

Minutes of the North West Federation of Croquet Clubs Spring Meeting
Saturday 2nd March 2024 (Draft 0.1 to Committee)
Held on Zoom & YouTube

- 1 **The Meeting** was attended by 18 people representing 11 clubs:
- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Bowdon | Angharrad Walters, Nigel Matthews, Andrew Winn* |
| Bury | Roy Spencer, Roger Schofield |
| Chester | Tom Grievson, Robin Tasker |
| Craig-y-Don | John Hannah, Roger Edwards* |
| Crake Valley | David Cornes |
| Ellesmere | Alan Wright |
| Flixton | |
| Fylde | Phil Snowden |
| Keswick | |
| Llanfairfechan | Sarah Andrew |
| Patterdale | |
| Pendle & Craven | Sharon de Maine |
| Penrith & North Lakes | |
| Southport & Birkdale | Esther Jubb, John Haslam, Peter Williams |
| Stonyhurst | |
| Tattenhall | |
| Westmorland | Sue Pritchard |

* Attended via YouTube

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Alison Maugham & CqE for their support in hosting the meeting virtually.

- 2 **Apologies for Absence.** Clubs: Keswick, Penrith & North Lakes, Stonyhurst. Individuals: Chris Alvey, Liz Wilson, Peter Wilson, Catherine Bass, Howard Bowron, Ian Tupling, Simon Robbins, Steve Skelton

3. **The minutes** of the AGM & SGM held on 18th November 2023 were approved as a correct record Nem Con.

4. **Matters Arising** – None.

5. **Officers and Committee Members Reports since the previous meeting.**

A **Chairman – John Haslam**

Nothing to report.

B **Secretary - Angharrad Walters**

Following Liz Wilson's resignation, we currently have two vacancies on the Committee, for the posts of Development Officer & Coaching Officer. Anyone interested in either role, please let with John or I know.

The Committee has met once since the AGM. Much of the discussion will be covered under AOB, but there was also a proposal to amend the Constitution to rename the AGM, as the Autumn General Meeting, to reflect the twice yearly meeting cycle & regularise the approval of AGM minutes at the Spring meeting.

Millennium Competition Entry Forms will be issued to Club Secretaries as soon as the details are confirmed.

A couple of reminders: Entries into the National Inter-Club competitions are due before Monday (SBCC to enter Federations Shield) & replays of the Croquet England webinars are available via the members section of the CqE website. (<https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=members/webinars>)

C **Treasurer – Peter Williams**

All Clubs have paid their subscriptions for the year & there have been only a very small expense, so the bank balance is now £6714.

D League Manager – Phil Snowden

A small increase in the number of teams entering the Leagues (up to 55 from 51 last year) has resulted in 193 matches being scheduled, with the final version of the Fixture list due to be issued next week. However they may be a couple of withdrawals, to be confirmed asap.

A simplified approach for using scoring clips in the handicap GC League will be communicated with the League documentation.

Submitting level play results (Advanced B League or LPG) requires either the Excel spreadsheet to be completed, or the data input to croquetscores.com

E Coaching Officer – Vacancy

Nothing to report

F Development Officer – Vacancy

Role remains vacant.

G NW Festival – David Cornes

Planning for the 2024 Festival is now underway and Co-ordinators are due to meet on Zoom on Tuesday 12th March from 7pm.

Summary of feedback from the 2023 survey will be discussed and any improvements identified adopted, if possible.

Calling notice is due to be sent out in May with a closing date of early June. Joining instructions, Fixtures and lawn allocation due to be issued by 23rd June.

Festival to be held Saturday 29th & Sunday 30th June 2024.

Fees to be held at 2023 prices (£40 per team). Fees are likely to have to be increased in 2025.

H Safeguarding Officer – Roger Schofield

Croquet England have made available e-learning materials for both Child & Adult Safeguarding to all Club Safeguarding Officers. If your Club's Safeguarding Officer has not received this invitation, please contact the CqE office.

I Pennine Cup Captain - Liz Wilson

Anyone interested in playing should let Liz know.

J Federation Handicappers – Liz Wilson & Tom Grievson

David Cornes is now a member of the CqE Handicap Committee

There is a Zoom meeting planned for Federation Handicappers on Thursday 21st March. At that meeting discussions are planned -

ASSOCIATION CROQUET – There is a strong desire to bring in a “GC to AC mapping table” to help the club handicapper when a GC player decides they want to try AC. Full discussion paper is on the CqE website (under committee meeting minutes – January 27th 2024). The principle to bring a table in will be discussed – the values within the table will not be debated but will be reviewed at the end of the 2024 season.

GC Class Level of play	GC Handicap Range	AC Initial Handicap	Index
Championship / Open	Minus handicaps	11	1200
A level	0 – 2 inclusive	14	1100
B level	3 – 6 inclusive	18	1000
C level	7 – 12 inclusive	22	9000
New players	12 and above	24	850

GOLF CROQUET – Clarification in respect of the relationship between DG and the handicap index when reviewing a players’ handicap will be given.

ANNUAL REVIEW OF HANDICAPS – The CqE is keen for all clubs to review all member handicap and handicap cards at least once a year. March / early April seems to be the most sensible time to do this task.

K Website Manager – Chris Alvey

Nothing to report

L CqE Board Member (NW) - Robin Tasker

Croquet England has been operational since 1st January. All associates have been invited to become members, which would give them voting rights.

The first AGM will be held on 16/3 by Zoom.

6 Millennium Competitions

Dates were proposed / confirmed as follows:

AC Advanced - Pendle - 10/11 August
GC Level Play - Bury - 7 September
AC Handicap - Chester - 7/8 September
GC Handicap - Crake Valley - 20 July
Short Croquet - Pendle - 22 June

7 Motions:

The League Rules for 2024 were approved nem con.

It was agreed to consider the outcome of the Alternate Shot Doubles unilateral decision trial at the AGM.

Bowdon (Nigel Matthews)

We are hosting seven tournaments this summer:-

- 4-6 May - May AC Handicap Weekend
- 1-2 June - June AC Advanced Weekend
- 18-19 June - Midweek AC B-level advanced
- 6-7 July - GC Cheshire Open
- 24-25 July - Midweek Short Croquet
- 7-8 August - 14 point AC Handicap
- 24-26 August - North of England AC Championships

Entries for Midweek Short & 14pt AC by email to Angharrad Walters

Bury (Roy Spencer)

BCC will be holding the following events this season:

- Saturday 20th April - Annual Open Day for Bury Hospice, Coronation Park 11am - 4pm.
- Saturday 25th May - National Croquet Day Open Day, Whitehead Park 11am - 4pm.
- Public events all welcome.

National GC Tournaments: Whitehead Park.

- A Level (Zero +). Sat/Sun 4th/5th May
- B Level (3+) Sun 19th May
- C Level (7+) Wed 17th July

Chester (Tom Grievson)

Chester have added two more GC events (B & C level) to their calendar in late May / June. Unfortunately the B event has not been included in the national series.

Craig-y-Don (John Hannah)

Craig Y Don is looking forward to the new season start in April with a major project on its' hands.

Conwy Planning recently passed our plans for a new bungalow style clubhouse which will allow us to grow membership and bring more organised groups to play croquet in Llandudno.

Our current clubhouse is basically a double length single width concrete garage which holds hot drink making equipment and sink, along with all our mallets and hoop trolleys leaving space for a maximum of 14 members sitting down. It is simply unsuitable for our regular gatherings of 20 to 30 members in the constantly varying weather conditions which are normal here in North Wales.

The club membership has borne the cost of the Architect so far and getting through planning. We now must fund other pre-construction contract fees for detailed design drawings, structural engineering calculations, Quantity Surveying take offs and the Building Regulation approval costs as we seek major grant funding into the order of £180,000! We have just submitted our first major grant application to the 'Gwynt Y Mor' (local off-shore) Wind Farm Fund and should know whether we are successful or not by June.

We have raised our playing membership fee to £100 for our six month season and are now embarking on a 'Buy a Brick' campaign (at £100) aimed at membership and friends alongside local fundraising activities.

As our current membership ages, we have tragically lost two stalwart players since Christmas with a further couple still quite poorly. We have good ideas for bringing youth/young adult groups to the club, but they all require shelter for their own H&S requirements.

We are looking forward to our second season with a team in the handicapped Golf league and are planning/hopeful that we can put in at least a second league team into the NW Fed leagues in 2025.

We remain optimistic for the future, but it will need a lot of hard work.

Crake Valley (Simon Robins)

Initial pre-season treatments of the lawns have been dictated by poor weather at the end of last season where exceptionally heavy rain washed away some areas which had been levelled and over-seeded. The resulting bare patches are being rejuvenated with fresh seed, top dressing and water-retaining compost. This year's main treatment package from Duncan Hector includes a modified, longer-lasting granular fertiliser applied in April and August, with just two liquid feeds in June and July. This regimen is intended to provide residual fertiliser activity for the top-dressing and over-seeding that will be done towards the end of September.

In 2024, Crake is running the same seven tournaments that were hosted last year, starting with an AC Alternate Strokes Handicap Doubles in April. Advanced AC Tournaments, the Cumbria Cup and Cavendish Clock will be held in June and August, respectively, and in June the Club will host the GC C-, B-, and A-level Series National Qualifiers. The final Tournament in September is a 2-day GC Ladies Open which continues to be a popular event. Registration for all Tournaments is through TES and many are already fully subscribed. The Crake Valley Club has also been awarded the two-day CqE v SCA Advanced AC Representative match to be held at the end of August.

Finally, our Club is extremely proud of the achievements of David Cornes in representing England in the Over 50's GC World Championship in Australia last October, and a memento of the occasion now adorns the wall of the clubhouse. In November, David also accepted an invitation to sit on the CqE Handicapping Committee.

Ellesmere (Alan Wright)

The former members of Culcheth have been welcomed into the Club. We have entered teams into the GC Leagues.

Fylde (Catherine Bass)

Fylde currently rents space for its three lawns at South Shore Tennis Club in Blackpool.

A private investor, in liaison with the Tennis Club has applied for planning consent to build indoor padel tennis courts on two of our lawns.

The Tennis Club has kept us informed about the development and it is expected that nothing will change for the 2024 season. From 2025, they say we will be allocated other grassy areas but we're expecting to be reduced to two lawns. There is ongoing discussion about relocating our equipment and other facilities.

Keswick (Steve Skelton) – Nothing to report.

Llanfairfechan– (Sarah Andrew)

The hoops will be drilled on 9th March weather permitting. We look forward to a good season. A grant received under the Shared Prosperity Fund will allow us to renew hoops, mallets and balls in addition to building a shelter for spectators and some additional storage. For this funding we will increase community interaction. We are hopeful of hosting new groups of youth organisations, people with disabilities and refugees.

Pendle & Craven (Sharon de Maine)

The new Committee continues to be on a steep learning curve!

Penrith & North Lakes – (Ian Tupling)

Another enjoyable year of Croquet on our lawns at Edenhall to the east of Penrith. We sadly did not win the Cumberland Tankard this year, but members took part in Advanced and Standard AC, GC and short lawn AC between club members. Work done on the lawns during winter and the pre season period, both mechanical and with treatments resulted in a better grass growth, and thus playing surfaces. A couple of dips are being gradually levelled out, so our aim is again to improve the playing surface further during this year. One slight set back was the flooding of the whole area including the pavilion when the recent storms through late January resulted in the River Eden again over topping its banks.

Southport - (Esther Jubb)

This season we will be offering several one day competitions in 14point and Short Croquet. Dates will be advertised in due course.

Stonyhurst – Nothing to Report

Tattenhall – Nothing to Report

Westmorland - Sue Pritchard

We have been enjoying playing on Fridays and have been working on the lawns to improve the surface.

9 Federation Equipment Assets

No amendments to list circulated with agenda. There is an imminent transfer from Bury to Llanfairfechan - details to be confirmed when completed.

John Hannah observed that Foxy hoops can be inserted into hard surfaces.

10 Any Other Business

a) Federation Voting structure

A brief discussion failed to identify a consensus view. Esther Jubb posed the question as to what is the purpose of the Committee? Is it trying to be representative of the clubs, or is it managing the execution of Federation business?

Action: The three Executive Officers to develop proposals for further discussion before / at the AGM.

b) AGM Format

With the objective of trying to increase attendance at the Federation Meetings, discussion focussed on start time, location, refreshments and more time for open discussion / networking.

Action: John to contact “absent” clubs & ask what would encourage them to attend.

Action: The three Executive Officers to discuss further before the AGM.

Action: Alan Wright to investigate whether Ellesmere could host, or possibly the Culcheth Village Centre.

c) Whether Federation Handicappers should be members of the Fed Committee. Decision deferred to later date.

d) Quadway Hoops. Simon Jenkins, the agent for Quadways & Terminator mallets, has asked the Federations whether they would like to purchase multiple sets of Quadway hoops to use at tournaments within the Federation. Mixed experiences reported and no desire to use a large proportion of our funds on such a purchase.

e) Approach from The Lowry re a “We invented the weekend” event. Angharrad reported that The Lowry were looking to include croquet in their event. Ellesmere & Bury asked for more information.

Action: Angharrad to share the email/

11 Date of Next Meeting

AGM 16th November 2024 at TBC, Spring Meeting via Zoom 1st or 8th March 2025 (TBC)

12 Meeting Closed at 11:15.

Appendix 1 Equipment as at March 2024

Bowdon	None
Bury	Projector
Chester	None
Craig-y-Don	CA Start up Set
Crake	None
Ellesmere	3 Mallets
Flixton	None
Fylde	None
Keswick	None
Llanfairfechan	Gazebo
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 nd ary balls,
Westmorland	None
West Pennine (U3A group)	1 set Jacques Hoops, 1 centre peg, 1 set of flags, 1 set of Dawson first colours, 1 set of Dawson 2nd colours, 1 set of primary clips, 5 George wood mallets, 1 hoop puller, 1 36" metal shaft mallet, 3 mallets (All ex Liverpool) 5 Round head mallets, 1 set Dawson primary balls, centre peg (ex Criccieth)
Wilmslow (U3A group)	In carrying case 4 George Wood mallets, centre peg, 1 set primary Sunshiny balls and 1 set secondary Barlow balls, 1 set metal primary clips
Paul Rigge	1 set Tertiary Balls (Dawson)
Available	With Bury CC - 1 set dawson primary balls, 2 centre pegs, set of clips, flags, markers and assortment of balls (three Barlow - white / pink / green, one Dawson - black, 7 assorted poor condition - 3 green / 2 white / 2 yellow) - (All ex Liverpool). CA start up kit (set of hoops, set of primary balls, centre peg) and 4 CA george wood mallets 1 set hoops (ex Cricceith) 1 set of Foxy hoops (CA)