

Royal Tunbridge Wells Croquet Club

Minutes of the AGM held on 28th February 2015

Present: Jon Diamond, Richard Mann, Bob Bruce, Carolyn Gunstone, Frank Gunstone, John Hobbs, Barbara Kitching, Brian Kitching, Michael Lawrence, Sonia Lawrence, Ray Meech, Barbara Tasker, Chris Barham, Duncan Cox, Mick Belcham, John Moore, Frank Parr, Pauline Morris, Roger Morris, Geoff Croxford, Jolyon Creasey, Derek Crocombe, John Greenwood, Derek Heath.

1. Apologies for Absence: Angela Chapman, Jeff Chapman, Pam Clark, Richard Clark, Barney Lewis, Ben Moore, Kate Sander, Michael Sander, John Skates, Jo Smith, Richard Smith, Christopher Sturdy, Roy Turner.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting: The Minutes of the previous AGM held on the 22nd February 2014 were approved and there were no matters arising.

3. Chairman's Report. Jon Diamond extended a warm welcome to returning member John Greenwood, and also mentioned the return of Alex Jardine. He then summarised the news and activities from the previous year, and said that our membership was now at 55. He said that 6 people had attended the Introduction to Croquet Course, and then reviewed our results in the various external competitions concluding that - in most cases - our results meant that we had to do better this season!

He said that last year's Finals Day was a great success, and we would repeat this in 2015. Also the Winter Programme had been very good but the One Ball events has been adversely impacted by the weather.

He thanked Brian Kitching for his donation of 2 Training Videos and then reminded us that this year's Opening day will take place on Sunday the 12th of April starting with the CA One Ball Charity Event.

4. Treasurer's Report: Richard Mann reviewed the previously circulated Accounts and advised the meeting that the Club's finances were in an even better state than last year, with our balance now at £24k. He advised however that a significant amount of this total is expected to be required for the purchase of a new lawn-mower.

Roger Morris asked about budgeting for water charges and was advised that this item is indeed being accrued. The Accounts were then approved by the meeting - Proposed by Brian Kitching, Seconded by Frank Gunstone.

The Agenda Item of Key Deposits and their abolition was then discussed, and the meeting unanimously agreed with the Committee proposal that all old key deposits held in the Accounts will be treated as donations to the Club unless a refund is specifically requested before 30th June. Proposed by Frank Gunstone, Seconded by John Hobbs.

Continuing the subject of keys, the Chairman then advised the meeting that the Council had recently changed the locks on the Calverley Grounds gates that allow vehicular access from the Station end, and that the Club had been issued with just one key (which our groundsman was using for his early morning access to our lawns).

5. Lawn & Facilities Maintenance: Jeff Chapman's previously circulated report was read to the meeting by the Chairman and then discussed. Roger Morris asked about the use of a light roller, and Jon Diamond promised that discussions would be held with George Noble before using the roller although it was felt that the current high sand content prevented major compaction. Derek Crocombe mentioned a device that his Bowls Club uses to achieve similar end results and he was asked to discuss this further with Jeff.

John Hobbs referred to Jeff's comments about the 'bisque eater' and explained that the wooden bisque markers that he makes and provides to the Club will now be augmented by some plastic ones. Frank Parr asked about the occasional occurrence of too narrow hoops stopping balls going through, and he was advised that in this instance he should seek technical help to remedy the problem.

John Hobbs asked about selling off old balls for members to use for practise at home, and the Chairman suggested that in this case members could take a few old balls (not from the trolleys or ball carriers) home and make a donation in lieu.

On the subject of the Club House, Carolyn Gunstone advised the meeting that this year everyone will be assigned one week of Club Housekeeping in a rota which she will shortly publish. Jon Diamond added that the Club House badly needed painting and said that Jeff will be selecting a date soon for which he will need lots of

volunteers.

6. Tournaments, Competitions and Events: The meeting was advised by Jon Diamond that the Club would be holding 3 external events this year, as well as participating in SE Federation Tournaments – full details are in the Diary. We are planning participation in the Leagues again except that we will field only one team in the Golf Handicap League (unless more players contact Duncan Cox re playing).

With respect to Internal Competitions, Duncan Cox proposed that Ladder game results should (also) be recorded on our Handicap Cards, and this was agreed unanimously. The Chairman said that the Ladder trophy would only be awarded if he was satisfied that sufficient games had been played by the end of season winner. Still on the subject of Handicap Cards, Frank Gunstone pleaded for more scrutiny of Handicap cards to ensure their realistic rating, and others mentioned the very dubious handicaps we experience from players from two particular Clubs that we play against. Finally the Chairman reminded the meeting that all Golf Croquet Tuesday League games must be recorded on our Handicap Cards.

7. Coaching: Jon Diamond read out the previously circulated paper on Coaching dated 2nd December 2014, which was duly accepted by the meeting.

8. Private Events. Bob Bruce stressed the importance of Private Events and the income that they generate for the Club, and appealed for more members to volunteer as coaches. Derek Crocombe was recognised for being the Top Volunteer last year, volunteering on 5 of the 7 occasions to provide coaching for our Private Event visitors.

Mick Belcham then said that these Private Events were potentially also a very good way to gain new members, and on that subject John Moore advised the meeting that the Club will be holding an Exhibition Game at Penshurst Castle on the 21st June (and 4-6 mentors are required for that event).

Finally Bob stated that two Private Events had already been booked this year – Crowborough Probus on 25th June and the Willshire Family on 11th July - both of which will require mentors!

9. This Year's Subscription: Jon stated that all Subscriptions would remain unchanged.

10. Election of Officers, Committee and Trustees: The existing Committee members were re-elected as follows:-

Chairman - Jon Diamond

Secretary - Bob Bruce

Treasurer - Richard Mann

Committee Members - Jeff Chapman, Mick Greagsby, Carolyn Gunstone, John Moore and Kate Sander

The Trustees re-elected were Jon Diamond and Richard Mann.

11. Any Other Business: The meeting discussed at some length the proposed changes to the Croquet Association constitution, and then accepted the recommendation made by the Committee that the Club should vote in favour of all 3 motions.

12. Presentation of Trophies: John Greenwood kindly presented the trophies for the 2014 season.

The Meeting Closed at 12.30.