

Minutes of the North West Federation of Croquet Clubs AGM
Saturday 14th November 2020 (v2 issued 14 December 2020)

- 1 The Meeting was attended by 33 people representing:
- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Bowdon | Ken Cooper, David Walters |
| Bury | David Barrett, Jean Hargreaves, Ken Eccles*, Margaret Eccles*, Roy Spencer*, Barbara Young* |
| Chester | John Dawson, Jayne Taylor* |
| Craig -Y-Don | Jack Pattenden, John Hannah |
| Crake Valley | David Cornes, Simon Robins* |
| Criccieth | |
| Culcheth | Alan Wright |
| Ellesmere | |
| Flixton | |
| Fylde | Peter Wilson, Liz Wilson, Catherine Bass*, Philip Bass*, Barbara Walker*, Ted Walker* |
| Keswick | Steve Skelton* |
| Llanfairfechan | Sarah Andrew |
| Pendle & Craven | Libby Dixon, Paul Rigge, Roger Schofield* |
| Penrith & N Lakes | Ian Tupling* |
| Southport & Birkdale | Don Williamson, Diana Williamson*, Tony Thomas |
| Stonyhurst | |
| Tattenhall | David Boyd |
| Westmorland | John Shakespeare, Ivan Wheatley, Sue Pritchard* |
- (* indicates attended by YouTube)

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting & thanked Eugene Chang for his assistance in hosting the meeting virtually.

2. **Apologies for Absence:** Benedict O'Connor (Stonyhurst), Howard Bowron (Penrith & North Lakes), Richard Bellwood (IOM)

3. **Minutes of the Spring Meeting**

The minutes were accepted nem con (Proposer Liz Wilson, Seconder David Barrett) and the Chairman asked the Secretary to sign them on his behalf.

4. **Matters Arising** – Re Item 5C Treasurer's report. David Barrett reported that he had contacted Salford regarding their decision to leave the Federation. Their rationale was that because their members are not Competitive in the sense of being ready to play in an Official League and being required to travel long distances to play their matches. They just want to play each other socially and perhaps very occasionally play friendly games against other local Clubs.

David went on to say that he was surprised when advised that the Club had been told by their local Council that they could remain open during lockdown as they formed part of the Salford Park Support Group, which aims to combat loneliness & help with mental health issues.

A brief discussion followed with the Chairman expressing his disappointment at their decision to withdraw from the Federation, given the support that had been given, including a CA Starter set in 2011. It was noted that should Salford eventually close, (which is not expected) the set would revert to the Federation. John Dawson wondered whether or not their insurance cover would still be valid given the CA's advice to suspend croquet activities until the end of lockdown.

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

A really tricky year and each club's response to our collective difficulties has been as fragmented as the various national governments – all of us trying to find some way to normalize the impossible. I was sorry to lose *all* of this year's leagues, but understood the reluctance of teams travelling with each other in a single vehicle was an issue.

I could also, just about, understand losing this year's festival.. the June date was too early, just as we were all re-opening and getting used to what the 'New Normal' meant as far as Croquet play was concerned.

I am pleased that all five of this year's Millennium Tournaments were contested and the unbroken archive records could be written with this year's winners – it showed that our members were willing and wanting to contest games.

Looking to next year, there is no doubt that Covid will still be with us and I hope that lessons learnt this year will enable the Festival at least to be hosted, possibly in some modified form, although I'm not that optimistic about team travel supporting the full league schedule – we'll see.

For the last two years, I've reported upon the 7th Edition of the AC rules, well they still haven't been published yet, so we'll review 'em again at the next meeting in the spring.

B **Secretary – David Walters**

A busier year than usual with lots of discussion about how to respond to Covid restrictions & advice. Rescheduled dates & venues for Millennium competitions agreed & revised entry forms issued. Nomination of Don Williamson for Diploma agreed & submitted. Cascaded letter from Handicap Committee to Clubs. Eugene Changthanks has been hosting a series of Federation "Focus Groups" via Zoom. Interesting to learn that SW Fed have been offering coaching tips via Zoom sessions. Almost got Paul on The Real Housewives of Cheshire, but that's another story!

C **Treasurer – Liz Wilson**

As this has been a quiet year there is little to report.

Income - 18 Clubs joined with two dropping out – Liverpool and Salford. The 25% Levy was waived this year allowing the clubs who ran the events to keep the revenue in what has been a difficult year financially for the clubs. The interest next year will be substantially down (approx. 5p per month!)

Expenses – Tea and coffee refers to the Spring Meeting. The only other expense relates to the Website.

D **League Manager – Ivan Wheatley**

Unfortunately due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the ensuing Government guidelines for social mixing, the 2020 league season was cancelled before any matches had taken place. Whilst the original intention was to run a reduced series of inter-club competitive matches later in the season if circumstances permitted this proved impractical due to the ongoing restrictions on social mixing/distancing.

For the 2021 season the assumption is that we will be either through the current pandemic by the start of the new season or at least the restrictions on social mixing will have reduced. I will be issuing the registration form for the new season via club secretaries in the next few days with the deadline for registering teams for the 2021 season the 31st December 2020. The leagues will be as previous years with weekend handicap, midweek handicap and B level advanced AC, short-lawn AC and handicap and level play GC leagues. I will aim to publish draft fixture lists before the end of January.

Each season the venues for fixtures, wherever possible, are the reverse of the previous year's matches. For 2021, in recognition that the 2020 season was cancelled, I will use 2019 as the base for determining the venues of matches to be played in 2021. I will also be designating any late cancellation of matches due to Covid-19 related issues as an agreed emergency under Rule 2(b) and allow a three week period for a rearranged date to be agreed otherwise declare affected matches match void rather than award a walkover.

E **Coaching Officer – Paul Rigge**

My earliest start to a season yet – 16th Jan was my first session, eight players (four for each code). Worth noting that collectively they travelled 352 miles each way for the day.
By 7th February, after the second session, the world stopped.....

F **Development Officer – Sarah Andrew**

It is interesting to look back on the innocence of my report from 7th March 2020. The year has not really been conducive to activities in Croquet Development. I have attended two Development Committee meetings by Zoom at which we discussed funding applications not relevant to the North West. I note that we also remarked at the last meeting (23/09/20) that a request for applications to the Club Awards (Apps Healey, Townsend and Millennium) would be sent out. This does not appear to have been received at the time of writing. I will check.

[Post meeting note: The application form is available to download from the CA website or from John Reddish, the Chair of the Development Committee. Applications must be submitted by 31 Dec 2020.]

I also attended the CA webinar to meet the new Executive Board on 31st October and the AGM of the Welsh Croquet Association on 1st November. The former meeting discussed the requirement to market croquet more effectively. Paul Heatherington is Chair of Marketing and Communications Committee. He has extensive experience of commercial marketing. He will be developing self-help guidelines for Clubs.

There was a reminder that the CA is the National Governing Body for the Sport and therefore has some lobbying capability. It needs as many members as possible to give more authority to its voice. Finally a note that the CA shop is selling face masks with the logo on them!

G **NW Festival of Croquet – Ivan Wheatley**

As with the leagues the Federation Committee decided to cancel the Festival as it was judged that it would not be possible to run the Festival at the end of June whilst complying with published guidelines on social mixing.

H **Safeguarding Officer – Jean Hargreaves**

The CA Council set up a Working Party looking at all the documentation on its website, and other sports documentation, on Safeguarding. John Dawson led this Working Party so he will report further on it.

I **Pennine Cup Captain - Liz Wilson**

Nothing to report

J **Federation Handicapper – Don Williamson**

The CA Handicap Committee has reviewed a proposal from the Yorkshire Federation to integrate Short Croquet handicaps into the overall AC AHS but decided against adopting the proposal. Cards for Short Croquet Handicaps will be printed again and issued by the CA.

K **Webmaster – Tony Thomas**

The website continues to be well used. The Menu system has been simplified on the Home page and several pages (Clubs, Leagues) have been re-designed to make viewing more attractive on Mobile devices - I estimate 40% of views are on Mobile phones and tablets. The most popular pages are, not surprisingly, the News pages, followed by Who's Who and club pages. The most popular club pages are Llanfairfechan, Pendle and Fylde. Just out of interest, there have been 406 visits in the last 30 days, mainly from the UK, but intriguingly 13 from the United Arab Emirates! Thank you to everyone who has submitted information for publication.

L CA Council Member (NW Constituency) - John Dawson

Zoom has facilitated many discussions this year, with Covid dominating many of them. Particular attention has been paid to the budgetary challenges faced by Clubs & the CA itself. Locally we were successful in getting Croquet featured as a socially distanced sport on Granada Reports & are trying to establish a relationship with the Shadow Minister for Sport, who is a Wirral MP.

Re Safeguarding, the CA has relied heavily on Jean's expertise for many years. Council is aware that as the number of young players grows we need to ensure that our policies & processes are kept up to date with developments in other sports.

Ian Vincent is confident that the new AC laws will be available for the 2021 season but that depends of course on the WCF finalising them and the CA printing them in time. If that comes to pass I am sure clubs would welcome a Fed teach in at an appropriate time.

6 Changes to League Rule 6(a) (Proposed by League Manager, Ivan Wheatley)

The timetable for the adoption of the 7th Edition of the Laws of Association Croquet remains uncertain so at this stage I have made no change to the applicable AC laws in the draft League Rules. If the 7th Edition is adopted and issued before the Spring meeting I will propose an amendment to the League Rules at that meeting to adopt the 7th Edition for the 2021 season.

The proposed league rules for 2021 were circulated with the agenda for this meeting and the changes proposed can be summarised as follows:

1. At the Spring Meeting I said that I would seek to remove the catchall reference to CA Tournament Regulations in Rule 1 and identify those specific regulations that should apply to Federation league matches. I am therefore proposing to amend the reference to complying with the Tournament Regulations in Rule 1 by inserting a reference to the specific applicable regulations and to amend individual Rules to cover:
 - ... Tournament Regulation L4 which cover AC Alternate Stroke Doubles play (Rule 19(a))
 - ... Tournament Regulations T2 and T4(b), procedure in event of expiry of time limit (new Rule 3(b))
2. To add new rule 24(a) to cover requirement for results sheets for level-play GC matches to reflect the actual order of play and define the default sequence as that shown on the Federation Results Sheet.
3. To delete old rules 21 and 25 to remove duplication with Rule 1 and renumber the affected League Rules accordingly.

Additional proposed amendment to League Rules

Since the proposed amendments were published, it has been identified that whereas the Laws of AC specify that short lawn AC games are played to 14 points and the application of League Rule 4(a) requires AC games to be played to 26 points, the Rules of GC permit GC games to be either 7, 13 or 19 point games. The original rules 21 and 25 both stated that GC games are played to 13 points (a duplication) and this specification has been removed by deleting these rules. I will therefore be proposing to the Spring Meeting an amended rule 4(a) to explicitly state that AC games are to be played as 26 point games, short lawn games as 14 point games and GC games as 13 point games.

Subsequent discussion noted that amongst other things, Tournament Regulations cover Personal Conduct and the League Manager was asked to consider how these aspects should be included.

It was agreed not to vote on the proposal but await the revised set for ratification at the Spring Meeting.

7 Subscriptions (Proposed by Treasurer, Liz Wilson)

Agreed that Subscriptions should remain unchanged at £20 per Club.

Acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Don Williamson & seconded by Jean Hargreaves. Carried nem con.

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

The Chairman introduced the item by reminding the meeting that the purpose of these events is to provide a stepping stone for new players from Club or League play to Tournament play and urged Clubs to encourage their members to participate.

- a) Advanced ? TBC
- b) Handicap Chester?? TBC July
- c) Short Chester?? TBC May
- d) Hcp Golf Crake? TBC
- e) Lvl Golf Crake 21st August

Would Clubs interested in hosting please let the Secretary know asap.

9 **Arrangements for Festival of Croquet**

Ivan has agreed to manage the event. Given the many unknowns regarding hosting a large event in a (hopefully) post Covid world, Ivan intends to invite a group to help consider options to modify the format to manage the social interactions. Concerns were also expressed about the ability to provide catering as in previous years.

10 **Federation Classes of Membership**

After a brief discussion regarding the recent changes in the CA's approach to Affiliate membership, it was agreed to discuss the topic further over the winter (Paul/Ivan/David W). It was noted that Croquet playing U3A groups at Bury & Wilmslow may develop further and that there should be clear delineation between full & affiliate membership.

11 Coordination of dates for CA or other tournaments in the NW

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.

| | |
|---------------|---|
| 24 March | Bowdon Charity 1-ball |
| 2-5 April | Pendle & Craven John Beech Memorial Easter Tournament |
| 6 April | Crake Alternate Shot Doubles AC |
| 24-25 Apr | Southport Advanced Weekend |
| 1-3 May | Bowdon May Handicap Weekend |
| 8-9 May | Pendle & Craven B & C Level Advanced Weekend |
| 10-16 May | National Croquet Week |
| 15 May | Pendle & Craven B-Level Golf |
| 15-16 May | Southport Handicap Weekend Carol Lewis Memorial |
| 5-6 June | Bowdon Advanced Weekend |
| 5-6 June | Pendle & Craven Advanced Weekend |
| 5-6 June | Bury GC A-Level Golf |
| 12-13 June | Pendle & Craven Open Golf |
| 12-13 June | Crake Advanced (Cumbria Cup) |
| 17 June | Crake GC C level National Qualifier |
| 18 June | Crake GC B level National Qualifier |
| 19-20 June | Crake GC A level (0-2) National Qualifier |
| 26-27 June | Festival at Southport |
| 3 July | Bury National B Level Golf |
| 3-4 July | Bowdon B-Level Advanced Weekend |
| 6-9 July | Pendle & Craven Midweek Tournament (Handicap AC) |
| 10 July (TBC) | Crake Short AC (Bob Vaughan) |
| 11 July | Crake GC High Handicap |
| 13-14 July | Bowdon Midweek Short (Handicap AC) |
| 17-18 July | Southport Super B and B-Level Advanced Weekend |
| 17-18 July | Lancashire Open Golf - Pendle & Craven |
| 21 July | Bury National C Level Golf |
| 24-25 July | Fylde AC – Handicap Weekend |
| 31 Jul-1 Aug | Llanfairfechan Welsh Clubs |
| 7-8 August | Chester GC 0plus Cross Over Tournament |
| 7-8 August | Bury Handicap Weekend |
| 14-15 August | Pendle & Craven AC Handicap Weekend |
| 14-15 August | Crake Advanced (Cavendish Clock) |
| 21-22 Aug | The AC All England Handicap Area Final - Bury |
| 27-30 August | Bowdon North of England Championship |
| 28-30 Aug | GC Eights |
| 9-13 Sept | AC Eights |
| 11-12 Sept | Pendle & Craven GC Alevel 0plus Tournament |
| 18-19 Sept | Southport Advanced Weekend |
| 18-19 Sept | Short Croquet Inter-Club Finals Weekend - Bowdon |

Welsh CA is planning to hold a Club Championship with a regional qualifier at Llanfairfechan tentatively scheduled for the last weekend of July.

Bowdon:-

Faced with lockdown at the beginning of the summer season, the club eventually managed to open its lawns for members to play under coronavirus rules. We even had some press coverage with a visit from Granada Reports. A lawn booking system was introduced & Ladder competitions were arranged for members to play either 18pt or 14pt matches. The standard internal club competitions went by the wayside and all CA events due to be held at the club had to be cancelled. Bowdon withdrew from all of the Inter-Club competitions. Some individual CA competitions went ahead and notable personal achievements were:

- John-Paul Moberly won the GC's First Eight at Eights Week, the Ricki Savage Memorial Trophy, he won the NWF Millennium Advanced A-Class competition and he also won the Bowl competition at the GC Open Championship
- David Maugham won the South of England Championship and played in the AC World Championship
- Jack Good won the Plate Knockout competition at the GC Open Championship, he also won the GC 'B' Level Series final

Several of the club's younger players are in the CA National Junior Programme.

When play resumes, winter competitions are to consist of 18pt and 14pt competitions, both handicap and advanced, as well as a one-ball handicap competition.

Ken Cooper

Bury:-

Given the difficult circumstances in 2020 Bury has had a reasonably successful year. Since play was allowed to restart in mid-May members have kept Coronation Park busy using a successful booking system. We managed to run four of our Internal competitions two of which were won by 14 year old Jack Good. This resulted in some excellent publicity for the Club in the form of a full page article and pictures in the Bury Times and Bolton News. One unplanned benefit of the lockdown was that due to the lack of fixtures some major remedial work could be done to improve the drainage at Whitehead Park. This seems to have paid off and we look forward to playing there next year on an excellent surface and hopefully without Covid restrictions.

Barbara Young

Chester :-

2020 has been a frustrating year for Chester. Like others we were locked down as the season began but got back into play relatively quickly. However we then had months of interminable dallying from the Council as they refused to reopen the clubhouse and its loos - causing amongst other issues the need for the club to back out of its offer to host the Millennium AC Short. Even David Guyton's patience was stretched to near breaking point by the Council's " tactics". Eventually they did reopen and we had a period of internal play and competitions. Few members were inclined to travel and thus we made little contribution to Fed and other tournaments.

Our usual open recruitment/ induction processes had to be halted but we did pick a small number of promising newcomers. Our finances remain sound and we hope to be back on the recruitment track in 2021. We have made an offer to our local hospital staff of a free evening's croquet in 2021. It is billed as a well deserved " thank you" but it has a side agenda of reaching a new potential recruitment pool which our usual methods fail to reach.

Finally some good and "bad" news. The good is that the Council has completed its autumn maintenance schedule and the lawns look in excellent shape. The " bad" is that we still have several league/ Southport trophies from 2019 and I now have to give them a polish.

John Dawson.

The 2020 Croquet Season was shortened from 26 weeks to 14 weeks because of Corona virus. A total of 34 playing members took part in games (from June 22nd until end of September) when lawns had to be pre-booked with smaller numbers allowed than usual. No formal competitions were allowed either within the club membership or with visiting clubs. No social events were permitted. Costs of keeping the lawn in good order for the full summer was close to normal as were the monthly standing orders to the CYD Sports and Community Centre which means those running costs caused our small reserves to become even more depleted. Fee paying, 'Playing Members' dropped from circa 55 to 34. We hope to recover numbers next year, but if we start under the same restrictions as we ended this September, that is unlikely to happen.

The club would like to see a rebate on its standing orders bearing in mind the main provision of toileting from the Community Centre was not available for the whole season and no electricity was used, because use of our clubhouse was not permitted. A hired 'portalo' toilet had to be provided by the club.

The Croquet Club gained CASC (Community Amateur Sports Club) status from HMRC in February 2020 but some recent grant applications have still required a Charity number. Since we are still an integral part of the CYDS&CC Charity, we have used that number in those circumstances.

The club has just been awarded a grant from the National Lottery of £2,700 to erect the Composting toilet agreed and approved by Conwy Council as landlord and Planning and the CYDS&CC Directors meeting last year. It will be operational by April 1st 2021, the start of our playing season. It will be used whilst Corona virus restrictions prevent our use of the Community Centre facilities and hence forth as an emergency loo for club members, when the Centre is closed at weekends and Bank Holidays.

John Hannah

Crake Valley:-

The expected “exciting” times at Crake Valley reported at the Spring 2020 meeting were somewhat dampened however we still have achieved plenty including -

- Official Opening of the new clubhouse went ahead with a much scaled down celebration on 21st March 2020 with Roger Staples (Chair of CA Executive Board) cutting the ribbon.
- A new (to us) ride on mower was purchased reducing cutting time drastically but meant an extension to the new garage to house the extra storage was needed. The 6ft extension was completed in August.
- We purchased a 10m x 5m marquee which enabled us to host several successful events, safely, from July onwards including NW Fed Millennium GC handicap and AC short lawn tournaments. We look forward to hosting the Federations’ GC level play in 2021.
- We also hosted a CA National GC C level qualifier and a high handicap GC invitation. The C level qualifier will be held again in 2021 with the addition of GC B level and the new A level category (0-2) in June.
- We had 3 national GC finalists - David Cornes (B level at Roehampton) and Frank Sharps with Sandra Cornes (C level at Colchester) where Frank finished 3rd. David stepped in at short notice to manage the finals tournament in addition to being referee – a challenging but enjoyable experience.
- In AC, The Cumbria Cup had to be cancelled but we attracted a very strong field (national and local players) for the Cavendish Clock Advanced Tournament with James Death (Nottingham) the winner. Both AC tournaments along with the Alternate Strokes (in April) and, potentially, a short lawn competition, are planned for 2021.
- All tournaments held were fully subscribed with the renovated 3rd lawn being used in all bar the Cavendish Clock. The quality of All the lawns being widely praised by players to whom we thank for attending and having a good time.
- After several years of driving the club forward and leading the club through our most ambitious, but rewarding, period Jim Allcock has stepped down as Chair. Simon Robins is Chair elect. The club recognises and thanks Jim for his vision and input. We are pleased to report that Jim is willing to keep responsibility for lawn maintenance.
- Thanks to the collective efforts of the club members an application for the CA Apps Heley Award for the most improved club (3 lawn) will be submitted with the outcome due early in the new year.

Criccieth:- No report received.

Culcheth:-

An unusual year. Our indoor mat helped to keep our members playing croquet until the Coronavirus shutdown in March. We were not able to begin the season outdoors initially but when Croquet was given the all clear to play outside we grasped the opportunity with a variety of mallet grips.

Our groundsman was able to keep the lawn mown and we arranged timed sessions. Not all of our members played but many did and enjoyed a summer of croquet until we were locked down again in November.

We weren’t able to play league games but we managed to organise our internal competitions which gave an extra competitive edge to our games.

Our social activities were curtailed and we were grateful to Sport England for a grant which helped to pay our costs to our parent club. We reduced our subscriptions by a third and most people gladly paid them.

Corona virus has not helped the problem that may affect the existence of Culcheth Sports and Social Club. Many sections have closed down but we hope that matters improve and we can continue to play croquet here in Culcheth.

Alan Wright.

Ellesmere:- No report received

Flixton:- No report received

Fylde :- Despite the late start Fylde managed to run and complete all the internal competitions with good press coverage. We had a multi-disciplinary visit from Westmorland. Despite loss of income we have had no support from grants of any kind as money has gone to the tennis club. We have not allowed any new members this year apart from family members. Liz has also started a One-ball afternoon played on short lawns to get more interaction. This has proved very popular with the golfers. We intend to run a completion later in the season. We intend to keep the lawns open over the winter (covid permitting). The online calendar used to book courts helps make visible how much the club is being used.

Liz Wilson

Keswick:-

Little to report except socially distanced social play has continued through the Summer, but membership is down to approximately 4 playing members.

Steve Skelton

Llanfairfechan & North Wales:-

The Club Committee decided to open the season early this year to make up for closing early for maintenance the previous year. Working parties prepared the playing areas and set up the hoops on 16th and 18th March. Everyone knows how long the early playing period lasted, precisely 4 days. Through the rainless, sunny months that followed a few of us watered the lawns and maintained the white lines and our gardener mowed. On 13th May England was allowed to play croquet, but not Wales. Then golf re-opened in Wales and we decided croquet could be played again from 1st June. Word came from the Welsh Assembly (not croquet players) that we could not play croquet so we closed again on 2nd June. The Club finally opened for the 2020 season on 22nd June with risk assessments, distancing, sanitizers and a booking system. At first we did not allow visitors, but as confidence grew in our safety measures, we allowed a few small groups to return. We even set up coaching sessions.

The Committee decided to open the lawns until 31st December, weather permitting, to make up for the late opening. At the time of writing we are closed again under Welsh Covid Firebreak, but only until 9th November. We did an intensive day of aeration and feeding of the lawns along with other more ambitious maintenance on 17th October so allowing the lawns to rest for a few weeks is welcome. Our extended playing period and the lack of many other outside activities has led to a very large number of new members. We have recruited 26 new members while only losing 7 this year. This takes our total membership to 73, although 20 of these are second club or country members. We have approximately 6 non-playing members. The vast majority of our members play Golf Croquet, but two years of Association Croquet Coaching sessions mean that we will be able to enter an AC team in the NW Federation League as soon as it starts again. We were successful in obtaining a grant from the charity associated with the local hydroelectric scheme to buy new hoops for our two large lawns this year. We have plans to start enlarging the lawns, which are not quite full size, during the winter months.

Sarah Andrew

Pendle and Craven:-

Every single member of Pendle has 'earned' a CA Diploma this year, or should've IMO.

In a year that started so normally; club play in Jan/Feb interspersed with ground-works/working parties preparing us for the new season, then World-Wide Shutdown hit.

By mid-May club sessions had restarted and all members 'guinea pigged' our tournament C-19 protocols whilst competing in club internals. After a review & a few tweaks, we hosted (safely, without incident) five weekend tournaments including the Federation's Millennium Level Golf at short notice – none of which would have been possible without the extraordinary collegiate efforts by the whole membership. Active U3A group.

What a club – brilliant effort.

Paul Rigge

Penrith and North Lakes:-

Covid restrictions preventing cricket being played throughout most of the season turned out to be to the advantage of Penrith CC members. For those who felt they wanted to play, (about 80% of members), we had unfettered use of the ground we normally share with cricket, including at weekends. Limited to how many could safely play at any one time, our normal club sessions were replaced with "all play all" competitions. Members really appreciated these competitive games, having few other diversions, and enjoyed the opportunity to socialise in a safe environment. Having additional lawn time also meant we could run a Golf Croquet competition for the first time. All in all it's been a very successful season.

Howard Bowron

Salford:- Not a member in 2020

Southport and Birkdale:-

The season started late. Weather stopped the completion of Autumn/Winter work so top dressing was not done. Just when we should have begun preparations for play we were locked down.

When we were allowed to open restrictions meant there could be no competitive play so tournaments, league matches and internals did not take place.

There was good use of lawns when lockdown was relaxed with some members on the lawn almost daily and some maintenance could be carried out although mowing was reduced as some volunteers were shielding and new volunteers could not be trained.

The lack of Come & Try was a major problem but we were able to do some restricted 2nd year coaching for some of last year's beginners and also ran a Beginner's course for 4 or 5 newcomers but this did not bring in any new members due to injury/illness but may bring them back next year.

Unfortunately none of our members were willing to travel to play in any the Millennium events which were organised because of the restrictions on travelling with other players.

We hosted 2 CA events in September, the Treasurer's Tankard and the Ascot Cup which both went well. The latter involved the deployment of 200 metres of flexible plastic pipe as ball guards.

The loss of tournaments, the North West Festival and no catering has affected our income whilst outgoings and maintenance have not reduced. A Grant from the small business fund has meant that we are still financially viable.

Diana Williamson

Stonyhurst College:- Nothing to report

Benedict O'Connor

Tattenhall:-

There is not a lot to say this year. We have however been lucky enough to play for the majority of the season under CA Guidelines. We have been running an internal GC Handicap Tournament which proved to be very enjoyable and kept members in touch with each other, albeit we have yet to play the final round due to the second 'lock down'. We were fortunate in being able to play a friendly match V Chester and had our first win! Membership is c30 with some gains & losses.

Ruth Wrigley

Westmorland:-

Having lost the first 3 months of the season due to Levens Hall and our lawns being closed our season was underway in mid June. This was partly compensated by an extension into October.

While strictly following "Coved Guidance" the majority of our members have enjoyed social croquet plus we have managed to run most of our internal competitions and friendly matches against Crake and Fylde Croquet Clubs.

Two of our members have played in outside tournaments one of whom Neil Adams, who was new to Croquet in the 2019 season who won the Pendle and Craven Short AC 14pt Tournament held on 11th October.

Through local contacts we have recruited 10 new members – at the moment just playing social golf but we have plans to extend their croquet range next year.

John Shakespeare

13 NW Federation Equipment Assets – see Appendix 1

Currently the Federation has no equipment available for loan. The clubs with long-term loaned equipment have been contacted and they are not able to return the equipment. I suggest from now forward we put a time limit, say 5 years, on loaned equipment. If we can afford we should buy a CA starter set of 6 hoops, centre peg, 4 mallets, clips, set of primary balls and set of flags costs £1450. Buying everything separately without flags is £5 cheaper. A set of secondary balls costs £380. George Wood mallets are £170 each.

Following discussion it was agreed to formally request the return of loan equipment from Penrith. Sarah to contact member clubs to see if they have any excess equipment they are prepared to donate or sell at second hand prices to the Federation.

14 County Captains

Thanks were expressed for the many years that Colin Irwin has ably captained Cheshire.

The following Captains were elected for the AC Inter-Counties Teams in 2021:

Chris Coull for Cheshire and James Hawkins for Lancashire. Paul Rigge to act as Organiser for Lancashire.

If anyone wishes to organise a GC team for either Lancashire or Cheshire, please let the Secretary know.

15 CA Diploma

Presenting awards is one way that we can recognise the huge amount of voluntary work that goes on at our various clubs (and throughout our region) .

Congratulations to Don Williamson (Southport) & Howard Bowron (Penrith & North Lakes) on their awards.

16 Election of Officers

Officers were elected nem con as follows

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| 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 |

The meeting expressed its thanks to all officers for their work in support of the Federation

17 Election of Independent Examiner

Robert Essler was elected nem con as Independent Examiner. (Proposed by Jean Hargreaves, Seconded David Barrett.

18 Any Other Business

It was noted that the virtual format had enabled a larger group & certainly a more geographically dispersed attendance at the meeting and consideration should be given to retaining this format even when the Covid restrictions are lifted.

19 Dates of Next Meetings

Next Meetings - Spring Meeting on 6th March 2021 at Culcheth or Zoom/YouTube Autumn AGM on 13th November 2021 at Culcheth.

20 Meeting Closed at 12.02pm

Appendix 1

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Bowdon | None |
| Bury | Projector |
| Chester | None |
| Craig-y-Don | CA Start up Set |
| Crake | Mower (50%) |
| 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 |
| Harlech | None |
| IOM | None |
| Keswick | None |
| Liverpool | None |
| Llanfairfechan | None |
| Nannerch | None |
| Pendle | None |
| Penrith | 4 Mallets, 1 set hoops, 1 peg |
| Salford | CA start up Set |
| Southport | None |
| Tattenhall | CA Start up Set + set of 2 ^{ndary} balls, |
| Wilmslow (U3A group) | In carrying case 4 mallets, centre peg, 1 set primary Sunshiny balls and 1 set secondary Barlow balls, clips |
| Westmorland | None |
| Paul Rigge | 1 set Tertiary Balls (Dawson) |
| Available | No equipment available |

North West Federation of Croquet Clubs

Accounts for the Year Ended 30th September 2019

| | 2019 | | 2018 | |
|-------------------------------|---------|----------------|--------|----------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Income | | | | |
| Affiliation fees | | 400.00 | | 400.00 |
| Festival entries | 1001.00 | | 888.00 | |
| Festival expenses | 1021.00 | -20.00 | 864.32 | 23.68 |
| Donation | | | | 9.00 |
| Millennium events | | 190.00 | | 165.00 |
| Interest | | 35.65 | | 22.89 |
| Total Income | | <u>605.65</u> | | <u>620.57</u> |
| Bank balances brought forward | | 5895.91 | | 5455.13 |
| | | <u>6501.56</u> | | <u>6075.70</u> |
| Expenditure | | | | |
| Development | | 380.00 | | |
| Engraving | | 100.95 | | 43.00 |
| Meeting Tea / coffee | | 10.00 | | 20.00 |
| Website | | 41.99 | | 49.99 |
| Coaching | | 40.20 | | 66.80 |
| Total Expenditure | | <u>573.14</u> | | <u>179.79</u> |
| Bank balances carried forward | | 5928.42 | | 5895.91 |
| | | <u>6501.56</u> | | <u>6075.70</u> |

E A Wilson - Treasurer *E A Wilson*C Slater - Independent Examiner *C Slater* 31.10.19.

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.

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 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.

Officers

- a) The Executive Officers of the Federation shall be the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. All posts are held until the next Annual General Meeting.
- 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, other Officers and the CA Council Member representing the North West Federation.
- 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.

November 2019