



Royal Tunbridge Wells Croquet Club

Minutes of the AGM held on 16th February 2019

Present: Jon Diamond, Richard Mann, John Greenwood, Paul Gamba, Michael Hughes, Duncan Cox, John Moore, Michael Sander, Kate Sander, Derek Crocombe, Jeff Chapman, Angela Chapman, Carolyn Gunstone, Frank Gunstone, Jane Smith, Mick Belcham, Nigel Barton, Derek Heath, Brian Kitching, Barney Lewis, Mike Gentry & Jolyon Creasey.

1. Apologies for Absence: Chris Barham, Barbara Tasker, Richard Smith, John Skates, Alex Jardine, Bob Bruce, Chris Becket, Tina Becket, Mark Houslop, Elaine Houslop, Lister Fielding, Beverley Brown, Christopher Sturdy, Tom Carpenter, Bob Fordham, Jenny Scudder & Sandy Smith.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting: The Minutes of the previous AGM held on the 10th February 2018 were approved. There were no matters arising.

3. Chairman's Report. Jon Diamond reported that the club had had another good year although the membership had dropped to 62 from last year's all time high of 68. We will concentrate on attracting new members this coming season using the World Golf Croquet Championships (WGCC) as a spring board.

The new Introduction to Croquet course for new players had been successful with most of the attendees subsequently joining the club. We will hold at least one, and probably more, this year in May, July and/or August around the WGCC. Any members' ideas on recruitment would be welcomed by the committee.

The National Croquet Day was well attended and thanks were expressed to Nigel Barton for organising it. This year's National Croquet Day will be held on the 12 May 2019 and will be the focus for our publicity this year.

There had not been as much publicity in the local media this year. we hope Kent TV will be interested in doing a piece on the WGCC this year.

As regards competitions, we didn't do too well in the SECF leagues although the club had its first win in the AC level league. Mick Belcham and Jon Diamond had notable successes in individual competitions and Tom Carpenter winning the Montevideo Cup. Jon Diamond is now a scratch AC player and Jolyon Creasy is just 1 point away from achieving the same handicap.

Jon extended thanks to John Skates for organising the pub lunches and to Kate & Michael Sander for hosting and running the Summer BBQ, the Winter Warmer and the club catering through the season, including this AGM. Other thanks were extended to the managers of the various club teams: Alex Jardine, John Greenwood, Richard Mann, John Skates, Jon Diamond and Derek Crocombe.

4. Treasurer's Report: Richard Mann presented the previously circulated accounts which had been reviewed by John Timmis. There has been a slight, £200 decrease in our reserves primarily due to an increase in costs for lawn maintenance and groundsman payments.

The committee will review our capital reserve taking account of Charity Commission guidelines.

The accounts were then accepted and approved, proposed by Michael Sander and seconded by Angela Chapman

5. Lawn & Facilities Maintenance: The lawns are in good shape. The additional mowing has resulted in flatter lawns which means that they can be cut closer without “scalping” the lawn so increasing their speed.

We have a continuing badger problem and we will look at improving the fencing . They have their den in Calverley Park grounds and enter the croquet grounds through the far side fence.

The clubhouse will be generally improved and externally painted in time for the WGCC. As always, volunteers are very welcome as would suggestions for improvements. A request for volunteers would issue in due course.

There was a proposal to engage an external contractor to carry out the internal decorating , tiling and minor building repairs. The committee will consider this.

Our main lawn machines are a few years old but still in good shape. As noted at previous AGMs, we have been advised that they are soundly engineered and we will be better off continuing to maintain them rather than replacing them new, possibly less well engineered, versions.

6. Tournaments, Competitions and Events: Jon Diamond confirmed that the club will be running our usual open tournaments this year: the Kent Cup (Association), Montevideo Cup (Golf), Pegasus Plate (Association), Honeygrove Cup. We will hold the CA charity 1-ball club competition on 14 April 2019.

We will hold the same internal competitions as last year although it was noted no games were played on either of the GC and AC ladder competitions. After some discussion, and an interest expressed by a number of people to play in both ladder competitions this year, both will be retained.

There was a discussion on whether to play the AC handicap doubles competition using alternate stroke rules. The committee will consider this proposal.

The rules of the GC team competition (Fraser Tankard) were discussed with comments made on the pros and cons of it being a handicap or level play competition. It was agreed to play it as a handicap event this year. Players are reminded to enter their singles results on their handicap cards.

We will enter the same SECF competitions as last year as well as the Ladies Day competition as Jane Smith is available to be the team manager. The organisers of the other SECF leagues will be as last year.

We will hold fewer corporate events in view of the WGCC and that volunteers will be needed for all these events.

There will be a session for the French school children again this year.

7. Coaching: The GC coaching sessions had not been too successful and different external coach would be considered for this year. Members are encouraged to go to coaching courses at other clubs, eg Southwick and Surbiton.

Jon Diamond will run GC coaching sessions again this year, which will include bringing players up to date with the recent rule changes.

Feedback from new members in response to a survey by Nigel Barton indicates that continued one-to-one mentoring/coaching would be very useful and welcome.

Jon Diamond outlined the involvement the club will have during the WGCC including its format and timetable. Paul Gamba has volunteered as our Venue Manager. We will need a good number of volunteers for a number of roles, as described by Jon, and a list of will go out to all members asking for help which will be essential if the event is to succeed.

The membership was asked to consider if they know any firm that might want to sponsor the WGCC at the club and pass details on to the committee.

8. Private Events. The meeting was reminded of the need to follow the club's rules on green fees for visitors and the need to sign the Visitors Book.

9. This Year's Subscriptions: The meeting accepted the Committee's recommendation that all subscriptions should remain unchanged. Proposed by Kate Sander and seconded by Michael Sander.

10. Election of Officers, Committee and Trustees: Carolyn Gunstone has stepped down from the committee and was thanked for all her work and as membership secretary.

Paul Gamba has kindly volunteered to serve on the committee. There were no other candidates for the committee positions other than the remaining incumbents who were all willing to serve a further year on the committee. The election/re-election of Officers, Committee and Trustees for 2019 were then proposed by Nigel Barton and seconded by Michael Sander, and agreed by the meeting as follows:-

Chairman - Jon Diamond

Secretary - John Greenwood

Treasurer - Richard Mann

Committee Members - Jeff Chapman, Paul Gamba, John Moore, Kate Sander, Nigel Barton & John Skates

Trustees - Jon Diamond and Richard Mann

11. Any Other Business: Mike Gentry informed the meeting that he would be taking over "Hobbs Mallets" from John Hobbs in due course. Curling was being arranged as a club social event at £22/head and an invitation would go out shortly from Kate Sander.

The meeting was closed at 12.50pm.

Presentation of Trophies: Carolyn Gunstone presented the following trophies for the 2018 season:-

Association

Spa Salver: Alex Jardine

Lustau Cup: Alex Jardine

Lewis Shield: Not contested

Calverley Cup: Barney Lewis

Howell Cup: Jane Smith

Miriam Reader Memorial Doubles: John Greenwood & Jane Smith

Golf

Hunter Plate: Jon Diamond

Kitching Rose Bowl: Mark Houslop

High Bisquers: Kate Sander

Handicap Doubles: Nigel Barton & Mike Gentry

Fraser Tankard (Teams): Sander's Swingers