

Nailsea and District Croquet Club
Minutes of the Zoom Committee Meeting 22nd October 2020

Present: Graham McCausland, Meriel Forshaw, Mike Tracy,
Brian Roynon, Peter Dyke, Joan Timmins, Sandra Morgan.
David Hunt - observing

1. **Apologies:** Andrew Wimshurst

2. **Minutes of the meeting held on the 24th September 2020:** agreed and signed by MF on behalf of GMc.

3. **Matters Arising:**

(14e) Cost of future zoom meetings – Graham had looked into the monthly and annual cost of holding future zoom meetings. Monthly cost would be £14.99 inc of VAT.

Mike agreed to continue to be the host for zoom meetings as he holds a licence. However, once the meeting is opened, he will then be able to transfer the responsibility of host to a member of the committee. The secretary to inform Mike just before the next meeting is due.

4. **Treasurer's Report:** discussed and noted

Mike will activate the increase on the BACS transactions after the AGM when signatures etc. have to be changed.

The 2020 Christmas meal has been cancelled and the booking fee will be carried over to December 2022. The Christmas meal is usually held on the first Saturday of December. The booking of the venue for this event will become the role of the treasurer and a note to this effect will be put in the committee diary for January.

Action: MT/MF

Mike thanked David Hunt for allowing his name to go forward for the role of treasurer and confirmed he will be available to assist if required to do so.

Graham thanked Mike for all the work he had put into the role over many years.

5. **Property Report:**

Repairs have been completed on the soffit boards and on the lifter supports on trolley one. Brian expressed thanks for all those who supported the work morning.

The council have now cut the exterior side of the hedge; hedge cutting is only permitted between September and the end of February. Cost for future hedge cutting will need to be considered.

6. **Membership Report:** not much to report other than that there is one new person who might be interested in being a member of the club. Andrew is in contact.

7. Lawns Report: discussed and noted

The committee agreed the last day for play would be on the 1st November 2020. The lawns would then close for winter maintenance.

Joan would place a reminder of the closure on the table just inside the front door of the clubhouse.

Action: JT

8. Recruitment Report: discussed and noted

Tournament dates: The committee agreed to the movement of the May 2021 tournament to August 2021 – Peter to advise Kathy of the decision.

Peter has responded to Kathy's email re CA juniors.

Action: PD

9. League Secretary's Report: discussed and noted

The committee recognised that league fixtures for next year could not be organised at the present time.

Peter thanked everyone for their help and commitment in supporting the junior coaching sessions over the last few months.

10. AGM:

The AGM agenda has been agreed and Meriel will send to all members this week.

Only those members who have told Meriel that they wish to attend the zoom meeting will be sent the invitation, together with some instructions.

Mike has agreed to host the AGM zoom meeting.

11. Any Other Business:

Mike has recently received the water bill for the club and the direct debit of £37 will be increased to £75.

12. DONM: TBA

The meeting closed at 10.45 hrs.

Signed as a true and accurate record

Name.....

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

Reports

Treasurer's report for NDCC committee meeting 22nd October 2020

This report has been prepared on 18th October 2020.

The spreadsheet for the year end (30th September) is attached. There are two points to note. The council has never invoiced us for rent in this financial year, despite my repeated contacts. I have received an invoice for 2020/2021 which leads me to believe that we will never be invoiced for 2019/2020, but that is just a supposition. Secondly, up to this point there have been costs under the heading 'Top dressing and levelling'. This is a hangover from the time when we believed that the lawns could be levelled by the application of targeted top dressing, which proved to be impossible. As the lawn levelling project has finished I have recategorised this expenditure as Lawn maintenance which I think is more appropriate.

Spreadsheet for the new financial year is also 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 £15693.00. I also have cheques for £45 (new members after tuition). Our financial assets therefore stand at £15,738.00. The year is showing a deficit of £710.64

There has been little financial activity since the last meeting. Our rent for 2020/2021 has been paid.

I note the committee's decision to increase the limit on BACS transactions to £1,000. I have not actioned this change yet as I thought it best incorporated with the changes that will have to be made after the AGM (signatories, online access etc.)

I was delighted to hear that David Hunt has accepted nomination for treasurer and will give him any support he requires. The accountant who has been our auditor (strictly speaking he examines my records rather than audits them, as is usually the case with clubs) told me last year that he would continue to do this only as long as I continued as treasurer. Consequently we will need to find a new examiner. In the absence of any independent alternative I would be prepared to carry out this function, but it would be best if an independent alternative could be found.

M Tracy

18/10/20

Lawn Maintenance Report – October 2020

1. Lawns

Players have reported improvement in the playing surface as the Autumn weather moves in. This is probably due to a mixture of factors but the recent germination/growth of more small annual meadow grass clumps (bad) and the new Bent seed (good) may well be contributing. The stripes of Bent seed continue to be visible on lawns 3 & 4 but much less visible on lawns 1 & 2. The reason(s) for this are not obvious. However whilst collecting soil testing samples on 18/10 I noticed numerous small clumps of grass on lawns 1 & 2 that could be Bent. The clumps are too small to

remove leaves for identification purposes but I am slightly more hopeful that at least some of the Bent seedlings have survived.

Rainfall has been quite variable recently (figure 1) with some dry days interspersed with periods of heavy rain. Around the end of September/early October we had just under 4 inches of rain in four days. The lawns coped with this quite well with puddles dispersing in less than 24 hours but the ground has remained soft ever since. LAG members involved in leaf clearance were recently surprised just how soft the ground was. The lawns will be closing at the end of October to protect the Bent seedlings. In November the cutter height will be raised to 8mm and I will take over mowing from the team so that I can choose opportune moments to mow.

One undesirable feature of the lawns is the proliferation of weeds. Spot spraying had to cease in early August because of the overseeding at the end of August and as a result the weeds have taken hold in places, particularly lesser trefoil. A full Praxys herbicide spray was applied on 8th October having been delayed for a week or so by rain. (It needs dry grass). It is quite late in the season to apply herbicide because weed growth is not vigorous at this time of year. Some weeds appear to be responding whilst others are not (yet) showing any signs of wilting. Further Praxys sprays are planned for next spring and autumn. The chemical costs about £30 per application but the supervision required (it is a licensed product) is expensive at £54. Every effort is made to avoid the use of licensed products in order to avoid this cost.

As usual the leaves have started to fall and Andrew Wimshurst has organised two teams of leaf clearers to clear them away. I expect this to continue until the end of November. At that point I hope to do some specific lawn repairs using rye grass and green waste. However this is not possible until the leaf clearance teams have finished.

The high cost of overseeding the lawns with a Dynaseeder has led me to attempt the construction of an NDCC version to be towed by our lawn tractor. The bent seed is very fine (about 10,000 seeds per gramme) and needs to be sown at about 5 grammes per square metre. To achieve even germination the seed is pressed into about 1500 holes per square metre at a depth of around 5mm into the soil. My prototype seed dispenser does work on the bench but I have yet to construct a full-size version. The holes will be created using chain sprockets mounted on a 16mm shaft that drives the seed dispenser using a timing belt arrangement. Avoiding mud pickup and synchronisation of seed dispensing immediately in front of the sprockets remain challenges to be faced. Doubtless I will encounter other unforeseen problems but if they can be resolved we can save £864 per year on Dynaseeder hire.

2. Soil Testing and 2021 Programme

The treasurer recently requested a budget forecast for 2021 which was duly provided. There are some changes to the maintenance regime for 2021. The principal changes are:

1. No PGPR spraying. When the technical expert returned to work at Plantworks after furlough she agreed with my original interpretation of Francesca Baylis's PhD thesis. Her conclusion was that we should not apply the PGPR spray to Diploid rye grass (or Bent) and after a few weeks I was able to obtain a full refund of £360 on our 2020 purchase.
2. In order to improve fertility I intend to apply Growth Products "Essentials Plus" sprays regularly. Essential Plus is a natural soil amendment that contains microbial food, amino acids carbohydrates, fungal food and root stimulators. These are aimed at promoting the growth of perennial grasses such as Rye and Bent.
3. To boost humous levels in the sandy rootzone and top up the mycorrhizal fungi population I have included provision for some organic granular fertiliser which will also help to boost the development of any new seedlings from a cold overseed with Bent.

The programme continues to be free of phosphates in order to maximise the positive symbiotic relationship between perennial grasses (Rye,Bent) and degrade annual meadow grass. In order to check on Phosphate and other soil nutrient levels I have ordered a soil test from Pitchcare (£40). If this confirms last year's results the programme will stay as planned.

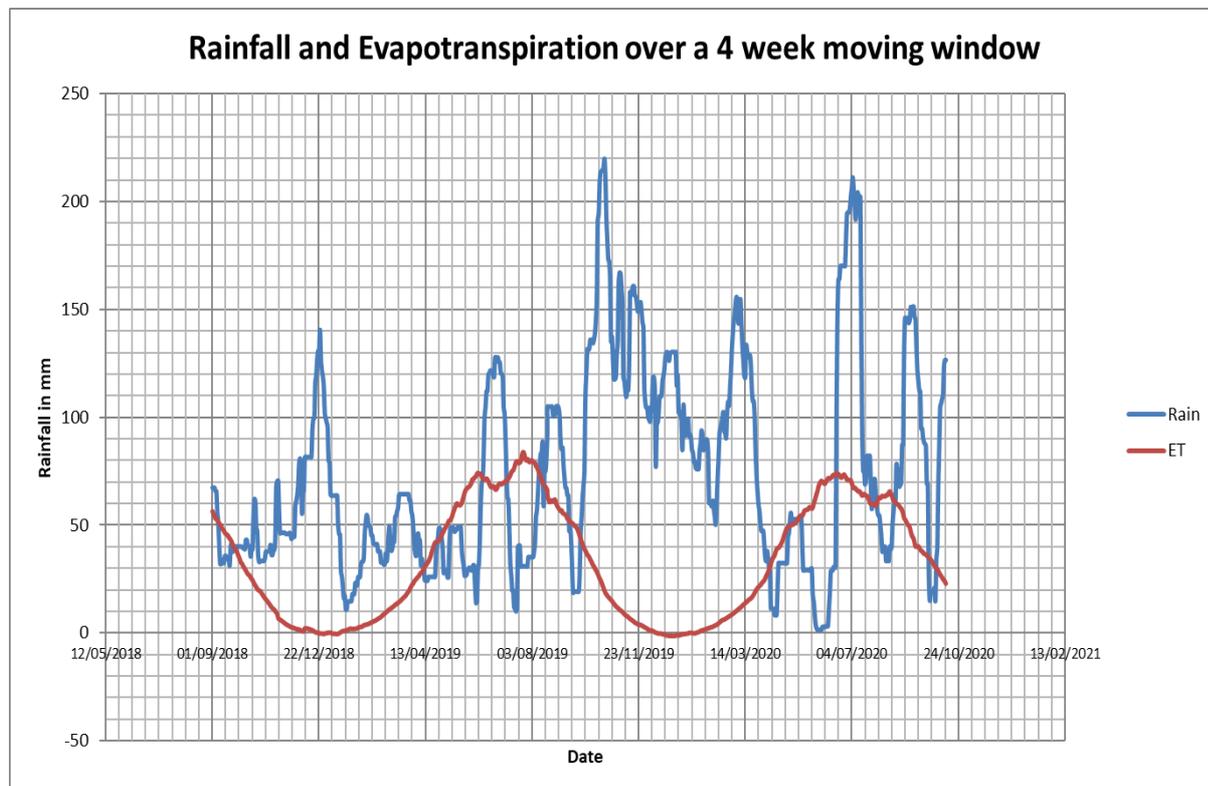
Collecting soil samples is quite tedious at present using my home-made device. If soil testing continues, I will probably ask the treasurer to fund a professional stainless-steel device!

3. White Lining

For different reasons two of the four white liners (Erica, Martin K) may not be available next year and so new white liners will need to be recruited.

JNW

19/10/20



Report for meeting October 2020

Recruitment

Nothing specific to report but there are various embryonic plans in my head for 2021.

Tournaments

The CA office still hasn't sent out the requests for dates and the ECB still hasn't announced the Test Match date that will affect my availability to manage tournaments. By the time of the next Committee meeting there should be more information available. However, it would be good if the Committee could make a decision in principle on whether or not to defer the usual May Tournament to an August date on the grounds of increased normality as the summer progresses. Once this decision has been made and the Trent Bridge cricket date is available, I can suggest dates for all our Tournaments that suit the lawn teams and ask the Committee to approve them or point out problems with them by e-mail.

The dates that we are committed to are:

GC Home Internationals: 17/18 July 2021
Selectors' Weekend: 10/11/12 September 2021

We have agreed:

Semi-finals: 4/5 September
Finals: 25/26 September

Competitions

The competitions are complete with the exception of the Sergeant Cup in which the Finalists are separated by the Severn Bridge and Lockdown. The full results are all on the Club website but I am supplying the names of the winners and runners up here for the archives (see next page).

The decision to award certificates instead of the usual trophies turned out to be good one for organisational reasons but also because it attached less significance to competitions in which entries and playing conditions were affected by Covid 19 restrictions.

I would like to record my thanks to all the mowers, white-liners and, in particular, to Andrew, for his work with the hoops. Without all this effort from a relatively small number of people, the competitions, and even social play, could not have taken place.

CA matters

1. Nailsea, as a club, was invited to take part in a pilot scheme involving Junior Schools, The national Bowls Association and the CA. Peter will be taking the lead on this.

2. I was invited to join a small CA group to discuss barriers in croquet to those with a disability. The group is a subgroup of an initiative looking at Inclusivity and Diversity in croquet. The objective is to make croquet a more diverse sport. One of the spin-offs would be access to substantial grants at local and national level. I hope that this isn't what is driving the initiative. My group has had one meeting and I have observed that the others in the group are certainly not motivated in that way. The leader is Jonathan Toye who plays excellent croquet with one arm and who worked as a Disability Rights Officer for many years.

Kathy Wallace 19/10/20

Lockdown Competitions 2020 Results

	Winner	Runner-up
Association Croquet		
Open Advanced Singles	James Galpin	Marcus Evans
B Class Advanced Singles	Pat Long	Andrew Wimshurst
Level play Singles (9-14)	Graham McCausland	Martin Kerly
Open Handicap Singles	Pete Longden	Tony Hinchliffe
Short Croquet	Andrew Wimshurst	Brian Roynon

Golf Croquet

Level Play Singles (upper tier)	James Galpin	Andrew Wimshurst
Level Play Singles (lower tier)	Graham McCausland	Steve Durston
Sergeant Cup Handicap Singles	Finalists: Peter Dyke and Robert Upton	

League Secretary's Report for the meeting on Thursday, 22 October, 2020.

League Fixtures 2021

Normally at this time of year I would be considering which leagues we would want to enter the following year. However there is a proposal to be put forward at the SWF AGM in November to delay deciding on league entries for next year until January. In my opinion it is unlikely that the situation will be any clearer in January than it is at the moment, but I would welcome not having to arrange league fixtures in the weeks running up to Christmas so I will not be opposing the proposal.

Junior Croquet

Results of junior competitions:

Junior Pirates (large lawn, single game, two balls each) – winner Esme Sutherland

Junior Golf Croquet (large lawn, best of three) – winner Esme Sutherland (6-7, 7-2, 7-3)

Junior One Ball (small lawn, single game) – winner Luke Mair (13-11)

Most Improved Junior – Esme Sutherland

I would like to thank James Galpin, Brian and Brenda Roynon, Erica Malaiperuman, Libby Howard-Blood and Terry Young who have all assisted with juniors this year.

Peter Dyke

