

# Draft Minutes of the North West Federation of Croquet Clubs AGM

## Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2019

- 1 **The Meeting** was attended by 21 people representing 8 clubs:
- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Bowdon                | David Walters, Sylvia Steer, Ken Cooper, Steve Reynolds        |
| Bury                  | David Barrett, Jean Hargreaves, Barbara Young, Francois Garcia |
| Chester               | John Dawson  |
| Craig-y-Don           |  |
| Crake Valley          |  |
| Criccieth             |  |
| Culcheth              | Di Mitchell, Ann Woodward, Keith Woodward, Alan Wright         |
| Ellesmere             |  |
| Flixton               |  |
| Fylde                 | Liz Wilson, Peter Wilson                                       |
| Keswick               |  |
| Liverpool             |  |
| Llanfairfechan        |  |
| Pendle & Craven:      | Roger Schofield (& Bury), Robert Essler, Paul Rigge.           |
| Penrith & North Lakes |  |
| Salford               |  |
| Southport & Birkdale  | Don Williamson, Tony Thomas                                    |
| Stonyhurst            |  |
| Tattenhall            |  |
| Westmorland           | Ivan Wheatley  |

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Last year was the stuff of dreams... weather wise and so far this year I'm filled with optimism that we might get another – well we're here in March and winter hasn't arrived yet and we've just left the warmest UK February on record. I've even had to cut the grass at home twice this year and over the last couple of weeks I've had loads of play/practice at Pendle in the sunshine.

- 2 **Apologies for Absence.** Clubs: Craig-Y-Don, Keswick, Penrith & North Lakes, Salford, Stonyhurst. Committee Members: Sarah Andrew. Other members: Jim Alcock (Crake), Jack Pattenden, John Hannah (Craig-Y-Don) John Shakespeare (Westmorland), Benedict O'Connor (Stonyhurst), Steve Skelton (Keswick), James Hawkins (Liverpool). Frances Rollinson (Salford)
3. **The minutes** of the AGM held on 17th November 2018 were approved as a correct record. Acceptance Proposed – David Walters, Seconded – Robert Essler. Approved Nem Con.
4. **Matters Arising** – none
5. **Officers and Committee Members Reports since the previous meeting.**
- A **Chairman – Paul Rigge**  
Firstly a word about the CA. As you all know – there is a Special General Meeting for all members at the end of the month. No you don't have to attend in person but I urge you and all your fellow club members to vote – do so either on-line or by snail-mail...your votes need to be cast by the 20th - the CA has sent out plenty of detail & notice for this meeting and ensured it has been well covered in the Gazette and I'm sure John (Dawson) will mention it in his report, so no more from me on the subject but please VOTE on the reason for the meeting.
- Back to us and our business:  
Let me \*trail\* today's highlights
- 1) League rules are a changing.
  - 2) Festival – I hope that we'll announce three fabulous changes today for this annual set-piece – the jewel on the country.
  - 3) Our Millennium Tournaments – Please support them by sending players, they are restricted to Federation Players only - so play in them!
- B **Secretary - David Walters**  
Arranged Club Development Workshop with Dave Gunn, kindly hosted by Bury. Drafted the Millennium Competition Entry Forms & hope to issue them to Club Secretaries within the next week.
- C **Treasurer – Liz Wilson**  
All Subs have been paid – 20 clubs @ £20/club
- D **Development Officer – Sarah Andrew**  
I took over from James Hawkins in November 2018 and have gratefully received considerable advice from James. At the time of the exchange the NW had applications for two development grants awaiting consideration by the CA Development Committee. Both of these applications were successful enabling Crake Valley to begin its transformation into a super facility.

So far I have supported three NW clubs in applications for funding which were considered at the Spring Meeting of the CA Development Committee (23<sup>rd</sup> Feb 2019). Namely: Apps Heley Award for Bowdon; Townsend Award for Tattenhall; two Development Grants for Crake Valley. The outcomes of these applications will be known at approximately the time of the NW Spring Meeting.

I have visited Bury Croquet Club to hear Dave Gunn (National Development Officer) give a talk to representatives from the NW on the Croquet Matters interactive web tool. I have also visited Bowdon Croquet Club to assist Dave Gunn in delivering his presentation on Croquet Matters with a view to taking over the task for other clubs in the North West. I have progressed the application for a start-up equipment loan to Criccieth Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club. I am in discussions with interested parties from Wilmslow to establish a croquet club there. A flat area of lawn has been identified.

In the next few weeks I will be contacting all clubs with representatives listed on our website to offer assistance in developing croquet in their areas.

#### **E League Manager – Ivan Wheatley**

All suggested changes to the draft league fixtures for 2019 have now been incorporated on the league calendar and the final fixture list has been issued to all team captains, club and fixture secretaries. This year we have even more teams entered with Crake Valley entering both the AdvB AC and level-play GC leagues, Bury entering a second team in the level-play GC & Short leagues and Fylde entering a second team in the handicap GC league. Unfortunately Bowdon have decided not to enter a team in the level-play GC league so for this year we have 49 teams playing 183 matches spread over the 6 leagues, an increase of 14% over 2018.

It's worth noting that this increase in scheduled matches, when combined with CA, federation and other club commitments, has increased the weekend lawn utilisation in several of our larger clubs to its maximum. The implication of this is that if we are successful in growing the attractiveness of our sport to more people it will be necessary to rethink the organisation of our league activities. The options available include moving some of the weekend fixtures to midweek dates, splitting some of our more active leagues such as the handicap GC league into two parallel leagues, perhaps north and south leagues with some form of end of season playoff or even a two league structure with end of season promotion and relegation. The important thing is to have a plan that we could implement if needed. I will give more thought to this over the coming months with a view to having a proposal for the AGM later in the year and in the meantime if anyone has any ideas that they would like to share I would be happy to receive them.

Draft league rules for 2019 have been circulated. These incorporate the various changes we agreed at the AGM in November and we have a proposal for later in the meeting to adopt this draft for use in the 2019 season. No changes have been made to the procedures to be followed in the event of a match having to be called off for whatever reason so I can only stress the need for team captains to be made aware of the procedures to be followed to avoid any ill feeling that can arise when someone feels that they are being treated unfairly.

Finally I can confirm that the federation nominations for the two CA interclub competitions, namely the Secretary's Shield and the new interclub GC competition have been made. As some of you already know that, by tradition, the club that wins the weekend handicap AC league is nominated for the Secretaries Shield for the following season, and which this year is Chester, and it has been decided that, in a similar manner, the winner of the Handicap GC league, in this case Westmorland, be nominated for the new interclub GC competition. Good luck to both clubs and let's hope we can report yet another success for the North West at the end of the season.

#### **F Coaching Officer – Paul Rigge**

As I said in my opening remarks – Pendle's season has already started and the internal ladders are well under way. So I've held a couple of coaching clinics there to members, so far on AC 4ball break hygiene and GC odd tactics.

Courses planned so far are;

- 1) Golf Rule Changes 16<sup>th</sup> March at Bowdon – this year GC \*will\* be played under the 5<sup>th</sup> Edition of the GC rules, as a side bar does your club have a copy yet – you can download & print the PDF version, you don't need to buy a copy from the Office – but of course, I should encourage you so to do.....
- 2) Coaches Training Course 13<sup>th</sup> April at Bury – totally over-subscribed I'm delighted to report. So popular that Don, James & I will be holding at least another one on a single day later in the season.
- 3) The only Flying Circus Request I've had is from Keswick, for an AC Bronze (ish) Course... so I'm up there 13<sup>th</sup> March.

I also plan to attend Fylde on Thursdays and Pendle on Wednesdays

#### **G CA Representative – John Dawson**

Re the CA Governance Reforms and the Special General Meeting - Encourage all entitled to vote to exercise their votes in favour of the motion.

National Croquet Day – Publicity Material will be issued by the CA Office shortly.

CountryfileLive North at York. Awaiting site visit to confirm suitable lawn space.

#### **H NW Festival – Ivan Wheatley**

Arrangements for the 2019 Festival, which will this year be held on Saturday and Sunday the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> June, are progressing well. Registration forms have been prepared and will be issued to clubs by Liz Wilson, who has agreed to handle the registration process, at the end of the month with a deadline for return by Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> June.

In addition to the usual sections of advanced, handicap and short AC and handicap GC we will be inviting clubs to enter teams in a new level play GC section. For the level play GC section our current plan is for a competition involving teams of two players with a mixture of singles and doubles matches played over the course of the two days. The handicap AC section will comprise 18 point singles games with a 2½ hour time limit with bisque calculated to a base of 6, the handicap GC section will be 13 point games with a 50 minute time limit and short AC the normal 14 point games to a 1½ hour time limit with gross handicaps. The overall winner of the tournament will be based on the best three performances of a club in any of the sections.

Unfortunately due to increases in the CA standard charge for lawn hire, the entry fee will rise from £36 per team, at which it has been held at for many years, to £39 with the fees for advanced AC and level play GC set at £26 per team.

I am pleased to be able to report that once again Jean Hargreaves of Bury has agreed to act as section manager of the handicap GC and Jim Allcock of Crake Valley has agreed to act as section manager of the handicap AC section. I will be looking after the advanced AC and level play GC sections over the weekend and I will be contacting clubs in the near future with a view to recruiting a section manager for the short lawn AC section. The role of the section manager will be to ensure that matches start and finish promptly, to act as a first response to any queries and to ensure that game results are recorded timely and accurately. If anyone knows of an individual who might be interested in undertaking this role would they please get in touch.

It was noted that the festival might be a suitable event for a Regional Sponsor to support. Anyone with possible sponsorship contacts, please let one of the Committee members know.

A proposal to provide additional toilet facilities (3 portaloos) was agreed.

**I Pennine Cup Captain - Liz Wilson**

Will be held at Pendle on 1<sup>st</sup> June. Anyone interested in playing should contact Liz. Robert Essler will captain the team on the day.

**J Safeguarding Officer – Jean Hargreaves**

Nothing to report.

**K Website Manager – Tony Thomas**

Nothing to report.

**L Federation Handicapper – Don Williamson**

Everyone should be aware of the recently published advice from the CA Handicap Committee that players should always play off their correct handicap, i.e. the practice of allowing higher handicapped players to play off (say) 20 in handicap restricted tournaments is to cease.

**6 Millennium Competitions**

These were re-confirmed as:

- a) Advanced at Bowdon (13-14 April)
- b) Level Golf at Bury – Whitehead Park (17 April)
- c) Handicap AC at Pendle & Craven (13-14 July)
- d) Short at Fylde (11 May)
- e) Handicap Golf at Chester (1 June)

Entry Forms to all events will be sent to Club Secretaries shortly.

**7 Election of CA Representative**

Whilst it is hoped that the composition of the CA Council will be changed following the CA SGM on 30<sup>th</sup> March, John Dawson was proposed for a second 3 year term by Liz Wilson, seconded by David Walters. Approved nem con.

**8 Motions:**

- a) The draft 2019 League Rules previously circulated be adopted for use in NWFCC league matches over the course of the 2019 season.

Proposed by Ivan Wheatley, League Manager

The motion was discussed.

The main changes for 2019 are those that were highlighted at the AGM in November. These relate to the adoption of 5<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Rules of Golf Croquet for all GC league matches, the mandatory use of corner pegs to be for all league AC matches and changes to Rules 5 and 11 to implement the handicap restrictions agreed for the advanced B AC league.

Subsequent to the publication of the first set of draft rules in November a further revision was issued in February 2019 to add a caveat that the same game pairings should not be played twice in advanced B league matches which could have been the case if the original draft of rule 11 was applied literally.

A further change was proposed and agreed – to make explicit that the default format for doubles is the conventional one, rather than alternate shot.

Subject to the above change, the motion was carried nem con.

- b) To amend the Constitution to expressly prevent anyone casting two votes, other than the Chair's casting vote, by amending 6

e) to read as follows:

“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, speak to, put and second motions but not vote. Six members entitled to vote shall form a quorum. Any person representing more than one club or holding office and representing a club or clubs will only be entitled to one vote.”  
(Proposed by Roger Schofield)

Following discussion, it was agreed to withdraw the motion & seek advice from Graham Good, with a view to proposing a revised amendment at the AGM.

**9 CA Governance Changes**

Proposals being put to SGM – Clubs and members are encouraged to support the changes.

**10 Club Announcements:**

**Bowdon**

Bowdon recently held a Croquet Matters Workshop with Dave Gunn, CA National Development Officer; Sarah Andrew, the NWF Development Officer also attended. 31 club members came along and thought it well worthwhile attending. Please note that we have replaced our Northern week in July with an AC B Class weekend & our first Short Croquet tournament. We will be hosting the GC Rules Briefing at 10.30am on Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> March.

**Bury**

We are pleased to report that our lawns at Whitehead Park are looking good after the installation of new drainage and we have had some limited winter play on a small area. The first National events to be held on the new lawns will be the B Level and C Level GC and entries for these will be most welcome.

In January we hosted the NW 'Croquet Matters' seminar given by the National Development Officer Dave Gunn and we have since followed up on this by using the on-line tool that Dave introduced to guide us in the development of our own club.

Last year's coaching by Chris Alvey was very successful and as a result we have now entered second teams for both Short AC and Level Play GC in the NW leagues for 2019. We have a large squad wanting to go to the Southport Festival overflowing to a second B&B this year and probably providing more players than we need. If any club is short of a full team for any event we would be happy to make up a 'Chairman's team'.

**Chester**

Working with the Council & hoping to improve lawn quality this year.

**Craig-y-Don**

We have nothing significant to report.

**Crake Valley**

Have received grant support from the CA & Aviva.

**Criccieth – Nothing to Report**

**Culcheth**

Croquet section is doing well, with regular play on Tuesday on Indoor Mat. Overall Sports & Social Club is facing severe challenges with changes imminent.

**Ellesmere – Nothing to Report**

**Flixton – Nothing to Report**

**Fylde**

Fylde are losing three good players this year for a variety of reasons. We have a new member who used to be in charge of publicity for Blackpool Pleasure Beach and whom we hope will help with recruitment. We now have a Website, A Facebook Page and a Twitter Account – please ask your club members to follow / like in order to spread the word. Over the winter we have excavated, piped and gravelled the ditch along the South Boundary and have had a small grant from the CA to help with costs. We have entered two golf teams this season (Coasters and Falcons) and this seems to have encouraged more members to participate in competitive play.

**Keswick – Nothing to Report**

**Liverpool– Nothing to Report**

**Llanfairfechan– Nothing to Report**

**Pendle & Craven**

Continuing to work on improving the lawns. Running a course for U3A (c30 people).

## **Penrith & North Lakes – Nothing to Report**

## **Salford – Nothing to Report**

## **Southport**

We have had the South Lawns "ground aerated", this and low rain fall has meant that there has been virtually no flooding this winter. We have been looking for a replacement for our John Deere mower but have been unable to find one with low hours at an acceptable price, our existing mower is therefore being refurbished with new cutting cylinders. So far 8 members have not renewed.

## **Stonyhurst – Nothing to Report**

## **Tattenhall – Winner of 2019 Townsend Award**

## **Westmorland**

After an excellent season last year when we won several trophies we look forward as ever to the new season.

We do have the usual concerns – our membership is likely to be down on last season and our lawns are going to need a lot of work making recruitment and lawn care high on our agenda.

We are busy processing our membership renewals and find it interesting that a number of our members do not wish to be registered as CA members. Perhaps the way that CA membership has been introduced without adequate explanation has alienated a number of players.

### **11 Federation Equipment Assets**

Our interest in Crake's Mower has been written off. The projector is now being loaned to Bury. Updated list appended.

### **12 Any other business**

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### **13 Date of Next Meeting**

AGM 16<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at Culcheth, Spring Meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020

### **14 Meeting Closed at 1155.**

## Appendix

### North West Federation      Equipment March 2019

Club	Equipment
Bowdon	None
Bury	One Projector
Chester	None
Crake Valley	None
Craig-y-Don	CA Start up Set
Criccieth	6 Hoops & Peg, 5 round headed Mallets, 1 set primary Barlows plus CA Start Up Set
Culcheth	None
Ellesmere	3 Mallets
Flixton	None
Fylde	None
Keswick	None
Liverpool	None
Llanfairfechan	None
Pendle & Craven	None
Penrith & North Lakes	4 Mallets, 1 set hoops, 1 peg
Salford	CA start up Set
Southport & Birkdale	None
Stonyhurst	None
Tattenhall	CA Start up Set + set of secondary balls
Westmorland	None

Available                      4 George Wood Mallets in carrying case, 1 set secondary Barlow balls, 1 set primary Sunshiny balls, 1 set metal primary clips.