

Nailsea & District Croquet Club
Annual General Meeting
9th November 2019

Chair: Graham McCausland

Present: 31 members attended

The meeting opened at 2pm.

1. Welcome by the President

As President, Geoff Hughes welcomed members to the meeting . He thanked the Committee and all those members who worked so hard for the Club throughout the season. One sad note had been the death of Sandra Bath who was a very popular member of the Club and will be much missed. He thanked Coral Harrison for all her hard work over many years and expressed regret that she was now leaving the club.

It was disappointing that Pat Long's team had been relegated but hoped for better results next season. Geoff emphasised the importance of getting young players and he was pleased that his own grandson is learning the game and showing promise. He was sure that there must be other members who had grandchildren keen to learn the game; they needed to be at least 10 years old.

2. Apologies: Alan & Lynda Longdon, Rob Royffe, Marcus Evans, Andrew Buchanan, Pat Thompson, Mike Powell, Joan Timmins, Harry Wallace, Don Clayton, Mary Barnes, John Malaiperuman, Hamish Hall.

3. Minutes of AGM held on 10th November 2018 - approved and signed as a true and accurate record. Proposed: Mike Tracy; Seconded: Linda Shaw

4. Matters Arising - none.

5. Chair's Report

Chairs report 2019

Following on from Andrews report last year it is encouraging to see how our lawns continue to improve. We remain indebted to the tireless work of John Wallace in overseeing the long management, aided by his willing team of helpers. There is still much to do as this remains a work in progress, but I for one have heard many positive comments from visitors during the season, including that they would soon be of 'Championship Standard'. Well done John and congratulations to you on being awarded a CA Diploma this year, in recognition of your unceasing efforts on behalf of the club.

It has been encouraging this year to see that we have attracted some 13 new members to the club, maybe the news of our lawn improvement has spread, or was it the charms

of our 'Tea Lady'!! Welcome to them all, and I look forward to meeting them, and seeing their progress on the lawns in 2020. Thanks especially to Kathy and Erica for their efforts in helping with recruiting, and all those members who have given of their time to help with recruitment and coaching.

The task of finding enough volunteers to help with a myriad of jobs needed to keep the club functioning, does not seem to get any easier. Could I please appeal to all members to put themselves forward and offer some help next year, in whatever capacity they feel they can manage, to help waiting the load. We owe a great deal to all those who have helped during the year with maintaining, and preparing the lawns for play, looking after the club's equipment, cleaning and keeping in good repair the clubhouse, catering and provision of refreshments to visitors during League matches, or special events, and I would like to say a big thank you to everyone of you.

On a sad note, many of you will know that Sandra Bath died recently. She was very active member for many years, until her health took a turn for the worse, and she will be much missed by all who knew her. The club was well represented at her funeral, and our thoughts and condolences go to Tony and all the family at this time.

After some 15 years or so, we will be saying a fond farewell to Coral at the end of this season, as she is leaving the club and heading off to her allotment!! It was only a year or 2 after she and Jeff joined the club, that Coral was elevated to the committee, where she has remained ever since, in different capacities along the way. On behalf of the club can I say how much we appreciate the sterling work she has put in over the years, and we wish you well for the future.

We are also losing Linda Shaw as a committee member, who has given many years of service to the club, for which we are so grateful. She has been a great help to me in my first year as Chairman, and her knowledge of the CA and SWF has been invaluable, when queries arise.

I end my report with huge congratulations to James Galpin, who has certainly helped keep the name of the club in the wider croquet communities consciousness! He has won his 3rd National Junior title, been runner up in the World Under 21 GC Championship, and has been selected to participate in the World AC championship in Australia in 2020.

It has been an enjoyable, and successful season for the club, marred in part by some very strange weather, with lots of rain and strong winds causing some disruptions to scheduled matches along the way. Let us hope this is not a portent of things to come due to climate change!! To be inserted

6. Treasurer's Report

Income and expenditure accounts have been published for the financial year ending 30th September 2019 with the previous year's figures shown for comparison.

The headline figures are a net surplus of £275.22 and a closing bank balance of £12,476.98 but I have issued a cheque for £2,500 to the CA which has not yet been presented. Removing that from our balance leaves £9,976.98.

As I mentioned last year, the Toro had to be replaced at a cost of £6,000. In order to avoid a cashflow problem I applied for an interest free loan of £5,000 from the CA. The application was successful and the committee agreed that we should repay half of this loan in this financial year. That is the cheque referred to above. Thus we go into next year with the remaining £2,500 to be repaid, and we plan to do this next year.

Excluding the exceptional expenditure brought about by the replacement of the Toro, our surplus would have been £3,775.22. We are also owed £1,120 by the CA for the balance of our tournament entry fees and the lawn hire fees regarding the Treasurer's Tankard. This indicates that without the purchase of the replacement Toro and with all debts cleared we would have achieved a surplus of £4,495.22,

I have constructed a forecast for next year. Including the repayment of the rest of the CA loan and the purchase of 4 new sets of balls I anticipate a surplus of about £2,800. This takes into account the need to replace the fridge freezer. After that we should return to a steady state with no debts and no expensive projects planned. I therefore propose that the annual subscription for full membership should stay at £150.

One final point. I would like to encourage all members to accept payment for expenses by direct bank transfer. You should not be concerned about revealing your bank details to me because you already do that every time you make a payment by cheque. Transfers can be made quickly, to the convenience of both the payee and myself and remove the need to take a cheque to the ever dwindling bank branches. I always advise members that payment has been made, generally by email. Payments to the club by the same method are also convenient if you use on-line banking, but please either put something in the narrative to say what the payment is for or send me an email to tell me. Many members do this already to our mutual convenience.

Additional items: -

A question was raised regarding the old balls when new ones are purchased. Mike said that in the past, old balls had been sold for a nominal amount to a striving Club but this was later regretted as they are useful for training purposes and for taking into schools.

No irrigation had taken place during the year but the amount listed in the accounts showed an increase in cost. Mike explained that a re arrangement of the Direct Debit was responsible for this.

Subscriptions to remain unchanged.

The current Auditor to continue.

Proposed: Graham McCausland; Seconded: John Wallace

7. Tournament Secretary's Report

Fixture Secretary's Report 2019

This year quite a few of our matches were affected by the weather. One weekend in June four matches were curtailed - two without playing a stroke and another after just one round of golf croquet with the opposition leading 1½ -½. The Advanced League match played on the Sunday did rather better - they had completed four games, Nailsea winning all four, and our opponents conceded. In spite of the problems with the weather, we managed to play all but one of our fixtures.

Association Croquet

Bristol A team has won the top division of the Advanced League for several years. In 2018 they only just beat us 5-4 with a narrow win by four points in the deciding game. I had hoped that this year we might be able to turn the tables on them. As usual going into the final match Bristol A and Nailsea A were the undefeated top two teams in the division 1. These two teams are played each other at Bristol on Sunday, 1 September. Unfortunately we were without Kriss Chambers for this important match and although our team started well Bristol beat us quite convincingly by seven games to two. Our other two Advanced teams have not done so well, both coming bottom of their respective sections and our B team will be relegated to division 3 next season. Looking forward to next year, I have my doubts if we can find enough players to field two teams in this division.

Our handicap teams in the Association Croquet leagues have all done well. Both of our Federation League teams won their respective blocks. Nailsea Central had a bye straight to the final and Nailsea South won a play-off match against Broadwas (winners of the North Division) by six games to one to set up an all Nailsea final scheduled to be played at Nailsea on Saturday, 28 September - more about this later.

In the Intermediate League we won the North Section and came second to Wellington in the Central Block. Our North team had a semi-final match away at Wellington on Monday, 19 August. I understand that the Wellington team apologised for their lawns before beating us, 5-0.

South West Federation League Tables 2019

Association Croquet								
League	Team	Played	Won	Lost	For	Against	Position	% games won
Advanced	Nailsea	4	3	1	15	12	2/5	55.6%
Advanced	Nailsea 2nd	6	2	4	9	21	4/4	30%
Advanced	Nailsea 3rd	4	0	4	7	19	5/5	26.9%
Federation	Central	4	3	1	15	9	1/5	62.5%
Federation	South	5	4	1	21	14	1/6	60%
Intermediate	North	4	4	0	15	9	1/5	57.7%
								52.7%

Intermediate	Central	5	3	2	14	14	2/6	50%	55.1%
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In the block stages of the handicap leagues Nailsea teams won 58.6% of their games. Once the semi-finals and final are taken into account this percentage drops slightly to 57%

With several of our players playing well and their handicaps coming down, I am not convinced that we will have enough players for two teams in the Intermediate League next year, but we will certainly be entering two teams in the Federation League. I will be speaking to the captains of the teams affected before making a final decision.

Golf Croquet

In July I reported to the committee that I expected our Golf Croquet (GC) Level Play team to win the Northern section of the league. The only team that could beat us was Cheltenham who had already suffered one defeat and needed to win their three remaining games to win the block. As it happens they won their next two games including one against Weston-super-Mare who, at the time were lying in second place, to set up a virtual block final against Nailsea. The match between these two teams was scheduled to be played on Saturday, 17 August, but as it clashed with the GC Inter-Counties Championship, it was rearranged for Friday, 23 August. Cheltenham fielded a strong team, but we were without two of our top players so our team did extremely well to win the match 12-8. This meant that Nailsea qualified to play in the final against Kingston Maurward on Saturday, 28 September. Does that date seem familiar? - More later.

In the Golf Croquet handicap league the North East team did well winning 55% of their games - they finished fifth out of seven teams. Our other two handicap teams did not do so well, finishing 6th and 7th out of seven teams in each of their sections.

We did well in our first venture in the High Handicap League, winning three matches out of five and finishing in third place out of six teams.

Overall we won 46.6% of our handicap games in the golf croquet leagues.

Next year we intend to enter one team in the Level Play League, three teams in the GC Handicap League and one team in the High Handicap League.

Golf Croquet										
League	Team	Play ed	Won	Draw n	Lost	Point s	For	Again st	Positi on	% won
Level Play	North	5	4	1	0	9	63	26	1/7	70.8%

Handicap	North West	6	1	1	4	3	46.5	69.5	6/7	40.1%
Handicap	North East	6	3	0	3	6	64	45	5/7	58.7%
Handicap	Central	5	0	1	4	1	37	63	7/7	37%
High Handicap	Central	5	3	0	3	6	50.5	49.5	3/6	50.5%

League Finals

The two finals involving Nailsea teams were scheduled to be played on the same date and Andrew and I both had players from our Federation League teams involved in the GC Level Play Final. We looked to see if we could find an alternative date for the Federation League Final, but decided that it was difficult to find a date where both sides could raise a team so we decided to leave it as it was.

Our GC Level Play team had a convincing win, 15-5, against Kingston Maurward at Camerton and Peasedown Croquet Club.

However after two days heavy rain the Nailsea lawns were flooded and it was not possible to play the Federation League final on that date. I had another look to see if I could raise a four-player team. The earliest I could come up with was 27 October. Heavy rain the day before threatened to write off the match for a second time, but after an inspection on the Sunday morning it was decided that the lawns were just about playable and the match went ahead. In the morning Nailsea South won the doubles and Nailsea Central won the two singles giving the Central team a 2-1 lead at lunch. In the afternoon the Central team coped much better with the difficult conditions winning all four singles to give Nailsea Central a 6-1 win.

Short Croquet Tournaments

In the Spring Short Croquet Tournament Nailsea Trendlewood came third in division 1 with nine wins and Nailsea came fourth with five wins. Nailsea Avening came first in division 3 and will be promoted to division 2 next year. In division 4 three teams finished equal with nine wins; after a shoot-out at the peg Bristol Boys were the winners and Nailsea Glassblowers came second equal with Bristol.

In the Autumn Tournament at Budleigh Salterton Nailsea Trendlewood won division 1 and Nailsea won division 2 gaining promotion back to division 1 next autumn. I am not sure how Nailsea Avening got on in division 5.

Tournaments

Bob Whiffen (Bristol) won our AC C Class Advanced Tournament. Our other tournaments were all won by Nailsea members, **Geoff Hughes** winning the B Class Advanced and **Marcus Evans** the Open Advanced. **Brian McCausland** won our Golf Croquet B-level tournament to qualify for the National Final of the B-level series at Guilford and Godalming. In the national final he was joint overnight leader, but his form fell away on the Sunday and he finished ninth (on net hoops).

Nailsea beat Australia in the GC Ashes Competition, but I do not have any results.

Notable Performances:

James Galpin has had another incredible year. He has played 101 games of golf croquet and won 88 (87%). He has won 91% of his level play games and 83% of his handicap games. Over the past year his GC world ranking has improved from 502nd to 99th. He was runner-up in the U21 World Championship, narrowly losing the final to Edmund Fordyce from New Zealand (ranked 8th in the world). James' GC handicap has come down from 0 to -4.

James, along with **Ryan Cabble**, was a member of the Somerset team, surprise winners of the GC Inter-Counties Championship. This is the first time Somerset has won this event. Both players played a significant part in Somerset's victory winning almost all of their singles games. James lost only one of his singles and he beat high ranked players such as Jon-Paul Moberly (ranked 11th) and Will Gee (50th).

James has also had notable successes in Association Croquet (AC) and has completed six triple peels. He is National Junior Champion for the third successive year. In AC he is now ranked 86th in the world (150th October last year). His AC handicap has improved from 0 to -1½. He has been selected to represent England in the 2020 AC World Championships which will take place in Melbourne, Australia in February.

One final note - several of our visiting players have commented on how much our lawns have improved this season. This is due to the hard work put in by John Wallace and his team. I would like to thank them for their efforts - it is very much appreciated.

Peter Dyke
(08/11/19)

8. On Line Booking

On line booking had been discussed by the Committee and had been put on the Agenda as it was felt that the membership should be involved. The system suggested was for two lawns to be booked on line and two to continue on paper. John Wallace said that the proposed system would be a nightmare for him and he was concerned about the security aspect. Double Banking was seen as a possible problem and it was highlighted that the Club's policy is to allow double banking of the lawns. It was agreed that a clear specification needed to be drawn up for on line booking. Bristol Club, using the system, had no problems with security. A vote was held and the majority were against on line booking; however, it was agreed that a minority of members were present and it was proposed that a full specification should be circulated to all members for their consideration.

9. Committee Proposals

The proposed amendments to the constitution were agreed, with the addition of the words 'beginners and' under 3) Objects.

The Committee proposes the following changes to the Constitution

3. Objects

Current wording:

The Club shall take active steps to encourage beginners to the game by provision of advice and coaching as appropriate.

Proposed wording:

The Club shall take active steps to encourage beginners and all members to develop their playing skills by provision of advice and coaching as appropriate.

Rationale:

The revised wording more accurately reflects what we aim to do and acts as a reminder to everyone

8. Membership

Current wording:

The Committee may expel any member whose conduct is, or has been, in the opinion of the Committee, contrary to the interest of, or injurious to the reputation of, the Club. If a member is so expelled, he/she shall have the right of appeal, and the appeal shall be heard by a board of three independent persons to be appointed by the S. W. Federation of Croquet Clubs Committee.

Proposed wording:

The Committee may expel any member whose conduct is, or has been, in the opinion of the Committee, contrary to the interest of, or injurious to the reputation of the Club. If a member is so expelled, he/she shall have the right of appeal, and the appeal shall be heard by a board of three independent persons to be agreed between the Committee and the affected member.

Rationale:

The SWF is unaware of any agreement they have made to undertake such a role and does not consider itself in a position to do so.

10. Election of Committee

Name	Role	Proposer	Second
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Graham McCausland	Chair	Brian Roynon	Mike Tracy
Mike Tracy	Treasurer	Geoff Hughes	Pam Hendry
Meriel Forshaw	Secretary	Joan Timmins	Mike Powell
Peter Dyke	Member	Meriel Forshaw	Mike Tracy
Brian Roynon	Member	Pat Long	Linda Shaw
Andrew Wimshurst	Member	Brian Roynon	Coral Harrison

All were accepted with an unanimous vote.

11. AOB

John Hancock asked for members to forward match details to him. It was agreed that the cover in the North Somerset Times had been very good during the last season.

Violet Delmas said that she and Erica Malaiperuman would be working with St. Francis School during June 2020.

John Wallace explained the structure of the soil underlying the lawns and said that it was an on going battle and future treatments were being planned .

Terry Young felt that it would be good for the OBE group to raise money to help James Galpin finance his trip to the tournament in Australia. It was agreed that Terry would liaise with Peter Dyke to agree a mid week date and rules for the OBE competition. Pat Long had agreed to arrange a social event in January to help with James's expenses as well.

12. Date of next AGM

Saturday 7th November 2020

The meeting closed at 3.30pm.

Signed as a true and accurate record:

Name.....

Signature.....Date.....