



East Anglian Croquet Federation

Minutes of the 25th Annual General Meeting

21st April 2012

Minutes of the 25th Annual General Meeting held at The Hyndman Centre, Hospital Road, Bury St. Edmunds, IP33 3BD. The meeting was opened at 2.00pm by the Chairman Peter Allnutt (Ipswich), with the following members present: Secretary Terrey Sparks (Peterborough), Treasurer Arthur Reed (Watford), Simon Hathrell (Watford), Chris Howell (B.S.E.), Jonathan Toye (Downham Market), Mike Percival (B.S.E.), John & Edme Robinette (B.S.E.), Ken Wheeler (Hunstanton), Hazel Medler (Norwich), Leslie Barnard (Norwich), Pat Hetherington (Colchester), Bob Dawkins (Fromus), A. Church (Sudbury), George Collin (Wrest Park), Duncan Hector (Bygrave/Letchworth), Howard Bottomley (Wrest Park/Hunstanton).

Apologies: were received from J. Hall, John Skuse (Leighton Linlade) and Jean Healey (Maldon).

Minutes: The minutes of the 2011 meeting held on the 19th March were taken as circulated and there were no matters arising, and so being it was unanimously agreed by the meeting that the 2011 Minutes be accepted.

Officers Reports:

Chairman:

Peter pointed out that this was his fifth year as chairman and under the constitution is required to stand down. He reported that he very much enjoyed being part of the EACF team and remarked that whoever takes over from him will be inheriting an excellent team. He thanked all the committee members for the way they had continued to make the EACF run as smoothly and efficiently as ever - leaving him with very little to do except smile & be thankful.

Without wishing to take anything away from the rest of the committee he particularly wished to mention the contribution by Terrey Sparks and to thank him sincerely for his tremendous work as secretary, as well as acting as the hub of the committee in co-ordinating their organisational efforts.

Peter finished by thanking the committee once again for all their help and wished his successor all the very best.

Treasurer:

The treasurer advised that the statement of accounts had been circulated which showed a very minor fall in the reserves of £16.50 over the previous year. This raised the subjects of the necessity to protect our reserves and prepare for the eventual replacement of the indoor carpet. A discussion ensued over raising the affiliation fee which had remained at £15 for the last six years to £20. Regarding the necessity for accumulating funds to eventually replace the indoor carpet it was suggested that an additional £1.50 per player be added to the tournament fee. After some discussion these two proposals were agreed and to be effective from 1st January 2013. The accounts having been audited and passed by Mark Homan, Mike Percival proposed that the accounts be accepted; this was seconded by Ken Wheeler and passed unanimously.

Secretary:

Terrey reported that last year the programme had run smoothly. He was particularly pleased to report that for the first time there had been 18 entries in the AC Club Champions Day held at Wrest Park and entries continue to grow year on year. The AC league play off held at Colchester between Chelmsford & Bentley, Watford and Hunstanton had for the first time ended in a three way tie which had to be decided by a peg shoot out. The Winner Chelmsford & Bentley will go on to represent the Eastern Region in the Secretaries Shield for 2012. The newly introduced Golf Croquet tournament (similar to the Anderson Shield) and named the "Ken Wheeler Shield" had been an outstanding success and had been won by Hertfordshire.. He congratulated Ken Wheeler on the excellent manner in which he managed the tournament.

Terrey explained that he had had a busy winter. Statistics show for this year that there are 30 registered clubs in the Region. For the first time ever every club had paid their affiliation fee. Regarding communications with the clubs, there was now only one club not on the web - this made communication to the clubs cheaper and quicker. The history of the EACF, National Trust and the indoor croquet had been updated and were now on the Web Site.

Terrey reported that Ipswich had moved to a new ground at Fynn Valley Golf Club; Wrest Park were being re-sited within their present grounds and Norwich were in the throes of moving. Martin French (Ipswich) had been appointed Secretary of the WCF.

Congratulations to the following members on being awarded the CA Certificate of Merit: George Collin (EACF/ Wrest Park, Neil Chalmers (EACF/Norwich), Iris Freeman (Southchurch Park), Basil Lawrence (Enfield) and John & Edme Robinette (B.S.E.)

The 2012 diary had been compiled and can be viewed on the web site. This includes two new competitions. The first a GC Club Champions Day due to be staged at Newport and a GC high handicap tournament which will be held at B.S.E.

Coaching & Development:

Jonathan's report covered a wide range of activities - the main ones being:

- Fromus, Ipswich & Norwich have received grants to assist with club improvements
- Harwich is developing an additional lawn, and we have lent them some equipment. Coaching assistance has been given to them and Ipswich are willing to help out in that respect.
- Little Gaddesden have had the loan of equipment for a year now, but it's been agreed to give them another years use of it.
- Lea Valley want to buy a new set of hoops - we only have "grotty" sets at present. This raised the subject of costs. Mike Percival reported that one could sand blast & powder coat a set for about £30. This was going to be checked. Duncan Hector mentioned that he had access to two sets of hoops for £60 per set - whilst not top quality would give adequate service.
- Jonathan mentioned we needed to replace mallets, about eight would be adequate. Terrey Sparks said it might be a good idea to circulate clubs to see if they had any spare mallets to sell. Mike Percival said that they could be refurbished. This was thought a good idea.
- Fromus have approval for new huts & equipment.
- Unfortunately Bottisham Club are folding and will be giving us their equipment.
- Disabled croquet was is continuing to go well.
- Small grants for coaching and setting up activities are available through Inspired Facilities Funding - their web site is: www.inspiredfacilities.sportengland.org For those interested

the next round of grants will be being made July - September.

- Finally he had made great efforts to get a Counties team together but unfortunately had failed.

Golf Croquet:

Twenty two teams joined the league at the beginning of the playing season, but Colchester had to withdraw unable to raise a team. Maldon was welcomed as a new club. The break down in areas was: North - 3 teams. Central - 5. West - 6, and East - 7.

Play was friendly and competitive throughout the summer, with few problems other than the usual handicap issues. Some system of standardisation needs to be set in place. The semi - finals between Hunstanton, L. Linslade, Enfield and Bury St. Edmunds were held on Newport lawns. The finals Enfield v L. Linslade were played at the Bury club. Enfield taking the trophy.

The standard of play in golf croquet is improving year on year. Many club members are entering level play tournaments around the country, hence the level play league, which was raised last year may come to fruition next season with a limited number of clubs taking part. Various formats are being considered and information will be circulated to club secretaries for comments.

This season 2012 the league has been extended to include level play. 7 teams have entered this tournament. C/N - 3 teams; E/W - 4 teams. 18 teams are playing in the handicap league.

Indoor Croquet:

The November 2010 tournament had difficulty in attracting entries in order to be a success therefore, the date had been changed to March in last year's calendar which apart from late call offs' had gone well. Next year the GC tournament will again be staged in March. It's planned to split the two days between level & handicap play.

Indoor Croquet (Association)

Terrey Sparks reporting on behalf of Colin Hemming, that the tournaments had been a great success. Much of this was due to Colin devising differing formats of play, which kept everyone's interest, and he is to be congratulated. Terrey suggested that we add two additional trophies to cover the expanded number of tournaments, which will be ten next year. Terrey repeated that although the indoor carpet still had a number of years left in it, that it would be wise to start raising funds to eventually cover the cost replacing it. It was suggested and accepted that an additional £1.50 per person be added to next year's match fees.

CA Representative:

Terrey reported that he had attended his first AGM as a member on both the Handicap Committee and the GC Tournament Committee. He said he was basically keeping a finger on the pulse as to what was going on. Terrey reported that the membership fees were going up for all classes of membership. Terrey reported that there was concern that overall although club membership was generally on the increase over the country there was concern that the right kind of player was not being recruited. It appears that social playing members are being attracted to the detriment of competitive players. For the year ended 31st December 2011 there were registered with the CA 185 (179) clubs showing 6,100 members (5737) of these only 1,718 (1728) were registered as Tournament members ie: 28%. Steps must be taken to encourage clubs to reverse this trend and to increase the number of tournament players.

The accounts for 2011 show a small income loss and the projected loss for 2012 is estimated to be in the region of £13,000. Subscriptions will need to rise by the RPI for 2013 estimated to

be in the region of 9.2%. This being the case the projected level of subscriptions for next year will be in the region of:- Tournament Member £46/£40.50, Non Tournament £29.50/£24 and Juniors £15/£15. The Club Levy for members will rise to around £7.95.

Development fund expenditure was up last year to meet an increase demand by clubs mainly arising due to cut backs made by Local Authority landlords. As the recession looks likely to continue it is anticipated that the demand will continue to rise, extra funds will be made available but strongly biased in favour of those clubs encouraging more competitive play.

Finally, Terrey was sitting as a member on a Federation working party that was tasked with reviewing all aspects of the working relationships between the CA and the Federations, with a view to identifying any weakness and proposing where appropriate, improvements to the existing structure. He would be reporting back at a later stage.

Web Site:

Simon Hathrell reported that he had tightened up the security of the web site. He had investigated the number hits onto the web site, which ran into tens of thousands, however 17,000 of the hits were by "robots" trying to gain personal information! His security measures have reduced the risk of interference. Simon went on to report that 4 clubs were making use of the court booking programme on the Web Site, was good and hoped other clubs would follow suit.

Election of Officers:

- The Chairman Peter Allnutt was standing down after five years - George Collin had been nominated and was willing to stand.
- Howard Bottomley had been nominated to join the committee in order to understudy Terrey Sparks, who is planning to step down in the near future as secretary. He was willing to stand.
- Duncan Hector had been nominated to join the committee and was willing to stand.
- All other officers of the committee were willing to stand.

Proposed by Ken Wheeler and seconded by John Robinette all were elected en bloc.

It was proposed by Peter Allnutt & seconded by Terrey Sparks that Mark Homan who was willing to stand be re-elected as Auditor. Passed unanimously.

Federation Handicappers

Terrey Sparks (AC) and Mike Percival (GC) both appointed CA Handicappers, have also been appointed Federation Handicappers. They are tasked to identify all Club Handicappers and to liaise with them over any problems or queries that may arise. If any conflict arises then advice should be sought from either of the above Handicappers.

AOB

There was a short discussion on the recent CA's paper on Growth & Recruitment & Ken Wheeler floating the idea of making all club members of registered clubs automatically made full CA members. It was felt that this would make for a more "inclusive" feel to Non CA members. Terrey was asked to put to the CA Committee the following: Every club member of a Registered Club would automatically be made a full CA member and entitled the Gazette electronically.

There being no other business the meeting was closed.

Next Meeting: 2013 AGM to be held on 20th April.