

ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS CROQUET CLUB

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13th 2010 AT 11.00 a.m. in FRANT

Present: Jon DIAMOND (Chairman), Richard MANN (Treasurer), Mick BELCHAM (Secretary), Angela CHAPMAN, Jeff CHAPMAN, Pamela CLARK, Richard CLARK, Duncan COX, Jolyon CREASEY, Derek CROCOMBE, Geoffrey CROXFORD, Michael GENTRY, Carolyn GUNSTONE, Frank GUNSTONE, Derek HEATH, John HOBBS, Alex JARDINE, Shirley JARDINE, Barney LEWIS, Ray MEECH, Angela MILNE, John MOORE, Pauline MORRIS, Roger MORRIS, Joyce ROCCA, Val ROCCA, Kate SANDER, Michael SANDER, Barbara TASKER

PRELIMINARY

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies from those unable to attend were noted.

There were no Matters Arising from the Minutes of the 2009 AGM so they were duly signed by the Chairman.

1. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman reviewed the past year:

- The season's weather has generally been good
- The lawns are in very good condition
- Our membership level remains stable
- Our Committee is also relatively stable this year – however we are losing Roger Morris as he is retiring
- Injuries have meant that a number of our key players have been out of action. As a result, our performance in the SECF Leagues has only been average – though marginally better than in 2009! In the Mary Rose interclub Association Croquet tournament, we again lost to East Dorset.
- In our internal competitions, we had trouble completing the required games on time – two competitions are still undecided.
- We ran our normal mixture of Open Tournaments – the two CA Association weekends, a Golf Tournament and two “Super B” Association days. While entry levels were as expected, there were disappointingly very few entries from our own club members
- Our clubhouse has been upgraded with new hand dryers over the cloakroom basins, lockers for valuables and an emergency mobile phone
- We now have some club badges for sewing onto our “whites” especially for interclub matches.
- Many thanks to Kate Sander for her catering efforts this year especially for the Summer Supper
- Our social programme of pub lunches continues to be well supported
- During the winter, we hope to have one lawn open for play. We plan a series of One Ball Competitions throughout the winter on the first Sunday of each month
- Our hosting of outside (typically evening) events again generated some healthy income for the club
- We had no luck organising Friendlies this year – will try again next year. Likewise organising “demo” games at National Trust properties and Penshurst Place
- A small party visited/supported the MacRobertson (World) Championships at Surbiton. Next year the UK hosts the World Golf Croquet Championships at the end of July.

And, in the discussion, that followed:

- As a club we are often disadvantaged in interclub competition by other clubs' poor (ie “generous”) handicapping systems.
- In order to improve the club's Golf Croquet competitiveness Duncan Cox will be organising a Golf Team League potentially to be played on Tuesday evenings
- John Hobbs has asked that the club seek a volunteer to replace him organising our club's teams for the SECF B League

- We need to organise a working party for a few clubhouse “diy” tasks eg painting the hoops, fixing a couple of roof tiles, turning off/insulating the irrigation system, getting the awnings down., general cleaning
- Michael Gentry and Carolyn Gunstone are both qualified “first aiders”

2. TREASURER’S REPORT.

The Treasurer reviewed the Accounts for year ending September 30th 2010 and highlighted a number of points:

- We have a small surplus – approximately £2000 less than last year mainly due to the value of donations being lower and the cost of clubhouse projects being higher
- We should perhaps identify replacements for our various items of equipment (eg Balls) annually so that we can spread those expenses over the years.
- We should also re-visit potential grants as there may be opportunities for additional monies.
- The Committee will consider whether or not to investigate the possibility of installing solar energy panels on the clubhouse although this almost certainly would be vetoed by the Planning authorities

The acceptance of the Accounts was proposed and seconded, and passed unanimously.

3. LAWN MAINTENANCE.

Roger Morris reviewed the situation at the end of the 2010 season:

- The lawns are in their best condition yet.
- We started the year with a few problems but these were eradicated during the year due to the efforts of our new Lawn Manager, David Evans
- Our expenditure this year on lawn maintenance was £5,500. We are expecting this to increase by £500 in 2011.
- The lawns are now generally mowed in alternate directions (longwise vs widthwise) to increase consistency.

Roger was formally thanked by the meeting for his many years of commitment to Lawn Management. Without him we would still be playing on the old tennis court surface. A presentation was made on behalf of the club.

4. PROPOSED UPDATE TO THE CLUB’S CONSTITUTION

Two changes to the club’s Constitution were proposed and, after discussion, both agreed unanimously. They were that:

Under the heading General Matters, in paragraph A, the date of 30th September should be replaced with 31st December so as to read “Financial Year – The financial year of the Club shall end on the 31st December in each year to which day the accounts of the Club shall be balanced.”

- Under the heading Rules of Membership, in paragraph C, the following phrase should be added: "except when as a contractor formally approved by the Committee" so as to read "No member shall receive any profit or emolument from the funds of the Club except when as a contractor formally approved by the Committee "

5. TOURNAMENTS, COMPETITIONS AND EVENTS

- The Finals Day was a success and should be repeated
- The late September Association Handicap Tournament should be brought forward to an earlier date to provide more flexibility for scheduling the end-of-season lawn maintenance programme
- The Association High Bisquers Tournament should also be brought forward to earlier in the season

6. HANDICAPPING AND COACHING

- We need to improve our coaching next year
- John Hobbs will run an introductory course for members and outsiders during April/May. He recommends two books that are available through the Croquet Association – “Golf Croquet Tactics” by Michael Hague and “Shortening the Odds” by Bill Arliss.

7. NEXT YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Secretary reminded the Meeting of the Club's policy to have a two-tier Annual Subscription mechanism to allow those that feel they are able to make contributions over and above the minimum to do so in the form of Voluntary Contributions.

He pointed out that the quality of the club's lawns and indeed of the club facilities as a whole are dependent upon the level of voluntary contributions as the basic Annual Subscription would only cover minimal lawn maintenance and other costs.

The Committee has proposed the following Annual Subscription rates for 2011:

- Full Membership:
 - First Year: £ 75
 - Thereafter: £100
- Student/2nd Club Membership: £ 35

In order to cater for exceptional or unforeseen circumstances, these rates may be varied by the Club's Officers when deemed appropriate.

The existing schedule of Green Fees for visitors (i.e. £5 for a full day, £3 for a half day) would continue to be applicable for 2011

These proposed Subscription and Green Fee rates for 2011 were agreed unanimously.

8. ELECTION OF OFFICERS, COMMITTEE AND TRUSTEES

The Chairman noted that Roger Morris was retiring from the Committee. All other members of the Committee (including the Officers/Trustees) were standing for re-election.

The two members co-opted to the Committee during the course of the year (Carolyn Gunstone and Kate Sander) were offering themselves for election.

The re-election of existing Committee members (including the 3 Officers/Trustees) as well as the election of the two co-opted members as full Committee members was proposed and unanimously approved.

The Committee then for 2011 is as follows:

Chairman	Jon Diamond
Treasurer	Richard Mann
Secretary	Mick Belcham
Committee	Jeff Chapman, Mick Greagsby, Carolyn Gunstone, John Moore and Kate Sander

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Alternative publicity and marketing mechanisms were suggested for Committee review
- The subject of standardising the setting and review of Golf Croquet handicaps across the area's clubs is to be raised at the SECF AGM early next year though this may need to be referred to the CA.

10. PRESENTATION OF PRIZES

The Chairman presented the following trophies and closed the Meeting.

Ray Meech	Golf Croquet Rose Bowl
Michael Gentry	Golf Croquet High Bisquers
Alex Jardine	Spa Salver
Geoff Croxford	Calverley Cup
Jolyon Creasey	Lustau Sherry Cup
Barney Lewis	Lewis Shield (All England Handicap)
Richard Clark	Hunter Plate
Duncan Cox	Golf Croquet Ladder