

SPRING MEETING

NORTH WESTERN FEDERATION OF CROQUET CLUBS

**The Meeting was held on Saturday 7th March 2015 at 10.00 am
at Culcheth Sports & Social Club, Charnock Road, Culcheth, WA3 5SH.**

The Meeting was attended by 32 people representing:

Bowdon	Ken Cooper, David Walters, Steve Reynolds, Brian Storey, Barry Keen.
Bury	Jean Hargreaves, Ken Eccles, Margaret Eccles, David Barrett, Paul Kenworthy, Graham Good, Paul Rigge.
Chester	Pat Clare, Alan Clare, David Guyton
Craig Y Don	
Crake	
Culcheth	Anne Connop, Bob Connop, Alan Wright
Ellesmere	
Flixton	
Fylde	Peter Wilson, Liz Wilson.
IOM	
Keswick	
Liverpool	James Hawkins
LLanfairfechan	
Nannerch	
Pendle & Craven	Kathryn Schofield, Roger Schofield, Garry Wilson.
Penrith	
Salford	
Southport	Don Williamson, Clare Bostock, Kath Thomas, Tony Thomas.
Tattenhall	Ruth Wrigley, Sheila Marsland
Westmorland	John Shakespeare, Ivan Wheatley

1. Welcome by the Chairman

The NW FCC Chairman Garry Wilson started on time and welcomed club representatives to the meeting, especially those from the far reaches of the area.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Keith Roberts, Christine Irwin, Ron Welsh. Clubs; John Saxby(Bowdon), John Dawson(Chester), Tom Griffith (Crake), Jack Pattenden (Craig y Don), Richard Bellwood(IOM), Georgina Llewellyn (Llanfairfechan), Howard Bowron (Penrith).

3. Confirmation of Minutes of the AGM – 8th November 2014 & 8th March 2014

The minutes of the last two meeting were approved unaltered ;

4. Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

There were no matters arising from the previous Minutes not covered by today's agenda.

5. Reports from the Officers

A. Chairman – Garry Wilson.

Garry reported he'd had a gentle introduction to the chair with a quiet winter.

B. Secretary – Paul Rigge.

The usual correspondence with regard to both southern Academy places and coaching courses at York had been cascaded to club secretaries upon receipt.

Mail exchanges with Jeff Dawson & Ian Vincent on the proposed CA changes – covered by today's agenda

C. Treasurer – Bob Connop

Copy of Current Income & Expenditure Statement (attached) was made available. A 'loss' over winter was reported, due to the grant to Crake.

D. CA Representative – Peter Wilson

Regarding individual clubs having queries regarding the proposed motions I can report a CA working party has been set up to deal with them. We have had an occasion to use it regarding a question of limited access. We received a prompt and clear reply to our query.

I think it is important for clubs and individuals with concerns about the future to try to understand the various motions and the reasons behind them. But if this then leaves you with a query you can contact the SGM working party directly by email to Ian Vincent.

I serve on the AC Tournament committee and I am Director of the All England AC tournament. I now enter my busy period as entries come in and have to be allocated to the area finals. The final is in Chester this year so I hope this will encourage extra interest this year in this Federation. ***

At the last meeting of the ACTC the Handicap Committee invited comments from us regarding some new ideas they are working on. We were consulted because the ACTC is responsible for the Tournament Regulations.

Briefly the Handicap Committee's ideas are that every CA Tournament to have a Tournament Handicapper appointed and the TH to check every player has handicap card with them and is playing from correct handicap. Failure to produce a handicap card will result in sanctions yet to be defined. Most likely that you play but cannot win tournament.

Developing a one size fits all plan is not as easy as it may seem. There are different problems at a tournament such as Fylde's Handicap to those of tournaments contested by minus 1.5s and below.

The numbers and rotations involved at the Counties is a special case.

The Handicap Committee also want club handicappers to become more active.

This is all for the future but it very much follows this Federation's initiative in our league matches.

E. League Manager - Tony Thomas

Thank you to everyone who contributed information to the scheduling process. Much to my surprise everything was squeezed in – about 200 events over 20 weeks. The draft schedule was circulated in early January and after a few alterations, the final list for our seven leagues was distributed on time at the end of February.

The league season will start on 3rd April and should finish at the end of September 2015.

Advanced League – reduced from 6 teams to 5 since Chester has now transferred to the B Level League.

Advanced B Level League – increased from 5 to 6 teams since being joined by Chester.

Weekend Handicap League – increased from 9 to 10 teams as Crake Valley have rejoined this league.

Midweek Handicap League - no change so continues with 8 teams.

Short Croquet League – decreased from 8 to 7 teams due to withdrawal of Fylde.

Level Play Golf League – this new league continues to expand and has now increased from 6 to 8 teams, gaining two teams from Bowdon (Sinners and Bandits), gained another team from Pendle (now have Pendle A and Pendle B), but lost one of the Bury teams.

Golf Croquet League – decreased from 10 to 9 teams as Bowdon have migrated to the Level Play Golf league.

So overall the league programme continues to expand and presents a varied and healthy competition. Add to this programme our Federation Millenium events, plus the wide range of club tournaments on offer and you have a vibrant and very successful Federation.

Just a reminder – there is one change to the League Rules for 2015 – concerning the players Handicap Cards - captains should ensure Players have an accurate card. Games will be retrospectively conceded if players play off the wrong handicap.

Please keep me informed of match results or other changes and in return I will keep the website up to date. For Advanced matches, I do need the details of individual games in order to inform the CA Rankings Officers but for all other matches all I need is the match result. I can be contacted by email, text or telephone.

As always, the website provides an accurate resource of updated fixture lists, contact details of team captains, league tables, league rules, match scoresheets and club handicappers.

Best wishes for an enjoyable season

F. Development Officer – Ron Welch

I am going to stand down as FDO for the North West as soon as a successor can be found and in any case by the AGM. I will give as much assistance as I can to the new Development Officer.

Invitations to this post now open ...

G. Coaching Officer – Christine Irwin

Flying Circus Coaching

As in previous years, courses are available in Golf and Association Croquet for all levels from beginners to A-class. Each Flying Circus course is typically 1 day long and caters for 8 – 16 players of a similar ability. Best of all in the North West our courses are free to all club members. So any North West Club who would like to hold a course should contact me and I will coordinate clubs and coaches.

So far we have one course arranged. Ken Cooper will be running a course for **Handicap 16-20 at Bowdon on Friday 10th April 2015**. This 1-day North-West Federation Bronze Course concentrates on the important parts of the CA's 2-day Bronze course and covers openings, split croquet strokes, hoop approaches, basic cannons, 4-ball breaks, general strategy against better players, break management, plus blackboard lessons on 3-ball endings (if time permits). To date there are players from Bowdon and Culcheth signed up for this and there are a few spaces still available.

The course will be run from 10am- 4pm. Players bring their own lunch. If you are interested in attending please let Ken Cooper know ASAP - kenco99@btinternet.com

Fylde have requested a **beginners golf course**. We are currently arranging this and when we have a date we will put it on the Fed website and people from other clubs will be welcome to join in.

A/B Class Pods

Last year was the first year of “pods” – regular 2 hour sessions each on a specific topic aimed at A-class players. Nationally and locally these were judged to be a success. So over the winter I helped Ian Burridge revise the documentation for these and they are ready to run again this year. I know Bowdon will be running them again and I hope Bury will too. Players interested should register via the CA’s website and they will be notified of dates and topics. We will also post the dates and topics on the Fed website.

Last October I said I was interested in extending the pod idea to higher handicapped groups too. I have not had the time to do much with this idea yet but I still hope to be able to put something together for later this season.

Golf Croquet Coaching Manual

The CA Coaching Committee (made up of the coaching officers from all Federations) has been working on a new Golf Croquet Coaching manual. I have the latest draft of this for comment and it is looking pretty good. We expect the final version will be available in a few weeks. I will let all qualified golf coaches know when it is ready.

Coaches Training Course

Last year I ran a very successful 2-day course for coaches at Chester. I based my course on some useful input from Roger Staples (Chairman of the Coaching Committee) and James Hawkins. Then over the winter I tidied up my notes from this and this is now being reviewed by the CA Coaching Committee and when developed a little further it will become the CA manual for this course.

So far 3 people in the North West (2 from Westmoreland and 1 from Bowdon) have said they want to do the course this year. If there are at least 3 others in the area interested then we will arrange it. The course is aimed at both Association Croquet and Golf Croquet coaches.

Referees – Golf and Association

Barry Keen gave an AC and a GC course in March last year following his usual pattern of doing them every two years if the demand is there. If there is a specific request from a club to hold a course with a guaranteed attendance at least 6 candidates then Barry, Colin or I will gladly give another this year.

Also if anyone has completed the course but not yet taken the exam and wants to do that then contact me and we can get that arranged too

H. NW Festival of Croquet Manager – Keith Roberts.

I am happy to continue management of the Championships/Festival.

I. Child Safeguarding Officer – Jean Hargreaves.

No problems from clubs notified to me.

Reminder to all clubs – If you are intending to do regular sessions (most days of one week or one day each week over a month or more) with a group or groups of children during the season please contact me as a matter of urgency to discuss DBS/CRB requirements.

Thank you

J. Pennine Cup - Paul Rigge

Nothing to report, however, usual appeal for players with AC Hcp < 12 to make themselves available for this year’s match at Pendle & Earby 21st June – not that anyone ever steps up!

6. Arrangements (dates and locations) for NW Federation Millennium Competitions.

a)	Advanced at Pendle & Craven	(25-26 th April 2015)
b)	Handicap Golf at Whitehead Park, Bury	(9 th May 2015)
c)	Handicap AC at Crake	(9-10 th May 2015)
d)	Short AC at Fylde	(30 th May 2015)
e)	Level Golf at Chester	(31 st May 2015)

Entry Forms were handed out at the meeting and would be emailed out to the clubs.

7. CA Changes.

Prior to this meeting, all the recent articles published in the Gazette by Jeff Dawson had been made available, to apprise all delegates with the current CA proposals. (G 352-4)

The main issue for our consideration was, should our Federation formally accept the invitation to join the CA but a lively discussion about all the CA's Proposals for members & clubs was entertained by the chair, with each contributor doing so from the front.

Various concerns were still being expressed on the floor about clubs losing voting rights, club size definitions, increasing southern membership bias, requesting 'alien' clubs to affiliate. While sympathetic to the rational behind the general proposals, there was still a feeling of distrust of them in the room, but it was recognised that they had been modified to such a degree from the original, 18mths ago that this Federation could join the CA and maintain it's independence.

Membership Vote ; Passed (yes 8: no 1: abs 1) Secretary to write positively.

All clubs and current CA members were reminded that they have till 18th March 2015 to also cast their vote before the Special General Meeting at Hurlingham 28th March implements any changes.

Votes can be cast online from the CA website; <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=news/newsdb.asp&NewsID=5142>

8. Club Reports and Announcements (to be taken in alphabetical order).

i) **Bowdon, David Walters reports;**

Bowdon Update: we've run our usual programme of winter activities, both on the lawns & indoors. Alan Mayne has been creative and laid out 3 slightly undersized lawns where we used to have 2, so we can now have 5 lawns in use for club winter play

On a sadder note, you may have seen on our website that our secretary John Saxby has been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. I hope you will join me in keeping him in our thoughts & prayers.

ii) **Bury, Paul Kenworthy reports;**

Reporting for Bury Club has become a report on 3 venues.

As previously stated we are no longer affiliated to the Heaton Park Bowling club and we now rent the lawns and clubhouse at the costs levied by the Bowling club. The bowlers are prioritising maintenance onto one lawn so the others will not be as well kept. The Lancashire Golf will go ahead on the 11 + 12 April 2015 but even this has proved troublesome.

Coronation Park continues as normal and is still our main venue for 2015. The lawns have some moss but this will be dealt with.

Our new venue Whitehead Park is progressing well. The lawns (3 full size) have yet to be cut due to the recent wet weather but we are hopeful that once cutting commences the grass will thicken and we will be able to play.

We are still hopeful that the Handicap golf event on the 9 May will go ahead.

We were not awarded the grant money we had applied for the pavilion improvements. However we have commenced work on the pavilion. New toilets and changing rooms are being created. An equipment store and a garage for our "ride on mower" are also being built. Yes we have purchased a ride on mower.

The money has come from some very generous donations from club members. We intend to apply again for grants to enable completion of a new kitchen and finishing of the main room.

Our membership remains stable. We will I believe secure a few new members due to having a new location. However we have launched a Development Task Force to work over the next 18 months on how we can both increase membership and develop new revenue streams from Whitehead Park

iii) **Chester,**

No Report

iv) **Craig y Don (Llandudno).**

No Report

v) **Crake Valley.**

No Report.

vi) **Culcheth, Alan Wright Reports;**

During the winter we play on our indoor mat. This has proved very popular and games of doubles, double banking on the mat even had two turn up from Liverpool/Upton.

vii) **Ellesmere – no report**

viii) **Flixton – no report**

ix) **Fylde – no report**

x) **Isle of Man - no report**

xi) **Keswick – no report**

xii) **Liverpool, James Hawkins reports;**

Managed to 'repair' club mower by making my own gasket. Two renegades from Upton still members and keen.

xiii) **Llanfairfechan, Georgina Llewellyn Reports;**

At the Federation spring meeting '14, I reported that our financial situation over the last two years had not been good and although things have improved slightly, it is still a cause for concern.

xiv) **Nannerch – no report**

xv) **Pendle and Craven – no report**

xvi) **Penrith and North Lakes – no report.**

xvii) **Salford – no report**

xviii) **Southport - Don Williamson Reports;**

The access path is currently being re-laid and should be complete by mid-March, that should see an end to it being flooded.

North lawns have already been mown twice this year in preparation for the 2015 festival. 85% of the daisy population has been eliminated but moss treatment is still outstanding this winter.

xix) **Tattenhall – Ruth Wrigley reports**

We have got two new courts, both slightly undersized.

xx) **Westmorland (Levenshall) – no report**

9. Equipment – Please verify your inventory.

Bowdon	None	Keswick	None
Bury	None	Liverpool	CA start up set
Chester	None	Llanfairfechan	None
Crake Valley	Mower (50%)	Llandudno	CA start up set
			CA Dev Officer's Set (till end 2013)
Craig y Don	None	Nannerch	(6 hoops, 4 primary balls, peg, 4 mallets)
Culcheth	None	Pendle and Craven	None
Ellesmere	3 mallets	Penrith and North Lakes	4 mallets, 1 set hoops, 1 peg **
Flixton	None	Salford	CA start up set
Fylde	None	Southport & Birkdale	None
Harlech	None	Tattenhall	Set 2ndary balls + CA start up set, 2 garden croquet mallets 5 mallets
Isle of Man	None	Westmorland	1 set primary balls 1 set 2ndary balls
		Secretary	Digital Projector

** Secretary to ascertain equipment at Penrith.

10. Any Other Business

Handicaps - Don Williamson picked up on the CA reps report. Following the NW Fed's lead, the CA has issued pink "How to Fill in a Handicap Card" guidance forms. Also, the CA are trying to update their records so could clubs supply the names of their club Handicappers (both GC & AC) either directly or via the Fed please.

Don was voted into the new role as Federation Handicapper unopposed .

11. Date, time and location of next meetings

AGM, 21st November 2015 & Spring Meeting will be on 5th March 2016. Both at Culcheth Sports Club.

12. Close of Meeting - Meeting closed at 11:30

NWFCC

2014-2015 Income & Expenditure Statement

Current Year to 7 March 2015

		<u>Amount</u>	<u>Account</u>
Income & Expenditure			
<i>Member Club Affiliation Fees</i>	Affiliation Fees @ £20/Club	<u>£300.00</u>	£300.00
<i>Development</i>	Income		
	Expenditure	<hr/>	£0.00
<i>Miscellaneous Income</i>	Aiton Talk		
	Crake Millenium Tournament	£60.00	
	Interest	<u>£5.15</u>	£65.15
<i>Festival of Croquet</i>	Income	£0.00	
	Expenditure	<u>£0.00</u>	£0.00
<i>Miscellaneous Expenditure</i>	Coffee/Tea at AGM/Spring Meeting	-£30.00	
	Crake Mower	-£750.00	
	Website Expenses	-£29.99	
			-£809.99
Nett income (loss) during year			-£444.84
Opening Balances			
Cash			£0.00
Current Account			£1,271.17
Deposit Account			£3,180.13
Total Opening Balances			<u>£4,451.30</u>
Total as at 7 March 2015			<u><u>£4,006.46</u></u>
Bank Balances as at 7 March 2015			
Cash			£0.00
Current Account			£801.18
Deposit Account			£3,205.28
Total as at 7 March 2015			<u><u>£4,006.46</u></u>