

**Minutes of the 31st Annual General Meeting  
of the South East Croquet Federation  
held at Surbiton Croquet Club on Sunday 25 February 2018**

The following 21 Clubs were represented:

**Canterbury** (H Bryant; D Buckman ; F Hughes; R Loram); **Cheam** (K Lugton; I Cobbold; E Swinton; R Cook); **Compton** (H Smith); **Dulwich** (P Newton ; J Reddish); **Ealing** (M Sherratt); **Ember** (M Lambert; R Dollimore); **Guildford & Godalming** (H Bird); **Hurlingham** (A Bingham); **Ivychurch** (K Lennon); **Littlehampton** (P Sherwin; C Merrington); **Merton** (L Taylor; G Taylor; J Sheahan); **Old College, Dulwich** (C Brook); **Purley Bury** (P Hinton); **Ramsgate** (T Longman; R Loram); **Reigate Priory** (M Peacock); **Rottingdean** (B Aikens; A Aikens); **Royal Tunbridge Wells** (J Diamond); **Surbiton** (D Beck; M Pulsford; G Noble); **Sussex County** (W Arliss; J Low; J Isaacs; L Farrow); **Sydenham** (Jane Sheridan; John Sheridan; M Wheeler) and **Woking** (M Hague; E McKenzie-Gray; J Dawson; P McGowan).

Apologies for absence were received from:

E Campbell (West Wittering); K Chordia (West Chilmington); D Carter (Worthing); L Simpson (Epsom); S Vallis (Angmering); J Johnston (Dogmersfield); J Waite (Cheam); H Brown (Lodsworth); P Flowerday (Caterham); A Jenkinson (Crawley); D Mooney (Roehampton and Committee) A Sugarman (Rother Valley); A Smith (Rother Valley); S Gregory (Hayes, Bromley & Keston); R Hilditch (Hampstead Heath) and J Overell (Purley Bury) .

The Chairman drew attention to the apologies from Richard Hilditch and said that he had attended every AGM since the first (\*except in 1992). He was absent because he had now moved overseas. His contribution to the SECF had been immeasurable. He had served as a Committee Member throughout the 30 years of the Federation's history and as Secretary, Chairman, Treasurer and, most significantly, as League Organiser (from 1994 to date). He deserved the thanks of all.

This announcement was followed by prolonged applause.

The minutes of the 30<sup>th</sup> AGM held on Sunday 26 February 2017 were approved as a true and accurate record. There were no matters arising.

**Approval of the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2017**

The Treasurer (Hilary Smith) presented the accounts. The accumulated cash assets of the Federation (reduced to £5,502 as at 31 December 2017 after grants totalling £1,000 during the year) would, she said, continue to be distributed by way of development grants and loans to members of the Federation as the Committee thought appropriate.

The Treasurer expressed her thanks to Clive Hayton (Sussex County) for again undertaking the duties of Independent Examiner.

A proposal that the accounts should be approved was carried *nem. con.*

**Annual Subscription for 2018**

The Treasurer proposed that the annual registration fee should be increased to £15 to ensure the continued support of the Federation for those undertaking coaching a refereeing courses and the funding of administrative expenses. This was carried *nem. con.* (after some muttering and other expressions of consternation).

**Tournament fees**

In accordance with previous practice, the tournament fees will be increased to take account of the increase in the CA suggested rates for lawn hire. The objective remained the same – to break even after payment of those fees and the incidental expenses. Accordingly, it was proposed and accepted that the fees should, if necessary, be increased by the managers in due course

The entry fee for each league will remain the same as before: £2.50.

**Constitutional amendment**

The Secretary proposed the following motion (which had been referred to in the Chairman's Report in 2017) :

“Article 4 of the Constitution shall be amended by adding, at the end of the first paragraph, the words: *“provided that they are full or affiliate members of the Croquet Association”* and Article 4 shall be further amended by deleting the words *“an Associate”* from the third paragraph in Article 4 and replacing them with the word *“a”*.”

This was carried without opposition by more than the required two thirds of the Clubs present and voting. The effect of this that any club wishing to affiliate to the SECF must now be either a full or affiliated member of the Croquet Association

#### **Chairman’s report**

The Chairman (Bill Arliss) said that the Federation had gone from strength to strength during the past few years. He had again reviewed the number of “player days” of competitive croquet in the period from 2008 to 2017 and had discovered that there has been a healthy, continuing growth in that measure. We have the best coaching (in the Academy and elsewhere) and the largest number of clubs of any Federation. The Southern Challenge was very successful. The tournament is open to Clubs from all over the south of England. Clubs from other Federations were welcome to participate. Winchester were the winners in 2017 and Ryde have been regular competitors. These clubs will be joined in 2018 by High Wycombe and East Dorset.

#### **Webmaster’s report**

The Webmaster (Jon Diamond) asked for an indication of how many clubs used the web site and discovered that approximately half of those present and represented did so, The diary is now exclusively on the web site and there is much else of interest there. As always, the webmaster is dependent on contributors. Reports and photographs of all SECF events are already included but member clubs should send in similar reports of their events if they wish to have them publicised. It was suggested from the floor that more regular newsletters should be posted. The Secretary took note.

The Webmaster further reported that he had produced a data protection policy document for the Federation and pointed out that this was dependent on member clubs having a suitable policy as the Federation does not collect personal information directly, except from Committee Members. A club policy will be required as part of the new Croquet Association membership scheme. He would circulate the documents prepared for Royal Tunbridge Wells when they became available, for information and guidance.

#### **Secretary’s report**

The Secretary (John Reddish) said that the Federation consisted of 44 member clubs in 2017 [It later became 45]. He encouraged Clubs to consider entering the new 3 player league and drew attention to the timetable for entries to the Leagues and Events and the procedure that would be followed after the deadline. The One Ball Team Tournament had been relocated to Canterbury (a city which, it was pointed out from the floor, was not as far away as many thought).

#### **Report on 2017 Leagues and Events**

The Secretary invited acclamation for the following:

AC “A” League winners: **Woking**

AC “U” League winners: **Sussex County**

AC “B” League winners: **Merton**

GC Level League winners: **Surbiton**

GC Level Restricted League winners: **Merton**

GC Handicap League winners: **Cheam A**

AC Team Doubles Champions: **Sussex County**

Ladies’ AC Team Champions: **Purley Bury**

Ladies’ GC Team Champions: **Sydenham**

Golf Croquet Team Doubles Champions: **Littlehampton**

Golf Croquet Team Singles Champions: **Dulwich 1**

The GC Southern Challenge Division One Champions: **Winchester**

The GC Southern Challenge Division Two North Champions: **Roehampton**

The GC Southern Challenge Division Two South Champions: **Rottingdean**

Representatives of the winning Clubs (other than Roehampton, who sent apologies and already had the trophy in their possession and Winchester, who are (obviously) a Southern Federation Club) collected the trophies and were applauded.

The Chairman proposed that thanks should be tendered to Michael Hague who had undertaken the duties of Development Officer for more than 10 years and had achieved significant success. He was retiring because of his age and infirmity (or so he claimed) but would continue as a mentor for the new appointee. Henry Bryant (Canterbury) added the particular thanks of his Club for the work undertaken by Michael in support of their development project. It had been invaluable and much appreciated.

#### **Development Officer's report**

The Development Officer reported that **Canterbury** had been awarded a grant of £1,000 from the Kent Capital Grants for Sport to assist the funding of the £10,000 disabled toilet and that construction of the toilet should be completed before the start of the 2018 season.

The new club house **Littlehampton** had been constructed and the club was now busy installing the interior fittings, including second hand kitchen furniture.

The **Priory Park Tennis and Bowling Club** in Kew had made a tentative enquiry about the feasibility of introducing croquet to their club, the bowling element having run down to extinction. Tennis members wanted to transform the bowling green into a paddle tennis facility for their children. As with Finchley Victoria and Cheam, the facilities would be excellent for a croquet section and the surrounding residential areas would be ideal for recruiting newcomers to the game. Four members of the committee had visited Cheam on 22 February. The Club committee would now decide on whether or not to adopt croquet.

The local council **in Ealing** was withdrawing payment for the maintenance of the club's three courts. With 60 members, the Club considered that it could not maintain all three courts on its own and would have to give up one of them on a permanent basis. This would deny them the facility to run open tournaments. Their wooden clubhouse was very large and in need of urgent maintenance. Again, the club felt that such a task was way beyond their financial capabilities. They were considering getting some other organisation to take over the pavilion and use it for other activities but on a shared basis.

#### **Coaching Officer's Report**

The Coaching Officer (Jonathan Isaacs) drew attention to the continuing success of the Academy and urged early application for the few remaining places on the 2018 courses. He also mentioned the bespoke course that could be arranged to meet the needs of individual clubs and urged any interested club to contact him.

There were 244 entries to Academy course in 2017 (an increase of 15% after adjustment). A GC referees' workshop was introduced. One-to-one coaching sessions had been undertaken and the trial had been very successful. Attendance at AC course was continuing to fall (which was obviously a matter of concern) but the number of GC attendees had grown rapidly (132 compared with 86 in 2016).

The main changes in 2018 would be the introduction of more one-day courses; the permanent introduction of one-to-one coaching; the re-introduction of the Stephen Mulliner Masterclass and the introduction of video analysis as a coaching aid. The AC Triple Peel Course had been dropped – but not permanently. It would probably be run every other year in future.

In 2018 the Academy wanted to update their coaches' register to ascertain the number of active coaches in the Federation by grade and to identify areas of weakness which would be addressed in the future. A form would be sent to each Club requesting updated information (with due respect for data protection).

#### **Election of Officers and Committee for 2017-18**

The following persons offered themselves for election and were not opposed.

Chairman: **Bill Arliss** (Sussex County)

Secretary: **John Reddish** (Dulwich)

Treasurer: **Hilary Smith** (Compton)  
Committee members: **Jon Diamond** (Royal Tunbridge Wells); **Michael Hague** (Woking); **Jonathan Isaacs** (Sussex County); **Roger Loram** (Canterbury and Ramsgate); **John Low** (Sussex County) and **George Noble** (Surbiton).

The elected SECF CA Representative (**David Mooney** (Roehampton)) is also a member of the Committee. An election takes place every 3 years. If there is more than one nominee, an election will be held before the CA AGM in October 2018.

#### **Election of an Independent Examiner**

The Treasurer proposed Clive Hayton (Sussex County) as an appropriately qualified candidate. He had agreed to continue. The meeting approved his appointment by acclamation.

#### **A proposal for the introduction of a short croquet league in 2019**

This was supported by Jonathan Isaacs and Hilary Smith. Others indicated their approval. Some wondered whether the games should be 14 point and/or whether there should be a 14 point game league and/or a short croquet one-ball league. It was agreed that the Secretary would undertake a formal consultation later in the season to obtain a clear indication of the demand, or otherwise, for new leagues in 2019.

#### **The 2018 League Rules**

The new League Organiser (John Low) was introduced and begged for forgiveness in advance.

The motion that *“In the U and B Leagues, teams requiring fixtures only at weekends shall be drawn to play against each other and not against other team”* and the alternative motion that *“In all of the AC Leagues, a club offering fixtures on any day of the week and not only at weekends shall not be required to accommodate more than one opponent requiring only weekend fixtures”* were both defeated by substantial majorities. The League Organiser pointed out that he would not have the information required to implement such rules. It was agreed that the Clubs involved would have to meet the challenges presented by offers of weekend fixtures only themselves, within the existing rules. The League Organiser agreed to help if he could.

It was noted that proposal that the Rules should be amended to provide that: *“The qualifying handicaps shall be taken as at the date of the arrangement of the League fixture”* applied only to the GC R League, where the existing rule is that the handicaps are taken as at 7 days before the fixture.. The problem that this rule had created in 2017 was outlined by Michael Hague (Woking). It was agreed that provision should be made to deal with the situation when one member of a team experiences a handicap change shortly before the fixture. It was agreed that the rule would be amended to provide for the qualifying handicap to be taken as at 30 days before the fixture.

#### **2018 Events**

The Secretary announced that the dates for all of the 2018 events had been fixed and were published on the web site. The dates were **AC Teams Weekend**: Saturday/Sunday 19/20 May at **Southwick**; **One Ball Teams (of 3) Tournament**: Sunday 3 June at **Canterbury**; **Ladies AC Teams Day**: Wednesday 4 July at **Southwick**; **The Southern Challenge Division One**: Saturday/Sunday 30 June/1 July at **Southwick**; **The Southern Challenge Division Two North**: Saturday/Sunday 30 June/1 July at **Surbiton**; **The Southern Challenge Division Two South**: Saturday/Sunday 7/8 July at **Southwick**; **Golf Croquet Day**: Sunday 5 August at **Southwick**; **Ladies GC Teams Day**: Wednesday 15 August at **Southwick**;

#### **Address by Jeff Dawson (Woking) on behalf of the Croquet Association**

This took the form of a question and answer session in relation to the new arrangements for membership of the CA with particular reference to data protection, usage and sharing. Mr Dawson provided a lucid account of the advantages to all concerned and offered to provide further, individual support for all Club Secretaries when dealing with the new forms if required.

**Other business**

Alison Jones (Surbiton) drew attention to her free coaching sessions and invited Clubs to consider and distribute the small but very attractive leaflets she had had printed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed and those attending moved furniture and partook of another excellent lunch prepared and served by George Noble and his team of Surbiton members.