

Harwell Croquet Club - AGM Minutes  
Saturday 25 March 2023, 10.30 am, Harlequin Room, Harwell Croquet Club

**Attendees**

Peter Allan, Tom Griffin, Norman Goodall, Mary-Elizabeth Shewry, Roy Platon  
(Committee)

Pam, Patsy, Dennis, Bridget, Jill Broadley, Peter H, Judy Gold, Judy Goodall, Alan and  
Tricia, David Morgan, Barbara A, Alistair Doig, Bill and Sarah, Mary and Nigel

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Pat, Peter Mansfield, Madeline, Hilary and John Alner

**2. Minutes of the 2022 AGM (Peter)**

Accepted

**3. Matters arising (Peter)**

None that were not covered elsewhere in the agenda

**4. Reports**

**a. Chair (Peter)**

Peter has continued in the role, but is aware he has not done as much as previous years, as he warned when he tried to stand down

The club has had lots going on, but did not run any internal competitions. However, we intend to do so this year.

Peter gave a summary of the Croquet equivalent of the World Cup – the MacRobertson Shield (England won). England has had an excellent year winning a number of international competitions including woman's AC and under 21s GC.

**b. Secretary (Tom)**

As Peter – I tried to step down, but no replacement. I have therefore continued to do a very bad job.

The secretary receives copies of the Croquet Association Gazette and these were made available at the front of the meeting for any members to take.

**c. Treasurer (Norman)**

Norman had made copies of the accounts available.

The club has a healthy account balance. It was noted that equipment can be very expensive, so having a small buffer is sensible.

Peter proposed keeping the subs the name at £25 / year.

Member subs are due now.

Question – how long do balls last? It depends – competitions expect a decent standard of ball, but they do last many years.

Peter noted that Dawson (Australia) used a material that is no longer legal. The manufacturing location has changed and they are now known as 'humpty' balls.

ME asked when our hoops might need replacing. They should not, but cast iron can fracture if the hoops are hit in the wrong place. If they fail, they would be expensive to replace.

#### **d. Social Secretary (Mary Elizabeth)**

ME report that we had a belated spring doubles due to late availability of the hall and lawns and held a fun day on 18<sup>th</sup> Sept.

Both events were very well attended.

#### **5. Croquet Results from 2022 (Mary Elizabeth, Peter)**

##### **a. GC**

- Entered doubles and handicap advantage.
- Handicap – won 3/5 matches
- Doubles – won 1, drew 1, lost 2

##### **b. AC**

- Joint team with Eynsham in the AC handicap league
- Unfortunately, due to personal issues, not all matches were played, so we were removed from the league due to unplayed matches.
- Committee decided to enter the SCF AC handicap league with Eynsham again.

#### **6. Election of Committee Officers**

The chair and secretary both wished to stand down as they felt they were not doing a good enough job.

Pat has stood down from the committee.

Roy, ME, and Norman all agreed to stand in their current roles, and this was agreed en-masse.

No new volunteers came forward for chair or secretary.

Peter asked for volunteers to join the committee.

Dennis agreed to this and was agreed nem-con.

Pam agreed to this and was agreed nem-con.

Reluctantly, the chair or secretary agreed to continue, but any members who are interested in taking on any committee role are encouraged to talk to Tom or Peter, or any of the committee.

#### **7. General playing calendar for 2023 (Peter)**

- **Club sessions Tuesday am, Wednesday am, Thursday pm, Friday pm**
  - o Agreed
- **Short croquet at lunchtimes to be decided**
  - o Short croquet is basically AC on half sized lawn
  - o Tom proposed Wednesday or Thursday lunchtimes and alternate evenings – to be agreed between Tom and Peter.
- **Coaching sessions**
  - o Peter will run these according to demand

##### **a. GC and Advantage handicap play (Peter)**

Peter summarised the SCF trial on advantage handicaps, where you start with a different score rather than extra turns. All SCF competitions and most other competitions and federations will be using advantage this year.

### **b. Handicaps (Peter)**

- The need for handicap cards
  - o No one is required to have a handicap card for friendly matches **unless** you wish to play in any internal club competitions or league matches. This is important as other players need to adjust their card if they play you in these matches, and the points exchanged are affected by both players handicaps.
- Annual check of handicap cards
  - o Peter or ME will check everyone's cards to ensure they are correct
- Assessing players for handicaps who do not yet have one
  - o Golf croquet just needs a quick session with Peter or ME – take one ball through 6 hoops, three times, and count how many strokes you take.
  - o Contact Peter to arrange a handicap assessment.

### **c. Short croquet (Tom)**

- As above – we will run lunchtime and after work sessions
- GC players would be very welcome to try out a short croquet session
- Short croquet will help working people on campus play shorter games at lunchtime.

### **d. Coaching (Peter)**

- Peter will offer GC or AC coaching sessions on demand. Please ask Peter if you are interested.

### **e. Internal club competitions for 2023 (Peter)**

- AC founders cup
  - o Will be run as an all-plays-all
- GC handicap competition
  - o Will be run as a 1-day competition. Date to be arranged. It will be a GC advantage handicap competition.

### **f. Participation in external competitions for 2023 (Mary Elizabeth, Peter)**

- GC league match timetable has been finalised and is on the club noticeboard.
- ME will send Pam a copy, so she knows when there are league matches.
- Home games are generally on a Monday, to avoid interfering with club sessions
- We are not in the same group as Ryde this year, so there will be no need to travel to the Isle of Wight this year.
  
- AC – joint team with Eynsham in the SCF AC handicap league.
  - o Peter, Tom and Roy would like to be part of this

### **g. GC friendlies (Pam Hunter)**

- Pam reported that the year was a success in terms of its aim in that players who played them enjoyed the games and friendship with other fairly local clubs
- As regards winning the year was no as good as 2021
- We learnt one lesson, in that when we next play one certain team we will remove the hoops from the lawn in the morning or be there to supervise their use for practice!

Pam circulated a sign up sheet for players who wished to join the friendly matches in 2023

### **8. Marking the King's coronation**

Dave noted that it the first week of the cricket season which might affect lawn availability. Peter asked if we wanted to do anything as a club.

Pam suggested having an informal 'open day' on the bank holiday Monday to invite people to try croquet – it was agreed this would be a good idea.

### **9. Social events for 2023 (Mary Elizabeth)**

ME would like to arrange spring and autumn events and is working with Cordy to identify suitable dates.

In order to cover costs, we will add a £2 entry fee to cover cakes, tea, etc.

### **10. Croquet Association matters (Peter)**

Peter encouraged everyone who wanted to to join the Croquet Association. Standard membership is free and comes with a few benefits including discounts in the CA shop. Premium membership costs extra, but you get discounts on tournament entry fees.

### ***Becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation***

The CA needs to change its legal status and a Charitable Incorporated Organisation is the best option. The CA council has been going through the application process and has applied to the Charity Commission. This was approved this week and the Croquet Association will transform into Croquet England over the current year.

There was a question about the CA royal patron – it was HM The Queen. The Royal Family have advised all charities that had the queen as patron that they will contact them with any new arrangements.

### ***Quinquennial survey – The Results***

The CA ran a large survey last year on the state of croquet. The results are available on the CA website.

<https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=ca/schemes/surveys>

### **Southern Croquet Federation matters (Peter)**

Peter is now chair of the SCF – this involves chairing one meeting per year.

The federation continues and leagues are growing.

### **AOB**

Eddie the groundskeeper is no longer working at Harwell. The croquet club and other sports clubs are concerned about who will be maintaining the lawns.

Judy asked when we could play. The lawns are open and available. Other people in the grounds maintenance team will be responsible for maintaining the lawns and grounds.

### **Date of next meeting – March 2024**

Peter thanked everyone for attending

**Meeting closed at 11:40**