

Minutes of the 34th Annual General Meeting of the South East Croquet Federation held on Sunday 22 November 2020 by Zoom

The following clubs were represented: **Canterbury** (H Bryant; R Loram); **Caterham** (F Collins); **Cheam** (J Lugdon; I Cobbold; J Waite); **Compton** (H Smith); **Crawley** (P Constance); **Croqueteers** (P Hobart; A Reed); **Dogmersfield** (R Barnacle; R Blightman; G Hassell) **Dulwich** (J Reddish; P Newton); **Guildford and Godalming** (H Bird); **Hurlingham** (M Ormerod); **Ivychurch** (K Lennon; A Sinden); **Medway** (J Bateson); **Merton** (C Doswell; J Sheahan; L Taylor); **Purley Bury** (J Overell; P Hinton); **Ramsgate** (T Longman); **Reigate Priory** (S Ling); **Rottingdean** (F Low; J Low); **Surbiton** (A Dibben; G Noble; Samir Patel); **Sussex County** (C Hayton; E Farrow; P Brown; R Clark; R Clark; J Isaacs; L Gavigan; D King; R Wootton); **Sydenham** (J Sheridan); **Tunbridge Wells** (J Diamond); **West Worthing** (A Stewart); **Woking**(S Anderson); J Iris (Club?)

Andrew Stewart, standing in for Bill Arliss, opened the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence were received from: Richard Carline, Bill Arliss (Sussex County) and Kay Chordia (West Chilmington)

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2. The Minutes of the 33rd AGM held on Sunday 27th January were approved and there were no matters arising.

3. Election of Officers for Committee 2021The following persons had been nominated for election: Chairman: Andrew Stewart (West Worthing); Secretary: Louise Taylor (Merton) and Treasurer: David King (Sussex County). Committee members offering themselves for re-election were: Richard Carline (Sussex County); Ian Cobbold (Cheam); Jon Diamond (Royal Tunbridge Wells); Jon Low (Sussex County) and George Noble (Surbiton). There were no other nominations and no objections so no ballot was needed. Andrew Stewart offered thanks to John Reddish for nearly ten years' service as secretary of the federation, and to Bill Arliss for his long service and many contributions to the development of croquet.

4. Treasurer's report. Andrew Stewart presented accounts up to 30th September 2020 and these were approved unanimously subject to the independent examination. (These were for 9 months only because of the proposed change to the financial year. See motion 12). He explained that because of Covid19, there had been no income. All subscriptions and tournament or league entry fees had been returned. Grants already approved were paid, however, resulting in a £1000 deficit. Since the federation reserves stand at £5702 for the coming year, this was not a problem. There was one question from C Doswell (**Merton**) about equipment expenses. These were explained by George Noble (**Surbiton**.) Hoops thrown out by Hurlingham had been refurbished and were now available to any clubs who needed them.

5. Chairman's Report (Bill Arliss) This report had been provided before the meeting and there were no questions.

6. **Webmaster's Report** Jon Diamond said that no further changes were planned. The aim was to have all payments for leagues and tournaments on-line in future. This had already been achieved.
7. **Secretary's Report:** John Reddish said that because of Covid19, the registration process had to be abandoned. Nevertheless, he had sent out many reports of events which had taken place during the year.
8. **Development Officer's Report:** Ian Cobbold highlighted that there was still time for clubs to apply for one of the CA awards for Croquet clubs which had made exceptional progress in providing a good playing environment. He said that he was only aware of one club which intended to apply and he would like a club in the SE to win an award. The closing date is the end of the year. John Reddish as Chair of the Development committee said he had only received two applicants so far. The aim of the CA is still to get more people playing more croquet in more places. To achieve this, new clubs are needed, so please let him know of possibilities.
9. **Coaching Officer's Report:** Jonathan Isaacs stood in for Richard Carline and told us that the Academy Programme was nearly complete. More coaches and referees are needed so virtual classes will be held by Zoom to get round Covid19 restrictions. Lots of AC and GC improvement Courses are also scheduled.
10. **Communications Officer's Report:** Linda Gavigan is keen to hear from clubs for their suggestions for webinars. She was also planning to send out regular Newsletters and asked clubs to submit anything of interest.

Constitutional Amendments George Noble on behalf of the Committee proposed that:

11. the words '*Motions may be submitted to the Secretary by (a) member Clubs; or (b) the Executive Committee*' should be added to Clause 6B of the Constitution.
12. the word '*January*' should be deleted from Clause 8 of the Constitution and replaced by the word '*October*'.
13. a new Clause 7A should be added to the Constitution: '*The Federation may appoint a person of distinction who is interested in croquet to the office of President of the Federation. A nomination for the post of President may be made by the Executive Committee annually. The nomination shall be approved by the Member Clubs by a motion passes at the Annual General Meeting. The office of President shall carry no executive powers. The President shall undertake such duties on behalf of the Federation as may be agreed by the Chairman.*' These amendments were all carried with no objections.
14. **Annual Subscription for 2021** It was proposed that annual subscription would remain at £15 and there were no objections.

15. Tournament and League fees for 2021 John Reddish explained that fees for these were low because they were intended to cover costs. It was proposed that these would remain the same and there were no objections.

16. Appointment of the Auditor (independent Examiner) Clive Hayton (Sussex County) was thanked for his work to date and he agreed to continue in this role. There were no objections.

17. League Organiser's report John Low explained that the 2021 programme was still in a state of flux because of Covid19. After some discussion it was concluded that preparation of the new programme should go ahead as usual so that dates could be fixed and a decision whether to go ahead or postpone could be taken when the time comes. He said that making teams of 3 rather than 4 if necessary could be done at the last minute. Jon Diamond suggested a Zoom meeting in Feb/March to see how things stand. John Low also thanked John Reddish for the enormous amount of work he had done on arrangements of leagues and tournaments.

18. Report by the South Eastern Constituency Representative(s) on the Council of the Croquet Association Ken Lennon (Ivychurch) asked about the federation safeguarding policy. Jonathan Isaacs said that the Safeguarding Policy for children has been published but the policy for vulnerable adults is more complicated and is still being updated.

19. Report of the nomination by the Executive Committee of a person of distinction to hold the office of the President of the Federation pursuant to Clause 7A of the Constitution. Jonathan Isaacs spoke of his long friendship with Bill Arliss whom he had first met in 1984 when they joined Southwick. Since then, Bill has done an enormous amount for croquet throughout the country. He became known as Mr Golf Croquet because of his work in advancing the popularity of Golf Croquet. He thought this ought to be applauded as does his work for the federation. For example, he introduced the very successful Southern Challenge and Ladies Day. He knew Bill still wanted to be involved with the federation and this would enable us to draw on his considerable knowledge and experience.

20. Motion that the person nominated by the Executive Committee shall be approved as the President to the Federation was proposed by Jonathan Isaacs on behalf of the Executive Committee. His nomination was seconded by John Reddish who spoke of Bill's talent for foreseeing areas such as team competitions where croquet needed to be developed.

The Executive Committee nomination for the first President of the Federation, Bill Arliss, was approved by acclamation.

21. Other business: There was a discussion about whether consideration could be given to the distance club would have to travel for league matches given the problems of sharing a car during the pandemic.

Philip Constance (Crawley) wondered whether grants were available for maintenance. His club was being asked by the Council for a more realistic payment towards the upkeep of the lawn. This would make membership cost of £160 (for only 4 days a week) which was beyond

the reach of most of the members. He has found that if membership fees came to more than £100 it was impossible to attract new members. John Reddish said that the CA and SECF grants would not cover these but under Covid19, some councils were offering emergency Grants as were Sport England. Information for these could be found on-line. Andrew Dibben (Surbiton) wondered whether an increase in subscription fees ought to be considered so that the training courses for coaches and referees could be free. This would encourage more people to train. He was advised that the fees are already subsidised by the federation and the CA. Jon Diamond said that his club (Tunbridge Wells) met the remaining cost of training.

Andrew Stewart expressed his hope for a better season next year than last. Ian Cobbold congratulated Andrew Stewart and Jonathan Isaacs on a well-run Zoom meeting.

At 11.45am Andrew Stewart closed the meeting.