

Nailsea & District Croquet Club
Draft Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 28 September 2016

Chair: Andrew Wimshurst
Present: Kathy Wallace, Brigit Clayton, Peter Dyke, Mike Tracy, Linda Shaw
Coral Harrison, Brian Roynon

The meeting opened at 10am

1. Apologies None

2. Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 23 August 2016

The minutes were signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting held on 23 August 2016

3. Matters arising from Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 23 August 2016

Geoff Hughes was still awaiting information re the plaque in memory of John Jeffrey.

The DBS checks for the junior coaches were still outstanding. Kathy to ask the CPO about this. KW

The junior who had still not paid membership had ceased to attend lessons

The amount of money being placed in the honesty box in the kitchen seems to have risen since the appeal for members to pay for their drinks.

Robert Moss had been initially unable to open some of Mike's attachments and Mike observed that it was safer to send pdfs to be sure that all recipients could open them.

The visit of the WI had been successful and they may well return in four years time

The Mad Monday managed by Peter had gone smoothly. A member had sent an e-mail expressing disappointment at some aspects of the Mad Monday situation and Peter had replied to the e-mail.

Peter had received a phone call from a croquet player with queries about a GC match between Weston super Mare and Nailsea

Linda had had no further contact from the people who had a taster session

4. Treasurer's Report (Mike Tracy)

“Current balance at the bank less unpresented cheques is £18,591.73

The surplus for the year is £5,102.01

Income includes the balancing payment from the CA for tournament entry fees (£377) and expenditure includes (after much prompting) our rent to North Somerset Council (£500, offset by a credit of £189.20 for the period from 29th September 2015 to 31st March 2016 for which rent had already been paid under the old lease). The only income I expect before the end of September is bridge table money and refreshments (i.e. tea and coffee). The only items of expenditure I expect are some outstanding expense claims, notably one for all the petrol bought for our lawn equipment this year, possibly about £150 and 100 club prizes for the presentation evening draw. Our surplus for the year should thus be very close to £5,000.

The WI tournament took place as planned producing £400 plus a useful input to the refreshments treasure chest. Thanks are due to all who helped with this event, notably the providers of the cream teas. The organiser, Sue Meadows, must have been pleased with what we provided as she indicated that they would like to come back. Apparently the event is run in alternate years and the other venue they use is Camerton and Peasdown.

It may be a coincidence, but since the poetic notice was put up reminding people to pay for their tea and coffee the cashflow from this source seems to have risen significantly.

Geoff Hughes has asked me to sanction spending £50 on a cordless drill for the workshop. Could we please consider this request.”

Mike asked that expense claims be presented promptly. He had just had a claim for petrol for machines for the entire year.

The Committee approved the request for a cordless drill.

KW

5. Property Report (Brian Roynon)

“Work mornings

The work morning on the 2nd September was much better attended with 16 members attending which made the work much easier and we were able to complete all the tasks and some that were left over from the previous work morning and to finish before 12.00. Well done to all.

Nearly half of those who turned out were ladies of the club and they did sterling work.

If mowers could dispose of the grass that they empty along the East boundary into the ditch at the base of the hedge and not in piles immediately over the stop boards it would be appreciated. Especially by those who have to move it later!!

The Friends of Trendlewood who manage and maintain the wilderness behind our East boundary do not want us to cut the hedge on the park side next year.

Social Bookings

We have Social Corporate event booking for the 30th September from 3.00pm until 6.00pm when a local company Parkwood Consultancy Services are entertaining guests from further afield.

It will be run as our normal social events and they expect to bring 25 people.

The lawns have been booked out for the afternoon so we are sorry for any inconvenience but it will help to replace the social events that were rained off earlier in the season.”

Kathy to ask John to request mowers to dump grass into the ditch and not leave it in piles near the stop boards

KW

Mike can now produce official invoices on behalf of the Club

There was a discussion about the state of the board at the entrance to the Club. Brian agreed to replace it and put current contact details on a laminated sheet attached to it. This could be updated when appropriate

BR

6. Lawn Maintenance Report (John Wallace)

“1. Lawns

The last fertiliser/Revolution spray took place around 1st August and the lawns have had no treatment since then. As in August the rainfall has been intermittent and no higher on average than during the summer. The evapotranspiration rate has fallen steadily throughout September. The data is shown in figure 1. Generally the lawns have stayed green but the North boundary again dried out due to the tree roots. The soil beyond the lawn boundary is very sandy (due to levelling from many years ago) with little moisture retention ability and the grass has died off. After the heavy overnight rain (11mm) on Saturday night the ground is now moist and the whole lawn 4 North boundary area was re-seeded on Monday. As the GA30 tining machine would not start the Sarel roller was used to spike the ground and seed brushed into the spike holes. This may or may not work! I have not closed the lawn as the area re-seeded in the playing area is a strip less than 1 metre wide.

Cutter height has remained at 3mm throughout August and September to maintain lawn speed. However, this does have the disadvantage of accentuating the effects of the undulating surface (wandering balls!). It also stresses the grass and cutter height will soon be returned to 5mm in order to rest the grass. The result will be slower lawns but less grass stress.

One of the current limitations of our Toro triplex mower is that the cutters do not have a groomer attachment. Groomers flick the grass blades up just before the cutting process and allow the cutting height to be higher but achieve the same lawn speed. Duncan Hector reckons that a groomer adds about 0.5 plummers to lawn speed. (He also believes that the shape of the new dwarf grass that will be supplied as a part levelling also facilitates a slightly faster lawn.)

Post levelling I would therefore like to consider replacing our existing Toro with a newer model that does incorporate groomers and also facilitates easier cutter height adjustment. Typically, five year old second hand machines (with 2000 hours running) are available from Golf clubs for £4-5000. Geoff Hughes has seen them advertised at £2500. All models are now diesel which would lower running cost but introduce the problem of separating petrol and diesel fuel.

Toro replacement will have to take its place in the queue behind car park refurbishment but I would like the committee to consider it for future funding.

2. Leatherjacket treatment

There is currently no approved treatment for Leatherjackets following the EU ban. (I don't think Brexit will affect this). Nobody is very enthusiastic about Nematodes as they are difficult to apply, require enormous amounts of labour in post application support, expensive and often ineffective. Duncan Hector has found a non-licensable product that is actually used for disease protection but contains silicon. It would seem that the leatherjackets become coated with silicon and die. However, this is anecdotal evidence only. I am awaiting a price for spraying it on to our lawns.

3. Hoop Setting and White Lining

The new method of hoop setting using alternating E/W holes has generally worked well and reduced the physical effort involved. However, sometimes the hoops are not quite as solid as I think they should be and some backfilling has been necessary where the old hoop hole was enlarged by excessive banging of the hoop into the ground. I am going to discuss this issue with David Hunt over the winter.

I am hoping to retain the existing holes next year and mark out the new 2017 lawns by reference to these holes. This will avoid having to re-drill 96 holes at the start of the season. My current plan is to mark out the lawn corners using buried tubes that can support corner flags. The tubes could also potentially be used by the white liners and prevent the line location drifting as the season progresses. With secure corner posts, it should also be possible to lay a single continuous line around a lawn in one go, thus speeding up the white lining process. An improved method of storing the line using a reel arrangement will also be needed. The overall aim is to reduce the total time taken to install the line and thus encourage all white liners to use the line rather than just go over the existing line.

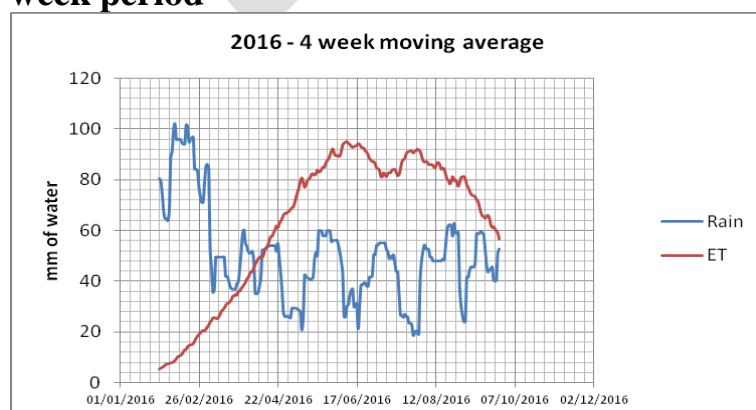
Erica has been trained as a white liner and may well be able to provide extra flexible white lining effort when rain washes away white lines just prior to tournaments etc.

4. Lawn levelling

The contract for Lawn Levelling has been placed with Talbot farm using the schedule of specific agreements to supplement the specification and tender response.

The agreed start date is 4/9/17 and the levelling will take about 2 weeks. Next years lawn maintenance rotas will be split into two, with separate rotas post levelling. The new grass will need to be cut by hand at least twice a week using the 22inch cylinder mower (which has a groomer). Until the ground has consolidated, the Toro cannot be used. From memory I recall that this takes about two hours and 72 passes so we will have a team of very fit mowers by Xmas 2017. In practice, we may need to enlist more mowers to minimise the effort on individuals."

Figure 1 Rainfall and Evapo-transpiration (ET) over a rolling 4 week period



It was agreed to keep the Toro until we could afford a replacement. More up to date models use red diesel and have groomers fitted.

It might be useful to have two lawn mowers in use during the period when the new grass was becoming established.

Peter thought the worms were more evident than usual this year and Mike wondered if the usual treatment had been applied. Kathy to ask John

KW

7. Membership Report (Coral Harrison)

“A revised membership Report has been emailed, as there is an additional new member, Mark Suter. Since the last Committee meeting another full member, Susan Pritchard has also joined

The total Club membership is 97 compared with the 104 at the end of last year. This membership is made up as follows:-

<i>Life</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Country</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Student</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Social</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Full</i>	<i>77</i>

*This includes Neil Devine who is still on the list as his subscription was paid for this year but he has been removed from the email list
A revised list will be put up in the Pavilion.*

I had a telephone call from Candida Chamberlain regarding the Nailsea Map being assembled in The Blue Room (an Arts and Crafts Centre in Nailsea Precinct). The Council paid for an artist to produce the map and local organisations were invited to make an artistic contribution. Candida noticed that the Croquet Club was not mentioned and there were only 3 days left before it closed. I contacted Pat Long who added a croquet figure, which I understand, would be photographed as part of the final map. I am told that the Council will use the map for marketing purposes.

The Bridge Group will change to Tuesday afternoon on October 4”

A member had expressed surprise that full addresses were circulated and it was debated whether this were still appropriate. It was decided to continue giving addresses for the moment

8. Christmas Lunch

.Two possible menus were circulated and the usual one with more choices was settled on. The cost is £17.95 per head. Coral said £22 per head from the attendees would cover the overheads – room hire, tip etc.

CH

Saturday 4 Feb 2017 would be the first choice date for the Skittles Evening.
Kathy to book it at Clarence House

KW

9. Dates for 2017 – to include possible GC tournament

The following dates were agreed:

8 April Open Day

22/23 April SWF Short Croquet Teams Competition (to be agreed with SWF)

6/7 May Open Advanced Singles Tournament

3/4 June C Class Advanced Singles Tournament

8/9 July B Class Advanced Singles Tournament

18-20 Aug NDCC semi-finals

1-3 Sept NDCC Finals

In addition, Peter will liaise with Chris Roberts with a view to holding a one-day B Class GC tournament. If this tournament is scheduled, Peter will manage it and Kathy will be Secretary for it.

Open Day will be earlier than usual because the season will finish at the beginning of September for lawn levelling. There was a shortage of coaches prepared to take on beginners but it was thought that several people could share the task. Mike and Andrew may do a “job share”.

Kathy reported that John and David were both flexible about a date for the season to commence

10. Clubhouse Cleaning

This continued to be a problem with many slots not filled and some people not cleaning when they had signed up and some not emptying bins. Andrew to contact Jo to see if she would like to be relieved of the responsibility for it. Linda made a suggestion for a replacement.

AW
LS

11. Mad Monday

Peter would like to form a sub-Committee to discuss Mad Monday regulations and format for 2017. He would like to see GC coaching for high handicappers on one Monday morning per month, just before the Mad Monday week.

PD

Linda will invite all members to give their views on Mad Mondays

LS

12. Rule changes for SWF Leagues

Peter would like the SWF to change the rules so that draws are not possible in Singles games in the Level Play GC League. It was agreed that this was a good idea.

PD

13. Beginners/coaching

Linda would like to gradually hand over the Competition Secretary role and two members had agreed to become involved.

Linda would also like to co-ordinate a programme for coaching both AC and GC. This would cover as wide a range of handicaps as possible. Linda to contact all coaches about their willingness to be involved and their availability. Lessons for beginners in 2017 would start in the week beginning 24 April. Only two sessions would be offered, a day time slot and an evening, subject to Linda's liaison with potential coaches.

Brigit to speak to Erica re Open Day

BC

14. Dishwasher Proposal

A letter and a petition signed by 34 members had been received asking that we provide a dishwasher. There was a discussion on the merits of this. It was accepted that hygiene levels in the kitchen could be improved with better use of dishcloths and tea towels. It was felt that the type of dishwasher suitable for everyday use was different from that required for tournaments and other big events. Kathy to ask Terry to provide more details of his proposal, including the total costs. It had been learned that Budleigh Salterton had had to install a water softener in order for their machine to work satisfactorily

KW

15. Memorial for Chris Jackson

Coral would be having contact with the family shortly and she would discuss this with them and report back

CH

16. AOB

Peter reported that the AC Handicap Committee had met the previous day and had reduced one AC handicap and one Short Croquet handicap. They had also allocated AC handicaps to the beginners. Peter would e-mail the report to the Committee. Kathy would then annotate the Tracking Chart and produce a new one for 2017

PD

KW

Kathy agreed to make some new Short Croquet handicap cards

KW

Peter would return all the cards to the Clubhouse. In particular, the Short Croquet cards would be returned by Wednesday in time for the Budleigh competition

PD

Mike felt that a £3 match fee was appropriate for the Short Croquet team competition and that petrol costs could be claimed for one car per team.

Mike said that Mark had offered his professional expertise in marketing to help with the club website.

Kathy had received an electronic version of the Gazette article about new membership arrangements for the CA. The intention was that all Club members should receive this as they would all shortly become members of the CA.

Kathy to circulate the e-mail and also add the price list KW

Kathy to send out AGM papers with a deadline for proposals and nominations set before the next Committee Meeting KW

17. Date of next meeting

This was arranged for Wednesday 2 November at 10am

The meeting closed at 1pm

Signed as a true and accurate record

Name.....

Signature..... date.....