

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NORTH WEST FEDERATION OF CROQUET CLUBS

The Meeting was held on Saturday 3rd November 2012 at 10.00 am
at Culcheth Sports & Social Club, Charnock Road, Culcheth, WA3 5SH.

The Meeting was attended by 36 people representing:

Bowdon:	Ken Cooper; Steve Reynolds; Brian Rust; John Saxby.
Bury:	David Barrett; Derek Deadman; Graham Good; Jean Hargreaves; Paul Kenworthy; Paul Rigge; Barbara Young.
Chester:	Alan Clare; Pat Clare; John Dawson; Janet Davies.
Craig y Don:	Glyn Jones; Jack Pattenden.
Culcheth:	Pat Barlow; Denis Cook; Doreen Groom; Brian Poynton.
Fylde:	Peter Wilson; Liz Wilson.
Pendle & Craven:	Kathryn Schofield; Roger Schofield; Ron Welch; Geoff Whitaker; Maureen Whitaker.
LLanfairfechan:	Georgina Llewellyn.
Southport:	Brian Lewis; Kath Thomas; Tony Thomas.
Tattenhall	David Boyd; Nigel Worthington; Ruth Wrigley.
Westmorland	John Shakespeare;

1. Welcome by the Chairman

The NWFCF Chairman Liz Wilson welcomed club representatives to the meeting and especially to those from Tattenhall and Craig y Don.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Bob Connop; Barry Keen; Geoff Young; Tom Griffith (Crake); Viv Seaman (Ellesmere); Rick Bellwood (IOM); James Hawkins (Liverpool); Howard Bowron (Penrith & North Lakes); Anwen Lloyd Williams (Llanfairfechan); Alan Morton (Fylde).

3. Confirmation of Minutes of the Spring Meeting – 3rd March 2012

The minutes of the last meeting were approved, after the title was corrected from Autumn to Spring in the header & footers – proposed by Barbara Young, seconded by John Saxby.

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 – Liz Wilson.

When I took this post over there was a firm nucleus of capable people on the committee and I am pleased to say I have managed to keep some of them! However many have dropped or are dropping by the wayside.

First to go was Peter Wilson – this was necessary so that we did not abscond with the Federation Funds.

Peter was closely followed by Ian Lines who has left the area and is missed by us all. The good news, for him, is that he is now engaged to Debbie Cornelius and I would like to congratulate them both on behalf of the Federation. The latest and hardest blow came recently when Ken Cooper tendered his resignation as Coaching Officer on grounds of ill health. Ken, you have been an excellent officer and I'm sure you could have come up with a less drastic way of getting out of the job.

Many, many years ago I remember coming to these meetings and the Coaching Officer standing up and saying – no one has requested any coaching – and then sitting down again. Ken you certainly bucked that trend. Can I say thank you from all of us.

Apart from the problems of deluge and flood and other minor problems which will be covered later in the meeting the only big item for the committee was the arrival of a CA Questionnaire headed :-

The objective here is to find out how the CA and the Federations could work more closely together, by identifying improvements in the structure and working relationships in croquet governance

It was a very long and comprehensive questionnaire which required contributions from all Officers. Much of it seemed to be asking for information on our good practice. The crunch came at the end asking us how the CA could help us. We basically suggested National coverage and promotion of the sport, financial support at a club level and less of a South bias on the "National Finals". In my opinion allocating the "All England" final to Ramsgate and in 2013 to Colchester is ludicrous. This year a member of Fylde went to Ramsgate and he and one member of Nottingham were the two furthest North competitors. I believe this event should always be midlands based. We have had no feedback as yet apart from an e-mail asking us for a copy because they had lost it. If any club would like a copy of this questionnaire please e-mail Paul Rigge who I'm sure will oblige.

Finally I would like to say thank you to all the committee for their help and guidance over the past year

B. Secretary – Paul Rigge.

The only correspondence we've have was a CA FEDERATION WORKING PARTY QUESTIONNAIRE, after due consideration by your committee, all questions were answered in full.

C. Treasurer – Bob Connop (not present), **Peter Wilson** presented the current statement of accounts:

showing slight net increase in funds. The item on Engraving was paid, since it referred to moving badges to the rear of our shield. A copy is attached to these Minutes - Appendix (i).

D. Development Officer - Janet Davies

Two new clubs have been formed this year.

Tattenhall made a start last year as the Burwardsley Club but have moved to better lawns on the cricket outfield of the Tattenhall Recreation Centre (10 miles from Chester) and are making encouraging progress. Their representatives are here and will give their own report. Llandudno (Craig v Don) started up in June this year with a membership of 41 and will also be giving their own report. The Village Sports Club in Nannerch (a village 6 miles from Mold in Flintshire) are currently considering the feasibility of opening a croquet section using an underused crown green bowling green. On 1st September five of us from Chester set out 2 short lawns & ran a taster afternoon there. Amazingly the sun shone, 40 of the local residents came to have a go at golf croquet, Elmyr Hughes demonstrated a four ball break, and we had a most enjoyable and encouraging afternoon with free teas provided by the sports club and good publicity in the Chester Chronicle (Flintshire edition).

Every 2 years the Croquet Association offers awards for the clubs that have made most progress in 2 consecutive years of the preceding 3. Entries for the Townsend award (clubs with 1 or 2 lawns), The Apps Heley (3 or 4 lawns) or Millennium (clubs with 5+ lawns) should be with me early in December. Last time Bury shared the Townsend with Swindon, and Chester won the Apps Heley. I hope there will be some entries from the North West again this time. The winning clubs get £250, a plaque to keep and a trophy for 2 years, plus lots of glory. – *Fylde indicated that they were applying for the Apps Heley.*

Lastly, if any club is considering applying for a development grant could you please let me know as soon as possible. It is now too late for the November Development Committee meeting, but applications can be made for consideration at the February meeting. Latest date for applying is mid January.

E. CA Representative – Geoff Young (not present), **Barbara** presented

For the first time, I actually have something of interest to mention. It is that there is activity aimed at getting more cash to the CA Two new clubs have been formed this year.

'They' feel that the CA could give us grassroots more support if we gave them more money. At present we pay a capitation levy of £7.30 per member. Last year this gave them £45,868.

Tournament membership is optional, and if you don't pay it you can't enter tournaments. This is thought by some to inhibit tournament enthusiasm. There are also a smallish number of non-tournament members who pay a bit less and get basically the Gazette and a small glow of virtue that they're paying it. This gives the CA £57,813, plus the money they get from 25% of tournament entry fees (£12,612)

One answer would be simply to make the capitation about £17 and make everybody tournament members. However, there are those who think that getting more out of the more competitive players would be acceptable.

The other suggestion is that the capitation be increased to £10 and introduce the concept 'pay to play' – a term alien to croquet, adopted from bridge, which worked it into affiliated clubs to centralise membership.

Bridge usually works off a small sub and table money, at my club £2 per session. The EBU took 32p (previously 13p) of this to make everybody full members. The 19p increase gave amounts equivalent to everybody becoming individual EBU members.

The 'P2P' element would be charged for any event involving players coming from more than one club, at £3 per player due to the CA. I doubt that those who play in the league would be happy to pay £3 a match direct to the CA so I assume that if it was adopted it would in effect be paid by clubs.

As part of the projected gain is to increase competitive play I think it might well have a negative effect in respect of this aim.

I also have doubts that the sort of club that has only a couple of sessions a week, probably no league action, on rented space, with a sub to match, would find putting up their sub by a tenner a jolly idea.

There would have to be an exception for clubs with limited playing time.

F. Coaching Officer - Ken Cooper

This year we were again in popular demand with 11 courses requested at the beginning of the season, with another 3 coming later on from new clubs joining the Federation; this was 2 more than last year and was our highest yet. There has been a definite trend for more Golf Croquet courses to be requested every year.

To enable us to run the courses early in the season so that attendees can get the most benefit out of them, similar courses were combined, i.e. we had 3 requests for the Silver course so we ran one large one at Bowdon, plus 2 requests for a Bronze course which ended up as our first course to be run at Westmorland.

The Flying Circus ended up running one 2-day and three 1-day courses at the beginning of the year, plus a number of smaller courses to our new clubs later on in the season:

- Sunday 15th April: a **Silver** course was held at Bowdon for players with handicaps 8-11 (although there were some exceptions), led by Ken Cooper and assisted by Paul Rigge; 15 attended (5 from Bowdon, 4 from Chester, 3 from Westmorland, 2 from Fylde and 1 from Southport).
- Saturday, 21st April: an **Intermediate Golf Croquet** course was held at Chester run by Bob Connop, with Barry Keen also attending to judge Bob for his GC referee and coaching qualifications.
- Sunday, 29th April: a **Bronze** course was held at Westmorland for players with handicaps 12-18, led by Ken Cooper and assisted by Colin & Christine Irwin, who were able to pass on some of their skills and experience – a real surprise and privilege for the 13 attendees (6 from Westmorland, 3 from Bowdon, 2 from Penrith and 2 from Fylde).
- Saturday & Sunday, 12-13th May: a **Coaches Training Course (CTC)** was run at Chester by James Hawkins, assisted by Ken Cooper. 5 Chester and 2 Bowdon members (AC & GC) were assessed for their Club Coach awards and, as a result of further coaching sessions at their own clubs, were put forward for their yellow badges. So we now have a few more people in the region who can help with the recruitment and teaching of up-and-coming croquet players in future.
- 3 new clubs, Ellesmere, Flixton & Salford, asked if they could be given basic **Golf Croquet** coaching and David Barrett, with help from Jean Hargreaves, kindly offered to give their services in a series of short sessions over several weeks at these clubs.

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 and to the clubs where they were run.

Clubs now need to think about at what level they would like help in as regards to coaching for next year so that plans can be set up and courses organised.

The AGM thanked Ken for his report and all his past efforts with a heartfelt round of applause.

G. NW Festival of Croquet Manager – Barry Keen

No report.

H. League Manager - Tony Thomas

Despite the worst weather in living memory, 42 teams eventually completed the 2012 season - which had to be extended by two weeks.

In the 25 week season, we only had 5 weeks when there were no postponements. Of the 157 scheduled matches 40 were postponed (mostly due to weather) and 4 abandoned. Eventually 143 matches were concluded with another 4 being decided by walkovers leaving 10 matches unplayed and declared void.

Fortunately, the void and walkover matches did not effect the league titles which were all won on merit but it became undesirably close at times.

The League Rules have been studied by more players than ever before as captains had to decide the correct course of action when games were interrupted. Many were confused by the 14 day rule (which we only agreed last year!), others surprised by the 50% rule and many amazed by the three stroke rule (a long standing rule used to decide abandoned games). There have also been queries about replaying parts of fixtures, and managing hold ups during play. After many discussions I have proposed some changes to the league rules to address these issues.

There were clear winners in each league, so congratulations to:

Bowdon Saints - winners of the Advanced League for the second year running being undefeated all season. Chester – winners of the Midweek League winning all their matches in the process.

Bowdon – winners of the Short League again being undefeated throughout the year.

Pendle – winners of both the Handicap and Golf Leagues.

Once again, for the fourth year running, the use of Bonus Points in the Advance League has no effect on the winning position but you know my view on this system which I believe to be unreliable.

The web site has been kept up to date with latest scores and league positions and I do apologise for the odd error which sometimes occurs but they are usually spotted quickly by readers and then corrected.

Finally, I wish to place on record my appreciation to all captains for prompt reporting of results and especially for their hard work in re-arranging postponed matches in order to keep the league programme functioning – a big thank you to everyone.

I. Pennine Cup - Paul Rigge

Many thanks to the Six players who turned out this year at Pendle - **James Hawkins (½) – Captain Roger Schofield (2.5), Dennis Graham (3), Mike Steer (4), Terry Vernazza (6), Sylvia Steer (7)**. All had fun but the day went against us again, 3-6. Can you do any better?

J. Child Protection Officer - Barry Keen

No report.

6. Proposal of changes to the League Rules for 2013 for NW league fixtures (Tony Thomas)

The League Manager presented his arguments for the six changes he sought (attached). After much discussion each rule change was voted upon, some edits (in italics) were made from the agenda proposal ;

- 1a) The league manager shall publish a Provisional Fixture List at least 8 weeks before the start of the League season. Clubs may re-negotiate the fixture dates with opponents and inform the League Manager within four weeks. The League Manager will then publish the confirmed fixture list and announce the final date by which all matches must be played. **Passed – Unanimously.**
- 1b) If any teams cannot fulfil a fixture, they must agree a new date with the opposing club and inform the League Manager prior to the date of the postponed match, otherwise the match is forfeited and a walkover awarded to the opposing team (see rule 8). The exceptions being an agreed emergency or lawns being unfit for play in which case the League Manager will declare the match void unless informed within three weeks of a re-arranged date. **Passed – Unanimously**
- 7c) If a game within a match is abandoned it is declared void unless both team captains and players involved can unanimously *agree the result* **Passed – single abstention**
- 7d) The match result shall be the score of the games completed plus those decided according to rule 7c provided the number of games that counted equals at least half the number that should have been played. Otherwise, the match is declared void. The match will remain void unless the league manager is informed within three weeks of a re-arranged date. The re-arranged match may consist of just the games not completed in the abandoned fixture subject to the agreement of both captains and the same players fulfilling the unplayed games, otherwise the whole match must be replayed. **Passed – single abstention**
- 22) The time limit shall be 45 minutes with *15 minutes* added for games which are double banked **Passed – three abstentions – (trials for one year)**
- 23a) Matches shall comprise one round of doubles (with no restrictions on pairings but play teams in order of their combined handicaps) and four rounds of singles, all play all. However, matches will be restricted to 4 rounds of singles if agreed by the captains before the start of play of the match. **Passed – three abstentions**

7. Proposed new Midweek Golf League.

Alan Morton (Fylde) proposed an additional Midweek League – Level Play Golf Croquet. This would give us the equivalent of Advanced Association Croquet in Golf Croquet format. It would be three players per team and finer details have still to be discussed but three clubs have expressed positive interest. The League Manager can incorporate all the administration within the present system. The meeting agreed this proposal should go ahead.

8. Arrangements (dates and locations) for NW Federation Millennium Competitions.

- a) Advanced 20-21 April - Heaton Park
- b) Handicap 11/12 May - Pendle
- c) Short – 1st June - Fylde
- d) Golf 4th May - Heaton Park

9. Arrangement for NW Festival of Croquet

To be held 29/30th June at Southport. Keith Roberts unanimously elected as Manager.
Proposed -Tony Thomas; Seconded – Peter Wilson Secretary Liz Wilson

10. Pennine Cup Manager

Paul Rigge will be seeking a comprehensive list of player handicaps from each club secretary over the winter.

11. County Captains

Colin Irwin for Cheshire and David Openshaw for Lancashire were again elected as respective Captains, Colin's health was noted and the secretary was asked to clarify the situation before the Spring Meeting.

12. Coordination of dates for any other CA or other tournaments in the NW

NW Events are; (red = FED only)

29 - 1 April Pendle & Craven John Beech Memorial Easter Tournament

6-7 April 13th Lancashire Open Golf. Heaton Park

13-14 April Southport Advanced Weekend

20-21 April - Millennium Adv – Heaton Park

4th May - Millennium Handicap Golf – Heaton Park

4-6 May Bowdon May Handicap Weekend

11th / 12th May Millenium Handicap - Pendle

18-19 May Pendle & Craven B-Level Advanced Weekend

25-26 May Southport Handicap Weekend

1 – 2 June Bowdon Advanced Weekend

1st June Millennium Short – Fylde

2nd June – Golf Doubles Team Event at Pendle

15-16 June Pendle & Craven Advanced Weekend

23rd June Pennine Cup (AKA Roses) - Pendle

29th / 30th June Federation Festival - Southport

2-5 July Pendle & Craven Midweek Tournament

6-7 July Manchester Advanced Weekend Heaton Park

13-18 July Bowdon Northern Week

20-21 July Southport Super B and B-Level Advanced Weekend

27-28 July Fylde Handicap Weekend

10-11 August Manchester Handicap Weekend Heaton Park

16-18 August Pendle Handicap Weekend

23-26 August Bowdon North of England Championship

14-15 September Southport Advanced Weekend

21-22 September Bowdon B-Level Advanced Weekend

Please support and attend as many as you and your club can.

13. Presentation of League Trophies.

The Chairman presented the new league champions their trophies and photos will appear on the website.

Advanced League: Presented to Ken Cooper on behalf of Bowdon Saints

Handicap League: Presented to Ron Welsh on behalf Pendle & Craven

Midweek League: Presented to Ken Dawdon on behalf Chester

Short League: Presented to Brain Rust on behalf Bowdon

Golf League: Presented to Geoff Whitaker on behalf Pendle & Craven

14. Change to the Constitution.

2b – The Chairman shall be elected at the Autumn meeting each year and hold office until the next Autumn meeting, but shall be eligible for re-election subject to a maximum continuous term of service of three years. A Chairman may serve more than one connected term provided there is a break of at least one year between connected terms. The Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected at the Autumn meeting each year and hold office until the next Autumn meeting, but shall be eligible for re-election with no limit on the total length of service. *The Federation Croquet Association Council Representative shall be elected at the Spring meeting each year and hold office until the next Spring meeting*, but shall be eligible for re-election with no limit on the total length of service.

Passed unanimously.

2e – The Federation shall also elect a Coaching Officer, Development Officer *and a Child Protection Officer*. These Officials shall be responsible for the finances relating to their activities and shall present reports on their activities to the business meeting of the Federation. The Officers may appoint Committees as appropriate to assist in their duties.

Passed unanimously

15. Election of Officers

- i) Chairman – re-elected Liz Wilson: proposed Jean Hargreaves, seconded David Barrett.
- ii) Secretary – elected Paul Rigge : proposed Liz Wilson, seconded Tony Thomas.
- iii) Treasurer – re-elected Bob Connop : proposed Paul Rigge, seconded Liz Wilson.
- iv) Coaching Officer – elected Roger Schofield : proposed Tony Thomas, seconded Paul Rigge.
- v) Development Officer - re-elected Janet Davie : proposed Liz Wilson, seconded Jean Hargreaves.
- vi) CA Representative - Geoff Young will continue in post until Spring Meeting to fall in line with new constitution
- vii) League Manager – re-elected Tony Thomas; proposed Paul Rigge, seconded David Barrett.
- viii) Child Protection Officer – elected Jean Hargreaves: proposed John Saxby, seconded Georgina Llewellyn.

16. Election of Auditor.

Re-elected Peter Wilson: proposed Tony Thomas, seconded Barbara Young.

17. Club Reports and Announcements (to be taken in alphabetical order).

i) **Bowdon, John Saxby reports;**

It's been a mixed year at Bowdon with health worries for many members including Colin Irwin and Ken Cooper and the death of John Larmouth.

The new ultra warm clubhouse is a great encouragement for our many winter activities. 28 turned up for our first weekly winter one-ball comp last week which is a bit busy on two winter lawns. These were top dressed and overseeded last year and the other two are getting the treatment this year.

After many years of trying we have managed to get rid of the huge London plane tree beside lawn 4 which has improved it immensely.

We are currently erecting our new Centenary gates presented by our retiring President Martin Granger Brown.

On the playing front our 8 teams acquitted themselves well and 2 will collect trophies today.

We hosted 5 CA tournaments during the year and the international against the Swiss CA.

Our recruitment drive attracted fewer new members but those that joined seem pretty well hooked.

ii) **Bury, Barbara Young Reports;**

2012 was not one of the best years in Bury's history. In common with most clubs our lawns spent much of the season waterlogged and we had trouble finishing all our league matches although we did eventually manage to run all our special events such as the Fun Days.

We also suffered the death of two of our members – Mick Sandiford very suddenly just before a match and Shaney Wicks after a long battle with cancer. It is however a tribute to the friendliness and support of our members that Sue Sandiford immediately joined the club and is already test-driving Shaney's mallet (Mick's is too big for her) and Colin Wicks is hoping to rejoin the club next year.

On a brighter note our two best players achieved the distinction of being selected to play in Eights Week – Paul Rigge in the Spencer-Ell in which he came fourth and Matt Holmes in the Selectors' Weekend which he won. Congratulations to both. Our latest whizz-kid Andy Brandwood also had a sparkling season winning all the tournaments he played in except one where he was the runner-up. He was also delighted at Fylde to record a +26 win over Robert Fulford. Congratulations to him too.

The dates of the tournaments at Heaton Park in 2013 are listed on the agenda but I would like to draw attention to the Heaton Park Handicap weekend on 10/11 August - this event used to be in late September but was poorly supported and in fact was cancelled the last two years. We hope that by moving it earlier in the season more people will be interested in entering. We plan to publicise it more strongly round the region next year to drum up support.

iii) **Chester, Janet Davies Reports;**

This has been a good season, mainly of consolidation. We have maintained our target membership with 97 members (including 7 country members). We have also been fortunate that, in an amazingly wet year, we only had to cancel one home fixture due to unplayable lawns. Perhaps there's something to be said for the famous slope.

League results were very encouraging (1st in the Midweek, 2nd in the Advanced, and the Golf, 3rd in the Short and 6th in the Handicap). As it was our first time of entering the Advanced league we were particularly pleased with that result.

We also entered the CA's Longman Trophy competition for the first time, and managed to reach the semi finals at Surbiton where we came 3rd, so bringing home a magnificent piece of silver (too valuable to keep in the pavilion!)

Once again we beat Shrewsbury in our annual match for the Northern Marches Cup.

We hosted flying circus courses for intermediate golf and for club coaches, sent 4 members on the silver course at Bowdon, and ran the usual association and golf beginners' courses.

iv) **Craig y Don (Llandudno), Jack Pettenden Reports;**

Following negotiations with the local bowling club we have acquired the use of a green for croquet with a playing season between 1st April and 30th September each year. Two public meetings each drew substantial numbers convincing us that there would be good support to start a club. We set out with thirty members when play began at the end of June which by the season's end had increased to 41.

We are grateful to the CA for supplying us with a starter set and to the generosity of Fylde, Pendle & Craven and Bowden who each responded to our plea for any surplus gear so that we very quickly acquired sufficient mallets, balls etc to allow us to double bank on two short lawns.

Most of our members are new to the game and so far Golf is the dominant discipline. We have already begun to instruct a small nucleus in Association and hope to grow this side of the game next season.

We want to keep members together during the close season and to this end have arranged fortnightly indoor games afternoons with tea & biscuits. We recently held an Autumn Lunch which was well attended and we were delighted to welcome a number of friends from our next door neighbours at Llanfairfechan.

We acquired a shed for storage of our equipment which however has proved inadequate to withstand the attention of the local layabouts. Whilst we have fortunately lost no equipment we have got to put our minds to replacing this with a more secure building before the new season opens. A winter of fund raising awaits us. We are delighted to be part of the NW Fed and as we develop hope to involve ourselves in the Fed activities.

v) **Crake Valley, Tom Griffith Reports,**

Despite a difficult year at Crake and especially with waterlogged lawns we are now looking to the future with more confidence. However, in the last few weeks there have been some encouraging developments. The membership position is (slightly) less desperate than it was. We have picked up some new members, and are just beginning to have a nucleus of middle- to high-handicap players who want to improve.

We also have done something constructive about lawns 2 and 3. After three years of complaining about the weather, blaming United Utilities for doing work in the field next door, wishing we had a herring-bone drainage system, etc, we have finally been goaded by Brian Walker (who is handicap 22 at croquet but around minus a half at drains and ditches) into doing something about our existing drainage system. So we have spent £500 on locating drains, deepening ditches, and (crucially, I think) clearing the ditch that was totally blocked by reeds. It is too early to be sure, but we seem to have had water running off lawns 2 and 3 in a way I haven't seen it run for years. So we hope we shall again have four working lawns next year.

We have been running very successful advanced tournaments for many years, and also an informal event - the Bob Vaughan trophy - which we have run as a one-day, short croquet knockout, attracting players from Penrith, Keswick and Westmorland who don't normally get a chance to play in competitive events. With the lawn improvements, (we are now the only club in Cumbria with four lawns), we are now considering offering more 'official' events in the future - possibly a Short Croquet tournament and a handicap weekend

vi) **Culcheth, Brian Poynton reports**

Club in pretty much the same position as last year, membership static at 16, although we have a healthy financial base. Now playing indoors on the mat every Tuesday mornings. All welcome to come down.

vii) **Ellesmere - no report**

viii) **Flixton - no report**

ix) **Fylde, Peter Wilson reports;**

Annual Dinner is Thursday 29th November, many coming more welcome.

Alan Morton went to the All England Finals at Ramsgate. FCC has a big history in this competition but could the committee please consider a letter to CA about the Southerly bias in the location of the finals.

We had a very successful beginners drive which netted us a lot of funds, but the weather prevented the new players from getting the most from it. We hope that the off season activities will keep them interested and that next season we can put the jet stream behind us.

This year's croquet achievements:

We entered all the events at the Festival winning the advanced. It was the best ever, thanks to S&BCC for efforts.

Secretary's shield ko'ed 1st Round

Longman cup ko'ed 1st Round

In the Mid week league we were runners up but in all the other leagues only narrowly avoided relegation. Despite the poor results (let's face it, we were due some) as a club we have moved forward tremendously: We hosted the Millennium short and would like to do so again.

We held our first CA handicap tournament which was successful and we are repeating that. 27-28 Jul 2013 entries welcome.

The tennis club where we have our lawns has had new life injected into it. Our position there continues to benefit us and them. For a reduced donation to the Tennis club we have taken over the lawn maintenance. Drainage has been tested this year but has risen to the challenge, further improvements are underway. Thanks to Liverpool CC for lending us a scarifying cassette. We now have some serious equipment and a new secure storage facility is being planned. This will also give us more room for living space. We continue to work on our lawns and they respond. We had our first sextuple on them in July.

x) **Isle of Man, Rick Bellwood reports,**
Still no court to play upon on the Isle.

xi) **Keswick - no report**

xii) **Liverpool, James Hawkins reports;**

It's been a difficult year - the rains arrived before I could start recruitment, and the lawns were waterlogged for most of July and August. Nevertheless, there have been some positive achievements: * A trial schools programme is underway. A group of eight 13 year olds played throughout the summer term. The boys and the school are very happy with the project, and it will hopefully develop over the coming years.

* An outreach project has been started at the National Trust's Speke Hall. There are promising signs that this will provide a 'shop window' for future recruitment.

* The failing tennis club has been stabilised with a Sport England grant to resurface their courts; I've submitted a follow-up application to fund the renovation of the clubhouse. We won't know success until December, but there's a chance of getting improved facilities by the start of the 2013 season.

* In the last month, a drainage channel has been installed, running through the south-west corner of Lawn 1. Even if the weather pattern next year remains the same, this should counteract the worst of the effects.

xiii) **Llanfairfechan, Anwen Lloyd Williams Reports;**

We began our Season on Easter Sunday, when 27 members came along hot cross buns were served by Committee members.

Group bookings began in earnest a week after Easter and continued until the last Thursday in September, although we were down this year to what we were last year due to the bad weather, we did have over 527 visitors, and 3 new groups which is very encouraging as we rely on the green fees to maintain the course.

It was a rather difficult time this year with League matches, what with being unable to get members to play or because the weather was so bad, but on a happy note Llanfairfechan did win the Short at Southport, and an enjoyable weekend was had by all. Richard one of our members held a 6 week course for beginners in Association, this proved to be very successful, hopfully new League players for 2013 who knows

We had 7 new members joining after our Open Day, but sadly we also lost 3 members, two of which were Trustees who died within a fortnight of each other, Jean Morrisson and Malltwn Williams they were both been members from the start, and were also past Presidents. Our Annual Presentation Lunch will be held at the Llanfairfechan Golf Club on Saturday 10th November. The Friday Cafe which proved such a success last year will resume on Friday 15th when members meet up for Soup, Sandwiches and play games.

Our Annual Charity Beetle Drive will be held on January 28th and this year the money will go to our local Talking Books for the Blind.

May I on behalf of all our members wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and hope that Tony will next year have a stress free season.

xiv) **Pendle and Craven – Ron Welch reports;**

This was a season progressively affected by rain. We began with a successful John Beech Weekend at Easter, incorporating Advanced play for the first time, and filling five lawns for four days. After that our tournament programme began to suffer and though we ran three events, the final day of the Midweek tournament in July was washed out and the August Bank Holiday weekend had to be cancelled, with lawns unplayable. Our drainage is never wonderful, but we now find ourselves attempting to restore Lawn 4, the centre of which was effectively drowned after being under water for two months. We hope to have it back in play next summer. One event which did just get played was the Pennine Cup between North East and North West Federations, which went ahead only after an early morning lawn inspection and phone call to Middlesbrough. The North West lost. There were some positives, Pendle had a good weekend at the Southport Festival, winning the Golf event and emerging as Club Champions. We also won two North West Leagues, the Handicap and the Golf. In 2013 we will be hosting a Golf Croquet Doubles Day team event. Full details will be forthcoming in the New Year and we hope for good support.

xv) **Penrith and North Lakes, Howard Bowron Reports;**

Despite pressure on lawn space during club sessions we extended the range of internal competitions adding a singles 14pt full lawn competition to our existing (two) singles 'short' competitions and golf doubles. This was well supported and will be continued next season. In all 41 competition games were played.

We also extended our programme of friendly matches against other local croquet clubs, welcoming Ivan Wheatley and a team from Westmorland CC for the first time to Langwathby. A fixture we agreed should become an annual event. For the second year players from Penrith joined those from Keswick, Crake and Westmorland for the annual Bob Vaughan 'short' tournament, hosted by Crake CC.

Penrith players also participated in the Millennium 'short' event hosted by Fylde CC.

We had a cow invasion at the sports ground at the end of September so whilst repairing the damage we've taken the opportunity to extend our short croquet lawn to a 'three quarter' lawn and expect it to be in play next season.

xvi) **Salford – no report.**

xvii) **Southport - report received after the meeting – Tony Thomas**

This season has seen momentous changes in our lawn management programme as we took over complete maintenance from the local Council. With the aid of grants we have made substantial investments in equipment and with club members working on a rota system the lawns have a planned mowing and maintenance schedule. We also employ a groundsman on an hourly basis as required. The latest development in this plan is to feed our lawns using a Tea Brew system which is a liquid spray system (bio-friendly) at the forefront of lawn technology, we make the 'brew' ourselves. We hopefully will never use chemical fertilisers again.

Whilst the main focus has been on the South Lawns, the North Lawns have not been neglected and they have received and will continue to receive appropriate maintenance in time for next years Festival.

Our normal tournaments were all successful in addition to the hosting Home Internationals and the Spencer Ell Tournament. On the league front, we ran six league teams this year and although not winning any trophies they did give many of our members the opportunity to start playing competitive croquet in the region. Overall, a successful season consolidating a foundation for the future development of the club.

xviii) **Tattenhall, Ruth Wrigley reports,**

Only have a single lawn, that has suffered drainage problems this summer, but all 24 members have all enjoyed themselves.

xix) **Westmorland (Levenshall) John Shakespeare reports.**

Although seeing a reduction in numbers, the entire club has enjoyed league play for the first time, hence the wish to push into midweek. The meeting urged them to enter the short league next season.

18..NW Federation Equipment Assets

According to my records the NWFed's equipment assets are held as follows. **I would be grateful if clubs could check their records and confirm these details.** 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. The equipment originally lent to Flixton by Bowdon was later given to them. This means that the equipment lent to Salford by Flixton, is actually the property of Flixton and should eventually be returned to them.

Bowdon:	None	
Bury:	None	
Chester	None	
Crake:	None	
Culcheth:	None	
Ellesmere:	3 mallets	
Flixton	None	
Fylde:	None – three mallets transferred to Ellesmere	
Harlech:	None	
Isle of Man	None	
Keswick	None	
Liverpool:	None	+ CA start up set;
Llanfairfechan	None	
Llandudno	None	+ CA start up set;
Pendle	None	
Penrith	4 mallets, 1 set hoops, 1 peg	
Salford	None	+ CA start up set
Southport	None	
Westmorland	5 mallets, 1 set primary balls, 1 set 2ndary balls	
Tattenhall	1 set 2nd balls, 2 garden mallets	+ CA start up set

I have also acquired a 'CA Development Officer's set' to be used for demonstrations and short term loans.

If the Nannerch initiative takes off then I will lend this to them. I also have my own garden croquet set which if necessary I can lend to new clubs. However with new clubs popping up all over the place it would be appreciated if those clubs who have had Federation equipment for several years could make plans to buy their own equipment eventually. Secondary colour balls and mallets are the priority.

A question was raised about the variance of stock claimed between reports, the 'missing' sets of balls and mallets have been written off.

19. Croquet in the North Leaflet

After open discussion it is to be dropped in favour of the Federation Website, The secretary will write to Croquet North and Yorkshire informing them that we are no longer maintaining this leaflet.

20. Any Other Business

An appeal was made to try and co-ordinate club annual dinners in the same way that other events are to avoid double bookings.

Bowdon Dinner Friday 23rd November £25 – live music and dancing too.

Pendle Dinner Friday 23rd November £20.

Fylde Dinner Thursday 29th November £22.

Culcheth Dinner Friday 18th January

Southport Dinner Saturday 2nd February £20.

Bury Dinner Friday 22nd February £20.

Any Federation Member will be welcome at any/all. Further details available via web site.

Southport wondered if there was any support for dropping the practice of the home team supplying lunches for league games – totally rejected by the room.

A way of extending the season by playing on ‘astroturf’ outdoors was proposed, by developing *carpet* hoops based upon the JC Lamb design. Agreement was reached to allow production of a sample prototype to hawk around various outdoor grounds seeking permission for winter play at those facilities.

(Details www.jclamb.com)

21. Date, time and location of next meetings

Spring Meeting will be on 2nd March 2013 and next AGM, 2nd November 2013. Both at Culcheth Sports Club.

22. Close of Meeting - Meeting closed at 12:55

NWFCC

2011-2012 Income & Expenditure Statement

		<u>12-Oct-12</u>	<u>31-Oct-11</u>
		<u>Amount</u>	<u>Account</u>
Income & Expenditure			
<i>Member Club Affiliation Fees</i>	Affiliation Fees @ £20/Club	£300.00	£300.00 260.00
<i>Development</i>	Income	£8.20	
	Expenditure	<u>£8.20</u>	-358.20
<i>Miscellaneous Income</i>	Millenium Short 25%	£30.00	69.13
	Millennium Handicap	£70.00	35.50
	CA Refunds		290.00
	Festival of Croquet	£374.00	
	Interest	<u>£3.05</u>	3.04
			£477.05
<i>Miscellaneous Expenditure</i>	Coffee/Tea at AGM	-£30.00	
	Coffee/Tea at Spring Meeting	-£30.00	-37.50
	Lawn Hire Pennine Cup	-£37.50	-26.30
	Coaching		-79.66
	General Administration		
	Advanced League Shield Engraving	-£22.00	
	Website Expenses	-£40.78	-24.99
			-£180.28
Nett income (loss) during year		£624.97	£131.02
Opening Balances			
Cash		£0.00	
Current Account		£99.93	
Deposit Account		£3,003.04	
Total Opening Balances		<u>£3,102.97</u>	<u>£2,971.95</u>
Total as at 12-Oct-12 2012		<u>£3,727.94</u>	<u>£3,102.97</u>
Bank Balances as at 12 October 2012			
Cash		£0.00	
Current Account		£691.85	
Deposit Account		£3,036.09	
Total as at 12 October 2012		<u>£3,727.94</u>	<u>£3,102.97</u>

Accounts as at 12th October 2012 R Connop, Treasurer

Certified as correct: P Wilson, Auditor

Date: 22/10/12

CURRENT CONSTITUTION:	PROPOSED AMENDMENTS: (main changes underlined)
<p>2.b) The Officers shall be elected at the Autumn meeting each year and hold office until the next Autumn meeting, but shall be eligible for re-election with no limit on the total length of service, except for the Chairman. The maximum continuous term of service for the Chairman shall be three years. A Chairman may serve more than one connected term provided there is a break of at least one year between connected terms.</p>	<p>2.b) The Chairman shall be elected at the Autumn meeting each year and hold office until the next Autumn meeting, but shall be eligible for re-election subject to a maximum continuous term of service of three years. A Chairman may serve more than one connected term provided there is a break of at least one year between connected terms.</p> <p>The Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected at the Autumn meeting each year and hold office until the next Autumn meeting, but shall be eligible for re-election with no limit on the total length of service.</p> <p><u>The Federation Croquet Association Council Representative shall be elected at the Spring meeting each year and hold office until the next Spring meeting, but shall be eligible for re-election with no limit on the total length of service.</u></p>
<p>2.e) The Federation shall also elect a Coaching Officer and a Development Officer. These Officials shall be responsible for the finances relating to their activities and shall present reports on their activities to the business meetings of the Federation. The Officers may appoint Committees as appropriate to assist them in their duties.</p>	<p>2.e) The Federation shall also elect a Coaching Officer, Development Officer <u>and a Child Protection Officer.</u> These Officials shall be responsible for the finances relating to their activities and shall present reports on their activities to the business meetings of the Federation. The Officers may appoint Committees as appropriate to assist them in their duties.</p>

ADVANCED LEAGUE '12 P W L D Games BP Points

Bowdon Saints	5*	5	0	0	26-19	4	14
Chester	6	3	3	0	28-26	5	11
Bowdon Canons	5*	4	1	0	26-15	1	9
Bury	6	3	3	0	27-23	3	9
Fylde	6	3	3	0	25-29	0	6
Pendle & Craven	5*	1	4	0	15-30	1	3
Southport	5*	0	5	0	20-25	1	1

* Void Matches:

*Pendle v Bowdon Canons
Southport v Bowdon Saints*

MIDWEEK LEAGUE '12 P W L D Games Points

Chester	7	7	0	0	32-17	14
Fylde	7	6	1	0	33-16	12
Westmorland	7	4	3	0	28-21	8
Bowdon Griffins	7	3	4	0	25-24	6
Bury	6*	2	4	0	19-23	4
Southport	7	2	5	0	21-28	4
Pendle & Craven	7	2	5	0	20-29	4
Bowdon Earls	6*	1	5	0	11-31	2

* Void Matches:

Bury v Bowdon Earls

SHORT LEAGUE '12 P W L D Games Points

Bowdon	6	5	0	1	59-38	11
Bury	6	3	2	1	45-44	7
Chester	5*	3	2	0	45-35	6
Southport	5*	2	2	1	39-24	5
Pendle & Craven	6	2	3	1	43-53	5
Fylde	6	1	4	1	44-38	3
Llanfairfechan	6	1	4	1	31-51	3

* Void Matches:

Southport v Chester

HANDICAP LEAGUE '12 P W L D Games Points

Pendle & Craven	9	7	2	0	35-28	14
Southport	9	5	4	0	36-26	10
Bury Caesars	9	5	4	0	33-27	10
Crake Valley	8*	4	4	0	31-21	8
Bowdon Firs	8*	4	4	0	27-29	8
Chester	8*	4	4	0	24-29	8
Bury Peelers	7*	3	4	0	24-25	6
Birkdale	6*	3	3	0	19-24	6
Fylde	9	3	6	0	26-37	6
Bowdon St Marys	7*	2	5	0	18-28	4

* Void Matches:

*Crake v Birkdale
Birkdale v Bowdon Firs
Bowdon SM v Birkdale
Chester v Bury Peelers*

GOLF LEAGUE '12 P W L D Games Points

Pendle & Craven	9	7	1	1	91-71	15
Chester	9	6	3	0	93-69	12
Westmorland	9	6	3	0	92-70	12
Bury North	9	5	2	2	88-76	12
Llanfairfechan	7*	3	2	2	66-60	8
Bowdon	9	3	4	2	81-79	8
Bury South	9	3	5	1	77-85	7
Culcheth	9	3	5	1	69-91	7
Fylde	8*	2	6	0	64-80	4
Southport	8*	0	7	1	51-91	1

* Void matches:

*Fylde v Llanfairfechan;
Southport v Llanfairfechan*