

Nailsea and District Croquet Club
Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 12th February 2019

Present: Graham McCausland, Meriel Forshaw, Mike Tracy, Andrew Wimshurst, Linda Shaw, Brian Roynon, Coral Harrison.

In attendance: Joan Timmins

1. Apologies: Peter Dyke

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on the 8th January 2019. Agreed and signed as a correct record.

3. Matters Arising: None

4. Treasurer's Report: discussed and noted

The interest free loan of £5,000 from the CA has been received. Subscriptions are now being received. It was noted that the kitchen refreshment box (teas and coffees only) for last year raised £297 for the club, whereas to date this year, a total of £232 has already been banked. It was acknowledged that this was evidence that the club had been used during the winter months.

5. Review of BBQ date

Unfortunately, the previous agreed date for the BBQ clashed with club matches. Therefore, a new date has now been agreed.

The BBQ will take place on Friday 28th June 2019 at the home of Mike and Liz Tracy.

6. Toro Storage

The committee has now been advised that the provisional costing to build a storage container for the Toro machine has increased to £681. After a long and detailed discussion the following was agreed:-

The club would not proceed with this project at the present time.

The committee recognised the extensive work that had been undertaken by Geoff and his team. Further discussions would take place with Geoff and John Wallace regarding equipment.

Graham to advise Geoff of the decision.

Action: Graham

7. Property Report: discussed and noted

Two stop fence panels have been made, which will be located on the boundary between hoop 4 on lawn 1 and the car park area. These will be installed before the start of the summer; if required they can easily be removed without causing any damage to the lawns.

The new cooker is in place and ready for use.

Enquiries re. social bookings for the coming year have not been confirmed.

Skittles: This year, the Skittles event will take place on Friday 8th March 2019 at the Grove Sports Centre, Nailsea, starting at 7.30pm. Brian has emailed a reminder to members advising them of the change of venue.

8. Membership

41 forms have been returned to Andrew with the relevant membership fee for the coming year.

A reminder was recently sent out to those members who have not yet renewed their membership; Andrew will follow this up with another reminder later in the month.

It was noted that the first match game is on the 7th April 2019. In order to play in this or in any other competition one must be a fully paid up member. No-one can enter any of the competitions if that is not the case.

Action: Andrew

9. Website

Linda and Mike have started work on the website in order to bring it up to date. Linda is working through the list of changes. It is possible that some of the information such as the extensive work on the lawns that has been undertaken during the last year could be stored within the archives. Mike will speak to Brigit about this.

Action Linda/Mike

10. Coaching

Linda is in the process of putting this years coaching programme together.

Dave Kibble will run a CTC session on the 16th February at Nailsea.

Brian Roynon and Brian McCausland have expressed an interest in attending the Handicap workshop. Graham will ask Brian McCausland to contact Linda re. the workshop dates and venue.

Action: Linda/Graham

11. Committee Diary

The need for the committee having this important information was discussed and it was agreed that the diary would ensure that we have a timetable for events, and it would act as a prompt for the renewal, revision and updating of relevant policies.

Meriel has almost completed the first draft of the diary, which will be circulated to committee members for suggestions etc. before it is finalised.

Action: Meriel

12. Recruitment Report

12.1 Recruitment:

The main recruitment event will be 'Hoops for the Hospice' Open Day on Sunday 19th May 2019. The posters are ready for printing. The day will be run like a summer fair with the emphasis on having fun whilst supporting a local cause. Whilst refreshments will be available and the hospice volunteers will provide some cakes, we will probably need more.

It is proposed to accept new people to join lessons throughout the season and Kathy already has four people who have shown an interest in learning to play croquet. However, we do have a shortage of committed and enthusiastic qualified coaches; if the recruitment campaign is to be successful we will need a larger teaching base.

At the last meeting Graham suggested free raffle prizes to local schools.

The committee agreed the proposal of a free session for 2 people. Graham will discuss with Kathy and Erica.

Action: Graham

12.2 Tournaments and Competitions

Six provisional entries have been submitted for the All England Competitions. The CA entry fee is £7.

Kathy requested that the committee consider the following - could we consider combining with another club if we do not get enough members to qualify? The committee agreed this in principle but it would depend on the rules. Mike will contact Kathy.

Action: Mike

Post Meeting Note:

Post meeting it was confirmed to go ahead with a heat for both competitions (AC and GC) combined with Bristol. Details are not confirmed but possibly Nailsea could host one, the other being hosted by Bristol.

12.3 Tournament help including catering

Linda will contact Kathy about all aspects of tournament help and will also contact Libby to see if she would be willing to take on the catering responsibility.

Action: Linda

12.4 General information

Handicap tracking charts have been prepared and are awaiting any changes to be made by the handicap committee.

A lawn layout chart has been prepared. Permanent small lawns will be on lawns 3 and 4 this year.

12.5 All England entry fee

Kathy had recently queried with Chris Roberts and Hilary Smith the junior rate for the above competition.

Post Meeting Note:

Confirmation received that the junior entry fee would be £3.50.

13. Club Competitions - continues as work in progress.

14. Lawn Report: Discussed and noted

During the winter months John has regularly sent out emails to all members updating them on the condition of the lawns and lawn closures.

15. League Fixtures Report: deferred

Peter has completed the NDCC SWF League Fixtures 2019 for members.

16. Club Calendar: deferred to next meeting in the absence of Peter.

17. Junior Croquet

A full discussion on this item was deferred until the next meeting.

However, the committee wished to acknowledge the commitment and support that James Galpin had given to the juniors during the past year.

Peter had requested that junior coaching be moved from Tuesdays to Fridays. The committee agreed whichever date suited those who were coaching would be acceptable.

Linda agreed to contact James re attending the coaching sessions.

Andrew agreed to contact the juniors' parents who had not yet paid their membership fee for this year.

Action: Linda /Andrew

18: CA Diploma

Deferred

19. Any Other Business

19.1 Safe Guarding –The review date for this policy will be identified within the committee diary, and the policy reviewed/updated if required on the appropriate date. Linda Shaw is the safeguarding officer.

Linda will ensure Peter and Erica receive the necessary information for junior members.

Action: Linda

19.2 New rules for Golf Croquet

A member from the Bath club had contacted Peter re: seminar sessions on the new rules.

The SWF will be arranging a date in March to brief members on the new rules. The session will be open to members in the SW Federation. Nailsea will provide the venue and members will be asked to bring their own lunch.

Linda will contact past speakers and information will appear in the next issue of Cygnet.

The SW Croquet Academy, Taunton and Cheltenham are also running sessions.

Action: Linda

19.3 SW Federation Committee meeting 23rd March 2019

The committee agreed that this meeting could again take place at Nailsea. No charge will be made for the room.

19.4 Christmas Lunch

The Masonic Hall has now been booked and the booking fee paid for Christmas lunch on the following dates - 7th December 2019 and 5th December 2020.

19.5 Cleaning

The clubhouse has been cleaned ready for the start of the new season with only one or two small jobs outstanding. The cleaning rota is on the notice board ready for members to sign up to. As the club does not have a facility for recycling rubbish, members are asked to please take as much of the rubbish home with them as possible.

The committee wishes to express thanks to Mike Powell and Joan for their hard work.

19.6 **Joy Wilyman** who was an NDCC member for many years and had served as a trustee until a few years ago, has recently passed away. No further details are known as yet. Joy and Margaret Cleveland-Smith donated the garden bench in recognition of the Club's 25th Anniversary in 2006.

20. DONM: Tuesday 19th March at 10.00hrs

The meeting closed at 11.45hrs

Signed as a true and accurate record

Name.....

Signature.....

Date.....

Reports

Treasurer's report for NDCC committee meeting 12th February 2019

This report has been prepared on 6th February.

Spreadsheet for the financial year attached. You can print the summary page if you wish by going to the High Level Actuals worksheet tab.

Balance at the bank less unpresented cheques is £15,541.66

Note that this includes the receipt of the £5,000 loan from the CA

The surplus for the year is £5,726.04, if the loan is excluded, £726.04

The cooker cost £319.00 which included delivery and disposal of the old one. Brian saw to the installation - many thanks.

Membership subscriptions have started to arrive totalling £5,065 so far. This includes £200 for winter memberships.

Geoff and Terry have been making preparations to convert the 'pig pen' into a store for the Toro. No money has been spent so far, but Geoff has advised that about £500 will be needed to complete the job. He seeks our approval for this expenditure. He is proposing a structure constructed with green metal box profiled cladding and a flat roof using the corrugated material already there. The shed will be no more than 2.3m high and therefore does not need a planning application.

M Tracy

06/02/2019

NDCC Committee Meeting 12th February 2019 Property Report

Car park

The car park is holding up to the winter traffic a lot better than expected. Members should still consider parking outside following heavy rain.

I have made two stop fence panels to be located on the boundary between hoop 4 on lawn 1 and the car park area. These will be installed before the start of the summer season.

Cooker.

The New cooker has been connected with no need to replace any isolators or wiring.

Social bookings.

The anticipated 1st booking for 2019 has so far not materialised.

Skittles

This year we are trying a different venue as the previous one in Portishead is long overdue a make-over. So this year we are going to the Grove Sports Centre Nailsea on Friday, 8th March 2019 starting at 7.30pm. (two alleys are never available on Saturdays at the Grove)

Where Clarence House Charged £50 for the alleys there is no charge at the Grove. Currently we have 19 members who intent to come some of whom are still to pay.

Recruitment

Our main recruitment event will be the Hoops for the Hospice Open Day on Sunday 19 May. The posters and flyers are ready for printing. TCS (“That Copy Shop”) in Clevedon have offered us favourable terms because of the Hospice involvement. They have also moved on a pace in terms of technology since I last visited them and they can print and laminate A2 full colour posters. We will also use free coverage in newspapers and on Facebook and hope to get some radio involvement. The day will be run a bit like a summer fair with the emphasis on having fun whilst supporting a local cause. Visitors will pay to play a game of GC and/or to learn various skills with prizes for the successful. Brian Mc has agreed for his image, dressed as a tea-lady, to be used and there will be an opportunity to “hit the 25 yard tea lady”. I will create a programme for the day which will include all the “stalls” and opportunities, some blurb about AC and GC and, of course,.....how to sign up for lessons!. The Hospice will have their own PR material on hand and I will mention them in the programme and include their logo.

Refreshments will be available. The Hospice volunteers will provide some cakes but we will probably need more. We will need as many club members as possible to lead the GC games and run the skills “stalls”. Our members have been given the date but I will send out a more detailed appeal soon.

We will also accept new people into lessons throughout the season and we already have 4 people who have shown interest in learning to play croquet. All are likely to be good players. We will get them started ASAP in April but we do have a shortage of committed and enthusiastic qualified coaches. If the recruitment campaign is successful, we will need a larger teaching base.

Tournaments and Competitions

Entries are coming in but it's still early days for both.

I have sent provisional entries of 6 for each of the All England competitions. With the CA entry fee being £7, I doubt if we will get more than that. We could consider combining with another Club if we don't get enough to send anyone forward to the Area Final. Please let me know whether or not the Committee finds this idea theoretically acceptable.

We will need catered lunches for 12 days this year. The Treasurer's Tankard will be for about 8 people each day so it might be easier to get volunteers for those days. It would be wonderful if a Club member would take responsibility for the slots being filled for all tournament help, including catering. I have prepared a blank rota, ready to be put up, but a certain amount of prompting and cajoling also has to be done.

General admin

Handicap tracking charts have both been prepared and are awaiting any changes (or settings of new people) by Handicap Committees.

Lawn layout chart prepared. Permanent small lawns will be on lawns 3 and 4 this year – agreed with lawns manager

Kathy Wallace 9/1/2019

Lawn Maintenance Report - February 19

1. Lawns

After a very wet December, January was cold but relatively dry. However, February has started off with melting snow and heavy rain which has left the lawns in a waterlogged condition. (Figure 1). As a result the lawns have been closed until Friday February 15th to give the ground a chance to dry out and firm up. At the end of January, the winter hoop holes were moved, thus allowing the lawn 3 hoops to be returned to the pavilion as normal. The winter hoop holes damaged by squirrels now need to be repaired and re-seeded but only when the weather is drier.

The lawns received a dilute liquid fertiliser spray (together with Dispatch) on Feb 5th. This does already appear to have revived the grass a little compared with its end of January state. I am less convinced about the effectiveness of Dispatch in terms of water dispersal and am currently not planning on purchasing more when the present supply is used up.

The much delayed lawn maintenance work started on Thursday. All the lawns were successfully marked out on Thursday (Feb 7th) with string. However the white lining

and drilling of hoop holes has been delayed by the heavy rain. Hopefully, as the lawns dry out the work will be completed this week. The drilled holes will be back filled, seeded and left to settle until the end of March when the first new “summer” hoop holes will be set.

Grass mowing during February has been cancelled because of the wet conditions and slow grass growth. Sarel spiking has also been delayed by the weather. With drier weather forecast, hopefully this activity can resume. The same applies to delays in white lining but this is less of a problem as the white lines survive quite well while there is little grass growth and no mowing.

2. Re-seeding and Over-seeding

The west and south boundaries of lawn 2 were over seeded on January 26th using the green waste technique described last month. This appears to have been successful as there are signs of germination after two weeks despite the winter weather experienced. The Barenbrug Ultrafine Dwarf rye grass does appear to be very robust compared with other grass seed. The retail of this seed is £142 + delivery per 20 kg bag so I asked Talbot how much they would charge. The answer was £90 per bag but they actually ordered us a bag and sent it to us free of charge.

Lawn 2 utilised 20 x 25 Litre bags green waste to provide a 10mm layer covering the seed (as calculated!) . A further two bags were employed on a small bare strip on the west boundary of Lawn 3. This was applied sparingly to just cover the seed and thus allow play to continue. This may affect the resulting germination. Noticeably , pigeons are often seen pecking at this area whilst the much thicker layer of green waste on lawn 2 seems immune to pigeon attack!

The North boundary strip still has a few areas that are a little bare and some further localised over-seeding will be undertaken in the near future. This strip (and the other boundary areas) was successfully cut with the Toro at 8mm on January 26th so I am confident it can be returned to service at the start of the new season.

Research continues into how to carry out regular over-seeding. Geoff has modified his disc slotter to create narrower grooves that do not clog up. An experiment will be carried in the spring on lawn 5. As mentioned last month, another cheap alternative is to use the GA 30 tiner to punch holes in the ground. In both cases the seed needs to be distributed in to the grass and then brushed into the grooves or holes. A small drop seeder may be the most accurate and effective method of distributing the seed. Costs vary from about £100 to £700 depending on size and design. Most are less than £200 but it is not yet clear whether these cheaper models have sufficient resolution to deal with grass seed as opposed to granular products. Such a drop seeder might be useful for top dressing the low spots (see section 4). The existing broadcast spreader handles grass seed but would not be suitable for dropping sand in precise locations.

3. Top Dressing

During the levelling process in the Autumn of 2017 it was very noticeable that the soil area for lawns 3 & 4) dried out more quickly than Lawns 1 & 2. This effect is still evident today as Figure 2 illustrates. Snow fell on Friday 1st Feb. By Sunday, it had all melted on lawns 3 & 4 leaving relatively firm lawns. However it was still one inch thick on lawns 1 & 2 and very boggy underneath. Thus when heavy rain results in a few puddles in the low spots on Lawn 1 they persist longer than those on lawns 3 & 4. Lawn 2 seems to suffer the fewest puddles.

As explained last month, we do not have sufficient funds to fully sand top dress the lawns to eliminate these small low spots. Nor do we particularly want to close the lawns for several weeks while the grass grows through the top dressing. However, in discussion with Duncan Hector, I was reminded of the golf green technique of applying small amounts of sand (circa 1mm depth) regularly to eliminate low spots. The principle is to apply 1mm every week for 10 weeks rather than one layer 10mm. This can be done without affecting play or the mower. As only specific low spots are treated we probably have sufficient sand in the pig pen. I therefore hope to apply this principle to lawn 1 during the spring/ early summer provided a method of applying sand in small quantities can be devised. A small drop spreader designed for grass seed comes to mind as being one possibility. As with over-seeding, further research and experimentation are required.

4. Machinery Repairs

The 24 inch Hayter cylinder mower has a clutch/gearbox problem that is beyond repair due to lack of spares. Geoff Hughes suggested that we retain the old Toro as our back-up mower and store it in the pig pen. This requires the roof to be raised to something like 2 metres. Terry Young has procured scrap timber from builders yards to complete the modifications at no cost to the club. David Hunt is advising on construction techniques. Mike Tracy and Geoff have discussed planning issues.

Keeping the old Toro in a serviceable state will require a certain amount of maintenance. AJ Mowers (the Bristol Toro service centre) advise draining the petrol tank. However, like all machinery in storage, occasional use would ensure that parts do not seize up. Hence an efficient method of draining the petrol tank after use may well be required. (Sucking out with plastic tube is not the way forward!) Boat outboard engines are winterised by filling the cylinders with special oil via the spark plugs and AJ Mowers also thought this was a good idea for winter storage.

The ongoing maintenance work is the principal disadvantage of retaining the old Toro but the advantage is that we still have a triplex mower as back up.

5. Summer Maintenance rotas.

The finalised rotas for summer lawn maintenance have now been distributed.

John Wallace 9/2/19

Figure 1 Rainfall and Evapotranspiration

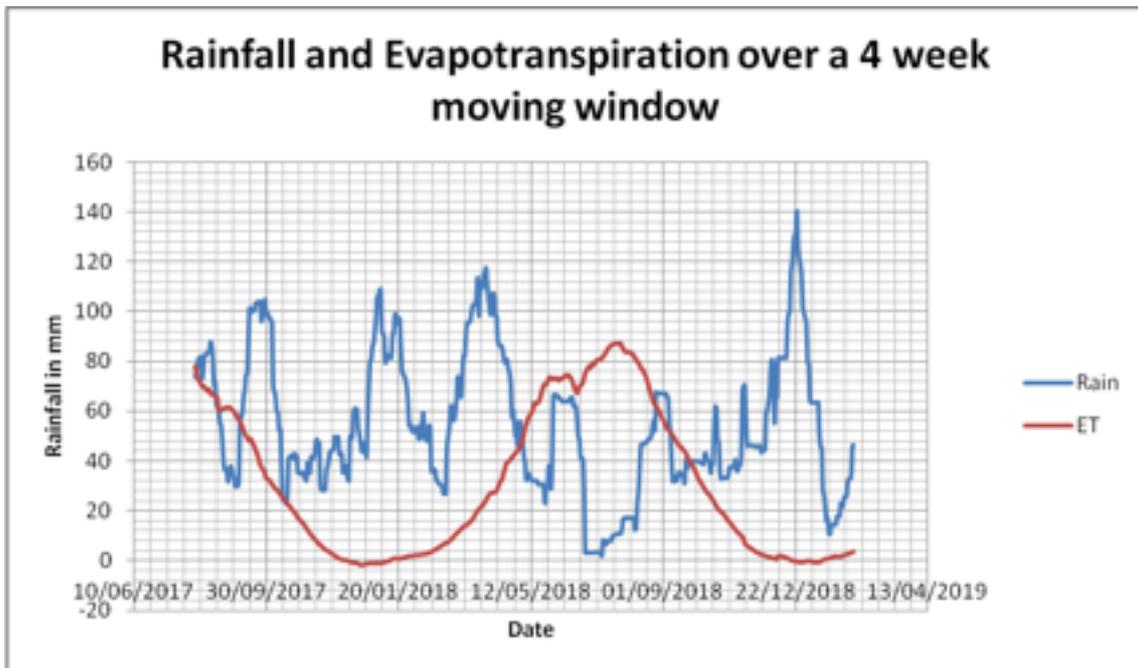


Figure 2 Snow covering 3 days after snowfall



