

Nailsea & District Croquet Club
Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 20 March 2017

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

1. Apologies Andrew Wimshurst

2. Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 20 February 2017

Peter pointed out two typos in the minutes – these were corrected and the minutes were then signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting held on 20 February 2017

3. Matters arising from Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 16 January 2017

It had been decided by e-mail that the end of season spraying should take place on Tuesday 29 August as originally suggested. John had explained the reasons for the choice of date and it was the optimum day.

Kathy had now received the update for the handicap section of the Club Handbook from Peter but was still awaiting a response from the Safeguarding Officer. Kathy to publish the 2017 version of the Handbook. The Competitions handbook would be published as a separate document attached to it as there were formatting incompatibilities.

KW

Martin Kerly is now unable to act as B league captain for this season; Peter will seek an alternative from the B league squad.

PD

Christine Haley had agreed to take over responsibility for the cleaning rota.

Violet will provide a batch of soup for the first day of the season on 1 April

Erica had Open Day arrangements in hand

Lessons to be discussed under item 8

4. Treasurer's Report (Mike Tracy)

“Treasurer's report for NDCC committee meeting 20th March 2017

Spreadsheet attached. It is compatible with old versions of Excel, so if you have been unable to open it in the past, this one should work. You can print the summary page if you wish by going to the High Level Actuals worksheet tab.

Current balance at the bank less unpresented cheques is £18610.73

The surplus for the year is £199.66

These figures were recorded on 15th March.

You may have noticed that most of the club competition entry fees are shown for the Open Advanced Singles competition. The reason for this is that a few people paid by BACS, so for these I only know the total, not the competitions actually entered. This will be corrected when I receive the final data from Linda with the associated

cheques and cash.

100 club subscriptions have reached £456, which is for 38 units. At this point last year we had sold 40 units with a final take-up of 45 units. The sale of some more units would be welcome and this may happen on the opening day of the season, as it did last year.

Income from membership subscriptions is low. We have 24 paid-up full members compared with 39 this time last year. We are all aware of a number of people who have decided not to rejoin, and this will have a considerable effect on our finances. Although I have not yet seen the paperwork, I am expecting expense claims for £135 to fund the face book campaign which it is hoped will bring in good quality recruits. I await the outcome of this campaign with interest and my fingers crossed. We may need to take up the offer of an interest free bridging loan from the CA if this downward trend continues.

Linda and I went to a seminar at UWE organised by Wesport on the subject of fund raising. The first half was a presentation by Nick Lockwood of Sport England (which controls National Lottery funding). The main thrust of this is that Sport England does not fund sport for sport's sake. Their target is to improve the level of physical activity in our generally sedentary population and to make sport available and engaged in by disadvantaged and neglected sectors of the population. Linda and I agreed that we would not meet their criteria for funding unless we changed our focus. I recall hearing about the very substantial funding and support enjoyed by Swindon Croquet Club. This depends on them devoting a great deal of time and effort reaching out to people suffering from conditions such as Parkinson's Disease and dementia. Worthy though this is, it is not current direction of our club. I conclude that Sport England is not going to be a source of funding.

The second half was a presentation by Louise Treacher of 4George, an organisation which hunts around for funding for organisations in need. Although she did not say so, it sounded as though 4George may have charitable status or have a not-for profit approach. She spoke for about 50 minutes and covered a huge amount of ground at some speed. Her notes were not available at the time and I have just received them by email. They will be worth the effort of digesting. One point she made clearly is that the legal status of the fund seeker, e.g. NDCC, has considerable bearing on how funds can be raised. I have already started to look at the ins and outs of registering NDCC as a Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC). Other possibilities include charitable status and Community Interest Company. Each of these arrangements brings its own benefits but also creates an administrative responsibility which I and my successors would have to deal with. Furthermore, changing to any of these statuses is irrevocable, so it is essential that the best decision is arrived at.

I will follow this up in due course.

Mike reported that the up to date balance is £18 882.73 and the surplus is £471.66

Following on from his report Mike observed that the situation with Sport England could change in the future. He thought the Community Amateur Sports Club status was possibly the best of the available options re any changed status for NDCC. However, it would convey little advantage, entail considerable administration and was irrevocable. If we were a Club interested in profiting from corporate hospitality events, the situation might be different but the Committee were keen to keep the Club as a Croquet Club with the lawns available for its members.

It was decided not to have a Club debit card. The effort in setting up such an account was considerable with a personal trip to the bank in Cabot Circus for two people involved. It would not be possible to put a limit on a spend for such a card and it was

at odds with the general banking policy of the Club.

The issue of the online marketing campaign was discussed. Without a separate Business Account and associated debit card, it would be difficult to pay for a campaign. There was a huge uncertainty about the cost of a campaign and of its effectiveness. In the light of a disappointing return of 2017 membership subscriptions, it was felt that the Club could not bear these uncertainties.

Mike to contact Mark to explain this and to ask if the £100 cost mentioned for the plug-in for the website could be retrieved

MT

5. Membership Report (Coral Harrison)

Attached is my usual Technicolor Membership List showing the state on the membership as of today.

It shows a grim picture with the loss of 15 Full members (3 have transferred to Social membership) which, in addition to the 2 deaths earlier last year is a serious reduction on the 2016-2017 figures and I very much doubt that all of those who have not yet paid will do so, resulting in an even greater reduction. One member has transferred from Full to Country Membership causing another small loss of income.

Should there be as much effort put into retaining members as recruiting new ones?

The entry on the Membership Form for an emergency name and telephone number has not, as yet, been put on the list and this is deliberate on my part, as I will adjust the list when all forms have been received.

Bridge continues to be very well supported and 6 of the 8 people sitting around the Committee Table will be involved on Tuesday 28 March. Play will be transferred to evenings starting Tuesday 4 April. ”

There was a brief discussion about the non-renewals. There were many differing reasons including aging, re-location, lack of time and also non-renewal of what had only ever been intended as winter membership.

6. Property Report (Brian Roynon)

“Pavilion

The Roof

The work on the roof has been completed with 12 ridge tiles being removed and re-grouted. Re-pointing of others and several broken tiles replaced. We now have a couple of spare tiles for the future.

The Car Park

The depressions in the car park have been filled with gravel to support the matting as a temporary measure

7. Lawn Maintenance Report (John Wallace)

1. Lawns

The new lawns were marked out on March 6th using the old hoop holes in the East position as reference points. This worked well and means that drilling out 96 hoop holes has been avoided for this year. Each corner position was marked with two 10mm nylon bolts with centres drilled out so that with a template/metal spikes the corner position is readily located. Reels for the line marking string are currently being constructed so that the white lines can readily be marked out using a taut string as reference. If this experiment is successful over the season then more permanent corner location markers will be fitted after the levelling project is completed.

All large and small lawn hoop holes are now in place. David Hunt has re-painted the hoops.

To suppress worms, Ringer (together with Headland Glow PH buffer) was sprayed onto the lawns on March 9th. To maximise ground penetration, the lawns were spiked with the Sarel roller and then irrigated for about 3 hours (45 mins/lawn) prior to spraying.

Ringer has been used in the past so hopefully worm-cast production will reduce or cease. The committee has endorsed the concept of re-applying Ringer just before the levelling project starts. The associated lawn closure will be marked in the lawn booking sheets. During the season there will be numerous other sprays of liquid bio and Revolution being applied. These will also result in lawn closure but are weather dependent and cannot be pre-booked. To minimise the impact on play the spraying is usually done around tea time or early evening. (Revolution spraying is best timed to coincide with rain!)

Corner 1 on lawn 2 and the North boundary remain a concern as they remain somewhat bare and muddy. Having cleared off the worm casts it was possible to cut the North boundary with the Hayter hand mower. This has a groomer and a useful quantity of grass was removed. A further attempt at reseeding the North boundary was attempted on March 15th. The Sarel roller was used to spike the ground, grass seed scattered by hand and the tractor brush attachment used to brush the seed into the ground. A final application of the roller smoothed out the surface. Hopefully with the arrival of slightly warmer spring weather a percentage of the seed will germinate.

2. Rainfall

The winter rainfall continues to be low but consistent. The pattern is quite different to 2015 and 2016. Figure 1 contains the up to date 4 weekly moving average of rain and evapotranspiration. Low winter rainfall could result in a lower water table and hence more potential for lawns drying out during the summer months. Hopefully Revolution spraying will prevent this.

In passing, note how the ET figure is rising steadily. Once it exceeds the rainfall the

lawns will start to lose water. This usually starts to occur in April.

8. Coaching

It was hope that all our coaches would observe the CA Guidance, particularly when coaching beginners. Linda, Polly and Erica had all indicated a willingness to take a beginners group.

GC would be taught to those who did not show an interest or aptitude for AC

Peter was hoping to coach GC on the Mondays preceding Mad Mondays but was not available on 3 April, a week before the first Mad Monday. He wondered if Polly and Jim would do this instead of him.

Linda would offer a Refresher Course for AC for recent recruits

At this point Brian Roynon left the meeting after making the point that he thought that DBS checks for our coaches of Juniors were essential.

9. Safeguarding

Peter was still pursuing the DBS checks situation with the CA Chairman (Brian Shorney) and Secretary (Ian Vincent). Progress had been made but the situation had not yet been resolved. PD

The Club Safeguarding Officer had not been in contact so Kathy would include the Policy in the Handbook and be prepared to edit it if necessary KW

10. Open Day and recruitment in general

The data on the Dongle purchased at Club expense might still be valid on Open Day

On Open Day:

Lawn 1 would be used for demonstration games of AC at certain times but might be required for visitors if Open Day was busy.

Lawn 2 would be used for games of GC

Lawn 3 would be used as two groups of 3 hoops for Garden Croquet or AC practice

Lawn 4 would be used for instruction in the basics that are common to AC and GC. All visitors would begin their visit on Lawn 4

Mike asked for A6 flyers – Kathy to arrange with Erica KW

Kathy and Erica would be targeting the Hello Nailsea Face book page

Mike would write an article for the NS Times to which Kathy would add a photograph and attempt to get onto the news pages. Kathy to liaise with Doreen about this MT KW

11. SWF

Kathy to forward the SWF e-mail with news and information to all Club members KW

Kathy expressed her frustration with the Handicapping policy of the SWF and CA. There was a clear contradiction between the advice to teach beginners on small lawns and the requirement to assess them on large lawns. Kathy would like to devise a method for assessment on small lawns. It was suggested that she should do so and submit it for approval. Peter said he would like to be involved with this and Kathy and Peter agreed to liaise. KW PD

12. AOB

Mike suggested a method for allocating handicaps for one-ball that would be fair to all AC and GC players. This was to take the average of the AC handicap and double the GC handicap. Players without an AC Handicap would be regarded as AC 20. Players without a GC handicap would just use their AC handicap

Using this method, a player with a GC handicap of 4 but no AC handicap would take the average of 20 (default AC) and 8 (double GC handicap). This would give a one-ball handicap of 14. This method was accepted as a good option LS

Peter expressed his frustration that the NDCC contact details in SWAN were incorrect again. He had sent the updated details in good time and Linda had also had an input.

It was decided to ask Brain McCausland if he were prepared to co-ordinate the NDCC teams for the SWF Short Croquet Teams Competition again KW

13. Date of next meeting

This will take place on Tuesday 25 April at 10am

The meeting closed at 12.30pm

Signed as a true and accurate record

Name.....

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