

**Nailsea and District Croquet Club**  
**Minutes of Zoom Committee Meeting 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020**

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

**1. Apologies:** Sandra Morgan.

**2. Minutes of the meeting held on the 25<sup>th</sup> June 2020:** agreed and signed by MF on behalf of GMc.

**3. Matters Arising:** On line booking of lawns – On the 7<sup>th</sup> July members were sent the ‘Lawn booking protocol’

**4. Treasurer’s Report:** Discussed and Noted

The quote of £875.21p for the insurance had now been received.

The £10,000 grant has been received and consideration will need to be given as to how the money will best be utilised (further note on this in AOB).

**5. Car Park:** The proposals put forward were discussed in detail.

The committee agreed that a decision could not be made at the present time, as financial support for the project could not be secured.

**6. 100 Club:** A draw will take place on Wednesday 5th August with Pam and Robin as witnesses.

**Action: BR**

**7. Property Report:** Nothing to report.

**8. Membership Report:** There are a few new members and the total number to date, including life members is 80 members.

**9. Mowing:** The committee agreed that where possible mowing should take place before 10am or after 6pm.

**10. Hedges:** The cutting of hedges commenced in July; unfortunately, the ‘Friends of Trendlewood Park’ feel that the hedge has been cut too low. Following discussion it was established that NDCC had planted the hedge originally and therefore is the property of the NDCC. Graham has approached the council re this matter and was informed that no outside hedge cutting should take place as this may contravene the ‘Wildlife Country Act’. Hedge cutting should not take place between March and August.

GMc. will contact the council again to ensure that the club conforms to the requirements of the law.

**Action: GMc**

**11. Lawns Report:** discussed and noted.

The committee agreed to the purchase of the 'Backpack Sprayer'. MT to confirm a cost for this purchase and will speak to JW.

**Action: MT**

**12. Recruitment Report:**

3 new members will join the club from the 1<sup>st</sup> August. Competitions are underway.

The committee agreed the following: The website will be updated. Juniors will not be set up on the on line booking system as 'users' for lawn bookings.

**Tournaments:** Specifically for the Tournament to be held on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> August the following will apply:-

The touching of balls is permitted – clips and corner flags can be used.

Joan will manage the infection control procedures for the whole weekend.

Visitors can watch the matches but must adhere to Covid precautions, register their interest in attending the event with Graham McCausland before coming to the club. The number of spectators will be limited. Catering facilities will not be available.

One competitor requested to park his camper van on the site for the weekend; and the committee agreed to this request.

GMc will inform Marcus of the decisions taken.

**Action: GMc**

**13. Trophies:** The committee agreed that Trophies will not be awarded this year; instead the winners will receive a laminated certificate. Graham to update Kathy.

**Action : GMc**

Trophies will be awarded for junior competitions and Peter Dyke will take full responsibility for the arrangements.

**Action: PD**

**14. Covid 19 Rules –**

GMc has exchanged emails with members reminding them of the club rules relating to Covid19.

PD suggested some minor changes to the rules to bring them in line with changes already agreed by the committee.

Agreed.

AW suggested that masks should always be worn in the workshop to avoid possible contamination of equipment.

Agreed.

PD also made the following recommendations:

1. That the 3 hour time limit be removed to allow competitive games lasting more than 3 hours to be played and to allow members travelling long distances to stay all day if they wished. Agreed.
2. Removal of the rule on ten minute interval between games as it was not possible to book lawns less than half an hour apart. Agreed.
3. More emphasis on hand washing. Agreed.
4. That an outside sink should be erected to enable members to wash their hands and any equipment used. Not agreed.

5. Allowing AC players to touch balls when placing them for croquet shots. Not agreed.
6. Allowing AC players to use clips and bisques provided they wash them after use.  
Not agreed.

PD to send updated rules to GMc who will then send out with the newsletter to members.

**Action: PD, GMc**

### **15. League Secretary's Report:** Discussed and noted.

The committee considered how many teams should be entered in the league matches for 2021. PD proposed: the Federation League - reduced to one team and GC Handicap teams reduced to two. PD agreed to email members in August to establish the degree of interest in entering the above competitions in 2021.

**Action:PD**

Specific questions from Chris Roberts requesting the views of the committee on two issues were discussed in detail. The committee agreed to 'b' for the maximum of two tournaments but not to 'a'. (For further information see PD's report at the end.) PD to inform CR.

**Action:PD**

The committee wished to congratulate and send good wishes to James Galpin on being selected to play in the 'Ricki Savage Memorial Tournament' (GC first eight). **Action:PD**

### **16. Coaching:** Coaching has been taking place since the club reopened.

### **17. AOB**

a) £10,000 grant - A decision will need to be taken as to how, when or if the £10,000 grant will be spent in the future. It was acknowledged that if the £10,000 is removed from the balance sheet and this year's expenditure, plus increased costs are taken into consideration, then at the end of the year, there would be a deficit of £4,000.

b) There was a discussion about a possible reduction in membership fees next 2021 for fully paid up 2020 members, a £50 reduction was mentioned. However, emphasis must be made that NO decision on this matter was taken at this time. Mike advised that no reduction in membership fees should be given next year, his reasons being that £4,000 has been taken up by this year's deficit, the £50 reduction would use another £3,000, the knock on effect of the pandemic on our financial position for 2020 is unknown, lawn maintenance costs are expected to continue to be higher than in previous years and the offers of funding for the improvements to the car parking area have been withdrawn.

c) The latest issue of Cygnet recorded that three members of Weston super Mare club had recently passed away. The committee agreed to send condolences to the club.

**Action: GMc**

**d)** GMc asked PD if new members were automatically given a handicap. The new booking system allows for the member's handicap to be filled in. PD confirmed there is a procedure for setting handicaps. The committee agreed that new members would be given a handicap when completing their coaching sessions. PD will discuss this with the coaches and the handicap committees. **Action: PD**

**e)** Change of email address/ information on the CA website, - It was confirmed that neither the member nor the CA could make these changes on the system; this needs to be done by an authorised individual, who is given administrative access to club data by the CA on request from the club.

**f)** It was noted that no-one has come forward for the position of treasurer or secretary since Mike and Meriel made their intentions known that they will retire from the committee in November at the AGM.

**g)** Cakes in the freezer – There are a lot of cakes in the freezer, which were donated for competitions. Kathy to be contacted re leaving insitu or to dispose of the cakes. **Action: JT**

**h)** The committee wishes to express its very sincere thanks to Joan Timmins for her regular and thorough cleaning and sanitising of the clubhouse and the equipment.

**DONM:** Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> August 2020 via zoom at 10am

The meeting closed at 12.12hrs

Signed as true and accurate record:

Name.....

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

## Reports

Treasurer's report for NDCC committee meeting 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020

This report has been prepared on 28<sup>th</sup> July 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 unpresented cheques is £19343.23 including the £10,000 grant which arrived shortly after application. The year is showing a surplus of £9,366.25. Significant outgoings since our last meeting are for white lining paint (£179.86, this will last for ages as we bought 3 10 litre containers since this avoided a carriage fee), fire extinguisher annual maintenance (£108.11) and hedge trimming (£340 so far). Insurance renewal is due. I have been quoted £1,086.49 but the agent believes he may be able to produce a less costly alternative. Significant income (other than the grant) includes 3 rejoining full members and 2 rejoining student members.

John Wallace has spent £514 in as yet unclaimed expenses and provided me with an estimate for lawn maintenance for the rest of this year, which is included in his report. It amounts to about £1,400. There is some uncertainty here as he is fighting a war against poa (the perennial meadow grass which is making the lawns bumpy), pearlwort, chafer grubs and/or leatherjackets (or possibly neither), crows and the weather. He has to determine not only which is the best treatment for each of these problems but also the side effects of each with respect to the others. For example, there is a new treatment available for chafer grubs and leatherjackets, but it turns out to be a fungicide which will destroy the mycorrhizal fungi which we have been applying and intend to continue applying at significant cost and effort. Note that if we have to use nematodes to counter either chafer grubs or leatherjackets the cost is £500/£600 for the nematodes themselves plus the cost of modifying the sprayer and the cost of irrigation. Also note that the cost of lawn maintenance has risen sharply from last year. In 2019 we spent £2,390. This year we are currently at £3,637 with £514 in unclaimed expenses and an estimated £1,400 to come – total £5,551.

I support John's suggestion of buying a new backpack sprayer.

I have thought about how to make best use of the grant, but other than pointing out the increased cost of lawn maintenance this year and the expectation that this trend will continue I would prefer the committee to discuss this before I commit my feelings to the record.

M Tracy

28/07/2020

### Report for meeting 31 July 2020

#### Recruitment

There is more positive news here.

Three people who paid for lessons last year, but never had them, have returned. One is having lessons with Erica. The other two are having AC lessons with Andrew and have already joined the Club, as from 1 August. I'm sure they will be great additions to the club.

Two new people contacted us. Both had been turned away by WsM because of Covid restrictions but we have accommodated them. One of them has had 6 lessons with James. He was thrilled with his time with James and his impressions of the Club and has joined the Club as from 1 August. He wanted to concentrate on GC and is keen to play competitively next year. He was due to have his handicap assessed this week.

Tony Hinchliffe has agreed to coach the other newcomer. Tony will play the AC/GC issue by ear when he meets her as she had no preconceived notions.

## **Tournaments**

I have asked Marcus for an update on his plans for the Advanced Tournament due to take place 8/9 August but have not had a reply. There were 4 entries on the online system at the time of writing this report but that didn't include Marcus and there may well be others. I have asked Marcus to liaise with Graham re Covid restrictions. I would like to suggest that the tournament players are allowed to touch the balls and to use clips, provided that Marcus takes responsibility for the thorough cleaning of all these things, particularly at the end of the tournament. I assume they will be using the tournament balls and these won't be used again until next season. This is clearly a Committee decision but it's difficult to line up a peel with your feet!

John won't be over-seeing the usual tournament preparations (mowing, white-lining etc) and I won't be getting the balls out or replacing them afterwards. Marcus was expecting to set the hoops himself, possibly with James, and to accept a lower than usual standard – with no move to fresh holes.

## **Competitions**

The competitions proved very popular with members and I was surprised how many entries we received.

4 AC competitions with a total of 27 entries

3 GC competitions with a total of 22 entries

All but 4 people have played at least one match. All the winners have reported the results very promptly and the results are all on the Club website.

I have also put the handicap tracking charts for AC and GC on the Club website, I only included the players who had entered at least one competition this season. I will incorporate any reported changes into full charts for 2021.

Brigit suggested that, in this strange season, we present laminated certificates, instead of the usual trophies, to the winners. I would be happy to create such certificates.

**Please scroll down for next page**

## **CA matters**

Updates on Covid advice already forwarded to all Committee

Insurance certificate forwarded to Mike.

Following a request from one of our members to the CA to update his email address, it became apparent that the CA office will no longer deal with this. On this occasion, Mike did the update. Perhaps we should do

the CA updates whenever a member informs us of a change in his details. The alternative is to persuade our members to do their own CA updates by the automatic process on the CA website - not an e-mail to the CA. They will probably need reminding every time they tell us of a change so it would probably be easier to do it ourselves! Otherwise, they will fail to receive information from the CA as the CA become increasingly paperless.

#### **Tournaments Update** (written after report sent)

I have now heard from Marcus. There are now 8 players in the tournament. Marcus is going on holiday and will be back in time for tournament. John advised him to liaise with Graham re mowing, etc. as well as re Covid restrictions.

### **Lawn Maintenance Report - July 2019 - Budget Commentary**

#### **1. Draft Budget**

At the end of this document is a draft budget. Below is a commentary on the background to each item

#### **2. Chafer Grubs and Leatherjackets.**

During June I became concerned about the connection between the crows pecking holes in the lawn and the hundreds of little beetles crawling about in the sunshine. After some initial investigation into beetle pictures I came to the conclusion that the beetles were garden chafer grubs and that we might have a potential lawn disaster on our hands. Bird and other animal lawn damage in pursuit of chafer grubs is renowned for its severity. Duncan Hectors view was that the problem was more likely that the birds were after leatherjackets because the damage was not severe.

With the banning of Chlorpyrifos in 2016 the chafer grub/leatherjacket issue is becoming an increasing problem for golf clubs and horse racing venues. With the commercial losses mounting the licencing authorities have given a new chemical from Syngenta named Alcepryn emergency clearance for use where there is significant commercial loss. This does not mean it is available to NDCC.

Until recently the only treatment for Chafer grubs (and Leatherjackets) available to NDCC is the use of Nematodes. These attack the young grubs but the type of nematode and timing of application is critical and different for the two pests. Application would require us to modify the sprayer and irrigate every day for two weeks. All are expensive with success somewhat uncertain.

There are three main suppliers of nematodes:

- |                            |      |          |
|----------------------------|------|----------|
| a. BioNeema CT Plus        | £499 | for NDCC |
| b. BASF/ICL Nemasys G      | £600 | for NDCC |
| c. Bayer Harmonix Trineema | ?    | for NDCC |

Bioneema offered to identify the beetle (from a picture) and said it looked more like a ground beetle of the Carabid type. . Compare the garden chafer ([https://www.nematodesdirect.co.uk/blog/6\\_chafer-beetles-identifying-garden-chafer-grubs-summer-chafer-grubs-and-welsh-chafer-grubs.html](https://www.nematodesdirect.co.uk/blog/6_chafer-beetles-identifying-garden-chafer-grubs-summer-chafer-grubs-and-welsh-chafer-grubs.html)) with the harpaline beetles (<https://www.ukbeetles.co.uk/harpalinae>) . Not very different unless you know about beetles! Both have a greenish thorax and a brown back. One destroys lawns – the other doesn't.

Whilst the uncertainty about what was causing the crows to peck the lawns persisted Kathy put me in touch with a company that supplies a new treatment that deals with both Chafer Grubs and Leatherjackets. As with nematodes, application times are different for Chafer Grubs and Leatherjackets but the product (TurfSolv) merely requires a single spray. It is currently cheaper than nematodes at £299 but has one unfortunate feature that rules it out. In the small print it comments that the product also acts as a fungicide. The supplier admitted that it was likely to kill the mycorrhizal fungi that we are trying to nurture and therefore the product cannot be used at this point in time.

With the only potential solution being nematodes I have decided that we should do nothing for the time being. The extent of crow damage is not huge at present and there remains some uncertainty about whether we have leatherjackets or garden chafer grubs. However, a pheromone trap did not attract any chafer grub beetles. The probability is, therefore, that we have some leatherjackets but at present I think its not worth spending five or six hundred pounds on nematodes whose effectiveness is not certain.

### 3. Growth Regulators

PrimoMaxx (chemical Trinexapac) growth regulator is recommended by Duncan Hector. It works by suppressing Gibberlin production in the grass and reducing top growth. However, the real benefit is that root development and possibly tillering are enhanced. It has been claimed that a more dense sward results. The effects have not been obvious at Nailsea and application of PrimoMaxx discontinued.

Research has shown that PrimoMaxx has no useful impact on annual meadow grass. However, the growth regulator situation recent changed with the introduction of a new product (Attraxor – chemical Prohexadione) . This has similar growth regulator benefits but in addition it has a substantial negative effect on the ability of annual meadow grass (AMG) to produce seedheads. Over a period of time (several years) this should help to reduce the presence of AMG in the lawns. It is not an instant solution because viable AMG seed remains in the ground for several years and some of the NDCC AMG appears to have mutated into a more perennial form.



Evidence from the US is that Prohexadione does reduce AMG but the UK evidence is limited due to introduction only in February 2020. I spoke to the greenkeeper at Dudsbury Golf Club (Bournemouth) who has applied it a couple of times. He confirmed that it completely stopped AMG seed production. Bath rugby club are using it to keep AMG out of their newly re-laid pitches. I will contact them in a few weeks time.

The product cost of a monthly application at NDCC is £282 . However the product is licensed so spraying needs supervision at NDCC. And it needs a PH buffer to acidify the spray water. With the cost of supervision at £288 and PH buffering at about £40 the total cost of applying Attraxor is about £620 for the season. It might well be worth spending this money for one season to observe the benefits but this issue needs to be discussed by the LAG. The decision needs to be made before the fertiliser programme for 2021 is specified as the latters biostimulant content needs to be considered.

#### **4. Mycorrhizal Fungi and Plant Growth Promoting Rhizobacteria(PGPR).**

Research has shown that mycorrhizal fungi are beneficial in terms of perennial grass growth and reduction in annual meadow grass (AMG) growth. The intention is to encourage the perennial grasses to outcompete the AMG and reduce the latters presence. The main lawn inoculation was carried out in March 2020 but about 10 Kg (out of 150Kg) of granules was held back for second application where needed. During the lawn 3 over-seeding using germination mats 5kg was applied by mixing it in with the seed. This corresponds to an application rate of 64Kg/hectare which is the optimum rate cited in Francesca Baylis's PhD thesis.

During the over-seeding process on August 25 the DynaSeeder will make a large number of small holes in the lawns into which new seed is inserted. This is a good opportunity to apply mycorrhizal fungi in a way that was not possible in March by broadcasting the granules and then brushing them into the holes using the artificial grass dragmat. This requires the purchase of one bag of mycorrhizal fungi granules at a cost of £132 + delivery. The LAG will make a decision on this in the near future.

The rye grass survived the drought quite well and responded instantly to the return of rain. This suggests that the roots are much deeper than those of the AMG which died back very quickly. How much of this is due to the mycorrhizal fungi is difficult to say. Lawn 5 did not respond as well to the drought conditions but has since recovered quite well. It did not receive an inoculation in March but did receive mycorrhizal fungi in previous granular fertiliser applications. A proportion of the AMG has recovered from the drought but some has died, leaving patches of lawn without any grass. In the short term this is a nuisance (bumpy lawns) but once the reseeding is completed new perennial grasses (Rye, Bent) should occupy the spaces.

One important feature of the research on mycorrhizal fungi is that the reductions in AMG all occurred where Bent grass was present. Browntop Bent spreads through short rhizomes under the ground where as Rye grass only spreads slowly through tillering. This is a major factor in the decision to include Browntop Bent in the over-seeding programme. Germinal Amenity who provide the AberMajesty seed mix say that they have some 60 golf club sites where AMG is in retreat. They do, however, emphasise the need to over-seed each year. I will shortly be contacting Stoneleigh Golf Club where they have reduced AMG presence from about 80% to 60% over an eighteen month period by the introduction of AberMajesty seed. (The greenkeeper is currently on holiday!)

Germinal Amenity also say that over-seeding in Spring as well as late Summer speeds up the transformation away from AMG. However, the cost of hiring the Dynaseeder twice in one year is somewhat prohibitive.

The Rye grass is generally healthier than last year but its difficult to separate out the effects of mycorrhizal fungi from the change to slow release fertiliser. It is even more difficult to quantify the impact of the PGPR sprays that are intended to enhance the impact of the mycorrhizal fungi. (Lawn 5 was included in the PGPR spraying).

For 2021 the situation is complicated by the fact that we will have both Rye and Bent grass within the sward. The bacteria choice is different for these two species and I have asked Plantworks for their technical advice on this matter. The 2021 budget includes provision for 3 applications of PGPR spray (cost £180) compared with 6 in 2020 because of the uncertainty over benefits and choice of bacteria. Advice from Plantworks will be needed before decisions are finalised.

## **5. Weeds and Moss**

Generally, spot weeding using Weedol (ex Verdone) and Resolva selective weedkillers has kept the weed population under control. To reduce cost, Weedol concentrate is purchased and a diluted version used to top up an old Weedol spray bottle. A bottle of concentrate is not much more than the cost of an 800ml retail spray but can provide about 50 refills. (Water is free!). To spray the boundaries which support many weeds requires a back pack sprayer. At present I am just using my own professional sprayer because the club sprayer is not functional. It would be helpful if NDCC could purchase a replacement.

The application of Iron presents a particular problem. It is highly destructive for spraying equipment and I am reluctant to use the boom sprayer to apply Iron to the lawns for moss control. A compromise is to use a backpack sprayer and selectively spray areas with moss – mostly near the west boundary. Iron also destroys the cheap backpack sprayer pumps so a sprayer where the pump is of the diaphragm type would be preferable and may avoid the problem. For smaller areas we can use the Duncan Hector solution of a watering can with a fine rose partially blocked off with tape.

Over the 2019/20 winter a new type of weed appeared – Procumbent Pearlwort. It forms bright green clumps and spreads very easily via seed. It is easily picked up and transferred by the soles of shoes. It looks like moss at first site. It can be killed by Weedol but in practice spot weeding is not containing it. I have therefore reluctantly concluded that we need to treat the whole of the lawns with a professional selective herbicide to entirely eliminate it from the lawns.

Most of the selective herbicides cannot be applied to newly seeded lawns within 3 – 6 months of germination. However, Duncan Hector, who rotates between Holster and Praxys indicated that these

products have fewer time restrictions. Research into Praxys revealed that it can be applied a up to month before or a minimum of month after seeding and that it is effective until the end of October. I therefore plan to apply Praxys with the boom sprayer around October 1<sup>st</sup>. The minimum quantity supplied will do three applications at Nailsea and as two applications per year are allowable the purchase will cover NDCC to the end of the 2021 season. Adding to the cost is the usual spraying supervision for licensed products.

## **6. Fertiliser programme**

At present I am proposing to use the same fertiliser programme as for 2020. However, this may be modified in the light of the end of season soil sampling. In particular, I want to check the Phosphorus (P) level as none was applied this year in order to encourage the Rye grass to make use of mycorrhizal fungi. (The fungi supply the grass with P in exchange for Carbon.) The Potassium (K) level was high last year but dropped significantly over the wet winter through leaching. I want to check that K levels are still on the high side as the current programme provides reduced K to take this into account.

If the Attraxor growth regulator is to be applied then the seaweed component of the liquid bio fertiliser needs to be omitted as one inhibits Gibberelin production whilst the other promotes it. As Attraxor promotes root development as well as inhibiting AMG seed production this is probably a good trade off.

The soil test results may show up other trace element deficiencies that require attention.

One item I have not included is any kind of thatch degrading spray or granular product because my impression is that thatch levels are satisfactory at 5-10mm. However, it is possible that Bent grass will generate more thatch than the Rye grass and that some action will need to be taken in 2021. I will continue to keep an eye on this.

## **7. Toro Maintenance**

When AJ Mowers visited NDCC on July 11<sup>th</sup> I invited Geoff Hughes to attend in order to settle the issue of back lapping. AJ Mowers confirmed that the reels should not be lapped. The correct procedure requires the DPA units to be clicked forwards one notch after each cut. This keeps the reels in very light contact with the bottom blade and maintains good cutting performance. It is the regime employed at Long Ashton Golf Club.

Over a season this will gradually wear away the bottom blade which should ideally be replaced at the start of the new season. A very light reel re-grind is then required to match up the bottom blade to the reel.

Back lapping creates a rounded rather than flat reel blade tip that does not cut correctly and that requires more metal to be removed during the re-grinding process. This leads to more frequent reel replacement as well as less effective cutting.

I have budgeted for AJ Mowers to carry out the work at the start of the new season and also carry out two height adjustments during the season. If we ever have to replace the reels, the total cost is about £1500 – quite a bit less than previously thought.

## **8. Capital Equipment**

It would be really helpful if NDCC had its own seeding equipment but this is not realistic both from a cost and storage point of view. Golf clubs have such equipment but are generally unwilling to lend/hire it out for understandable reasons. The best hope would be to get the Long Ashton greenkeeper interested in NDCC and offer us some help! AJ Mowers hope to get him to come along to the club at some point but I suspect that the golf club would not co-operate.

The club also lacks the capacity to both solid tine and top dress. Greenkeepers do like to solid tine down 3 or 4 inches a few times during the winter months. The GA30 provides with a tining capacity but it does tend to damage the surface. Many of the more modern smaller walk-behind machines seem to create much cleaner holes. However, the case for replacing the GA30 is weak as the Sarrel roller does an excellent job at summer rootzone aeration. Realistically, a new set of solid or xcross tines is the most that could be justified.

Routine yearly top dressing is not recommended and is arguably harmful both to the soil biology and the mower through sand pick up. At present, the sward is not uniform but once it is and AMG content reduced it would probably be a good idea to have a one-off top dressing to help to smooth out any gentle undulations in the surface. This activity is best bought in from a contractor if we could find one capable of actually smoothing the surface.

Longer term, one of my ambitions is to be able to over-seed without requiring a Dynaseeder or Disc seeder. To achieve this a drop spreading capability would be useful. However, none of the normal commercial products is capable of handling green waste and those that can handle seed are expensive. It is not clear if any drop spreader can handle Bent seed which is very fine and behaves like sand. A drop spreader that could handle Bent seed could also be employed in localised sand top dressing. More research is needed on this subject.

JN Wallace

27/7/2020



LAWN MAINTENANCE BUDGET				
	ITEM	COST (inc VAT)	Sub Totals	Comment
2020	Autumn 2020 Soil Test	50		Checking P and K levels to adjust 2021 fertiliser levels. Pitchcare PWS testing cost
	200L Green Waste	72		
	Praxys Selective Herbicide	94		DH quote awaited
	Spraying supervision	48		
	1 bag of Mycorrhizal Inoculant	140		To be dragged into holes from Dynaseeder using artificial grass mat acting as drag mat. Optional cost to be agreed by LAG.
			404	
2021	Revolution	774		
	Liquid Fertiliser (Summer)			
	- Duncan Hector Liquid Bio (20-0-10), 10 x 20L slow release with biostimulants	990		
	- AGS Nitro 30, (30-0-0) 2 x 10L very slow release fertiliser	128		
	Liquid Fertiliser (Winter)	165		
	- Duncan Hector Liquid Bio (20-0-10, no additives)			
	PGPR Spray	180		May not be needed. Info from Plantworks required.
	Weedol concentrate	20		800 mls makes 53 Litres of Weedol!
	Green Waste	0		£80-90 if we don't get it this year. Waiting for DH quote.
	Attraxor Growth Regulator (for poa seed control)	282		More info required before we apply. LAG has not yet had a chance to review evidence with regard to Poa suppression
	Ph Buffer for Attraxor	40		
	Supervision for 6 sprays	288		
			3271	
2020 and 2021	Dynaseeder Hire	864		Assuming overseeding is an annual event.
	20Kg Bent grass seed	440		
	40Kg Ultrafine dwarf rye grass seed	240		
			1544	
2021	Toro Spring service - New bottom blades + mild regrind+ height adjustment to 6mm	480		AJ Mowers preferred approach. Assumes DPA units operated by mowers.
	Toro Summer height adjustment to 5mm	101		May well not be needed if 6mm cutting height is ok all summer, depends on Bent growth
	Toro Autumn height adjustment	101		
			682	

## **Fixture Secretary's Report** for the meeting on 31/07/2020

A lot has happened since our last meeting.

### **Club Competitions and Coaching**

Immediately after the meeting I rang Kathy and informed her of the committee's decisions on Club Competitions and coaching a new member from Weston-super-Mare. In the meantime James was at the club finding the holes for the small lawns on lawn 2 ready for junior coaching (and the club short croquet competition). At 14.00 James called round to report that he had found the holes. He also informed me that Kathy had already contacted him and he had agreed to coach the potential member. Later that day Kathy sent an email to members inviting them to enter club competitions and on 1 July she emailed the competition blocks to those members who had entered. This is going well with several members having already played some of their competitions.

### **Junior Coaching**

I contacted the parents of last year's juniors and told them that I hoped to be able to arrange junior coaching soon. Of the three juniors from last year only two wished to continue. Then I came across a problem – despite the fact that many children were not attending school because of the coronavirus pandemic one of the juniors was attending school full time and the other was attending two days a fortnight. I was isolating as I was still showing symptoms of having a virus; James is working full time and his hours are 16.00 – 24.00, Monday to Thursday, and 12.00 – 20.00 on Fridays so he is not available after school hours; Erica said she was not prepared to take juniors this year because she does not want to take any risks. So there were no members from our club who had had DBS checks and were available to take the juniors when they were free.

On June 16 I was tested for covid-19 and the result was negative. However I chose not to visit the club for a further month in case the result was a false negative. Now that the school holidays have started James and I are taking the two juniors on Wednesday mornings and I have started looking into arrangements for September when they go back to school. Brian Roynon has agreed to help and I hope that Brenda will also be willing to assist.

### **Meetings**

There have been several internet meetings since we last met and I have attended quite a few.

Saturday, 27 June – **CA Clubs Webinar –Recruiting Young Players over Lockdown** – this was very interesting and when I have time I will send a report of the meeting.

**CA Junior Task Force Meetings** (Tue, 30 June, Mon, 13 July and Tue, 28 July) – these meetings are primarily for juniors (under 25), but I am attending as a club contact and junior coach. These meetings are very useful and I am picking up a few ideas from other coaches, three of which I have tried with our juniors.

### **Wednesday, 1 July – SWF Meeting**

1. **SWF Leagues** – Of the thirty clubs who entered the leagues this season only 19 had responded to Stephen Custance-Baker's enquiry about which teams wished to play league matches this year. Only eight clubs were interested and of those only two (Nailsea and Swanage) were prepared to play

home matches. Two more clubs expressed an interest during the meeting, but the decision was made that **the leagues would not take place this season**. Despite this Stephen seems keen to get clubs to play friendly matches and on 20 July sent an email listing 16 clubs who may be interested in playing friendlies. Nailsea is on the list, but as far as I can tell there is no enthusiasm amongst our members for playing friendly matches against other clubs.

**We need to consider carefully how many teams we wish to enter in the leagues in 2021.**

2. **Recruitment** - The CA and SWF committee see the current climate as the perfect time to recruit new members. Croquet has had a lot of media attention during lockdown. The CA has been selling croquet as the perfect social distance sport. Sales of croquet equipment by John Lewis have increased by 600%. Cheltenham has recruited eleven new beginners, Taunton Deane eight and Bristol, with no advertising or open days, five (the number of new recruits this year at Bristol has now increased to twelve). We, on the other hand, seem to be deterring new members. On the home page of our website under the heading **Coronavirus** it states that we are open to members only followed by in bold letters **TASTER SESSIONS for 2020 are CANCELLED**. Is this the image we really want to present? Apparently we are short of members who are willing and able to coach beginners. **We need to do something to address this situation**. However I am delighted to note that since I drew the committee's attention to this that we have recruited three new members who will become full members of the club on 1 August. However I do feel we should be trying to do more.
  
3. **CA Matters** – not a lot to report other than the coronavirus updates that have already been sent to club secretaries. However, Chris Roberts would like our views on two things:
  - a. **If a club has been an affiliate member club of the CA for three years should it then be required to become a full member club?** Brian Wilson spoke against this proposal; he felt it was up to the CA to show the advantages of becoming a full member club and he felt that, if the CA chose this route, it would lose some clubs altogether.
  - b. **If a standard member enters a tournament and pays their £5 levy, should they then have the same rights as premium members and not go to the back of the queue if the tournament is oversubscribed?** Sarah Hayes spoke against this proposal; she felt there should be some advantages in being a premium member.

It seems to me that in some ways the two proposals are contradictory. In (a) the proposal tightens up on rules for affiliate clubs whereas in (b) the proposal is slackening the rules for standard members. I have no strong views on either of these proposals, but I have more sympathy with (b) than (a). Premium members already have an advantage because they can enter as many tournaments as they wish without paying a levy each time. How will a standard member get a taste of tournament play if they find that they are continually ineligible to enter tournaments because they become oversubscribed with premium members?



Tim King spoke at some length about the conditions one needs to consider – Regulations imposed by the Government, Local Authorities, the CA and Host Clubs. While his presentation was excellent I knew most of it already. The one new thing that I did learn was that tournament play no longer needs to be in sessions, so if two games are double banked and one finishes quickly while the other goes on for a lot longer, you can now start a new game on that lawn without waiting for the second game to finish provided you have no more than four players on the court at one time. Double banked doubles tournaments may be allowed, but you need to get special permission from the CA. This was in the new tournament guidelines (sent out by the CA last week) that I had not had time to read before the meeting.

This was followed by a presentation by Paul Rigge from Pendle, a club that depends very much on its income from tournaments. They have arranged three events so far this year. The first was an internal club tournament to gauge the practicality of holding a tournament under current restrictions. After that they arranged a U3A competition – this is normally a recurring event at their club; so far this year they have arranged two such competitions. Thirdly they held a full A class golf croquet tournament with sixteen competitors. They used clips and at the end of each game the competitors washed their equipment in a bucket of soapy water provided by the side of the lawn. The manager went round to each court with a clipboard to collect scores from each game. At Pendle they allow the use of hand driers. There was also some discussion about the use portaloos and car parking problems for large tournaments.

#### **Nailsea Advanced Singles Weekend Tournament - 8-9 August**

I have spoken to James and he informs me that Marcus seems to have everything in hand and has sent detailed instructions to all competitors. As there are only eight competitors and four lawns will be available there will be no double banking. He would like to allow the use of clips – I would support this. Kathy has raised the issue of spectators. I suggest we allow spectators, but only if they inform a selected member of the committee of their intentions by email beforehand. It should be made clear that there will be no tea or cake available (unless the committee decides otherwise) and spectators must bring their own chairs or rugs to sit on and sit at least two metres apart and well away from the competitors – the benches should be reserved for the players.

#### **James Galpin**

I learned today (Wednesday) that James has been selected to play in the Ricki Savage Memorial Tournament (GC First Eight). Congratulations James. We wish him well in this top class event. He has also indicated his availability for the AC Eights, but has not yet heard in which eight he will be playing. I am sure it is tricky for the selectors choosing the best eights this year as so many tournaments have been cancelled and some players, including James, have not yet played in a tournament so they do not know who is in form.

Peter Dyke  
(29/07/2020)