

Minutes of the Harwell Croquet Club AGM 2020

Location

Chilton Village Hall

Date and time

12th March 2020, 2.30 pm

List of attendees

Peter Allan
Mary Elizabeth Shewry
Norman Goodall
Hilary Alner
John Alner
David Steele
Mary Hewlett
Nigel Hewlett
Mike Duck
Pam Hunter
Sarah Roycroft
Clare Wagner
Alan Wagner
Judy Goodall
Roy Platon

Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Jim Bartlett, Tom Griffin, Ian Adsley, Judy Gold, Barbara Anderson, and Pat Knights.

Since Jim could not be present he had asked Peter Allan to deputise for him.

Minutes of the 2019 AGM

The minutes of the 2019 AGM were approved by the meeting without any changes.

Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising.

Reports

Since Jim Bartlett could not be present, Peter Allan presented the chairman's report using notes provided by Jim.

It was very sad that we lost Ivo Ponting earlier this year. Ivo had been a great supporter of the club and a great competitor.

We weren't able to run our GC Spring Singles, our GC Autumn Doubles or our internal GC competition due to back weather and too few players. Likewise, several of our usual GC friendlies were not possible.

The weather has been non-conducive to croquet throughout the winter.

We are expecting to increase our membership in the coming season. We have a full complement of quality croquet equipment and a new web site.

Jim has requested to Campus Management that we have a wire barrier installed at the new fence. Without it, balls will inevitably escape our ground, posing a serious danger to pedestrians and traffic. Hard-hit balls could be launched upwards by the slope of the ground at the trees, and we could feel inhibited in making our shots towards the road. Also, it would be a long walk (and delay) each time when retrieving balls - the fence is not suitable for climbing over.

Peter presented the Secretary's report.

I am pleased that we have attracted new members over the last 12 months. I hope they will enjoy their croquet once the weather improves.

As you all know, the main lawns have been out of action since the autumn. This is always frustrating, but playing on the lawns when they are very wet will damage them, causing problems for the summer. Although lawn 3 is very sub-standard as a croquet lawn, it is actually there and is one of the few places where one can actually practice at this time of year.

At the end of last year I was asked to become the Development Officer for the Southern Croquet Federation and I accepted. Part of my role is to help new clubs get started, and for existing ones to expand or even to survive. I have contacted four clubs to see how I might be able to help them.

As part of this role I attend meetings of the development committee, which handles awarding development grants. This is something that the CA offers to clubs and which might be of benefit to us at some time in the future.

I am also taking part in a CA working group on improving the efficiency of how the CA operates. Our report was due in yesterday.

Norman Goodall presented the treasurer's report.

The club is in a sound financial state with £794.18 in the bank at the end of 2019. He has recently been paid the capitation fee to the Croquet Association for 2020, but this will be more than offset by the annual membership fees which Norman will ask for shortly. There are no other expected large expenditures for 2020.

Mary Elizabeth reported that the winter social get together went well and was well attended.

[Croquet results from 2019](#)

Mary Elizabeth reported that in the GC league, we beat one team from Phyllis Court and agreed a draw against the other Phyllis Court team since their lawn had been water logged and they could not find another date for the game. We lost the other singles matches, although our team played well. In the doubles only league, we won two matches, lost two and drew one.

Mary Elizabeth reported that we amalgamated National Croquet Day with the Harwell family fun day. This generated interest from some attendees, but did not result in any new members.

Peter reported that for AC, we had entered the Longman Cup and the SCF handicap league (north). In the Longman Cup, we beat Blewbury in the first round, but lost to Guildford and Godalming in the

second round. We came bottom of the AC handicap league with one win, two draws and two losses, although we did score the same number of points as Phyllis Court.

Presentation of trophies

Since there were no internal club GC competitions in 2019, there is no trophy to be awarded.

The winner of the Founder's Cup in 2019, our internal AC handicap competition, was Tom Griffin. Peter reported that he would present this to Tom as soon as possible.

Election of committee officers

Peter reported that Jim is retiring as chair of the committee. Mike Duck is also retiring as a committee member after many years of service, including being the chair prior to Jim.

Peter was willing to stand as chair, but asked if anyone else would like to stand. No one did. Peter was nominated, seconded, and elected as the new chair with no one voting against.

This meant that we needed a new secretary. Peter reported that Tom Griffin had agreed to stand as secretary on the understanding that the workload would be kept to a minimum. Peter also encouraged others to stand. In the absence of other nominations, Tom was nominated and seconded and elected as the new secretary with no one voting against.

Mary Elizabeth and Norman had agreed to continue in their current positions and this was also agreed with no opposition.

Peter noted that this left us with one fewer members of the committee, but that Pat Knights has agreed to stand as an Ordinary Member. This was approved with no opposition.

Peter asked if anyone else would like to join the committee. Roy Platon said that he would. He was nominated, seconded and agreed with no opposition.

Peter noted that with significant changes to the committee, the committee should meet in the near future to clarify the roles of the committee members.

Keeping handicaps up to date

Peter reminded members of the importance of keeping their handicap cards up to date. Whenever you play in an internal or inter-club match, you will need to show your handicap card and that must be up to date. This is true even for level-play matches where the effect of the result on your (and your opponent's) handicap card will depend on the difference in your handicaps.

The result of all singles games played in internal or external competitions must be recorded on your handicap card. The result of internal friendly games must not be recorded on your handicap card, nor must the result of any doubles games be recorded.

Alan Wagner asked about getting an initial handicap when you have not played before. Peter and Mary Elizabeth described the process for getting an initial handicap. (Subsequently Peter has written a note describing this. Contact him at peter.allan@stfc.ac.uk if you would like a copy.)

Coaching

Peter noted that the club no longer has a qualified coach. He reported that he will be going a course to become a coach on 1-2 April and encouraged members to take advantage of this during the season.

Standard membership of the croquet association

Peter summarised the options for an individual to be a member of the Croquet Association. One can become a Standard Member at no cost to you or to the club, or one can become a Premium Member at a cost of around £30 (less for the first and second years). Standard membership gives you full access to the information on the CA web site, including the Croquet Gazette, which is published bi-monthly, the ability to enter domestic tournaments, and access to subsidies should you wish to become a coach or a referee. The primary reason to be a premium member is that this gives you money off the entry fees to tournaments or coaching courses, so that if you play in enough tournaments, this pays for itself.

You do need to apply to be a member of the CA. It does not happen automatically as a result of being a member of the Harwell croquet club.

Peter encouraged club members who are not also members of the CA to become members of the CA. There are potential financial benefits to the club in having everyone be a member of the CA. Peter will contact all members of the club who are not already members of the CA to encourage them to join the CA.

Internal club competitions for 2020

Peter stated that he wanted to have a full range of internal club competitions in 2020, both AC and GC. There was some feeling in the meeting that making the GC competition level play would simplify things.

Participation in external competitions for 2020

Mary Elizabeth reported that she has entered us for the SCF GC handicap league (south) and the doubles-only league, as in 2019. She has already arranged the date of all the matches except one.

Peter reported that he had entered us in the SCF AC handicap league (north), but not the Longman Cup, since we only have four who can play in the AC team this year. The rules of the Longman Cup require that each match must be played on one day, so all of our players would need to be available for every match, which seems too much of a stretch.

AOB

John Alner raised a question about whether the hoops should be taken in after each session. It was agreed that this was not needed.

It was noted that the club offers reduced membership to new members in their first year. Since David Steele and Alan and Clare Wagner joined at the end of last year and got essentially no play before the lawns were closed, the committee had agreed that they would not need to pay any membership fee for 2020.

The meeting thanked Norman and Judy for organising the use of Chilton village hall for this meeting.

Peter will write to Jim and to Mike, formally thanking them for their service on the committee for many years.

Peter noted that he had received information from the CA relating to the COVID-19 virus. Anyone who has booked on a coaching course or tournament and wishes to cancel due to COVID-19 should be able to get their money back.

Date of next meeting

The next AGM will take place at approximately the same time next year.