

DRAFT Minutes of the North West Federation of Croquet Clubs AGM

Saturday 17th November 2018

- 1 The Meeting was attended by 35 people representing:
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| Bowdon: | Ken Cooper, Francois Garcia (& Bury), Graham Good, Steve Reynolds, Sylvia Steer, David Walters |
| Bury: | David Barrett, Margaret Eccles, Ken Eccles, Barbara Young. |
| Chester: | John Dawson, Alan Clare, Pat Clare, |
| Craig-y-Don: | |
| Crake: | Jim Allcock, Sandra Carnes, David Cornes |
| Culcheth: | Alan Wright, Bob Connop |
| Ellesmere: | |
| Flixton: | |
| Fylde: | Peter Wilson, Liz Wilson. |
| Keswick: | |
| Liverpool: | James Hawkins |
| Llanfairfechan: | Sarah Andrew |
| Pendle & Craven: | Kathryn Schofield, Roger Schofield (& Bury), Paul Rigge |
| Penrith: | |
| Salford: | Irene Waterhouse, Frances Rollinson |
| Southport: | Don Williamson, Derek Lunt, Kath Thomas, Tony Thomas |
| Stonyhurst: | |
| Tattenhall: | David Boyd (& Chester) |
| Westmorland: | Ivan Wheatley, David Snaith, Mike Hodgson |

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. **Apologies for Absence:** Jack Pattenden, John Hannah (Craig-y-Don), Steve Skelton (Keswick), Benedict O'Connor (Stonyhurst), Libby Dixon, Ruth Wrigley (Tattenhall), Jean Matthews (Flixton), Jean Hargreaves (Bury)
3. The **minutes of the Spring Meeting** held on 4th March 2018 were confirmed as a correct record.
Proposed – Ivan Wheatley, Seconded – Don Williamson
4. **Matters Arising** – None.

5. **Reports on the Past Year**
A **Chairman – Paul Rigge**

Quick roundup;

The Festival was successfully managed by Abdul at my request, was good to see someone else with my weird sartorial wardrobe style! (I did ask if he would sell me his Egyptian waistcoat – na!).

North West now has a new tournament manager available for 'hire', he handled his first at the AC Millennium Handicap, including a tiebreaking ending quite calmly... Bury's Chris Alvey.

Late April I was contacted by a Jesuit School in the Lancashire heartland of Bowland who were looking to introduce their students to our sport – more about that from coaching, but suffice to say, we now have another club in our Federation – if this meeting approves the inclusion later in today's agenda.

CA Management wanted to drop secondary and any subsequent club membership levies - mails flew and we'll hear more from John, I'm sure.

Helped James out with a 'Corporate' event at Manchester University in July – more details from him or read the Fed website for my report on a really fun day with Engineers & Scientists.

Finally, can I say a few words about our Federation's Hosted Tournaments – these are not CA events, we restrict entries to these to federation members only, so as to allow ***you*** access to the world-wide tournament scene - possibly for the first time, playing against friends you'll have met in the leagues.. Why do I want to talk about this? Entries are down year on year across each discipline – and it's a concern. Why is this? Is it that there is no interest anymore in individual competitions. Doubt it so Can I call upon you to spread the word in ***your*** clubs about these Millennium tournaments – it takes as much effort by the host clubs to prepare their venues for 6 as it does for 16/20 but the income they derive is totally different.

And Congratulations to John Dawson on his appointment as Vice-Chairman of the CA.

B **Secretary – David Walters**

The Federation continues to encourage member clubs to support the CA membership changes. Club secretaries will have recently received a letter from Jeff Dawson indicating that only 75% of clubs nationally have participated so far.

The impact of the General Data Protection Regulation continues to challenge us all. I believe it is right to assume that it is

necessary for us to share contact details within the Federation to enable us to communicate with member Clubs and arrange events. However more from Tony later re, in particular, the publication of email addresses on our website.

Clubs & readers of the Gazette will also be aware of Dave Gunn's progress during his term as National Development Officer. We have arranged an update session at Whitehead Park on 12th January, 2019, (10.30am to 1pm) to enable Dave to share the benefits of the Club Development workshop and the hosted website offering. It would be appreciated if member clubs could confirm their intention to attend so that we can firm up the details.

C Treasurer – Liz Wilson

Looking at the comparatives with last year you will see

Income

Affiliation fees are up by two clubs – Stonyhurst and non- payment from Ellesmere last year due to mix up with banking cheque

Festival Profits are down to breakeven – less entries this year. Entry fees will have to go up this year as the CA Lawn Hire Charges will be going up.

Millennium Events levy is down due to small entry to the Short and late and therefore small entry in the LPG. The year 2016 – 2017 also had a late sub from the year before

Expenditure

Engraving cost due to new base being added to one of the trophies. Individual engraving costs should be paid by the winning club

Lawn and Ball Hire was a donation to Bury for use of tertiary balls at the Millennium Advanced AC

Good to see some expenditure on coaching

I propose that the Club Subs for Membership of the North West Federation remain at £20

D CA Representative - John Dawson

A busy period. I was heavily involved in the most recent Working Group on the reorganisation of the CA structure. Its proposals have been approved by Council - most significant is the reduction in the size of the Council with the Council concentrating on high level policy and an Executive Board managing the day to day activities. I again led a group running croquet at Country File Live at Blenheim; in 2019 there will be a second CFL at Castle Howard in Yorkshire. A group is looking at getting croquet into the Commonwealth Games in 2022 as a Demonstration Sport and helping the World Croquet Federation to gain CG status. The issue of primary/ secondary membership is more complex than first thought and is being considered further. Finally Council approved the adoption of the new GC Rules from 1 March 2019.

E League Manager – Ivan Wheatley

The 2018 season comprising 154 matches played by 45 teams spread over 6 leagues was concluded in early October. Whilst some leagues had runaway winners two leagues hung on the outcome of the very last matches of the season. In one case, the weekend handicap AC league, the league was eventually decided by a difference of one net game with the two teams in contention having the same number of match points.

Six matches were declared walkovers compared with eleven in 2017 and whilst we had eight matches declared void, seven of these related to the withdrawal of one team from the short lawn league before any matches were played.

The winners of the various leagues will be presented with their trophies later in the meeting.

The weather conditions over the course of the season saw two distinct periods. April and May were particularly wet months and it was necessary to reschedule a number of games due to waterlogged or otherwise unplayable laws. Once we were through the "wet season" the weather turned and we experienced probably one of the driest summers on record. As the summer progressed a number of clubs reported their lawns to be distressed due to lack of rain however this didn't seem to affect play and we were able to complete most matches by the end of August with September being used to catch up and complete the season's programme. The decision to front end load the matches this season seems to have paid dividends and I plan to schedule the 2019 season in a similar manner.

Planning for the 2019 season will commence soon. The 2019 leagues will be the same as 2018 with handicap and level play GC, midweek and weekend handicap AC and short leagues remaining unchanged. Over the course of 2018 various discussions have been held on the structure of the AC Advanced B league and this will be discussed separately. Invitations to register teams will be sent out to all clubs within the next few weeks with a deadline for returns no later than the end of the year. From this I will be pulling together a set of provisional fixtures in early January and it will then be for clubs to negotiate any changes with the opposite numbers so that by the end of February I will be in a position to issue the final fixture lists. The season will start on Saturday 6th April and will end on Sunday 13th October. Easter in 2019 is the 19th to 22nd April and this weekend will not be used for scheduled matches.

No changes are planned for the 2019 League Rules other than any changes agreed for the AdvB league and to recognise the adoption of the new 5th Edition Rules for GC which will take effect from March 2019. These and any other changes agreed elsewhere in this meeting will be included in a draft set of League Rules will be presented to the Federation Spring Meeting for adoption for the 2019 season. In terms of the new GC rules I am assuming that clubs will conduct their own communication sessions on the implications of these new rules before the start of the new season.

F Coaching Officer – Paul Rigge

First fixture of the year was before the season began, an AC POD about Super Advanced Play.
Room full attended at Whitehead Park 14th March.

May 3rd – First visit to Stonyhurst, introducing 6 staff & 12 students to both AC *and* GC, Including Lawn layouts.

7th June – Visit Stonyhurst with CA IPD (Alison Jones) Coaching AC full and short lawn.

The upshot of these visits, was that this school entered a team into the Federation Festival and **didn't** take the wooden spoon in that discipline – a hell of an achievement when you consider that they hadn't even held a mallet the month before.

The only Flying Circus Request I got was from Crake Valley, for Bronze **Golf** Course... I went up 14th May to a well supported event... if you don't ask – you don't get.

Tuesdays – regular sessions at Pendle and

Thursdays – at Fylde throughout May/June/July.

G Development Officer – James Hawkins

The NW Fed is healthier than it's neighbours, but we should keep a close eye on the trailing off of top level competitive play. We're in a much worse state than 20 years ago, but probably better than 40 years ago. It's still possible to enthuse newcomers, but the regular commitment of time seems to drive some away. In a changing society, we need to address how a 21st century club should look.

There are positive developments -

Criccieth, who've joined the CA and formed links with Llanfairfechan;

Mold, where the manager of Mold Castle offered the use of grass for croquet. She's been put in touch with contacts at Nannerch, but nothing further has been heard. The project may not come to anything, but should remain under observation; Stonyhurst, which has involved both boys and girls from the school taking part, along with several of the teaching staff; Tattenhall, who invited me for a day's brainstorming about local grants for helping with mower purchase;

Manchester, where Paul Rigge and I ran a day's corporate GC for nuclear physicists from Manchester University. Around 40 players took part on three short lawns, and there's potential for using this sort of event for recruitment to clubs. If we run one again, we should have more joined-up thinking about how it can benefit us.

H NW Festival of Croquet – Abdul Ahmad “All went smoothly”

I Safeguarding Officer – Jean Hargreaves

Nothing to report.

J Pennine Cup Captain - Liz Wilson

The annual match between the North East (Yorkshire / Croquet North) and the North West Federations took place, for the first time, in Middlesbrough. It was contested between teams of four, rather than 6, because of player shortages. Thanks to Robert Essler, Howard Bowron, Paul Dowdall & Garry Wilson for representing the NW.

K Federation Handicapper – Don Williamson

There has been discussion at the CA regarding the distinction between the roles of CA, Federation, and Club Handicappers. A communication is expected before the start of next season.

An attempt will be made to include all formats of AC (i.e. including Short) on a single handicap card. It is expected that this will be announced in time for next season, although it may be trialled initially. Concerns were expressed how this will accommodate different physical capabilities.

Few nominations were made this year for the Most Improved Player awards. Clubs were encouraged to nominate rapid improvers early in their development.

L Webmaster – Tony Thomas

The Federation website (www.croquetnw.co.uk) continues to be a popular vehicle for updating and informing anyone about Croquet in the northwest. According to the statistical analysis software we use, the site has been visited over 50,000 times in the last twelve months, the most popular pages being visited repeatedly are the front page, all the league pages, the Who's Who page and the Honours Board. When a fresh News item is posted, there are usually a flourish of about 60 hits within a few days.

There is a concern about the use of personal data on the website and whether it is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). All voluntary organisations have similar concerns. For the efficient organisation of our

Federation, our website lists telephone numbers and email addresses of Federation officials, Team Captains, Club Chairs and Secretaries. To date, no one has ever objected to this data being in the public domain.

However, to safeguard the Federation, there should be some evidential agreement from every person listed on the site that their data can be used as stated. So for next year, I will seek an email agreement from all Federation officials about the use of their data on the site. It is impractical to do similarly for everyone else, so am requesting all clubs to ensure that before submitting any personal data for their members listed on the site, they should have an agreement from that member.

As always, I am open to ideas and suggestions on improving the site. Discussions have taken place about the development of a national 'corporate' system of websites for all clubs and Federations, so we await further details.

Thank you to everyone who has supplied the website with news and photographs during the year.

6 Changes to level play advanced rules AC (LPAC) B League (Proposed by League Manager, Ivan Wheatley)

The history of LPAC croquet in the North West region is one of steady decline over recent times starting with the decline and eventual demise of the A (unrestricted handicap) league and more recently the decline in the numbers of teams taking part in the B league with those teams that continue to participate in the B league reporting increased difficulty raising teams to fulfil league fixtures. Over the course of 2018 Francois Garcia of Bowdon and I have undertaken a study of the problems and limitations faced by clubs with a view to identifying the opportunities for rebuilding the advanced AC league play.

The conclusions reached from this study were in summary:

- The numbers of club members willing to take part in LPAC matches is decreasing with new members becoming involved insufficient to compensate for those retiring.
- The difference between the lowest and highest handicap players as the league is currently structured is too great for competitive games and is a disincentive to middle order B class players to take part.
- That doubles play was a good way for higher handicap players to develop their skills by playing both with and against lower handicap players and should be retained.

We considered a number of ways in which we could hope to address these issues and our proposal is:

- To allow clubs to combine their resources for the purpose of entering teams in the AdvB league thereby giving smaller clubs to create an adequate squad of able and willing LPAC players. (Carried Nem Con)
- To raise the minimum handicap from ½ to 1 and to set a minimum handicap for player 3 of 3 to provide a more competitive opportunity for middle order B class players. (Carried 5 For & 1 Against)
- To retain a doubles game comprising player 3 and either player 1 or player 2 from each team.
- To retain team sizes of 3 players with a minimum overall aggregate handicap of 6

After some discussion it was also agreed that the doubles game in the AdvB league could be either conventional doubles or alternate stroke doubles by agreement between the two teams, in line with CA Tournament Regulations.

7 Amendment to League Rules (Proposed by Southport & Birkdale Croquet Club)

Don Williamson spoke on behalf of S.B.C.C. to propose that corner pegs are used in all Federation League matches, except Golf.

Whilst concerns were raised at the number of corner pegs that might be required in a short croquet tournament, the motion was carried.

8 Admission to Membership (Proposed by Paul Rigge)

The meeting confirmed Criccieth Tennis & Croquet Club as a member of the Federation & also accepted Stonyhurst College on a provisional basis, pending their application to join the CA.

9 Subscriptions (Proposed by Treasurer, Liz Wilson)

Agreed that Subscriptions should remain unchanged.

10 Amendment to Constitution (Proposed by Southport & Birkdale Croquet Club)

Don Williamson spoke on behalf of S.B.C.C. to propose a change to the Federation Constitution, restricting the ability of Executive Officers to vote on motions submitted by Clubs. After a brief discussion the motion was overwhelmingly rejected.

11 **Arrangements (dates and locations) for NW Federation Millenium Competitions**

- a) Advanced Bowdon – 6/7 or 13/14 April
- b) Handicap Pendle – 13th -14th July
- c) Short Fylde Saturday 11th May
- d) Hcp Golf Chester TBC
- e) Lvl Golf Bury TBC

Note that Crake hope to be able to host an event in 2020

12 **Arrangements for Festival of Croquet – 29th and 30th June.** Ivan Wheatley agreed to be Manager and Liz Wilson to be Secretary. Entry Fees will need to be reviewed in light of the increased Lawn Hire rates proposed by the CA. Consideration will also be given to renting additional portable toilets for the event.

13 **Coordination of dates for CA or other tournaments in the NW**

27 March	Bowdon Charity 1-ball
6 April	Crake Alternate Shot Doubles AC
19-22 April	Pendle & Craven John Beech Memorial Easter Tournament
27-28 April	Southport Advanced Weekend
4-6 May	Bowdon May Handicap Weekend
11-12 May	Pendle & Craven B & C Level Advanced Weekend
12 May	National Croquet Day
18 May	Pendle & Craven B-Level Golf
18 -19 May	Southport Handicap Weekend
1-2 June	Bowdon Advanced Weekend
8-9 June	Pendle & Craven Advanced Weekend
15-16 June	Pendle & Craven Open Golf
15-16 June	Crake Advanced
29-30 June	Festival
2-5 July	Pendle & Craven Midweek Tournament (Handicap AC)
6 July	Bury National B Level Golf
6-7 July	Bowdon B-Level Advanced Weekend
16-17 July	Bowdon Midweek Short (Handicap AC)
20-21 July	Southport Super B and B-Level Advanced Weekend
20-21 July	Lancashire Open Golf @ Pendle & Craven
24 July	Bury National C Level Golf
27-28 July	Fylde AC – Handicap Weekend
3-4 August	Chester GC 0plus Cross Over Tournament
3-4 August	Bury Handicap Weekend
10-11 August	Pendle & Craven AC Handicap Weekend
17-18 August	Crake Advanced
23-26 August	Bowdon North of England Championship
24-26 August	Pendle & Craven– Kate Jones GC
31 Aug– 1 Sept	Ian Maugham Salver (GB v Ireland) Southport
31 Aug– 1 Sept	All England Area Final Venue TBC
5-9 September	Pendle & Craven – Spencer Ell
14-15 September	Southport Advanced Weekend

The events listed above will be included in the calendar on the NW Fed website shortly & Clubs are requested to check that the calendar has been updated correctly.

14 **Club Reports and Announcements**

Bowdon:- An exceptionally hot summer provided our club members with good and extended playing conditions to improve their croquet abilities and we managed to win the NW Fed. B-Level Advanced League. We also did quite well in many other competitions:

- Bowdon reached the final of the national CA Inter-Club AC Championship.
- Our Longman Cup team got to the quarter-final stage.

- The new CA Short Croquet competition saw us go out in the semi-final.
- Bowdon finished second at the annual NW Federation Festival of Croquet at Southport.

Bowdon held the usual big 5 CA events, i.e. the May Handicap W/E, June Advanced W/E, Northern Week, the North of England Championship and the B-Level W/E. We were also honoured to host, for the first time, the Home Internationals and the NWF Millennium Advanced W/E.

Our recruitment drive produced 6 new members, an improvement on last year but not enough to maintain playing numbers. To encourage recent joiners, the club entered 2 teams in the NW Federation Short League: one team comprising of experienced players in an effort to continue the success we have had in the league in recent years and one made up of less experienced players, under the guidance of an experienced captain, to get them playing croquet under competitive conditions. As a result, 7 new players were introduced to the more serious side of croquet and both teams did well to finish in the top half of the table. On a similar theme, our internal Alternate Shot Doubles evening event continued with great success, pairing newish players with other club members; a short croquet event was held on a Monday morning to also encourage them to play.

The internal club competitions continue to provide players with most of their competitive croquet matches and they progressed well this season. Croquet events will continue throughout the winter but will be curtailed with lawns 1 & 2 being out of action as a result of the lawn improvement work. The charity events again raised a lot of money, this year for the Down's Syndrome Association and our annual British Legion Poppy Appeal.

Don't forget to keep an eye on what is going on at the club by viewing the club's website at www.bowdoncroquet.co.uk for the latest information.

Ken Cooper

Bury :- Members have made a significant investment in new (traditional) drainage at Whitehead Park. Initial signs are encouraging & Bury expect to be able to offer a number of Pop-Up events in 2019. The introduction of 1-ball competition has proved successful.

David Barrett

Chester :- Our numbers have remained around 100 with our usual successful taster days and beginners courses offsetting leavers and retirements. The weekly club sessions and internal competitions have continued to thrive. This year the club has played in six of the seven Federation leagues winning 2 trophies (Weekend AC and GC level leagues). We again entered the Mary Rose and Longman competitions. In the former we beat Bowdon and Nottingham but exited to Watford in the semi-final. In the latter we exited to Bowdon in the second round. We also entered the new national inter-club short AC competition but soon lost to Bowdon. We took part in the NW Millennium competitions (hosting the Short AC which was won by Jayne Taylor) and in the Southport Festival where we came first in the short lawn section. The third national GC cross over tournament went well with two of our members, Gary Greenwood and Trevor Farrell, finishing first and second. John Dawson won the national AC C level event at Budleigh Salterton. Carrickmines from Dublin made a welcome return this summer to play a mixture of AC and GC matches. Our social and community events have all been successful with good turnouts, both promoting our profile in the local community and making a useful contribution to club funds. As with many other clubs, our lawns were badly affected by the prolonged dry spell over the summer, exacerbated by the belated availability of the watering system in Westminster Park. After the usual lengthy dialogue with the council, our lawns are now in the process of hollow tining and treatment (fingers crossed for next year). We continue to work hard at our relationships with local councillors and officials and with our MP, who has been making a positive intervention in support of croquet at the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games. Our club website has continued to develop during the season with regular postings of match results and key information. Finally we note the well deserved award of a CA Diploma to David Guyton. He has contributed much to the success of the club over many years. Our thanks go to the Federation officials for providing a very effective and efficient structure for our competitive play and particularly to Ivan for managing the leagues so well.

John Dawson.

Crake Valley:- This has been a busy year with new members joining and forming a Golf Croquet Team. The team has been very successful in its first year winning the Golf trophy at Southport and ending in third place in the Leagues.

Next year they are intending to enter in the Level Play league as well as entering the GC Inter Club Championship and Murphy Shield.

Club improvements were the aim of the year and started with the re-establishment of our two other lawns, this is still ongoing with remarkable progress being made. Our third court should be playable in 2019.

We have officially changed our name to Crake Valley Croquet Club and will be shown as such on the CA club list.

We have started to progress our aim to replace our clubhouse. We have been asking for quotes and researching sources of funding from organisations that supply grants. We are submitting applications, with the help of James Hawkins, to the CA, and have already applied to the Aviva Community Fund. We will know if we are successful in the new year. If we raise sufficient funds we may have our new clubhouse next year. Any help will be appreciated.

Jim Allcock

Craig-y-Don:-

Craig Y Don completed and submitted the membership information required by the CA for satisfying the demands of the new 2018 Data Protection requirements.

Membership numbers remained steady thanks to new recruits joining from the Llandudno U3a Interest Group. However the U3a Group also brought a Vulnerable adult who we were unable to teach the basics and she was refused admission into the Group after initial free sessions. This was dealt with using the Croquet Association documentation and advice from the NW Federation Safeguarding Officer with the Llandudno U3a Chair fully involved.

Association Coaching offered during the year allowed a one day mini Association tournament to be run in September for the first time.

The heatwave caused some problems with our Crown Green lawn. In particular, we didn't have the watering capacity needed to fully keep pace with need. A second identified mains connection has been discussed with Welsh Water and should be operational from January 2019.

The heatwave also necessitated provision of shade and a large 6m x 3m pop-up canopy was purchased which can be fixed to the front of our clubhouse offering shade and protection from light rain, though unsuitable for use in high winds.

John Hannah

Criccieth:- No report received.

Culcheth:-

The club has had a pleasant year, although we have a small number of members. Our team entered in the Golf League and Level Play league as well as the Murphy Cup and another national competition. We did fairly well in the Golf League not quite as well in the others. However both our opponents and we enjoyed the games. We also took part in the Championships at Southport.

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

This year because of illness amongst some of our players our captain often found difficulty in raising a team. We fulfilled all our fixtures however and hope to encourage our social members to play in competitions next year.

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.

Culcheth Sports and Social Club, of which we are a section is encouraging all the sections to promote the club.

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

Bury 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.

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

Alan Wright.

Ellesmere:- No report received

Flixton:- Flixton Croquet Club are still playing at Urmston Sports Club at a social level which is what has been decided by the 35 members. We have invited local groups to join us and have enjoyed their company. We wish all other clubs in the North West success in 2019.

Jean Matthews

Fylde :- The Club has 40 paid up Members and 3 Social Members. Some of our novice A/C players played (and lost) in the Festival and also filled in on team shortages in the Short League. We continue in our policy of allowing anyone willing to compete the opportunity to do so. We ran the All England Area final and have been offered it again for next year. We have suggested that the director approaches other clubs first to spread the opportunity. We have offered to run it again if no other North West Club wishes to do so. We ran the **NW Fed Millennium Level Play Golf** at short notice and would like to thank Paul Rigge for managing and for making the effort to put it on for the Fed.

Peter Wilson

Isle of Man:- No report received.

Keswick:- Nothing to report other than that the Fitz Park lawn is now back in use after the 2015 floods.

Liverpool:- A disastrous year of floods, drought and lawnmower breakages. The grass has been unplayable for most of the season, so there's barely been any croquet played. The grass has been reseeded, but it will be spring before any decision can be taken on how to proceed in 2019.

James Hawkins

Llanfairfechan & North Wales:- The Club has 49 full members of whom 10 are currently inactive. There are also 3 social members in a Club which has a strong winter social programme. We had a busy and full calendar from 1st April to the end of October. We entered the NWFCC Golf league and the Southport Festival with a GC team. There are multiple internal competitions in both GC and AC all of which were played in 2018. This gives most active members of the Club a chance to enter a competition suitable to their level.

The Croquet Club is very active in the local communities of Llanfairfechan and Penmaenmawr. In 2018 the Club had visiting groups from U3A, WI, Trefoil and other more informal groups who played GC after short tuition sessions. These groups and others, using the pavilion only, were a valuable source of income. We held a taster day which resulted in 3 new members. All of these new members and several others in the club have begun learning AC. The Club hopes to enter NWFCC the short lawn AC league in 2020. We hosted approximately 30 players in the Coast Cup. An individual GC competition for players from any croquet club in North Wales. We also hosted Criccieth Croquet Club and provided some coaching in both AC and GC. We have met with our friends at Craig Y Don Club who are organising a tournament for both GC and short AC in 2019. More news of that at the next AGM.

As was common across the whole UK this year our lawns suffered greatly in the hot, dry summer. At one point the grass resembled a Mumbai car park rather than a Welsh lawn. We have engaged an expert in turf management from Chester to give a report on recovery options for 2019. We have a small Local Authority Grant, but may need to raise more funds to see significant improvement.

Sarah Andrew

Pendle and Craven:- Fusarium Attack on Pendle lawns. - totally unprovoked! Has taken nearly all year and a great deal of effort and expense to eradicate & repel. The committee thanks all visiting club members for their patience & understanding of the dire situation that Pendle found themselves in. Now much improved & looking forward to welcoming visitors to a full season of tournaments in 2019, including the Spencer Ell, the Kate Jones Golf Event, the Lancashire Open Golf Tournament, plus all of our regular tournament events.

Pendle & Craven have 20 playing members but still managed to enter four teams in the NW Federation League.

Peter Dewhurst / Liz Wilson

Penrith and North Lakes:- No report received

Salford:- Banners displayed on outer perimeter of park helped attract quite a few visitors, who then had a go & ultimately one or two new members. Our lawn has suffered not only from the hot weather but also from the Council cutbacks. Hopefully this will be addressed in the 2019 season.

Frances Rollinson

Southport and Birkdale:- We experienced a very wet winter & spring. The lawns were under water, killing patches of grass. Now 95% recovered. South lawns are being mown 3 times a week and the North lawns twice. Autumn work: Air to Ground injection of compressed air 12 inches deep. 9" tining, top dressing & over-seeding. Looking to replace the main mower with a newer model. The Club have acquired two more sets of Townsend Hoops & 3 more pegs. The club hosted the CA Chairman's Salver in September - well received. The C level GC event was cancelled as only one entry had been received. In 2019, Southport will host the Ian Maughan Salver (GB vs Ireland) at the end of August. Membership is steady, but new members are mainly elderly.

Don Williamson

Stonyhurst College:-

We have had a donation which has enabled us to buy 4 proper balls and so now we have a set at each level of quality and thus should we get to hosting a match or two next year then we will have them ready for use! Also I bought a set of hoops for the astro turf. They are beautifully made but a bit wide so I will use them with the beginners and work out how to reduce the width for matches. I was a bit disappointed by the gap but I am sure I can work something out and am pleased that we

will be able to try a full sized court. The good thing is the base seems to work well. We also were able to get some books which is really helpful.

We have made our first mallet (the S1) and it is not bad at all. Certainly we can work on it, but for a prototype it has a great feel to it with wood faces rather than plastic - the carpenters have done well - carbon fibre middle section and weighted head!

This term I came back in September and then we kept the hoops in till half term and I ran a winter club once a week for some junior students as the senior ones had a lot of university stuff to do as well as work.

Benedict O'Connor

Tattenhall:- We have had a good season due to the excellent weather. Our standard of play is gradually improving and we continue to increase our membership. We continue to fund raise currently focussing on the purchase of a new mower and additional mallets. However, we have achieved our aim this year by the erection of an equipment storage shed and new fencing around the lawn.

Ruth Wrigley

Westmorland:-

Westmorland have enjoyed their most successful season in the clubs history. We are a small club of approximately 30-35 members playing in the beautiful surroundings of Levens Hall Topiary gardens in South Lakeland. Following on from a very hot early summer the lawns were extremely dry with very little grass cover and played quickly. In June we were delighted to be the overall winners at the Southport Festival followed by success in winning the N.W.Fed golf league and also the short lawn league a great achievement enjoyed by all members.

Mike Hodgson

15 **NW Federation Equipment Assets** – see Appendix 1

16 **County Captains**

The following Captains were elected for the AC Inter-Counties Teams in 2019:

Colin Irwin for Cheshire and James Hawkins for Lancashire. Paul Rigge to act as Organiser for Lancashire.

17 **Presentation of CA Diploma & League Trophies**

The Chairman presented James Hawkins with his CA Diploma and made the following comments:

This bloke's been around for what seems like ever, he must have played in the womb, such is his longevity.

In his time, off court, he's been the editor of The Gazette, served on a few CA Committees, started a new club, wrote a coaching *picture* book..... (that we've all read), .. still co-edits 'Croquet World' On-Line and coaches at the Northern Academy .. all of these achievements went un-noticed and un-rewarded by his peers.

But this year the CA has awarded him a Diploma with the following citation;

“As a key member of National Development Officer Dave Gunn's 'Federation Working Party on Marketing', James has produced an excellent 'easy to use' guide that aims to help the large number of clubs with no social media presence to make a first step by creating an effective Facebook page. Facebook is an excellent way to reach the much sought after demographic of 30 to 50 year olds, something that should be of interest to many clubs as they look to increase and broaden their memberships. James also supported the club website template offering by producing a similarly 'novice focused' set of documentation to help newly appointed club webmasters get to grips with the possibilities.

The many hours James has invested in these projects are much appreciated.”

It humbles me that James elected to receive this CA Diploma, here, from me at *our* AGM rather than at Hurlingham at the national AGM.

Association Croquet

B level Advanced
Weekend Handicap
Midweek Handicap
Short

Bowdon
Chester
Southport & Birkdale
Westmorland

Golf Croquet

Level Play
Handicap

Chester Centurions
Westmorland

18 **Election of Officers**

Officers were elected as follows

Chairman:	Paul Rigge
Secretary:	David Walters
Treasurer:	Liz Wilson
League Manager:	Ivan Wheatley
Coaching Officer;	Paul Rigge
Development Officer;	Sarah Andrew
Safeguarding Officer;	Jean Hargreaves
Website Manager:	Tony Thomas
NW Festival of Croquet Manager	Ivan Wheatley

Also elected were:

Pennine Cup Manager;	Liz Wilson
Federation Handicapper:	Don Williamson

Please note - CA Representative, currently John Dawson is elected at the Spring Meeting

The meeting expressed its thanks to all officers for their work in support of the Federation & in particular to James on his retirement from the Committee.

19 Election of Independent Examiner

Chris Slater was re-elected as Independent Examiner.

20 Any Other Business

Don Williamson outlined the process of developing the 5th edition of the GC Rules. He proposed holding a meeting at Whitehead Park in the Spring to review the changes with GC Referees & GC Tem Captains.

21 Dates of Next Meetings

Next Meetings - Spring Meeting on 2nd March 2019 at Culcheth, Autumn AGM on 16th November 2019 at Culcheth.

22 Meeting Closed at 1pm

Appendix 1

North West Federation Equipment November 2018

Bowdon	None
Bury	None
Chester	None
Crake	Mower (50%)
Craig-y-Don	CA Start up Set
Criccieth	6 hoops, peg, 5 round headed mallets, and 1 set primary Barlows plus CA Start up Set
Culcheth	None
Ellesmere	3 Mallets
Flixton	None
Fylde	None
Harlech	None
IOM	None
Keswick	None
Liverpool	None
Llanfairfechan	None
Pendle	None
Penrith	4 Mallets, 1 set hoops, 1 peg
Salford	CA start up Set
Southport	None
Stonyhurst	None
Tattenhall	CA Start up Set + set of 2 ^{ndary} balls,
Westmorland	None
Paul Rigge	One projector
Available	4 George Wood Mallets in carrying case, 1 set secondary Barlow balls, 1 set primary Sunshiny balls, 1 set metal primary clips.

North West Federation of Croquet Clubs

Accounts for the Year Ended 30th September 2018

	£	2018 £	£	2017 £
Income				
Affiliation fees		400.00		360.00
Festival entries	888.00		912.00	
Festival expenses	864.32	23.68	832.00	80.00
Donation		9.00		
Millennium events		165.00		259.50
Interest		22.89		9.32
Total Income		<u>620.57</u>		<u>708.82</u>
Bank balances brought forward		5455.13		4828.55
		<u>6075.70</u>		<u>5537.37</u>
Expenditure				
Development		0.00		20.75
Engraving		43.00		26.50
Lawn & ball hire		20.00		-
Website		49.99		34.99
Coaching		66.80		-
Total Expenditure		<u>179.79</u>		<u>82.24</u>
Bank balances carried forward		5895.91		5455.13
		<u>6075.70</u>		<u>5537.37</u>
Difference		0.00		

E A Wilson - Treasurer *EA Wilson*C Slater - Independent Examiner *CSL* 27/10/18.

Appendix 3

North West Federation of Croquet Clubs – Constitution

1 Name

The Federation shall be called “The North West Federation of Croquet Clubs”.

2 Area of Influence

The area of influence of the Federation shall be North Wales, Isle of Man, the counties and metropolitan counties of Cheshire, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Merseyside and Cumbria. Unitary authorities shall be considered as part of the county within which they are situated.

3 Aims

The aims of the Federation shall be to promote and develop the game of croquet and co-ordinate the activities of croquet clubs in its area, especially in the organisation of leagues, tournaments and other events and by assisting existing clubs in all appropriate ways. The Federation shall be the body responsible for the administration and resolution of all disciplinary matters brought to its attention. The Federation shall be run under the auspices of the Croquet Association and shall be responsible to that body.

4 Membership

Every croquet club or croquet section of a larger club in the Area of Influence shall be eligible for membership of the Federation. Membership shall be by application to the Secretary of the Federation, payment of the current subscription and ratification, by majority vote at the next General Meeting, that the applicant club be admitted as a member. All member clubs must be affiliated to the Croquet Association.

5 Membership Fees

The membership fees for each year shall be determined by the Annual General Meeting. The membership fee will become due at the Annual General Meeting. Any club failing to pay within one calendar month of this meeting shall no longer be deemed a Federation member.

6 General Meetings

a) The Annual General Meeting shall be held in the Autumn, no earlier than October, to elect officers, approve the accounts, appoint an independent examiner, fix the membership fees and conduct business for which notice has been given. Other business may be conducted at the discretion of the Chairman.

b) A further General Meeting shall be held in the Spring to elect the Croquet Association Representative when appropriate and conduct business for which notice has been given. Other business may be conducted at the discretion of the Chairman.

c) A Special General Meeting may be called by the Committee, or at the written request of at least three member clubs. On receipt of such a request by the Federation Secretary, the committee must arrange the meeting within two months. A Special General Meeting may not conduct any business, save for that for which it has been convened.

d) At least 21 days’ notice of General Meetings and the business to be conducted at them shall be given to all member clubs, this may be provided electronically. Notice of motions must be given to the Secretary at least 28 days before the meeting at which they are to be considered.

e) All club members of this Federation’s clubs shall be entitled to attend General Meetings. Each member club shall be entitled to send one representative to the meetings, who together with the Officers and Executive Officers may speak and vote. Other interested persons may attend and speak but not vote. Six members entitled to vote shall form a quorum.

f) Motions (except for those covered in paragraphs 10 and 11 below), shall be carried by a simple majority of the votes cast by those present and entitled to vote. In the case of a tie the Chairman shall have an additional casting vote.

g) Nominations for election as Officers shall be made in writing or by email to the Secretary at least 14 days before the Annual General Meeting, proposed and seconded by any club member with the consent of the person nominated. If there is more than one candidate for any post a ballot shall be held, otherwise the persons nominated shall be declared elected. If any post remains unfilled, nominations, duly proposed and seconded, shall be accepted from the meeting and a ballot held if

necessary.

h) If the Chairman is unable to attend a General Meeting, those members present at the General Meeting shall elect a Chairman for that meeting who shall have an additional casting vote in the event of any tied vote.

7 Officers

a) The Executive Officers of the Federation shall be the Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Croquet Association Representative. All posts are held until the next Annual General Meeting, save the Croquet Association Representative whose tenure is defined by the Croquet Association Constitution.

b) Should the Chairman for the time being be re-elected for three consecutive terms, he must retire after his third term and becomes ineligible for election to the office of Chairman until a further term has elapsed.

c) The Chairman shall normally chair the General and Committee Meetings and act as directed by the committee.

d) The Secretary shall keep minutes of General and Committee Meetings, maintain a register of member clubs and act as directed by the committee.

e) The Treasurer shall keep the accounts of the Federation and transact its financial business. He shall lay before the Annual General Meeting examined accounts for the year ending 30 September and act as directed by the committee.

f) Other officers of the Federation shall be the Safeguarding Officer, Development Officer, Coaching Officer, League Manager, Web Manager and the North West Federation Championships Manager (Festival Manager) and shall act as directed by the committee.

g) All offices in the Federation shall be voluntary.

h) Any two offices, other than two of the Executive Offices, may be represented by the same person. Any Officer undertaking two Offices will only be entitled to one vote at both General Meetings and Committee Meetings.

8 Committee

a) The affairs of the Federation shall be managed by a Committee consisting of the Executive Officers and other Officers.

b) The Committee may fill casual vacancies until the next Annual General Meeting.

c) The Committee shall fix the dates of the General Meetings.

d) The Committee shall meet as necessary either in person or by electronic means. A simple majority of those voting shall decide any question, and in the case of a tie the Chairman shall have an additional casting vote. Three members shall form a quorum.

e) Notice of Committee Meetings shall be given to all Committee Members.

f) If the Chairman is unable to attend a Committee Meeting, those members present at the Committee Meeting shall elect a Chairman for that meeting who shall have an additional casting vote in the event of any tied vote.

9 Banking

Bank accounts shall be maintained in the name of the Federation.

10 Amendments to the Constitution

Notices of motions to amend the constitution shall be sent to all member clubs at least 21 days before the meeting at which they are to be put. An amendment to the constitution shall be carried if more than two-thirds of the votes are cast in its favour by those present and entitled to vote.

11 Dissolution

Notice of motion to dissolve the Federation must be sent to all member clubs at least 21 days before the meeting at which it is to be put. If approved by at least two thirds of those voting upon it, the Federation shall be formally wound up and the assets transferred to the Croquet Association.

