

**Nailsea and District Croquet Club**  
**Minutes of Zoom Committee Meeting 17<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

**Present:** Graham McCausland, Meriel Forshaw, Mike Tracy, Andrew Wimshurst, Peter Dyke, Brian Roynon, Sandra Morgan, Joan Timmins.

1. **Apologies :** None
2. **Minutes of the meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> March:** agreed and signed as a correct record. (signed by MF on behalf of GMc)
3. **Matters Arising:** None
4. **Treasurer's Report:** discussed and noted  
Funds committed for this year are insurance premium, rent, electricity and water.  
The committee agreed not to seek financial support from the CA at present.
5. **Membership Report:** The total membership stands at 71.  
Andrew will send out an updated membership list. **Action: AW**
6. **Property Report:** It was agreed that the club would remain closed at least until the end of June 2020. This decision will be reviewed at the May committee meeting.  
Graham will send an update to all members. Committee members to inform Graham of anyone identified as needing support, so that he can arrange for volunteer members to assist. **Action: GMcC**
7. **Health & Safety Risk Assessment:**  
Graham proposed the committee accept the document with the amendments. The committee agreed.  
Review date: April 2021  
Brian will send a copy to Brigit for the archives. Meriel will update on website and in the handbook. **Action: BR/MF**
8. **Recruitment Report:** Discussed and noted.  
Recruitment is on hold for the present time. Kathy has kept in touch with the four people who would have had lessons.  
All emails received from the CA have been circulated to the relevant committee members.  
The committee agreed to increase next year's tournament charges to £20.  
**The Home International July 2020:** It was unlikely that we would be hosting this, but the final decision will be made in our May meeting. Graham to communicate this to Ian Burrige. **Action: GMc**
9. **Lawns Report:** Discussed and noted.  
Mike will contact John Wallace regarding the need to purchase more green waste. **Action: MT**

**10. League Secretary's Report:** Discussed and noted.

The committee agreed to withdraw from the Secretary's Shield competition.

**Action: PD**

The decision as to whether to withdraw from the two tournaments scheduled for August was deferred until the May meeting.

Congratulations to James Galpin regarding his success in the World Association Croquet Championships held in Melbourne, Australia in February 2020.

**11. League Captain's Responsibilities ( LS Paper):**

It was agreed that the paper should include a reminder of the captain's responsibilities regarding the club's Safe Guarding policy when a junior member plays in their team. The committee accepted the paper with the above amendment. Peter to amend.

**Action: PD**

**12. Safeguarding policy:** Discussed in detail

The committee requested two changes/corrections to the policy.

It is the responsibility of each league captain, if they have a junior in their team to be aware of the safe guarding policy and the actions they may have to undertake during a competition. Peter will remind all team captains of their responsibilities.

**Action: PD**

Peter confirmed that 'declaration forms' and other papers, when completed, have been sent to Linda Shaw. Peter will remind other members who are involved with juniors that this is the correct procedure.

There is a need to record all 'safe guarding' incidents. Copies of the appropriate form will be kept in the handbook in the clubhouse.

Peter to make the amendments and send to Meriel who will update on the website and the handbook.

**Action: PD/MF**

Following the amendments the committee agreed the policy could be signed.

**13. Committee Diary:**

Checking of Fire extinguishers – Brian to contact the company to advise them that they can't come to the club until restrictions have been lifted.

**Action: BR**

Insurance renewal

**Action: MT**

**14. Any Other Business:** None

**15. Date of next meeting:** Friday 22nd May 2020 via Zoom

Meeting closed at 11.25hrs

Signed as a true and accurate record

Name.....

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

## Reports

Treasurer's report for NDCC committee meeting 17<sup>th</sup> April 2020

This report has been prepared on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

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 is less unrepresented cheques £9,250.95. I also have cheques to the value of £504 (mostly for membership) which I have not taken to the bank as I am self isolating for the time being. I also have £121.50 in cash, not yet banked for the same reason. Our financial assets therefore stand at £9,876.45. The year is showing a deficit of £100.53. Major outgoings since our last meeting are repayment of the remainder of the CA loan (£2,500.00), our annual levy to the CA (£1,084) and servicing to the Toro (£477.82).

The CA is alert to the financial difficulties that clubs may be in and have made funds available for loans to clubs that are in difficulties. In order to make plans for the future all clubs were asked to complete a simple questionnaire indicating what effect they thought that the CV situation would have on membership this year if (a) play became possible later in the year, say July or (b) if no play was possible at all. Andrew and I agreed that the response attached with this report was our best guess. The membership levy is of course one of the CA's most important sources of revenue. Nevertheless I have read (cannot find the source at the moment) that if croquet is washed out this year nationally they are considering the possibility of repaying the annual levy.

M Tracy

11/04/2020

### **Report for meeting on 17 April 2020**

**Recruitment**- clearly stalled! I have kept in touch with the 4 people who would have had lessons this year. The Publishing Today booklets have not reached me but neither has an invoice. That was our only expense for recruitment.

### **Tournaments**

Following the cancellation of the May and June Tournaments, the CA organised a system whereby entrants were given the chance to donate their entry fees rather than receive a refund. Erica, Robert Upton, Philip de Glanville (Bath) and Mike Salisbury (Bristol) all chose to donate. In Robert's case, it was for both tournaments so, in total, we saved 5 x £18 =£90. In fact, 25% of this would have gone to the CA if the tournament had taken place but the CA are not taking their levy. This is generous as they had already incurred the expense of printing the Fixtures Calendar. We will, of course, lose income from profit on lunches etc as well as the

course, lose income from profit on lunches etc as well as the other entry fees. I have thanked the players who generously donated their fees and have authorised refunds for the others.

At a personal level the refund issue drew my attention to the fact that one club in the south west was charging me £26 for a 2 day weekend tournament, justifying it on the grounds of excellent lawns and beer on tap. The club doesn't offer lunches on site. I feel we should review our modest £18 charge. We will not be offering draught beer any time soon but we may well develop excellent lawns (if no-one is allowed to play on them for a while!). We already prepare superb hoops, and our hospitality, including home-cooked food, is second to none. I suggest £20 for next season. £26 is an outlier but £18 is definitely too cheap for Nailsea. They can bring their own beer/wine and save money, after all.

The two August Tournaments are still on the Calendar and a decision about them will have to be made at some point.

A more urgent decision is re the GC Home Internationals in July but I can't imagine that happening even if we didn't cancel from our end. I haven't had any communication with Ian Burridge.

### **Competitions**

I am still holding entry forms and a small number of cheques but the immediate future looks bleak. Even if the lockdown is eased, many players, (including me), will not want to take any risks. I am happy to organise anything appropriate from afar so will see what happens.

### **CA matters**

All the emails from the CA re potential financial help and general advice have been forwarded to the relevant Committee members. The CA has been very proactive and helpful and this augurs well for the newly elected, new style of governance.

### **League Secretary's Report** for the meeting on 17 April, 2020

#### **World Association Croquet Championship\***

In February one of our members took part in the Association Croquet World Championship in Melbourne, Australia. 19 year old James Galpin was the youngest competitor in the championship. He did extremely well coming second equal in his block and qualified for the knockout section for the 32 best players. James (ranked 86 in the world rankings) did better than many entrants ranked higher than him. In the first round of the knockout he was beaten by Ben Rothman (USA, ranked 4), but in the best of three he took one game off Ben. He took part in the plate competition, but was beaten by Samir Patel (England, ranked 23); again James took one game off his opponent. This is a really good result against some of the world's top players and I am sure the committee wish to join me in congratulating James.

#### **Covid-19 (Coronaviras) and its affect on leagues and other matches.**

Due to the world outbreak of covid-19 the lawns have been closed to all members except John Wallace who is carrying out all essential maintenance work. The lawns will remain closed, at least until late June and we have cancelled the B/C class tournaments that were scheduled for May and June. We have also withdrawn from all leagues apart from the Advanced League Division 1 and the Golf Croquet Level Play League.

At the moment the country is in partial lockdown and I expect this will continue for at least another three weeks. We have no idea what will happen in three weeks' time, but if there is a considerable reduction in the number of deaths per day there may be some relaxation in the restrictions.

Recently I have been considering what we should do when the lockdown is relaxed. There are likely to be some restrictions still in place for quite a while and we must wait to see what we are allowed to do. However, the pandemic is affecting people over 70 and those with other underlying health problems more than other members of the community and most deaths, but by no means all, are people in those two categories. Many of our members are over 70 and some also have other underlying health conditions.

When we are able to open lawns to members they will need to come to the club at their own risk. Having said that we should do all we can to help prevent the spread of covid-19. For example we should minimize contact with members of other clubs:

- Should we withdraw Secretary's Shield?
- Should we cancel our two remaining tournaments?
- Should we withdraw from **all** leagues this season?

\* I apologise for not including James' success in the World Championship in last month's report. I was so busy thinking about the effect of covid-19 on our league matches that it completely slipped my mind.

### **Covid-19 and our own members**

What about our own members?

- Should members of the committee be keeping in contact with elderly members who live on their own during the lockdown?
- Should we request that members take certain precautions when they are finally allowed to visit the club - handwashing on arrival and departure? - wash balls before and after use? - clean hoops before and after use?
- Should we hold club afternoons this year? If so, what extra precautions should we ask members to make?

- Should we request that members do not come to the club for at least seven days if they show any signs of having a virus or have been in contact with someone who shows signs of having a virus.
- Should we request that members who visit other clubs stay away from our club for a minimum of seven days?
- What about club competitions? Should we have any this season? Should we just have “through the season” competitions and not hold any “on the day” competitions including Wild Wednesday.
- What do we do about juniors?

We do not need to make an immediate decision on these matters and indeed it is possible that such decisions are taken out of our hands if the government decides that restrictions on sports clubs should continue until October or later. However, we ought to be thinking about these things so that we are prepared when the restrictions are finally lifted.

Peter Dyke

16 April, 2020

## **Lawns Maintenance Report - April 2020**

### **1. Covid19 and Lawn Maintenance**

With the total closure of the club and guidance from the government via the CA (Beatrice McGlenn - Appendix 1 ) I am prepared to carry on with essential lawn maintenance. The proviso is that I am 100% certain that nobody else will be about. There is clear evidence that Covid 19 exists in the air as an aerosol for about 3 hours and can travel many (10+) metres when people cough and sneeze. It can exist on hard surfaces for several days. The presence of other people would therefore make it impossible for me to work safely. In view of this I decided to carry out all the essential work (Mowing, Spraying, Sarrel spiking, Irrigation) myself.

Essential work means the minimum to ensure that the lawns do not deteriorate over the next few months. Spraying of fertilisers, Revolution and growth promoting bacteria is scheduled to take place. I have therefore decided to mow the grass on a two week cycle prior to spraying. This is obviously efficient but also ensures that mowing does not remove fertiliser that has adhered to grass leaves.

### **2. Mycorrhizal Fungi and Annual Meadow grass**

Until recently the weather has been cold and thus the mycorrhizal fungi have had little chance to boost the rye grass or degrade the meadow grass. My last visit to the club was on April 4/5 which turned out to be the start of warmer weather. I formed the impression that lawn 5 (which was not treated with mycorrhizal fungi granules) did not look quite as healthy as the main lawns but this may have been wishful thinking. Any

differences may be more evident during my next visit due on April 16/17, weather permitting.

### **3. Spraying**

Mowing+Spraying trips have to be planned around the weather as mowing is best carried out with dry grass but spraying requires rain either during or immediately after the session. This means that weather forecasts have to be carefully scrutinised. Even with scrutiny things can go wrong. On April 4/5 I was expecting rain on the 5<sup>th</sup> so mowed the grass on the 4<sup>th</sup>. However overnight the forecast changed and with no rain forecast I spent the morning spraying and the afternoon/early evening irrigating. The latter took 6 hours! When I got home the weather forecast changed again and 5mm of rain duly arrived overnight.

This particular spraying session included two PGPR bacteria sprays mixed with bio stimulants, two Revolution sprays with extra Nitrogen fertiliser and finally Liquid Bio Fertiliser. The complicating factor was that the bacteria sprays require the tap water to be de-chlorinated by mixing in a powder. This was straightforward but I was concerned that subsequent sprays and the irrigation were carried out without dechlorinating the tap water. It is not clear whether this would be sufficient to harm the PGPR bacteria. Chlorine in tap water is not thought to disturb bacteria in the soil but the spraying/irrigation situation is unclear because the chlorine will evaporate off but possibly not before harming the bacteria that had been sprayed on.

To avoid this situation recurring, I will have to carry out the monthly PGPR spraying separately when rain is due. This may mean that the Revolution and fertiliser sprays will need to be irrigated as prolonged periods of rain have become rare – ironic after the winter we had. Longer range forecasts suggest that early May might be more changeable (helpful) but only time will tell.

### **4. Over-seeding.**

I had one pleasant surprise on my April 4/5 visit to the club. The lawn 4 bare patch that I over-seeded in early March had a thick cracked crust of dried up green waste. When I removed this crust on April 4 I found quite a thick covering of grass seedlings that were white/yellow. By the evening of April 5 these seedlings had begun to turn pink and I am hopeful they will eventually fully recover. Other over-seeded areas on Lawns 1, 2 and 3 had a thin covering of new seedlings but will need further attention when time and weather permit.

Squirrel hole digging was evident in a few places. These will need to be filled in with mole soil and re-seeded.

### **5. Tining and Sarrel Rolling**

When applying the mycorrhizal fungi granules I briefly experimented with solid tining. I decided not to persist as I knew from experience that the tine holes tend to persist in the drier weather that often occurs in March and April. That is exactly what has

happened! The top surface has dried out and it is now too hard to Sarrel Roll. The soil underneath remains moist.

## **6. Lawn Corner Pegs**

White pegs have been left in the corner tube holes to prevent them from being covered over by grass or soil. (Normally white lining activities keep the holes visible). For some reason the peg in corner 3 of Lawn 4 keeps being removed by birds or squirrels and the lawn has to be marked out again to relocate the hole. To prevent this happening again I have banged the peg firmly into the tube hole!

John Wallace

14/4/20