



Royal Tunbridge Wells Croquet Club

Minutes of the AGM held on 11th February 2023

Present

Jon Diamond (Chair), Richard Mann, John Greenwood, Jean Healy, Derek Ryan, Kate Sander, Michael Sander, Trevor Houghton-Berry, John Moore, Richard Crews, Paul Forster, Victoria Moll, Jane Smith, Jeff Chapman, Angela Chapman, Carole Mackenzie, Mike Mackenzie, Mick Belcham, David Pratt, Denis Cruse, Ruth Wallwork, Carolyn Gunstone, Paul Gamba, Peter Player, Derek Crocombe, Dave Grimshaw, Jack Ingle, Robert Hassell, Gerald O'Brien, Mike Gentry & Tim Luke.

1. Apologies for absence

Chris Barham & Barney Lewis

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous AGM held on the 12 February 2022 were approved. There were no matters arising.

3. Chairman's Report

Jon Diamond reported on some of the main events of 2022 as follows.

2022 was a very good year as regards membership with 27 new members taking the club to a new record membership of 85.

The winter social pub lunches restarted in full after the earlier years' covid restrictions and were organised by Jane Smith.

There were a total of eight private events which provided valuable income to the club.

GC coaching was helped by the CA Academy running courses at the club for the first time. There are three more courses this year which members are encouraged to attend. Robert Fulford also ran some AC coaching courses.

The club had only limited successes in the SECF competitions.

4. Treasurer's Report & Approval of Accounts

Richard Mann gave his report to the meeting.

The end of year accounts for 2022 have been reviewed by John Timmis and were provided to the members prior to the AGM.

The club is financially sound with the reserves increasing a little to about £22,000 although it is anticipated that there will be increased costs this coming year due to additional expenditure on the lawns, to improve them as the club's primary asset, and improvements to the club house.

The meeting was informed that the committee had decided to increase the subsidy for home match lunches to £4/head. After some discussion, the meeting agreed that £5/head would be more appropriate. The committee will review the figure in view of this.

The Statement of Accounts was approved by the meeting.

5. Lawn & Facilities Maintenance

Jeff Chapman gave his report on the club facilities.

David Pratt was doing most of the work on the club house with laying new carpet the next main task.

Ray Kemp is pleased on the progress being made on the improvements to the lawns and he will continue working on levelling the lawns. Some areas needed lifting and reseeding but some of these areas have been damaged by foxes.

The lawns are relatively slow even at their best so a new approach is being adopted, with assistance of the Compton Club groundsman, speeding them up. The main lawn treatment will take place this spring, rather than last autumn, with less top dressing. There will also be a programme of slitting the lawns. This will mean Ray has to spend more time attending to the lawns and members are asked to be tolerant if they are down at the club for a game when he is working on the lawns.

It was noted that we needed to keep Ray better informed of events where people have paid to use the lawns so there isn't a clash between them and his work on the lawns.

We have purchased a sprayer so we can use liquid treatments rather than granular ones.

Some new treatments will be used, eg penetrants, to improve the condition of the lawns.

Jeff answered questions for the floor. The slowness of the lawns is not attributable to the types of grass as the mixture is the same as at Compton where there are very fast lawns. Jack Ingle offered his assistance in addressing possible remedies for the bad drainage of the lawns.

6. Tournaments, Competitions and Events

It was proposed to hold the same tournaments, competitions and events as in 2022.

Additionally, the Pegasus Plate AC tournament will be revived this year.

It is hoped to enter the same SECF leagues but there is some doubt as to whether we have the players for the GC Advanced or AC Level leagues.

Trevor Houghton-Berry will be organising the Family Competition.

We already have two private bookings. As before, we will have at most two events/month to reduce wear of the lawns and not deprive members of too much lawn availability.

It was noted that GC social sessions were now very poorly attended. There was a discussion on how this might be improved, eg having some volunteers who would commit to attending the GC sessions so other members would know there was a guarantee of a game if they turned up.

7. Coaching

The club won't be running any formal GC coaching programme ourselves, but the CA Academy will be running courses which are available to club members at the reduced cost of £35. Reports from attendees of last year's courses are that they are very good.

Jon Diamond will be running an Introduction to GC course to which members are encouraged to mention to friends and family.

There continues to be a shortage of coaches and referees and members are encouraged to go on a CA course and qualify.

8. Subscriptions for 2023 membership

The meeting approved, unanimously, the Committee's recommendation that all subscriptions remain unchanged and the green fees be increased a little as follows:

Full membership: first year £50, subsequent years £100.
Student, Second Club and Social memberships £35.

Corporate memberships at the committee's discretion, but not less than £100.
Green Fees (for a maximum of 3 sessions/days) half day session £5, full day £8.

9. Election of Officers, Committee and Trustees

The AGM unanimously elected the following nominated trustees, officers and committee members.

Trustee nominations

Jon Diamond (proposer John Greenwood)
David Grimshaw (proposer John Greenwood)

Officer nominations

Jon Diamond (Chair) (proposer John Greenwood, seconder Jeff Chapman)
David Grimshaw (Treasurer) (proposer Jon Diamond, seconder John Greenwood)
John Greenwood (Secretary) (proposer Kate Sander, seconder Paul Gamba)

Committee Member nominations

Chris Barham (proposers Jon Diamond & John Greenwood)
Jeff Chapman (proposers Jon Diamond & John Greenwood)
Paul Gamba (proposers Jon Diamond & John Greenwood)
Kate Sander (proposers Jon Diamond & John Greenwood)
Ruth Wallwork (proposers Jon Diamond & John Greenwood)

10. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

11. Club Competition Winners

Presentation of trophies

Ruth Wallwork presented the following trophies for the 2022 season:

Association

Spa Salver: Thomas Cullis
Lustau Cup: Thomas Cullis
Lewis Shield: Jack Ingle
Calverley Cup: Thomas Cullis
Howell Cup: Jack Ingle
Miriam Reader Memorial Doubles: John Greenwood & John Moore
New members competition: Gerald O'Brien

Golf

Hunter Plate: Dan Crocombe
Kitching Rose Bowl: Trevor Houghton-Berry
High Bisquers: Denis Cruse
Handicap Doubles: Dan Crocombe & David Platt
Fraser Tankard (Teams): Paul's Pioneers

New Members' Competitions

The winners of the New Members competitions were Gerald O'Brien (AC) and David Pratt (GC).

12. Closing of the meeting

Prior to the closing of the meeting, Jon Diamond presented Richard Mann with an engraved glass bowl as a thank you for his long service as Treasurer.

The meeting was closed at 12.25pm.

13. Open Discussion

Advantage Play

Jon Diamond described in detail the Advantage Play handicap system for GC handicap matches. The extra turns system is used in only a small minority of countries so the CA is encouraging a move to the more widely used Advantage Play system.

It will be used in the SECF GC handicap leagues.

The AGM was unanimously in favour of using Advantage Play in the club's internal GC handicap competitions.

WhatsApp Groups

There was a request to explain the uses of the club's WhatsApp groups. The "RTWCC" group is used for arranging games/matches and general chat, eg arranging social games/sessions. The "Tunbridge Wells Croquet" group is used for official announcements and booking lawns for club matches once arranged.

It was agreed that a name change to the latter would help distinguish the two uses.

John Greenwood, Secretary
11 February 2023