

# **SPRING MEETING**

## **NORTH WESTERN FEDERATION OF CROQUET CLUBS**

**The Meeting was held on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2014 at 10.00 am  
at Culcheth Sports & Social Club, Charnock Road, Culcheth, WA3 5SH.**

The Meeting was attended by 29 people representing:

Bowdon:	Barry Keen, John Saxby, David Walters.
Bury:	David Barrett, Graham Good, Jean Hargreaves, Paul Kenworthy, Jean Oldfield, Paul Rigge.
Chester:	Pat Clare, Alan Clare, John Dawson, David Guyton.
Culcheth:	Bob Connop, Brian Poynton, Alan Wright.
Fylde:	Peter Wilson, Liz Wilson.
Liverpool	James Hawkins.
Llanfairfechan	Georgina Llewellyn (also North Wales CC).
Pendle & Craven:	Kathryn Schofield, Roger Schofield, Maureen Whitaker, Geoff Whitaker, Ron Welsh.
Salford	Frances Rollinson, Irene Waterhouse.
Southport:	Tony Thomas, Don Williamson.

### **1. Welcome by the Chairman**

The NWFCC Chairman Liz Wilson started on time and welcomed club representatives to the meeting.

### **2. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Keith Roberts, Christine Irwin.

Clubs; Howard Bowron (Penrith), Tom Griffith (Crake), Jack Pattenden (Craig y Don), Ron Welsh (Pendle),b.

### **3. Confirmation of Minutes of the AGM – 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2013**

The minutes of the last meeting were approved after' correcting;

Date under 9.Coordination 22-23 August to 23-24 August and

Pendle Club Report in section 10 had been penned by Roger Schofield not Ron Welsh as stated.

Proposed by Paul Kenworthy, seconded by Don Williamson.

### **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 – Liz Wilson.**

Reported about the many winter meetings and much correspondence that had been generated about the CA Working Party including the recent 'CA's Northern Conference'. Also, yet more changes to Golf Laws & Handicapping – these to be covered in depth at today's meeting..

#### **B. Secretary – Paul Rigge.**

In addition to the correspondence mentioned by Liz;

John Harris (YorkCC) had published details about two coaching courses to be held in York before season start (copies of poster handed out with phone number for late entry inclusion.

Brian Shorney requests that all Level Golf matches also submit the results via email to [gcreresults@wcfcroquet.org](mailto:gcreresults@wcfcroquet.org) for inclusion into the rankings database.

#### **C. Treasurer – Bob Connop**

Copy of Current Income & Expenditure Statement (attached) was made available and note was made of the clubs that still hadn't renewed membership (IOM, Keswick, Nannerch & Penrith).

#### **D. CA Representative – Peter Wilson**

Our Rep is now Director of All England Handicap Tournament, has seats on both Discipline and Tournament committees as well as General Committee.

Peter also reports that it is the CA's intention to Video and stream the next MacRob held in England (2017).

#### **E. League Manager - Tony Thomas**

Much discussion about the draft league rules including new league, new calculations required for handicap doubles and (of course) new golf laws. All proposals were accepted unanimously by vote after some minor wording changes were made to the handed out/downloaded draft.

The Accepted Document to be published for download before the new season on the Federation's Website ([www.croquetnw.co.uk](http://www.croquetnw.co.uk))

#### **F. Coaching Officer – Ron Welch**

The plan was that I should meet Janet in November for her to hand over details of current NW development and for her to travel with me to the March meeting of the CA Development Committee. However, as you will be aware this became impossible when she suffered a stroke. I shall be picking up loose ends from individual clubs in the next couple of months and would be grateful for any relevant information by email. I would be happy to speak to any club representative here today after the meeting.

I did go to the recent CA committee meeting last weekend. It was by their standards relatively short as there were no new applications for grants. The good news is that this means that the majority of this year's development budget is available.

There has been a change in the rules in that no personal guarantees for loans will be required in future, just a club officer signing on behalf of the club.

Two other points of interest from the meeting. There have been problems with National Trust and English Heritage properties where croquet is played. These are partly due to inconsistencies among the various administrators and the Committee is going to try to approach both organizations at high level with a view to a national agreement. All regions were asked to contribute information - I think Levens Hall is our only relevant house. Please let me know about any others.

Finally, a piece of news from Australia. It seems possible that Dawson balls may disappear as the Dawsons wish to retire and the only interest in taking over has come from the UK. They don't seem keen to let the Poms get their hands on their balls.

Two referee courses are being held 15/16<sup>th</sup> March for AC & 23<sup>rd</sup> March for GC.

#### **G. Coaching Officer – Christine Irwin**

As I am still new in this position I don't have much to report on. So this will be brief.

My plan is to continue to run the very successful Flying Circus coaching days. This one day format seems to suit us. So the main thing I want to make people aware of is the need for Clubs to let me know what coaching will help you.

As a reminder – most clubs have competent Club Coaches who are able to teach newcomers the rudiments of both Association Croquet and Golf Croquet. The Flying Circus is concerned more with players past this stage. We will provide a coach, of the appropriate level of expertise and experience, to move your players on by coming to your club and running a full day course. Please refer to near the back of the FIXTURES BOOK for the complete details of which level is required by your members – from Improvers (with Handicaps 20-24 )–right through to Gold level.

The intention is to visit any club within the NW Federation during the season that requires tuition, or to put on a course at another club also requesting that level of course. In order to plan the programme we need to know the level required, the numbers involved and the dates when your members and lawns are available. We will publish the dates of courses on the NW FCC web site and make them open to all members of the Federation to attend. The Federation will fund the course and so there is no cost to the club (other than providing the coaches with lunch).

Courses and venues already identified are:

□ BOWDON - IMPROVERS' COURSE, Thursday 10th April. This course is largely a revision of the Beginners' Course but covers techniques to a greater level and prepares players for match play. (Coach – Ken Cooper)

□ BOWDON - SILVER-GILT COURSE, Sunday 8th June. This course is concerned entirely with advanced play and is intended for those players who have reached a good standard in handicap play but have little experience of advanced. (Coach – Colin Irwin)

So please contact me with your coaching requirements and I will endeavour to match coaches and clubs together. Email: Christine.E.Irwin@gmail.com

#### **H. NW Festival of Croquet Manager – Keith Roberts.**

Nothing to report, however, remind people that they can send their (constructive) ideas to me, they will be considered along with the only one I have received so far.

#### **I. Child Protection Officer – Jean Hargreaves.**

Only thing to report was about an enquiry from Ellesmere about there \*Need\* to report who protection officer was.

#### **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 22<sup>nd</sup> June.

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

a) Advanced 26-27 April - Heaton Park

b) Handicap 17/18 May - Crake

c) Short – 31<sup>st</sup> May – Fylde

d) Golf Hcp 10<sup>th</sup> May - Heaton Park

3) Golf Lvl Wen 17<sup>th</sup> Sept – Heaton Park

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

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

i) **Bowdon, John Saxby reports;**

Bowdon have not done anything different this year. We have wintered well, the lawns have been open virtually all the time, competitions on Mon and Wed been well supported. Canasta on Tuesday and Youth club on Fri night still bloom. Annual dinner/dance at the Cinnamon club gets better.

We host the Northern One Ball Final on 26th April and the Presidents Cup on 5th Sept.

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

Winter events held at member's houses and our annual dinner were enjoyable as well as successful in raising £100's of pounds for the club.

Coronation Park lawns, which showed a huge improvement in grass quality in 2013, have suffered a little with the wet winter inducing considerable moss which is being dealt with.

Heaton Park continues to be something of a nightmare in terms of lawn maintenance and our relationship with the bowlers. Financially we are being asked to contribute a sum of £1741 pounds and also pay an increase in lawn charges. We have rejected the £1741 as we do not consider it proportional to our usage and we dispute the increased lawn charges as they have never been agreed at a Heaton Park committee meeting and would make running tournaments at a profit difficult.

We hope to hold the events we have committed to at Heaton Park but have concerns over the condition of lawn 3. The maintenance of this lawn is contentious and is also causing some disputes within our club which I find unpalatable as they would not happen if Heaton Park was more amicable.

The big news for 2014 is that Bury Croquet club is now officially a tenant of a second venue just north of Bury called Whitehead Park. Much praise must go to David Barrett for our acquisition of this facility and his work to make it a potential first class venue for the future. As it stands we have a large but internally somewhat shabby clubhouse. We also have 2 crown green lawns which could be played on as the crown is not too large.

The plan is to level the lawns and at the same time create 3 full size lawns. This is the maximum that will fit within the current boundary. We have the money to achieve this.

The plans for the clubhouse range for a palace with a lounge (big enough for indoor croquet), kitchen, changing facilities etc. etc to a minimum upgrade using members time. This is dependent on the grants that are currently being applied for being successful or not. Once we have established our exact plans for Whitehead Park we will be embarking on a recruitment drive as continued maintenance of this venue will deplete our money reserves with our current membership numbers.

We look forward to another fun season of competitive croquet in 2014.

iii) **Chester, John Dawsons Reports;**

The lawns were closed in November for the winter. At the moment the water is still draining & running off them, so we hope to have them back in action by month end.

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

No Report

v) **Crake Valley.**

No Report.

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

Once again we are looking forward to another enjoyable year. We have recently bought a new set of hoops which we will be using for our matches. As well as competing in the Golf League we shall also be entering a team in the Level Play Golf League. The financial difficulties being experienced by the Culcheth Sports and Social Club have meant that we are still spending more on our Lawn maintenance costs. This we have been able to do from our reserves.

Last year one of our aims was to increase our membership and we have recruited several new members. We have also raised extra funding from Social events such as the Quizzes which have been very successful. We are fortunate that we have members who are prepared to work hard, selling tickets and organising such events. We hope to attract new members from these events.

Members from Bury and Pendle were welcome guests at our annual dinner in January and some of our members have attended the Bury annual dinner.

During the winter we play on our indoor mat. This has proved very popular and games of doubles, double banking on the mat to the throbbing rhythms of the Zumba class behind the partition, is an unforgettable experience.

Members from other clubs are welcome to join us. Some of our members also meet together during the winter to play cards and indoor games.

We shall be holding our usual club competitions and once again will be urging members to play their games earlier in the season rather than leaving everything until September.

vii) **Ellesmere – no report**

viii) **Flixton, Cath – no report**

**ix) Fylde, Peter Wilson reports;**

Are pleased to announce that despite the weather the lawns have not even been soggy – let alone flooded. For those of you who know Fylde we are however, disappointed to announce that despite the severe gales the greenhouses on the land across the ditch are still standing!

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

**xi) Keswick – no report**

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

Going back to club straight from this meeting to give ‘first cut’ mow to courts this year and I hope to then have my first knock since October. New Club House now complete as some of you know. Current membership stands at about ten – don’t really know until they re-new.

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

We play indoor from Jan-Mar and held a recent ‘Beetle Drive’ the raised publicity & £270 to Rotary funds. Last Season we traded at a slight loss, spending more than our income so have made a few changes, the most notable of which is to reduce the size of our committee down to just eight. Bookings are already coming in all we need is good weather.

**xiv) Nannerch – no report**

**xv) Pendle and Craven – Roger Schofield reports;**

Duncan Heator has been up to pass his professional eye over our turf and we will be following his advice & treatment in the coming season.

We have had the carpet down once so far over the winter but we have also kept one lawn open for play too.

We intend to play Croquet in the BBC “Sport for All” charity event in the hope of raising our local profile.

**xvi) Penrith and North Lakes, no report**

**xvii) Salford - Frances Rollinson Reports;**

By the end of 2013 our lawn had become a lunar landscape and almost unplayable. Changes in park maintenance management have led to meetings and emails between them and our croquet group. We now have a remedial plan for our surface which will hopefully, give us fairly decent playing condition. This should be followed by regular grass cutting. So fingers crossed we may be able to improve our playing ability and invite other groups to our club in the forth coming season.

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

Over winter, play has been enjoyed on Thursday afternoons by the ‘White Top Comp’ – Short Alternative Shot Doubles.

New for this year, we intend to build a Summer House down the bottom of the main lawns and an equipment storage box inside the North Lawn Cage. We have also launched a new AC Hcp tournament into the dairy to be held over the weekend 23/24<sup>th</sup> August.

**xix) Tattenhall – David Boyd reports**

We plan to attend this years Festival and I’m personally attending the referee course

**xx) Westmorland (Levenshall) John Shakespeare reports.**

Despite the winter rains, our area has drained well with no flooding.

Our Short league team really enjoyed their first season of competitive play. To that end we will be fielding three teams at this year’s Federation Southport Festival.

## **8. Golf Handicaps – Don Williamson**

Don tried his best to clarify the new CA handicaps changes that have been made over winter, basically the scale has been opened up at the bottom to now officially allow minus grades but if you have a Hcp of four and above – don’t read anymore cause it’s that bits not changed. From three down, you must have your card inspected so that you can be re-assessed (‘screwed over’) and given your new grade. Then, if you play in a handicap game you must then use this ‘new’ grade to ‘look-up’ what your ‘effective’ hcp/grade is for that game - irrespective of your opponent’s grade. Got it? – table to be found on CA’s web site.

## **9. Any Other Business**

Southport are buying a Heart Deliberator to be held at the club and members will be attending CPR classes to learn how to use it.... (Make sure you move about a bit when your lining up peel attempts there, you have been warned - Ed)

The proposed Inter-Federation Festival will be held (maybe) 6/7<sup>th</sup> September.

## **10. Date, time and location of next meetings**

AGM, 8<sup>th</sup> November 2014 & Spring Meeting will be on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2015. Both at Culcheth Sports Club.

## **11. Close of Meeting - Meeting closed at 11:55**

**NWFCC**

**2013-2014 Income & Expenditure Statement**

**Current Year to 20 March 2014**

		<b><u>Amount</u></b>	<b><u>Account</u></b>
<b>Income &amp; Expenditure</b>			
<i>Member Club Affiliation Fees</i>	Affiliation Fees @ £20/Club	<u>£300.00</u>	£300.00
<i>Development</i>	Income		
	Expenditure	<u>          </u>	£0.00
<i>Miscellaneous Income</i>	Aiton Talk		
	Fylde Millenium Tournament		
	Interest	<u>£1.07</u>	£1.07
<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	
	NWFed v Yorks. Lawn Fees		
	Website Expenses	-£40.78	
	Handicap Forum Expenses		-£70.78
<b>Nett income (loss) during year</b>			<b>£230.29</b>
<b>Opening Balances</b>			
Cash			£0.00
Current Account			£1,197.16
Deposit Account			£3,127.22
Total Opening Balances			<u><b>£4,324.38</b></u>
<b>Total as at 20 March 2014</b>			<u><b>£4,554.67</b></u>
<b>Bank Balances as at 20 March 2014</b>			
Cash			£0.00
Current Account			£1,406.38
Deposit Account			£3,148.29
<b>Total as at 20 March 2014</b>			<u><b>£4,554.67</b></u>

Outstanding Affiliation Fees as at 20 March 2014 = 5