charters; Anne Connop; Bob Connop; Alan Wright.
Fylde:	Betty Bates; Lee Hartley; Alan Morton; Catherine Morton; Liz Wilson; Peter Wilson.
Llanfairfechan:	Glyn Jones; Georgina Llewellyn; Anwen Williams; Marion Williams.
Pendle & Craven:	Kathryn Schofield; Roger Schofield; Ron Welch; Geoff Whitaker; Maureen Whitaker.
Salford:	Frances Rollinson; Irene Waterhouse.
Southport:	Kath Thomas; Tony Thomas.
Westmorland:	Ivan Wheatley.

1. Welcome by the Chairman

The NWFCC Chairman David Barrett welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited all attendees to contribute to the discussions, however if a vote is required only one vote per club, plus the officers may vote.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from James Hawkins (Liverpool); Richard Bellwood (Isle of Man); Ian Lines (Bowdon); Martin Bradshaw (Fylde); Howard Bowron (Penrith & North Lakes).

3. Confirmation of Minutes of the Spring Meeting – 5 March 2011

The minutes of the last meeting were approved – proposed by Lee Hartley, seconded by Jean Hargreaves.

4. Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

There were no matters arising from the previous Minutes not covered by today's agenda.

5. Reports from the Officers

A. Chairman - David Barrett

I am delighted to say that today marks the end of an era and the beginning of a new dawn, as we implement one of the requirements of our Constitution for the first time. It's now three years since I was elected Chairman of The Federation and immediately received your backing to introduce a maximum term for the Chairman to serve as three years. So that's it, I've finished my stint !!

It has been pretty 'hairy' at times, but my lasting memories will be, the joy of seeing the growth and development in many of our Clubs. The support I have received from my fellow Officers has been outstanding and their willingness to promote croquet at all levels has been paramount in our development. I thank each one of them most sincerely.

I opened my remarks as Chairman three years ago by stressing the importance of Club croquet and the individual membership within those Clubs. Nothing has changed in that respect, it's still my belief and I leave it to my successor to carry the thought forward again.

B. Secretary - Ian Lines

Everything running fine and nothing major to report.

C. Treasurer - Peter Wilson

Thank Geoff Young for Auditing the accounts, (see Accounts in Appendix (i)).

Income: Salford & Liverpool joined the usual faces.

Festival: The NWFed Committee in conjunction with S&BCC worked hard to regenerate interest and this was rewarded with an increased entry. As agreed with S&BCC we paid more for the lawns this year in return for their being an improvement in the surface. I believe these improvements will continue and the hire charge should increase accordingly.

Millennium Events: The Short Lawn Competition reborn at Fylde and contributed £13 to the £56 from the Handicap at Pendle. The Advanced makes a loss for Bury at Heaton Park.

CA Refund is the recoverable part of the 2010 development expenses.

Development: We paid Chester the balance of the Fed Grant awarded to them several years ago in the sum of £350. The remaining charge is officer's expenses and is potentially recoverable from the CA.

General Admin: Engraving costs were £24 the remaining charge is for the refreshments at two annual meetings here.

All this means is that we finished the year with £130 more than we started it with. This is after paying a long standing charge of £350.

I would suggest there is no reason for increasing the affiliation fees of £20 which are inferentially due for payment here, now at this meeting and immediately. I believe the fee represents a significant contribution to the accounts but it is the Festival income which is the most important to the bank balance.

There was a discussion on travel expenses and development grants that clarified procedures.

D. Development Officer - Janet Davies

- 1) Most development work within Clubs in the Federation is reported separately in the reports from those clubs which follows later in the agenda.
- 2) However I am working with 3 'embryo' clubs which are not yet members of the CA or the Federation.
 - a) Congleton U3A formed several years ago. They play Association croquet and their leader is a country member in Chester who plays for our short croquet team. About 12 to 16 members play every week on 2 short lawns formed from a cricket outfield. They visit Chester once a year for a playing and coaching session. A 'friendly' match against Goostrey has been suggested
 - b) Goostey formed last year under the aegis of the Goostrey Playing Field Trust. About 12 to 16 members play association croquet twice a week on two full size lawns on the cricket outfield using garden croquet equipment. One of their members attended the beginners' course at Bowden this year and they have now abandoned their 'American Rules'. They were invited to come for a 'friendly afternoon' by both Bowdon & Chester but have not taken this up yet. A friendly match against Congleton has been suggested. Their Playing Field Trust is acquiring an additional field and they are hoping for better lawns next year.
 - c) Burwardsley formed this year. About a dozen members play golf croquet once a week on two terrible short lawns (an ex crown green bowling green with a trench across it) with primitive equipment. They have visited Chester twice this summer and one of our committee is now on their committee. They are negotiating a way forward with the Bolesworth Estate who own the village, and may join the CA.
- 3) The CA Development Committee has received a letter from the CA Marketing Committee who wish to support the recruitment & growth of competitive players. They pose a number of questions. I wonder if the Federation has any views on these. They are:
 - a) Do clubs have members who feel 'crowded out' of competitive play? If so how can we address this?
 - b) Can we target universities which can set up clubs on campus?
 - c) Can we identify good practices that encourage competitive play?
- 4) If any Clubs are considering applying for grants for development before next season, could you please contact me to discuss this as early as possible and in any case before Christmas as I will need the draft applications early in January.

E: CA Representative – Geoff Young

Have attended three CA Council meetings this year and am now on the CA Tournaments Committee. The All England competition always holds the finals in the South because they are the only clubs who bid to host this event.

F. Coaching Officer - Ken Cooper

Flying Circus Coaching Courses: This year we were in popular demand with 9 courses requested; this was 3 more than last year. Because we prefer to run the courses early in the season so that attendees can get the most benefit out of them, I proposed that similar courses should be combined, i.e. we had 4 requests for the Silver course so we ran one large one at Southport, plus 2 requests for a Bronze course which ended up as one run at Bowdon. However, this did not go down too well with some players who were not willing to travel to another club to attend one. As a result, we had players who attended courses that were way out of their depth simply because a course was being run at their club and they wanted to attend it, so we need to ensure that attendees go on courses appropriate their level of handicap in future.

In the end the Flying Circus ran five 1-day courses during the year:

- Saturday 2nd April: a **Silver Gilt-come-Gold** course was held at Southport, led by James Hawkins and assisted by Bob Burnett & Ken Cooper; 11 players in the handicap range of 0-9 attended
- Saturday, 16th April: a beginners' level **Golf Croquet** course was run by Don Williamson at Chester and assisted by Bob Connop; there were approx. 16 attendees
- Saturday 14th May: a **Silver** course was led by Ian Lines at Southport and assisted by Don Williamson, Ray Lowe, Brian & Carol Lewis; approx. 16 players attended (from Southport, Fylde, Chester, Bowdon & Westmorland) with handicaps in the range 8-24
- Friday 20th May: a **Bronze** course was held at Bowdon for players with handicaps 12-18, led by Ken Cooper and assisted by Lorna Frost, consisting of 10 Bowdon members and 4 from Westmorland
- Monday, 6th June: an **Improvers'** course was held at Chester, led by Paul Rigge and assisted by Ken Cooper, for players in the 20+ range of handicaps; 17 players attended, 10 of whom came from Bowdon

Details of these courses were advertised on the NWFCC website to enable clubs to let their members know of their availability and to get themselves booked on an appropriate course. My thanks go to the coaches who kindly volunteered their services to help me to put on the courses. Next year we would like to run a course for new Club Coaches, if there is sufficient demand.

G. NW Festival of Croquet Manager – Barry Keen

The competition worked well last year with an equal sharing of matches on the North and South lawns, apart from the Short competition. There were differing views on the Advanced competition format and we need to reconsider this for the future. In the Handicap competition, using the 18 point format gave no advantage over the full game but did produce longer waiting times. The Short competition can take more entries if required. The Golf competition worked well.

H. League Manager - Tony Thomas

This season 44 teams have played 153 matches in five leagues arranged around 20 regional tournaments and all crammed into a 26 week season. May I place on record my appreciation to everyone who has diligently kept me informed of results, postponements and re-arranged dates - thank you - I do realise how difficult the role of team captain can become at times and your co-operation is greatly appreciated. (See Appendix (ii) for final League Tables).

And, the league winners were:

Bowdon Saints	- Advanced League Winners
Fylde	- Handicap League Winner
Fylde	- Midweek League Winner
Pendle & Craven -	- Short League Winner
Bury South	- Golf League Winner

The season started with the usual weather problems causing some matches to be postponed, one was abandoned due to flooding, but during the season, 20 or more matches were postponed, three of which were not able to be re-arranged.

In the Advanced League, we welcomed Liverpool to their first season. Eight teams competed and Bowdon Saints became champions, only losing one match throughout the season. Bonus Points were used again for the third successive year and if these points are stripped out of the data, there is absolutely no effect on the league positions.

In the Handicap league, nine teams competed in a closely fought competition with league placings changing dramatically throughout the season, eventually Fylde won most matches and the championship.

The Midweek League ran very smoothly throughout the season, the eight teams were not involved in any postponements. Fylde only lost one match and gained the championship.

The Short League was the most closely contested league this year and any one of five out of the eight teams could have won the league up to within one month of the end of the season. Pendle & Craven playing most of their matches in the last few weeks eventually became champions only losing one match during the season.

In the Golf League nine teams competed in another close contest with Bury South just beating three other teams by one point to lift the title. The effect of last years rule changes had a mixed reaction – reducing matches from 22 games to 18 games has been well received and worked well, however, the new ruling on the doubles game pairing was not accepted and caused confusion and we need to clarify this for the future

Fixture List for Season 2012:

For season 2012, I would ask clubs to provide me with their team entries as early as possible and by 31 December 2011 at the very latest. Our season is now so congested that formulating the fixture list becomes more complex each year but if we can get it agreed in February it should reduce the number of changes/postponements required later.

Consequently, it is really helpful if clubs can provide as much information as they can muster about:

- Team captains and contact details
- Preferred days on which they wish their teams to play
- Dates when their teams/lawns will not be available (tournaments, open days, etc.)
- Who should be involved in confirming the club draft fixtures – team captains or a club co-ordinator

The plan is to produce the draft fixture list by the end of January 2012 then allow clubs one month to re-arrange any inconvenient dates, then distribute the agreed fixture list by the end of February 2012. (2012 League Entry Form to be found in Appendix (iii)).

I. Pennine Cup - Paul Rigge

The fixture was played this year and won by the North East who have now taken the trophy from the Pendle clubhouse. Pendle have agreed to host the competition again in 2012 with costs shared with the North East. Date still to be arranged sometime in July.

J. Child Protection Officer - Barry Keen

No issues to report from 2011

6. Future Arrangements for NW League Fixtures – Proposed by Tony Thomas

A League Rules Amendments:

To reflect changes made to league rules over the last few years, we need to tidy up Rule 8:

Amended Rule 8: In the event of a walkover the match shall be scored 4-0 for a Handicap match, 9-0 for a Short League match, 10-0 for a Golf match and 5-0 for an Advanced match. The winning side earning 2 points. Meeting agreed this rule change - seconded by Lee Hartley.

At last years AGM, we agreed the doubles pairing in Golf matches should be players Ab v ab and CD v cd. In practice, some clubs have played AD v ad and BC v bc whilst others just agreed pairings between themselves. I would propose a change to Rule 23a to make it similar to Rule 11 as used in Handicap matches:

Amended Rule 23a: Where two full lawns are available, matches will comprise one round of doubles (with no restrictions on pairings but match teams in order of their combined handicaps) and four rounds of singles, all play all.
Meeting agreed this rule change – seconded by Lee Hartley.

B Procedural Amendments:

The issue of postponed matches has arisen a few times this season – the major issue being the length of time it takes to get re-arranged dates, clubs feeling aggrieved about trying to fit additional matches into very congested parts of their season and unhappiness with clubs who re-arrange most of their matches for the last few weeks of the season. I have raised this issue via emails to clubs and had many responses and suggestions but whatever we do will not be unanimously supported. However, the concensus view is that we should no longer ignore the problem and the most agreed solution is as follows:

Replacement for Rule 2b: If any team postpones an agreed fixture they have the responsibility to negotiate a new date. If after 14 days a new date cannot be agreed, a walkover is awarded to their opponents. However, if a fixture is unplayable due to weather conditions, the home team have the responsibility to negotiate a new date. If after 14 days a new date cannot be agreed, a walkover is awarded to the away team. All re-arranged dates must be reported to the League Manager. Meeting agreed this rule change –seconded by John Saxby.

C League Points Issue:

In the Advanced League, there is a system of Bonus League Points in addition to the normal two points for a win, one point for a draw. This system has been in operation for three years and is irrelevant in deciding the league winners, making virtually no difference to team positions in the league. Yet, the system is not the easiest to report, and involves the League Manager in additional work when team captains expect him to calculate their bonus points. I propose a simplification of Rule 15 and an abandonment of the Bonus Points system:

Simplified Rule 15: In Advanced League matches, two league points will be awarded for a Win and one league point for a draw. The meeting did not approve this rule change.

7. Millennium Competitions 2012

The Millennium Competitions have been arranged as follows:

- | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-------------------|
| (a) Advanced | Heaton Park | 21-22 April 2012. |
| (b) Handicap | Chester | 19-20 May 2012 |
| (c) Short | Fylde | 6 May 2012 |
| (d) Golf | Heaton Park | 12 May |

8. NW Festival of Croquet 2012

To be arranged for Saturday and Sunday, 30 June and 1st July 29012 at Southport.

9. Co-ordination of North West Dates for 2012

31 March - 1 April	Lancashire Open Golf at Heaton Park
6-9 April	Pendle & Craven John Beech Memorial Easter Tournament
14-15 April	Southport Advanced Weekend
21-22 April	Fed Millenium Advanced tournament (Heaton Park)
5-7 May	Bowdon May Weekend
12 May	Fed Millenium Golf tournament (Heaton Park)
13 May	Fed Millenium Short tournament (Fylde)
19-20 May	Fed Millenium Handicap tournament (Chester)
19-20 May	Pendle & Craven B-Level Advanced Weekend
26-27 May	Bowdon Advanced Weekend (NB clash noted)
26-27 May	Southport Handicap Weekend (NB clash noted)
2-5 June	Inter Counties tournament
16-17 June	Pendle & Craven Advanced Weekend
30 June – 1 st July	Federation Festival of Croquet (Southport)
3-6 July	Pendle & Craven Midweek Tournament
4-5 July	Bowdon – CA v Swiss CA
7-8 July	Bury Advanced tournament.
14-19 July	Bowdon Northern Week
21-22 July	Southport Super B and B-Level Advanced Weekend
28-29 July	Fylde Handicap tournament
4 August	Grassroots regional final.
24-27 August	Bowdon North of England Championship
25-27 August	Pendle & Craven August Bank Holiday Tournament
15-16 September	Southport Advanced Weekend
22-23 September	Bowdon B-Level Advanced Weekend

Clubs should check draft calendars on north west fed website and also the CA website.

7. Club Reports and Announcements

i) Bowdon - John Saxby

Due to our extensive refurbishment the season got going slowly which affected recruitment. We really only replaced the natural wastage rather than increasing membership.

Our social programme got disrupted but we had a super day to celebrate our centenary on this site playing croquet to 100 year old rules and dressing appropriately. The club is 115 years old this year.

The refurbishment cost us £45,000 from reserves and £20,000 from a special appeal from our members but leaves a very warm and light building which we hope will last another hundred years.

Croquet has gone well. Saints won the Fed Advanced league, we provided five of the Cheshire team who came 5th in the counties, David Maugham Ian Lines and Alan Mayne won all sorts of important things but our proudest moment came when our junior player Adam Swinton won the all-England handicap championship at Sidmouth.

Our great pleasure is for Ian and Debbie, but we will sadly miss a great player, excellent coach, meticulous croquet secretary and good friend.

ii) Bury – Barbara Young

After the major upheavals of last year – the lawn levelling and hosting the MacRobertson Shield – Bury has had a more ‘normal’ season but still very busy. We have a record number of members and are nearing capacity – on one Golf afternoon there were 32 people on the lawns. Our teams have had a reasonably successful year, winning the Southport Festival Championship and short lawn trophies, also Bury Souths won the Golf league. One new member had a particularly successful debut – only 4 months after first picking up a mallet, Andy Brandwood qualified for the national finals of the All England Handicap and ended as runner-up. Our good relationship with Bury Council continues as they are currently engaged in tarmacing the car park and the side of the approach road to give us more parking space. What a pity the park does not have space for a third lawn!

iii) Chester – David Guyton

A wonderful year for Chester, as we attained our long awaited pavilion at the start of the season after 15 years of the horrible hut. The pavilion is in constant use and we are still on speaking terms with the 3 bowling clubs with whom we share it. The Grand Opening was performed in July by Barry Keen, the Chairman of the CA, in the presence of the Lord Mayor of Chester, sundry Councillors, the Chairman of the NWFed, guests from clubs throughout the North West and club members. The sun shone and guests were still playing croquet at 5.45pm when we started taking down the marquee. Barry Keen also presented the CA’s Apps Healey Award to the club as the club with 3 or 4 lawns which had made most progress over the past 2 years.

Recently 2 of our members, Mollie McBride and Janet Davies were awarded CA Diplomas for services to croquet (particularly at club level) over the years.

This year we entered the CA’s Mary Rose competition for the first time, and as a result of a series of fortuitous occurrences reached the semi final.

We also hosted a Laws course, and now have an assistant referee in the club.

Otherwise our playing performance was strictly average, possibly as a result of efforts last winter to get players handicaps correctly calibrated!

iv) Crake Valley

No report received.

v) Culcheth - Alan Wright

The club has had a pleasant year and although we have a small number of members, morale is high. We are fortunate in that we attracted new members this year. Our team entered in the Golf League as usual and we had a much better season than last year, finishing third on hoop difference. We also took part in the Championships at Southport. Several of our members have taken part in other competitions and we have several internal competitions for our members, Golf singles and doubles and short croquet are run on handicap lines and we also organised an open competition.

Two of our members attended the Golf Croquet Referees course at Bowdon in the spring and this winter will be busy swotting so that we can take the examination.

Because of our small membership we have to seek methods other than subscriptions to augment our income. Our lawns are regularly used by U3A, the University of the Third Age and several corporate events have been organised as well as the annual Croquet and Petanque competition held between the Lions and the Rotary Club.

We have also organised sessions for community groups.

Successful social events were our Quizzes and our Strawberry Tea. We are fortunate that we have members who are prepared to work hard, selling tickets and organising these events.

Members from Bury and Fylde were welcome guests at our annual dinner.

During the winter we play on our indoor mat and welcome members from other clubs to spend the day with us. This year we are organising an indoor competition for the first time.

Several of our members also regularly meet together during the winter to play cards and indoor games.

vi) Ellesmere

No report received.

vii) Fylde - Betty Bates

Our grounds continue to be improved, with no problems with drainage. Our club house is now complete, with awning and working electricity. We acknowledge thanks to the CA for their help with a development grant and the invaluable support from Janet Davies for her help in submitting our application. We took over all the Tennis Club lawn equipment this year and this has proved very expensive with various mechanical faults. The mower eventually needed replacing and we purchased a second hand mower to tide us over. This is not totally reliable and so we have now purchased a 2nd hand Dennis. We are very fortunate to have many hands on members, which has substantially reduced our need for further expenditure. We have also been blessed with a number of substantial donations. It is rare not to see anyone at the pitch improving something, whether it is the grounds or the equipment. We now have three full lawns.

We had two new members join us in response to an open day, two members joined us who were recruited from one of our corporate days and a further member, who plays association, has joined us after having moved from a different part of the country. This places our membership at 23 with 6 social members. There are potentially another two people who have expressed an interest to join next year. Fylde hosted four corporate days of which 2 have become an annual event. Despite trying to recruit from the participants, this has proven to be lack lustre.

We have had a successful Jubilee year this year winning Handicap and Midweek Leagues. Although we were last in the short league we are pleased that the improving players who switched from playing golf were able to experience association play and wish to express their comments on how friendly and helpful more experience opponents were on their debuts. A number of the members have improved their handicaps by between one and three steps. As well as the usual club nights we have been running coaching evenings which has proved invaluable. Alan Morton has now qualified as a golf referee. Fylde reached the final in the Secretary's Shield but were beaten by Nottingham. The England CA vs Ireland McWeeny Trophy was contested at Fylde this year. Two Fylde players were invited to represent England. England won the event in a nail biting finish. There was good news coverage in the local Blackpool newspaper and the event attracted a lot of interest. Fylde were fortunate to have hosted the NW Federation Millenium Short tournament which attracted 12 entrants. From the positive feedback received we feel we are in a position to offer our services again next year. In terms of further events Fylde are considering placing a CA open handicap weekend event in the fixtures for next years. We will be checking for suitable dates.

viii) Isle of Man - Richard Bellwood via email

Please accept the IOM's apologies for the meeting. Our only Report is that we have had no available playing facilities this year.

ix) (Keswick)

No report received.

x) Liverpool - James Hawkins via email

* 2011 was the first proper season when Liverpool had playable lawns.

There are two full sized lawns, which are improving all the time.

* The club entered a team in the Advanced League, and finished in better-than-bottom place. Teams from Bowdon, Bury and Fylde have visited, and - despite the disgusting filth of the clubhouse - everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. It's too early to enter any of the other leagues in 2012, but this year's participation has been useful to show new players the existence of croquet outside the confines of the club.

* There were full page features in both the Liverpool Daily Post and Liverpool Echo at the start of the season, but the subsequent Come & Try It Weekend was a washout. It did provide useful links with a PR company, which may prove useful for corporate GC evenings in 2012.

* There have been a number of group events, with around 100 people playing GC over the course of the season.

* Membership is now 11, which gives a critical mass for spreading the word in future. At the moment, it's difficult to get everyone down at the same time, but there are some promising and very keen newcomers.

* I've been in contact with the local independent school, who remain keen to start a youth programme. Despite the promise of a regular group of 13 year olds, a possible after-school club among boarders, and a group social session for teachers, none of this has materialised. There seems to be a political complication within the Common Room, but I'm hopeful that this will get off the ground by easter next year.

* The tennis club, who share the facility, are awaiting a decision (in December) of a lottery application for resurfacing their courts. The City Council are optimistic of success, in which case there would be a number of knock-on benefits for croquet.

* The economic squeeze threatens to be challenging for recruitment next year, but there are a number of live prospects already in the pipeline.

It's taken six years to get a product which I can reasonably sell to customers, but the playing surface is now serviceable. For next year, I can switch focus towards building membership.

xi) Llanfairfechan - Anwen Williams

We've had a very successful Season; we opened on Easter Sunday when 25 members came along and had their first Game of Croquet and the committee provided and served hot cross buns.

We won the Golf competition at the Festival of Croquet.

We had over 30 visiting groups play on our lawns from May to September, in total over 475 people and 3 groups of disabled and vulnerable adults, 1 of which came every week for 16 weeks and the others for 8 weeks. We now have 5 new members who have been checked by the CRB which brings the total of helpers to 9 and during the school holidays there was a childrens project where over 25 children attended. On our Open Day in May we had a Brass Band (one of the committee members plays in the band).

In June our village was twinned with a village in Brittany and over 20 children had a go at playing Croquet, we could not speak French and they could not speak English but they soon caught on to the game.

A BBQ was held in July with our annual fundraising events of Captains Day and Presidents Day being held in August and September.

Last Saturday we held our Presentation Lunch and the icing on the cake was a cake made specially to celebrate our 21st birthday as a club.

In January we will be holding our annual fundraising Beetle Drive when the money will be going to our local St Dunstance Home.

xii) Pendle and Craven – Ron Welch

2011 has shown positive progress. We have recruited a number of new members, three of whom are already playing for club teams. Another group will join us in the Spring so, with an active playing membership of barely 30, this is significant and very pleasing.

We hosted five CA Association tournaments, the All England Area Final and the Millennium Handicap Weekend.

Unhappily our Golf Singles Weekend had to be cancelled for lack of support.

Club teams had varying fortunes, but achieved victory in the North West Short League and second place in both the North West Handicap League and the East Pennine League. Pendle also reappeared in two events at the North West Croquet Festival and enjoyed the event and minor success.

xiii) Penrith and North Lakes - Howard Bowron via email

Another successful season at Penrith. The highlights being further improvement in the quality of our lawns, strong attendance at club sessions and a commensurate improvement in member's playing standard. The latter was evidenced in several visits by members to other clubs. We won some games at the very enjoyable Millennium Short Tournament (many thanks to Fylde CC), several of us played in the Bob Vaughan Memorial Short Tournament at Crake (won by Penrith member Brian Clark) and we've travelled as far as Aberdeen to play friendly matches over the weekend as guests of Crathes Croquet Club. Suffice to say our hosts will be hoping to win more games next year in a return fixture.

xiv) Salford – Frances Rollinson

After a rainy start in 2010, this year was blessed with sunshine and we have had a very enjoyable time meeting and making new friends through our croquet group. We were given the use of the old bowling green which had been used by would be footballers for many years and in a really poor condition. The work on it so far has been very rewarding and we now have space for two full sized lawns. The surface is still work in progress, improving all the time. Playing on this site can be challenging but as the green gets smoother, so our players are learning to master the game. This promises well for 2012.

Equipment has been bought through grants from the Croquet Association and the local Claremont and Weaste Community Fund. Further monies were raised by ourselves from car boots, craft stalls and members Green fees. We have had lots of support from 'The Friends of Buile Hill Park' who have promoted us whenever they could. We ended the year with a celebratory meal attended by 12 of our members and plan to meet for coffee afternoons throughout the winter months. Great plans are in the pipe line for recruiting and publicity for 2012. We would like to thank everyone concerned for their help in making this such a successful year.

xv) Southport - Tony Thomas

Southport have had more success off the field than on during 2011. We had a poor start to the season when poor weather wrecked our recruitment programme and during the year our tournament entries (like other clubs) were disappointing. However, we have run our most successful corporate programme ever, bringing in much needed finance to the club. We have developed an excellent relationship with the local press, who have included match reports every week, often accompanied by photographs, (we even had the front page when a tournament clashed with

Southport Air Show, generating a picture of croquet players with Red Arrows overhead). We were pleased with the Federation Festival this year, which we felt was the best for years.

We have invested in our clubhouse with new space heating and water heating systems, whilst outside, the brickwork has been restored and the building repainted. We are now seriously considering a change in our lawn maintenance programme and may be making a substantial investment in specialist equipment and will be applying to the CA for grants.

A few weeks ago we hosted a Coffee Morning in support of Macmillan Cancer Care – we are really grateful to clubs who sent us a donation and thank you other club members who attended the event – we raised £1000 for this wonderful charity. I am sure you will also be delighted to hear that our former Chairman, Terry Foster, has received the ‘all clear’ after his serious illness.

Finally, we are currently facing a very serious threat to the club as our local Council, as part of their austerity measures are proposing astronomical increases in charges and rents for all sports clubs who use local parks. We are developing a strategy to fight this and will be in discussions with the Council, however, we cannot guarantee we will be able to keep possession of the North Lawns which has implications for the Federation Festival.

xvi) Westmorland - Ivan Wheatley

2011 saw the club participate again in the mid-week handicap league with modest results (3 wins out of 7 games) and continue to support the Crake Valley weekend handicap team unfortunately with marginally less success. We also entered a team in the handicap section of the Festival of Croquet coming third in our section which, for a first attempt, we deemed to be a reasonable outcome.

For the 2012 season we will be continuing with our Association Croquet activities with plans well advanced to enter a team in the Golf Croquet league. We are also hopeful of again participating in the Festival of Croquet, this time with handicap, golf and short teams.

Over the year we won 25 and lost 24 competitive games against players from other clubs in the midweek league which gives us a degree of confidence that our handicapping system is resulting in “fair” handicaps being attributed internally. We are also pleased that all of our handicap card carrying members, with one exception, were able to reduce their handicaps over the season.

Membership of the club has increased by a net 6 people over the season with the beginner’s coaching programme, run at the start of the season, serving to get new, and some more established members, up to a modest level of competency at a reasonably early stage. Our recruitment activities are proving successful but we are still bringing in members new to the game however we remain confident that as these new members develop we will be able to increase our competitive capabilities in both scope and depth. To this end we will be running the beginner’s coaching programme again this year and hopefully introducing a developers mentoring programme. We also plan to participate in the Federations’ circus activities if there are sufficient spaces available.

Our tournaments continue to prove successful, albeit, at this stage they are internal, open only to club members. Despite the weather we were able to complete our Association, Short Lawn and Golf tournaments however our high handicappers (>20) tournament had to be abandoned having been rained off on two separate occasions.

Finally we continue to look for alternative facilities for the club. Whilst Levens Hall provides us with an attractive and safe environment, the restrictions this imposes in terms of access and the quality of the lawns remains a severe restriction on the development of the club. We continue to seek alternative venues without putting at risk our current activities.

11. NW Federation Equipment Assets - Janet Davies

The list of Federation Assets was previously circulated. The meeting made minor amendments – see Appendix (iv).

12. Confirmation of County Captains and Organisers

County Captains Colin Irwin for Cheshire and David Openshaw for Lancashire

County Organisers Colin Irwin for Cheshire and Paul Rigge for Lancashire

Both Organisers will need to inform the CA Office and Bill Arliss, and be prepared to send the entry fees.

13. Croquet in the North Leaflet – Ken Cooper

An electronic version will be produced in the future. Club secretaries will receive the 2011 version shortly and should update Ken with changes before 28 February 2012. (kenco99@btinternet.com).

14. Presentation of Trophies

The NWFCC League trophies were awarded to the victorious clubs by Chairman David Barrett. These were collected on behalf of the clubs by:

Ken Cooper (Bowdon) - Advanced Shield.
Alan Morton (Fylde) – Handicap Cup
Betty Bates (Fylde) – Midweek Trophy
Ron Welch (Pendle) – Short Cup
Barbara Young (Bury South) – Golf Shield



15. Election of Officers (also see Appendix v)

i) Chairman:

David Barrett has retired as Chairman (has served 3 years).

Liz Wilson was proposed by David Barrett, seconded by Jean Hargreaves and was elected.

ii) Secretary:

Ian Lines has re-located and in the absence of any nominations.

Tony Thomas agreed to cover the role on a temporary basis until a volunteer comes forward.

iii) Treasurer and Auditor:

Peter Wilson has retired as Treasurer.

Bob Connop was proposed as Treasurer by Peter Wilson, seconded by Betty Bates and was elected.

Peter Wilson was proposed as Auditor by David Barrett, seconded by Lee Hartley and was elected.

iv) Coaching Officer:

Ken Cooper offered to continue

v) Development Officer:

Janet Davies offered to continue

vi) CA Representative:

Geoff Young offered to continue

vii) League Manager:

Tony Thomas offered to continue

viii) Child Protection Officer:

Barry Keen offered to continue

ix) NW Festival of Croquet Manager:

Barry Keen offered to continue (to be assisted as necessary)

x) Pennine Cup Manager:

Paul Rigge offered to continue

16. Any Other Business

(i) Question was raised from the floor regarding tenure of Federation Officers. Since the Chair only serves for three years, should this rule not apply to other positions? This was rejected on the grounds it had been debated before and also it would not reduce the problem of finding volunteers willing to serve.

(ii) A discussion commenced on Handicap Trigger Points and how they are used. It was confirmed there is no explanation available on the CA website. Barry Keen agreed to write a short piece for the North West website.

17. Date, time and locations of next meetings

Spring 2012 Meeting	3 March 2012 at Culcheth
Autumn 2012 Meeting:	3 November 2012 at Culcheth.

18. Close of Meeting

Liz Wilson thanked Culcheth Croquet Club for hosting the meeting and closed the 2011 Autumn Meeting at 12:40pm.

Tony Thomas

Temporary Secretary of North West Federation of Croquet Clubs

6 November 2011


Appendices:

- (i) NWFCC Audited Accounts for 2011.
 - (ii) Final League Tables for 2011.
 - (iii) NWFCC League Entry Form for 2012.
 - (iv) NWFCC Equipment Assets.
 - (v) NWFCC Committee 2012.
 - (vi) List of Club Contacts.
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North West Federation of Croquet Clubs

Accounts for the Year Ended 31st October 2011

	£	2011 £	£	2010 £
Income				
Affiliation fees		260.00		220.00
Festival entries	540.00		636.00	
Less expenses	550.00	290.00	400.00	236.00
Millennium events		69.13		56.25
CA refunds		35.50		
Interest		3.04		2.34
Total Income		<u>657.57</u>		<u>514.59</u>
Bank balances brought forward		2,971.95		-
		<u>3,629.52</u>		<u>514.59</u>
Expenditure				
Development		358.20		271.50
MacRobertson Shield catering				150.00
Website		24.99		39.52
Roses match lawn hire		37.50		
General administration		79.66		60.00
Coaching		28.30		-
Total Expenditure		<u>526.65</u>		<u>521.42</u>
Bank balances carried forward		3,102.97		2,971.95
		<u>3,629.62</u>		<u>3,493.37</u>

P A Wilson - Treasurer 

G Young - Auditor 

(i)

ADVANCED CROQUET LEAGUE TABLE 2011							
	Matches				Games		Points
	P	W	D	L	W	L	
Bowdon Saints	7	6	0	1	41	22	16
Fylde	7	5	0	2	38	25	13
Bowdon Canons	7	5	0	2	37	26	12
Pendle & Craven *	6	3	0	3	27	26	8
Bury	7	2	0	5	30	32	8
Crake Valley **	5	2	0	3	21	24	4
Liverpool *	6	2	0	4	22	32	4
Southport **	5	0	0	5	8	37	0
* 2 matches not played ** 1 match not played							

HANDICAP CROQUET LEAGUE TABLE 2011							
	Matches				Games		Points
	P	W	D	L	W	L	
Fylde	8	6	0	2	35	21	12
Pendle & Craven	8	5	0	3	31	25	10
Southport	8	5	0	3	27	29	10
Chester	8	4	0	4	29	27	8
Bowdon Firs	8	4	0	4	27	29	8
Bury Caesars	8	3	0	5	29	27	6
Bury Peelers	8	3	0	5	25	31	6
Bowdon St Marys	8	3	0	5	25	31	6
Crake Valley	8	3	0	5	24	32	6

MIDWEEK HANDICAP CROQUET LEAGUE TABLE 2011							
	Matches				Games		Points
	P	W	D	L	W	L	
Fylde	7	6	0	1	31	18	12
Bowdon Earls	7	5	0	2	25	23	10
Southport	7	4	0	3	25	23	8
Chester	7	3	0	4	27	22	6
Westmorland	7	3	0	4	25	24	6
Bowdon Griffins	7	3	0	4	22	27	6
Bury	7	3	0	4	21	28	6
Pendle Craven	7	1	0	6	19	30	2

SHORT CROQUET LEAGUE TABLE 2011							
	Matches				Games		Points
	P	W	D	L	W	L	
Pendle & Craven	7	5	1	1	66	47	11
Bowdon	7	4	2	1	64	46	10
Chester	7	4	1	2	61	51	9
Birkdale	7	4	1	2	58	54	9
Southport	7	2	3	2	54	58	7
Llanfairfechan	7	2	2	3	47	65	6
Bury	7	0	2	5	48	64	2
Fylde	7	1	0	6	48	64	2

GOLF CROQUET LEAGUE TABLE 2011							
	Matches				Games		Points
	P	W	D	L	W	L	
Bury South	8	5	1	2	80	64	11
Llanfairfechan	8	4	2	2	82	62	10
Culcheth	8	5	0	3	81	63	10
Fylde	8	5	0	3	74	70	10
Bowdon	8	4	1	3	75	69	9
Pendle & Craven	8	4	0	4	69	75	8
Chester	8	3	0	5	66	78	6
Bury North	8	2	0	6	68	72	4
Southport	8	2	0	6	49	91	4

**NORTH WEST FEDERATION OF CROQUET CLUBS
LEAGUE TEAMS ENTRY FORM FOR 2012**

CLUB:	
Club or Fixture Secretary:	Home Phone:
Address:	Mobile:
	Email:
Who will be co-ordinating draft fixture list: Team Captains / Club Secretary	
Opening date of club lawns:	Closing date of club lawns:
Dates when lawns unavailable for league matches:	
Any preferences the League Manager should be aware of when compiling the 2010 Fixture List?	

ADVANCED LEAGUE 2012:

Team Name: Captain: Address:	Home Phone: Mobile: Email:
Team Name: Captain: Address:	Home Phone: Mobile: Email:

HANDICAP LEAGUE 2012:

Team Name: Captain: Address:	Home Phone: Mobile: Email:
Team Name: Captain: Address:	Home Phone: Mobile: Email:

MIDWEEK LEAGUE 2012:

Team Name: Captain: Address:	Home Phone: Mobile: Email:
Team Name: Captain: Address:	Home Phone: Mobile: Email:

SHORT LEAGUE 2012:

Team Name: Captain: Address:	Home Phone: Mobile: Email:
Team Name: Captain: Address:	Home Phone: Mobile: Email:

GOLF LEAGUE 2012:

Team Name: Captain: Address:	Home Phone: Mobile: Email:
Team Name: Captain: Address:	Home Phone: Mobile: Email:

The plan is to produce the provisional fixture list for 2012 by 31 January, allow several weeks for modifications and then publish the agreed fixture list by 1st March 2012.

If you require any further information, please contact me (Mobile 07841 538 676) or as above.

Please return this form to the League Manager, Tony Thomas, as soon as possible and at the latest by 31 Dec 2011

Either post to: 20 Talbot Street, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 1HP.

Or Email to: tonythomas@croquetnw.co.uk

NWFed Equipment assets (lent to clubs as follows): November 5th 2011 - Janet Davies

According to my records the NWFed's equipment assets are held as follows. **I would be grateful if clubs could check their records and let me know if these details are accurate.** Note that some equipment originally owned by Bowdon and lent to other clubs, has been formally given to the Federation and is included in the lists below. A question mark shows where I am uncertain about a club's holding (particularly for the equipment initially lent to Flixton by Bowdon and then in part passed on to Salford)

Bowdon:	None	
Bury:	None	
Chester	None	
Crake:	None	
Culcheth:	None	
Ellesmere:	None	
Flixton	2 mallets	+ ?? (information to be supplied)
Fylde:	3 mallets	
Harlech:	None	
Isle of Man	None	
Keswick	None	
Liverpool:	None	+ CA start up set; now Liverpool property
Llanfairfechan	None	+ CA carpet now Llanfairfechan property
Pendle	None	
Penrith	4 mallets 1 set hoops 1 peg	+ CA start up set, now Penrith property
Salford	1 set hoops 1 peg 2 sets primary balls 1 set 2ndary balls 2 mallets	+ CA start up set
Southport	None	
Westmorland	5 mallets 1 set primary balls 1 set 2ndary balls	
Burwardsley (new group)	1 set 2ndary balls 2 garden croquet mallets	+ 1 garden croquet set (private loan)

FEDERATION OF NORTH-WESTERN CROQUET CLUBS

COMMITTEE 2012

Chairman:	Liz Wilson 01253 735 266	9 West Beach, Lytham St Annes, Lancs, FY8 5QJ liz@palnet.co.uk
Temporary Secretary:	Tony Thomas 07841 538 676	20 Talbot Street, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 1HP tonythomas@croquetnw.co.uk
Treasurer:	Bob Connop 01925 765 194	12 Burnham Close, Culcheth, Warrington, WA3 4LJ bobconnop@talktalk.net
Development Officer:	Janet Davies 01244 350 370	10 Dee Hills Park, Chester, CH3 5AR janetjdavies@aol.com
League Manager:	Tony Thomas 07841 538 676	20 Talbot Street, Southport, PR8 1HP tonythomasuk@btinternet.com
Coaching Officer:	Ken Cooper 01625 420 615	32 Hightree Drive, Henbury, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK11 9PD kenco99@btinternet.com
CA Representative:	Geoff Young 0161 766 6048	12 Millom Drive, Bury, BL9 8NJ gandb.young@btopenworld.com
NW Festival Manager:	Barry Keen 01565 632 420	20 Grove Park, Knutsford, Cheshire, WA16 8QA barry.keen1@ntlworld.com
Pennine Cup Captain:	Paul Rigge	4 Lyndale Close, Crawshawbooth, Rossendale, BB4 8LT paul.rigge@tiscali.co.uk
Child Protection Officer:	Barry Keen 01565 632 420	20 Grove Park, Knutsford, Cheshire, WA16 8QA barry.keen1@ntlworld.com

CLUB SECRETARIES:

PLEASE CHECK THIS LIST AND INFORM NWFCC SECRETARY OF ANY ADDITIONS OR AMENDMENTS.

NWFCC LIST OF CLUB SECRETARIES / REPRESENTATIVES / CONTACTS

Names of Club Secretaries listed first in bold, followed by any other NW Federation representatives/contacts.

BOWDON	Secretary	John Saxby 0161 928 4692	2 Southfield, Richmond Road, Bowdon, WA14 2TY Saxbyj@aol.com
BURY	Secretary	Maureen Whittle 01204 885850	112 Moorside Road, Tottington, Bury, BL8 3HR maureen.bob112@yahoo.com
	NW Fed. Rep.	David Barrett 01706 368 214	61 Heywood Hall Road, Heywood, Lancashire, OL10 4UZ davidbarrett.db@tiscali.co.uk
		Paul Rigge	paulrigge@croquetnw.co.uk
CHESTER	Secretary	Janet Davies 01244 350 370	10 Dee Hills Park, Chester, CH3 5AR janetjdavies@aol.com
	Chairman	David Guyton 01244 675 978	Springfield, 22 Lache Lane, Chester, CH4 7LR DFGuyton@compuserve.com
CRAKE VALLEY	Secretary	Joan Clinch 01229 861 343	Brow Head, Spark Bridge, Ulverston, Cumbria, LA12 8BT No e-mail address
	Chairman	David Nicholson 01229 861040	6, Bankside, Penny Bridge, nr. Ulverston, Cumbria, LA12 7RH davenick26tp@hotmail.co.uk
CULCHETH	Secretary	Doreen Groom 01925 733893	5 Thorlby Road, Culcheth, Warrington, WA3 4JU dgroom2@googlemail.com
	Chairman	Alan Wright 01925 765 945	No address alanwright16@googlemail.com
		Bob Connop 01925 765194	12, Burnham Close, Culcheth, Warrington, WA3 4LJ bobconnop@talktalk.net
ELLESMERE		John Leach 0161 799 6463	10 Woodlea, Walkden Road, Worsley, Manchester, M28 2BJ No e-mail address
FYLDE	Secretary	Betty Bates 01273 722742	11 Parkside Road, Lytham St Annes, FY8 3SZ marshall_betty@hotmail.com
	NW Fed. Rep.	Liz Wilson 01253 735 266	9 West Beach, Lytham, Lancs., FY8 5QJ liz@palnet.co.uk
	Chairman	Martin Bradshaw 01253 734650 (0789182237)	50 Alder Grove, Lytham, FY8 4LA bradsband@tiscali.co.uk
ISLE OF MAN		Kevin Wells 01624 880551	4 Ballasteen Drive, Kirk Andreas, Isle of Man, IM7 4HQ Kevin.wells@manx.net
	NW Fed. Rep.	Richard Bellwood 01624 813 128	7 Auckland Terrace, Ramsey, Isle of Man, IM8 1AF RBellwood@ci.collins-stewart.com
	Vice Chairman	Kevin Garrad 01624 815 340	c/o French, Jawarra, Lezayre Mount Windsor Mount, Ramsey, Isle of Man, IM8 3HB kevin.garrad@clericalmedical.com
(KESWICK)	Chairman	Tim Pickles 01768 774135	The Archway, 17 St John Street, Keswick, CA12 5AE tim@timpickles.com
LIVERPOOL		James Hawkins 0151 722 4207	17 Dudlow Drive, Liverpool, L18 2HB james@liverpoolcroquet.co.uk
LLANFAIRFECHAN	Secretary	Georgina Llewellyn 01248 680 861	111 Gorwell, Llanfairfechan, Gwynedd, LL3 0DR gmllewellyn@gmail.com
	President	Jack Pattenden 01745 582 098	No address jack@pattenden9636.freeserve.co.uk
	Vice Chairman	Anwen Lloyd Williams 01248 680 738	No address anwenlloyd.williams@lineone.net
PENDLE & CRAVEN	Secretary	Geoff Whittaker 01282 865565	43, Alma Avenue, Foulridge, Colne No e-mail address
	Chairman	Robin Delves 01535 642 565	Ashdene, Yake Lane, Oxenhope, Keishley, W. Yorks, BD22 9HL christine.delves@virgin.net
		Roger Schofield BB18 5AR 01282 814571	46 Willow Bank, Manchester Rd, Barnoldswick, Colne, Lancs., rog.kath@virgin.net

PENRITH & NORTH LAKES	Howard Bowron 017683 62353	Oak Tree House, Temple Sowerby, Penrith, Cumbria, CA10 1TA howard.bowron@btinternet.com
	Treasurer Mrs C. Bretherton 01768 867 5811	The Beeches, Brougham, Penrith, Cumbria, CA10 2DF No e-mail address
SALFORD	Secretary Frances Rollinson	doris17@tiscali.co.uk
	Treasurer Irene Waterhouse 0161 736 2758	gandewaterhouse@hotmail.com
SOUTHPORT	Secretary Tony Thomas 07841 538 676	20 Talbot Street, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 1HP tonythomas@croquetnw.co.uk
	Chairman Brian Lewis 01704 226 718	49, Norwood Crescent, Southport, PR9 7DU brianlew@sky.com
	President Alan Pidcock 01772 743 859	The Manor House, 1 Barn Croft, Penwortham, Preston, PR1 0SX pidcock@manorh.plus.com
WESTMORLAND	Secretary Nancy Gregory 01539 563806	The Delves, The Princes Way, Heversham, LA7 7EE nancy_gregory2003@yahoo.co.uk
	Chairman Ivan Wheatley 01524 824796	8 Hest Bank Lane, Hest Bank, Lancaster, LA2 6DG. iwheatley@yahoo.co.uk
	President Peter Wardle 01229 885 105	Fairfield, Lake Bank, Water Yeat, Ulverston, Cumbria, LA12 8DL. No e-mail address
Web Site	Tony Thomas 07841 538 676	20 Talbot Street, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 1HP tonythomas@croquetnw.co.uk