

# EAST ANGLIAN CROQUET FEDERATION

## Minutes of The 24<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting – 19<sup>th</sup> March 2011

The 24<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting was held at The Hyndman Centre, Hospital Road, Bury St. Edmunds. IP33 3BD. The meeting was opened at 2.00 pm by the Chairman Peter Allnutt (Ipswich), with the following members present: Secretary Terrey Sparks (Norwich), Treasurer George Collin (Wrest Park), Simon Hathrell (Watford), Chris Howell (B.S.E.), John Hall (Letchworth), Jonathan Toye (Downham Market), Arthur Reed (Watford), John Cundell and David Balls (Leighton Linlade), John and Edme' Robinette (B.S.E.), Bob Dawkins (Fromus) and Ken Wheeler (Hunstanton).

**Apologies** were received from the Joint Presidents Tom and Judy Anderson and John Skuse (Chelmsford and Bentley).

**Minutes** of the 2010 meeting held on 20th March 2010 were taken as circulated and the only point arising was that Jane Collier (Colchester) had sent an email pointing out that she had attended as a delegate and her name was not included as attending. This was noted.

As there were no other points arising it was unanimously agreed by the meeting that the 2010 Minutes be accepted.

**The Chairman** reported that once again he had had a quiet year, really only being active in organising and running the EACF Golf Level Tournament held at Ipswich in July. If the EACF was likened to a swan on the river he would be the top half – serene and doing nothing much, whilst the rest of the Committee would be underneath paddling like mad!

The other committee members who are all too modest to blow their own trumpet do deserve our appreciation and thanks for all the work they put in. So I will blow it for them. There's George Collin our treasurer for nearly 30 years who year after year deals with all the minutiae of the accounts, patiently dealing with the late payers with his usual calm aplomb.

Terrey Sparks is the most conscientious secretary I think we have ever had, and basically the hub of the committee. Terrey this year had the extra task of dealing with the testing and purchasing of the carpet-handling machine on top of all his other duties.

Jonathan Toye since taking over coaching and development has been doing an excellent job of encouraging and introducing croquet to people with physical disabilities.

Simon Hathrell is consistently upgrading the Federation's web site making communication between our clubs quicker and easier. The current web site is very easy to surf through.

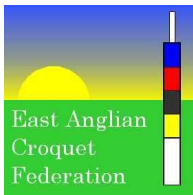
Chris Howell has continued to organise and run the Golf Croquet leagues very efficiently, with endless cajoling to get teams to organise themselves.

Arthur Reed has for years attended the CA committee meetings, which require a fair amount of time and travel to report back to us the current news from CA HQ.

Finally, and I don't know who it was who persuaded Colin Hemming to run the indoor croquet, but it was inspired. Colin whilst not on the committee has managed to rejuvenate the indoor croquet scene, introducing various new playing formats, which have been received well by the players.

So on behalf of myself and the rest of the Federation members, thank you for all your hard work, it's very much appreciated.

We look forward to a long hot summer of croquet at every level.



**Treasurer:** Before he gave his annual report the Treasurer informed the meeting that this would be his final report as that after 25 years in the post he had decided to relinquish office. George has held office since the Federation's came into existence and he gave the meeting a brief outline of how the Federation had developed over this time.

He then presented the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010, which had been circulated and approved by the Auditor Mark Homan. For the year there was an excess of expenditure over income amounting to £352.40, which reduced the Federation's reserves to £3,756.37. However, bearing in mind that we had acquired during the year equipment to the value of £400 (junior mallets) and expended £500 (carpet lifter) we could easily absorb the loss. This being the case he recommended no change in the annual subscription rate of £15.

On a proposal by John Hall and seconded by Arthur Reed the meeting unanimously agreed to accept the accounts and to no change in the subscription.

Following his report the Chairman proposed a vote of thanks from the meeting for all the Treasurer's past services and presented him with, on the members' behalf, an engraved glass tankard.

**The Secretary** reported that the last year had gone very well with all the Federation events being well supported by the members clubs. However, there were still concerns over the lack of volunteers coming forward not only to take over the running of various events but also putting themselves forward to serve on the EACF committee.

The Federation membership now stands at 29 clubs, two up on last year. The first is Maldon and comprises of a group from the Purleigh Club who felt that as lawn space was limited now was the time to develop their own facility. The other new club is at Little Gaddesden near Berkhamsted. This is a declining bowls club at which one of the members is a croquet player who hopes to revive their fortunes.

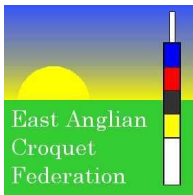
Of the 29 clubs 21 have already paid their subscription with 8 outstanding. No problems are expected but the secretary will be following up the outstanding payments in the near future.

The Secretary also reported that he is finding the improvements made to the website a great asset in keeping records up to date. By allowing him direct access he is able to update without first having to refer to the webmaster, this is proving faster and more efficient. At the present time 28 of the 29 clubs are on-line and receive information direct by electronic mail, which plays a large part in keeping postal costs to a minimum. In addition the Secretary is able to offer all member clubs a bulk mailing service should they wish to circulate any information to other regional clubs.

Finally, he would like to offer congratulations to the Wrest Park Club for winning the Longman Cup last year, and also to Janet Lewis (Watford), John Cundell (Leighton Linlade) and Owen Bryce (Northampton) for being awarded the C.A. Diploma.

**Coaching/Development/Equipment:** Jonathan Toye reported that coaching was ongoing and several local sessions for the disabled had been undertaken.

In regard to development, several letters of support had been written in respect of grant bids to the C.A.: Norwich - in regard to increased lawn costs (unsuccessful); Letchworth – back up bid for Townsend Award; Fromus – funding towards lawn improvements and facilities; Little Gaddesden – equipment loan and advice; Enfield – funding towards lawn improvements.



The Federation's equipment had now been moved from Norwich to Downham Market. A loan of equipment to the Little Gaddesden club had been improved and will shortly be collected.

**Golf Croquet:** Chris Howell informed the meeting that 24 teams played in the league throughout 2010. The play-offs in September saw semi-finals between Hunstanton Blue from the North Area against Enfield East from the East, whilst Newport Oaks from the Central Area played Stony Stratford from the West. The finals in Bury St. Edmunds on 11<sup>th</sup> September saw Stony Stratford emerge the winners after a hard fought match against Enfield East.

The idea of arranging a level play league for more senior players to run alongside the current handicapped league was circulated around clubs. There was interest especially from clubs who entered two teams in the league. However, there was not sufficient interest to go ahead for the 2011 season.

The details of the 2011 season have been circulated to clubs and is also up and running on the website.

**Indoors Croquet (Association):** the Secretary reported to the meeting that after the Health & Safety problem that had arisen in October had been sorted out the remaining indoor programme had gone very well. Colin Hemming had proved to be an imaginative and innovative manager who had increased the interest in participating so that many of the sessions had been over subscribed. Thanks were expressed to Colin for all his efforts.

The hall bookings for next year had been made and Colin had been asked if he was available and willing to continue as Manager. To date no reply had been received due to him being away on holiday.

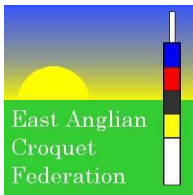
**Indoors Croquet (Golf):** Chris Howell informed the meeting the event had been successful in November when the weekend was split into a level play day, followed by a handicap play day. Trying to repeat the success during March 2011 proved to be more difficult particularly for the level play event. Because of this, she had decided next winter to only stage the one session instead of two. The extra weekend has been offered back to the AC game.

**Indoors Croquet (General):** The meeting was informed that the carpet and equipment was in good condition apart from the hoops, which needed some attention. Mike Percival to be asked into look into carrying out repairs.

The Committee have also decided to freeze next winter's entry fees and not increase them in line with any likely higher hall charges, with any increase in costs to be borne by the Federation.

**C.A. Representative:** Arthur Reed informed the meeting that during the last year he had attended three Council Meetings, which had been most interesting. Recruitment was the topic that was most worrying Council and the fact that although clubs were showing an increase in recruitment this was not being reflected in associate membership and the problem needs to be resolved. It would seem that the easy path to recruitment was being taken at club level and social golf croquet members were being recruited at the expense of association. This could be due to a lack of CA coaches and profile advertising.

In this connection at the request of the Marketing Committee and in tandem with all the other Federations he had conducted a survey of all the C.A. affiliated clubs in the region and



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received a good response. From this data he had compiled a schedule which gave a breakdown of the clubs' memberships and split between AC & GC players and their playing activities. This information is to be published on the website so that it could be accessed.

From this and other sources of information Kevin Carter has compiled a report for the Marketing Committee on Growth and Recruitment, which runs to 23 pages. Copies of this report will be made available at a later date.

The C.A. had made a small surplus last year. There had been a decline in commercial income, mainly from the shop, but this had been offset by expenditure on the MacRobertson Shield event being less than expected.

The club tournament levy is being reduced from 30% to 25%.

He also pointed out that over the last 20 years the total development grants made to clubs had amounted to £120,000.

Martin French (Ipswich) had been appointed as Secretary of the World Croquet Federation.

This year The World Golf Croquet Championships are to be held at Hurlingham and Surbiton between the dates of 18<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> July. Also the W.C.F Junior World Golf Croquet Championships are to be held at Hunstanton on 12<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> July.

Finally, Arthur confirmed that he would not be seeking re-election to the post this year and he would be standing down. He was duly thanked by the Chairman for all the work he had put in over the years attending Council Meetings and reporting back to the committee and members.

**Website:** Simon Hathrell reported that the site was well visited with over 13,000 hits to date. He had introduced a hidden web counter on each page to monitor where the most interest was. To date this was the indoor programme at Soham. He had spent a considerable amount of time introducing various upgrades, the latest being access for the League Organisers to enable them to enter results directly without reference to himself. The fees for the upgrades last year totalled £12 and the licence fee for the next two years will be in the region of £85.

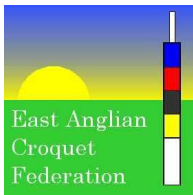
**Election Of The Committee:** As there were no nominations for office from the member clubs the Chairman called for nominations from the floor.

It was proposed by John Hall and seconded by John Cundell that the following Officers be elected en-bloc: Peter Allnutt (Chairman), Terrey Sparks (Secretary), Arthur Reed (Treasurer), Chris Howell (Golf Croquet), Jonathan Toye (Coaching / Development / Equipment) and Simon Hathrell (Webmaster).

As there was no nomination for the post of C.A. Representative Terrey Sparks put his name forwarded. He pointed out that having served five years as Chairman and six years as Secretary he would like to stand down next year. He pointed out that, as he would not take up the appointment until October, he would be able to hold both offices until the 2012 AGM. All elected en-bloc by the meeting.

Proposed by Arthur Reed and seconded by John Cundell the following members are elected to also serve on the Committee: Mike Percival, John Hall and George Collin. All elected en-bloc by the meeting.

It was also proposed by Peter Allnutt and seconded by Terrey Sparks that Mark Homan be duly re-elected as Auditor, which was unanimously carried by the meeting.



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It was also decided that the Chairman Peter Allnutt, Treasurer Arthur Reed and Secretary Terrey Sparks be delegated to sign the Federations cheques and that two out of the three authorised officers' signatures would be required.

**2011 Programme of Events:** The Secretary reported that the summer programme of events was complete and published on the website. It is basically identical to the previous year except with the addition of a new extra event, a One Day Inter-Counties 'B' Level Golf Croquet Tournament due to be staged at Hunstanton next June.

Also there will be a Golf Croquet Referees Course at Colchester on 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> May, at which Bill Arliss will be the lead instructor. Clubs have been made aware and likely candidates are slowly coming forward.

**Any Other Business:** The meeting was informed that Bill Arliss Chairman of the GC Committee was proposing to set up a Club Handicappers system on a similar basis to that of the AC game. He had written to all the Federations and followed this up with an article in the CA Gazette. A lively discussion followed and it was generally felt that although this was a good idea and long overdue the general feeling of the meeting was that he was setting the standard too high and this would preclude the recruitment of suitable candidates. This matter would be raised with Bill when he was at Colchester later in the year.

There being no further business the date for the next Annual General Meeting was set for Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2012 [*Note: later changed to Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> April*], and the meeting was closed at 3.40 pm.