

Nailsea and District Croquet Club
Minutes of the zoom committee meeting 18th February 2021

Present: G McCausland, A Wimshurst, P Dyke, D Hunt, B Roynan, S Morgan, E Malaiperuman

Minutes of the last meeting: Agreed and signed by EM on behalf of GMc

1. Matters arising: Marcus is keen to run the annual charity one ball event and will advise us of the date. Terry will make provisional arrangements for the OBE tournament. Greta Stringer's family is happy for us to go ahead with the new trophy in her name for one of the classes of the advanced tournaments this summer.

2. Bank Mandate The Committee proposed the following:

That the bank account with HSBC be continued and that the Bank is authorised to act in any Instructions provided they have been given by the following persons David Hunt, Brian Roynon, Graham McCausland, Erica Malaiperuman, (or authorised by such persons in accordance with the applicable authorisation requirement(s)) as follows : Any two listed persons together.

That any debt incurred to the Bank under the Mandate shall, in the absence of written agreement by the Bank to the contrary, be repayable on demand.

That the Secretary is authorised to supply the Bank, as and when necessary, with lists of all persons who are authorised to give instructions on behalf of the Club, and that the Bank may rely upon such lists.

That the Club accepts the account and banking relationship with the Bank will be governed by and subject to the Business Banking Terms and Conditions (a copy of which has been provided) as amended from time to time, together with any terms and conditions in respect of specific products and services requested by the Club.

That these resolutions be communicated to the Bank and remain in force until cancelled by notice in writing to the Bank, signed by the Chairperson or Secretary from time to time acting or claiming to act on behalf of the Club, and the Bank shall be entitled to act on such notice whether the resolutions have been validly cancelled or not.

Action: David

3. Treasurer's report: Noted and discussed. The £10,000 received as a grant during COVID is to be found under the heading Raffles, gifts, grants.

4. COVID recovery funding:

Although the club would have been closed anyway during this last lockdown it was felt that funding had been lost through cancellation of the short croquet tournament, bridge played during the winter and social fundraising events that normally take place during the winter closure of the lawns. Therefore the possibility of obtaining more funding from Sports England would be investigated.

Action: David

5. Membership : 53 members have rejoined. 1 member has rejoined a different club. A further reminder to those who have not rejoined yet will be sent out at the end of February. They will be reminded that they need to be a member to play in matches.

We expect to have the revised list of members by the end of March

Action: Andrew

Maintenance:

Brian arranged for Tony Willoughby to turn off the mains water supply during the icy blast this month. Tony will also continue maintaining the trolleys for play this year.

Recruitment: Competitions and Tournaments: noted and discussed

Marcus is happy to be involved with Kathy's 'elite' team initiative. The chairman is very happy about Kathy's initiatives on recruitment. No dates can be fixed until we know when croquet can resume. It was agreed that we would not enter the All England Handicap Competitions this year.

League Fixtures Report: discussed and noted.

Peter explained that Stephen Custance Baker reported that Weston Super Mare are not entering any leagues this year and that if they became members of Nailsea, they would be eligible to play for our teams.

Transport continues to be the biggest problem – sharing cars might not be permitted in the future.

Before making a decision on the Secretary's Shield, which might entail lengthy journeys, it was agreed that the players involved should be contacted for their opinion.

Action: Peter

The new changes to AC rules which will come into force from 1st March will be brought to all member's attention through the next Chairman's message. It is expected that the SWCA will be having zoom meetings in the future which will discuss and clarify the new laws.

Child safeguarding:

Linda has agreed to continue as our dedicated LSO (Welfare Officer)(Local Safeguarding Officer). Full details of the CA's policy on safeguarding children has been forwarded to the Club. We will therefore update our policy to their guidelines. Graham made it clear that this is a matter of common sense and everyone needs to take some personal responsibility on this issue, both for a child's safety and to protect themselves against being in any situation in which they could be unwittingly open to any suggestion of misconduct with a child.

Action to update policy: Linda and Graham

We will continue to use our annual renewal process and the requirements requested by the CA will be highlighted on the membership forms.

Action: Andrew

At present Peter is the only member with a CBS certificate. Erica's has expired. It is understood that members who might help out with Juniors occasionally do not need to have a CBS certificate.

Details of our new safeguarding policy will be posted on our website.

Action:Erica

Lawn Report: Discussed and noted.

The lawn action group will get together and decide when to start setting out the lawns. **LAG s** Erica to get in touch with James regarding the hoop holes on lawn 5.

Lawn Booking System;

Past members will be denied access to the site – data protection

Anyone who experiences difficulties gaining access should be referred to Graham; this may be due to potential issues of incompatibility due to the site being upgraded. Peter has requested the addition of a Short Croquet Handicap column on the lawn Booking system. Graham reported that he had already raised this point with Simon the developer last year, and it is on his long term development plan for the Booking System.

Tournament catering;

Libby to be contacted regarding the possibility of her taking on the organisation of any catering this summer - should Covid restrictions allow. **Action: Erica**

A.O.B.

Stephen Cunstance-Baker has been awarded Coach of the Year for 2020. Graham to email him and congratulate him on this achievement on behalf of the Club.

Mike Tracy has donated shed treatment paint to the club. (Mike is moving house in 2 weeks, if all goes through on time.)

Peter is very pleased with the committee’s (clandestine!) arrangement of naming a trophy for one of the classes of the Advanced Tournaments after him, in recognition of his service to the club.

Peter requested that there should be a third trophy for the Juniors for their One Ball Competition. This year’s winner, Luke, would have his name engraved on it. This was agreed and Brigit would be contacted.

Mike has requested that his name be removed as a contact on the website. It was agreed that Erica would add her name in his place. Kathy Wallace is already a contact. Erica would also update the Nailsea Handbook on the website. **Action:Erica**

DONM:

Zoom meeting on Thursday March 18th. 9.45 for 10.00 start

The meeting closed at 11.30

Signed as a true and accurate account.

Name.....

Signature.....

Treasurer's report to the committee meeting held on Thursday 18 February 2021

Attached is the Income and expenditure account for the current year made up to 15 February 2021

Total available funds are £19,058.30 after taking into account unpresented cheques totalling £2,648.66 and an unrecorded credit of £150.00.

Payments which are to be made in the next few days are £883 club membership renewal (2021) to the C.A. This was payable on 1st January and is now overdue and must be paid by 30th April. Also the annual levy and competition fees due to the SWF. Last year this amounted to £230 but should be less this year because of fewer teams being fielded by the club and the cancellation of the short croquet competition at Nailsea— Peter will advise.

The Bank Mandate. Mike has filled out the necessary form on line. As soon as this committee authorises the changes required by HSBC I will download the form, get the required signatures(David, Brian, Graham and Erica) and post to the Bank with copies of the supporting minutes

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Lawn Maintenance Report – November 2020

1. Lawns

The lawns have remained soft throughout January and not fit for play due to continual high rainfall as illustrated in Figure 1. This winter has been wetter than last year which was in itself exceptionally wet. On 27/1/21 they were given a dilute liquid feed together with a soil amendment (Essentials Plus) containing various essential nutrients and amino acids.

The lawns generally have a rather patchy and threadbare appearance. This is due to the annual meadow grass clumps top growth turning yellow/brown and the fairly extensive clumps of moss that have built up due to the very wet conditions. I have been trying to avoid moss treatment but decided that the situation warranted iron spraying. 40L of 6% liquid iron was purchased as part of the Duncan Hector chemicals order with a view to spot spraying using my Cooper Pegler Backpack sprayer. This has a diaphragm pump and is relatively immune to the ravages of Iron. Unfortunately, my attempt on February 15 at spraying quickly revealed how time consuming it would be to treat all the clumps of moss. I therefore applied 20L of 6% Iron using the boom sprayer and 300L of water in three sprays. This corresponded to about 1.5Kg of iron compared with the 4Kg of iron that used to be applied using ferrous sulphate crystals. It may not be enough to check (blacken) the moss and application of the other 20L may be needed in the near future. Iron is known to be destructive in terms of the boom sprayer pump so I spent considerable time flushing the pump after treatment. If, eventually a new pump is needed it would cost about £150. Hopefully the flushing through will limit the damage.

Prior to Iron spraying the lawns were mowed at 8mm. Despite the cold weather, a significant quantity of grass was removed. Only 3 passes were possible before the boxes needed emptying. In recent times the right hand front cutting unit has shown signs of dropping cut grass onto the lawn because it does not clear the box lip. I investigated whether it would be possible to modify the grass box to ease the problem but this does not really look feasible. The problem arises because as the reel is reground, it shrinks in size and is less able to throw the cuttings into the box. The reel can be replaced at a cost of about £500. However, in the short term, stopping after two passes and brushing the grass off the box lip and into the box partially avoids grass being dropped. Unfortunately, I noticed that the other two reels are also beginning to drop grass.

The cutting units continue to cut the grass well, so for this year, I think we can probably get by with brushing the grass into the box. This slows the mowing process but saves us £1500. I suspect next year we will probably need to spend the money (as AJ Mowers forecast!). When warmer weather arrives and covid restrictions ease a bit I will arrange an LAG meeting to consider options.

The lawns were sarrel rolled in January and will be rolled again next weekend. (The ground was too hard last weekend).

2. Material for 2021

Most of the chemicals for 2021 have now been ordered and delivered. Expenditure to date is as follows:

Duncan Hector	£2095	
AGS	£87	
Symbio	£399	
Germinal Amenity	£200	(half of Bent seed for 2021)

The overall cost is expected to stay within budget. More Bent and Rye seed will be needed for the Autumn and the concentrated Compost tea has yet to be ordered.

3. Overseeding

My Bent overseeder is nearly complete. I have attached a short video of two seed distribution units being tested at home. If you cannot open it on your PC have a look at the NDCC Facebook page that Kathy runs. Figure 2 gives an overall impression of the unit.

If the weather (and lawns) firm up I hope to attempt overseeding with Bent seed next week. Doubtless there will be some problems but if these can be overcome then we can save a substantial amount of money on an ongoing basis. At present the seeder only deals with Bent seed. A separate seed distribution unit would be needed for rye grass but I have the summer to devise one!

I ordered half of the Bent seed we need for 2021 as the success of the prototype is not yet established. Rather than using the standard Abermajesty mix of Bent seed I have purchased one cultivar (AberRoyal) which is the best choice for outcompeting Annual Meadow Grass.

If the seeder is successful I hope to replace the timing belt drive from the sprockets with one driven by a stepper so that the seeding operation can be electrically switched on and off. This would be convenient for long term use but is not essential at this stage.

JNW

16/2/21

Figure 1 Rainfall and ET

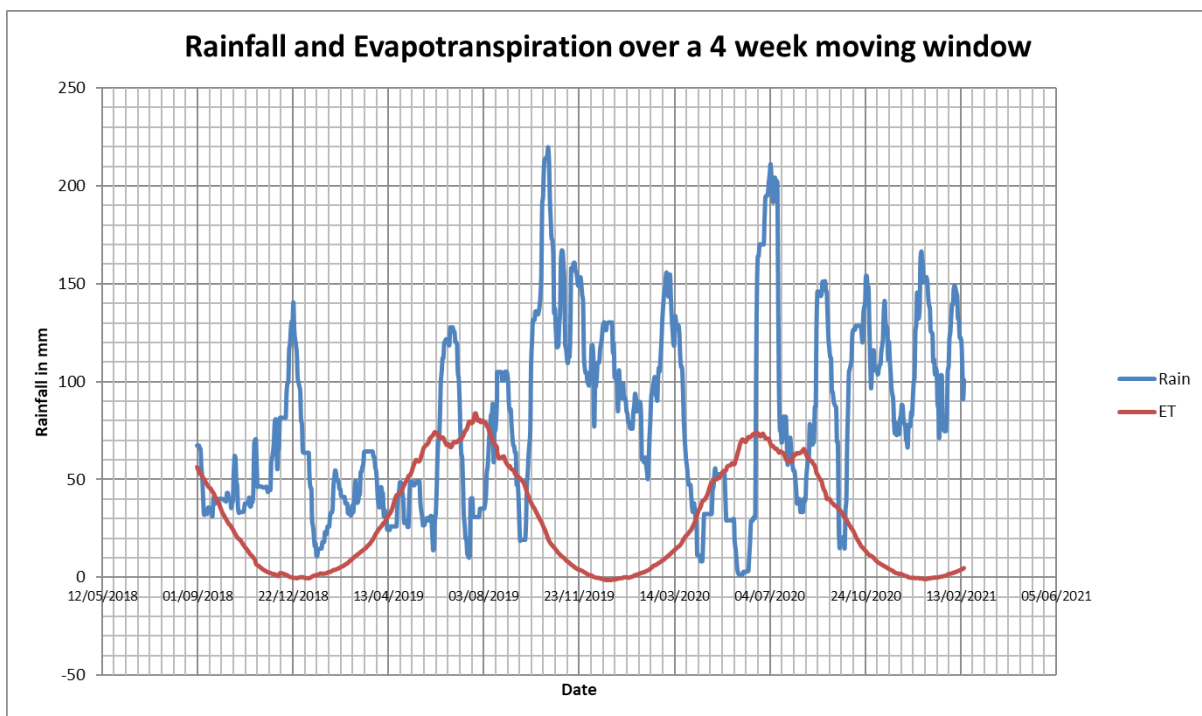


Figure 2 The Bent Seeder

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Reports for meeting on 18 Feb 2021 – version 2 with CA liaison report added

Recruitment Report

I have placed an article in Nailsea Paper advertising lessons, with a particular emphasis on a group for elite players. I am indebted to Andrew and Marcus for their help with the wording and I think it reads well. Marcus is willing to be involved with the coaching of an elite group.

As soon as possible, I will contact all the people already interested in receiving lessons. I will also contact the Scout leader who was going to bring groups last year and I will follow up all the other recruitment plans. The Committee might wish to pencil in some tentative dates for Taster Sessions but I would not want to advertise specific dates yet. The website and Facebook pages can be used to give dates when there is more certainty. All advertising will refer people there as well as giving a contact telephone number.

Competitions Report

As soon as is sensible, I will send out forms for internal competitions entries. There is no hurry as things can happen very quickly via e-mail. We will keep the dates already decided for semi-finals and Finals.

Tournament Report

The CA delayed the date for the Fixtures Calendar going live until the end of February at the earliest. I have postponed our Allocations Dates to 31 March.

Each of the two Advanced Class tournaments has, until now, had just one trophy assigned to them. As they will be run with two classes in each tournament this year, we need two new trophies. After discussion prior to this meeting, the Committee decided to name these new trophies after Peter Dyke and Greta Stringer, in recognition of their service to the club. The trophies will be bought this year if it becomes apparent that the tournaments will take place. As it is 40 years since Peter formed the club, we will try to incorporate some sort reference to ruby into the Peter Dyke trophy.

CA liaison Report

- 1. Safeguarding and Risk Assessment documents have been forwarded to Linda (via Graham) and Brian Roynon, respectively.
- 2. A reminder to pay our subs has been passed to David Hunt. This came with the CA membership pack which also included the forms for provisional entries to the All England Handicap Competitions. My personal view is that we should refrain this year, especially as we have had little or no interest in either of them in recent years. Last year, they were cancelled. **Could we please have a Committee decision on this.**

3 We have been awarded the Spencer Ell Cup for 2023.

This is an updated list of the CA (and Welsh CA) events now due to be held at Nailsea;

2021 GC Home Internationals 18/19 July and also Selectors’ Weekend 10-12 September

2022 GC Students’ Championship 9/10 April

2023 Spencer Ell Cup 7-11 September

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Fixture Secretary's Report for the committee meeting on 18 February, 2021.

South West Federation (SWF) Leagues 2021

After our last meeting I contacted all of our playing members who had not replied to my previous email. I have now had more responses – most saying that they did not wish to play in any leagues this year, but a few have indicated that they would play if it becomes possible. In my opinion things are still very uncertain – the main problem is likely to be travelling to away matches if it is still considered unsafe to share transport.

The revised numbers of players available are as follows:

Golf Croquet (GC) Leagues

Level Play League	8 (+1 when available)
Handicap League	10-15
High Handicap League	5

Association Croquet (AC) Leagues

League for Advanced Play	9-12
Federation League	8-11
Intermediate League	6-7
B League	0
Short Croquet League	7, but only one who may have a handicap of 6 or more.

Where there are two figures (eg. GC Handicap League 10-15) the lower figure is the number of players who would like to play if restrictions are eased sufficiently for the leagues to take place and the higher figure includes those who would like to play, but still expressed some reservations or for some reason are uncertain about their availability. I have therefore used the lower figure when deciding how many teams to enter.

Marcus would like to enter a team in the Advanced League Div. 1. His team will be Marcus Evans, James Galpin and Ryan Cabble. There is some uncertainty when James will be available this year and if James is not available, Marcus will be asking other players to make up the third place in his team.

Based on the above information I have entered

GC Leagues

Level Play League – one team
Handicap League – two teams
High Handicap League – one team

AC Leagues

League for Advanced Play – one team in division 1 and one in division 3.
Federation League – one team
Intermediate League – one team
B League – zero teams
Short Croquet League – one team

I have some reservations about entering a team in the Short Croquet (SC) League in view of the fact that at present we have only one player available with a SC handicap of 6 or more. However there are a few people I can think of that I could approach to see if they would be willing to play. Hopefully I will be able to get one or two more volunteers with high handicaps – if not we will reluctantly have to withdraw from this league.

In addition to the above I have entered three teams for the **SWF Short Croquet Team Event** at Budleigh Salterton in October. Hopefully, by then, restrictions will have been relaxed sufficiently for this to be possible. As agreed at our last meeting there will be no SWF Short Croquet Team Event at Nailsea this year.

Croquet Association (CA) Tournaments

I agree with Kathy that we should not enter the All England Handicap events this year. **However we need to decide whether or not to enter the Secretary's Shield.** This is a national tournament for the winners of the previous season's Federation Leagues. As neither the Federation League nor the Secretary's Shield took place last year and we won the Federation League in 2019, I assume we are still eligible for this event.

New Association Croquet Laws

The AC Laws have been under review for the past few years and a few changes to the laws come into force from 1 March 2021. A new edition of the laws should be available from the CA office by the end of this month. There is a link on the CA website to the changes in the laws (https://worldcroquet.org/documents/Governance/ACLC/Changes%20log_final.pdf.) – I printed them and found it was fourteen pages long! I am still wading through them and trying to take it all in.

As far as players are concerned there seems to be one important change. In the past when casting (swinging the mallet to and fro before striking the ball) if you accidentally touch the ball with your mallet, you were not penalised – you were allowed to replace the ball and play the stroke again. This law has changed for balls in a critical position (e.g. attempting to run an angled hoop) – you are no longer allowed to take the stroke again, your turn has ended. In a non-critical situation (e.g. If you are playing your ball in the open court and are aiming at another ball in the open court (i.e. not wired or cross-pegged) you are still allowed to replace your ball and play the stroke. The question now arises “What do you do in borderline cases?” Answer: “If it is a borderline case it is considered critical”.

As far as I can tell many of the other changes are advice to referees as to what to do in other borderline situations (e.g. faults). In the past, when judging a fault, my understanding was that if you are not sure you gave the benefit of the doubt to the striker. Under the new laws when judging a fault, in borderline cases it is deemed to be a fault. Players may find that referees suddenly become stricter than they have been in the past. Personally, I am not that happy with this change of emphasis.

I can see these changes causing a lot of arguments. C'est la vie!

Peter Dyke

(17/02/2021)