



SOUTH EAST CROQUET FEDERATION

FIVE YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A REPORT ON THE S.E.C.F. TO DATE

AND

THE PLANS FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

1998-2002

January 1998

Development plan for Croquet in the South East Croquet Federation Area covering London, Kent, Surrey and Sussex

1 Introduction

This report deals briefly with the history of the SECF and covers development plans for the next five years, 1998 to 2002.

The first development plan was produced by the SECF in 1988, the second, an update in 1994.

In general these plans may have been a little ambitious, but good progress has been made in implementing the spirit, if not always the letter of the objectives.

2 Background

The SECF is complementary to the CA, it was formed in March 1987 to promote Croquet and to co-ordinate the activities of clubs in London, Kent, Surrey and Sussex.

The SECF is administered by a committee of eight which is elected annually. This includes a coaching/development/equipment officer, a publicity officer and a representative on the CA Council.

Ten clubs in the area run CA tournaments. These cater for established players. The purpose of the SECF is to encourage new players and introduce them to the game, and to cater for less experienced players. To achieve this, it provides coaching and development, fosters new clubs, runs leagues, organises tournaments and events and holds a one-week Summer School.

The original report of April 1988 shows 19 clubs belonging to the SECF, in the 1994 up date this had risen to 34.

This number- 34, remained the same in 1997, Although the SECF has been successful in recruitment, the number of clubs belonging to the SECF has not increased due to the dissolution of clubs, e.g. Beckenham and Vine Road.

5 Coaching and Development

The SECF provides coaching, help with development and handicapping to clubs in the region. Through the Area Development Officer it also organises CA coaching courses.

Since 1989 the SECF has run a one week Summer School, originally at Ardingly, but since 1995 at Southwick. This accepts a handicap range of 10 and over and covers coaching together with a Swiss type competition. Although the number has dropped from the original 40, there were 24, both in 1996 and 1997, and the school is still very successful. Most of the participants are from the SECF area, but the school has also attracted people from Scotland, Wales and Ireland.

The School is being held at Southwick again this year, 1998. We already have eight applicants, including two from Scotland.

One of the key elements in the CA 1983 initiative was the appointment of voluntary Area Development Officers (ADO's) and voluntary Area Coaching Officers (ACO's) in each region.

The ADO's role to promote croquet as widely as possible, including help in the formation of new clubs.

The ACO's role to organise coaching and to administer the training and appointment of coaches in the national scheme.

Following an initiative from the SECF, funds were made available, last year, from the Sports Council, via the CA for development and coaching.

As a result of these funds, available again this year, 1998, we were able to appoint Regional Development Officers (RDO's).

This has meant that last year we were able to provide coaching and help to eleven clubs in the area, this will be continued this year by providing this benefit to any club that requires help. If necessary, in future years, we will consider financing this from SECF funds.

6 Golf Croquet

Golf croquet is played and supported extensively in the area, we also find it beneficial when teaching beginners basic skills, moreover it holds their interest.

We find that golf croquet is appropriate for large gatherings and corporate events, where the rules are easy to explain and limited skills are soon acquired.

This year, 1998, we will start to provide golf croquet coaching through our ADO, for clubs in the area who require it.

7 Finance

Our finances are derived from member clubs' subscriptions, SECF tournaments and the Summer School. In 1997 money also came from the Sports Council via the CA for coaching and development, funds will be available again this year, 1998, from this source.

Our accounts are now audited annually by an independent auditor.

The SECF offers loans to member clubs for development, equipment etc

8 Equipment

The SECF has equipment which is available on loan to clubs in the area, it is also used for coaching events etc. The stock was augmented last year, 1997, from the funds received from the Sports Council via the CA.

The utilisation is controlled through our Equipment Officer who also maintains the equipment.

9 Events and Competitions

The SECF organises and manages U & B association croquet and golf league matches together with tournaments and events. The committee reviews these annually to consider improvements and additional elements.

Events and competitions are publicised by circulating a 'calendar' to the secretaries of member clubs, this year, 1998, these include:

- Indoor speed tournament.
- Improvers, bronze and silver coaching courses.
- Summer School.
- Two day team tournament.
- One ball team tournaments.
- Ladies day.
- Golf croquet day.
- Veterans tournament.
- Short croquet tournament.
- High bisque tournament.

10 Affiliation to the Croquet Association

The SECF supports the proposal that all clubs in the Federation must be registered with the CA from 1st January 1999.

We have six unregistered clubs, they will be contacted by a committee member, the situation explained, and they will be encouraged to join the SECF.

11 Indoor Carpet

In addition to the indoor speed tournament being held at Maidstone in March this year, 1998, it is planned to hire a small side hall and carpet. This is to promote croquet and allow people to 'have a go'. Depending on the success we will consider buying a small indoor carpet.

12 The Millennium

We are now considering events to celebrate the Millennium, suggestions so far have included a weekend Croquet Festival with games for all handicap levels, including variations of the Association game.

The Millennium will be raised at our AGM to get ideas and contributions from member clubs.

13 Registration Forms

Clubs in the SECF area are sent a registration form each year. On this they are asked to give details of the club, including names of contacts, club tournaments etc. They are also asked to indicate if they require any help with coaching, development and handicaps. We have now included golf croquet, asking if they want coaching.

14 Godfathers

Each member of the committee is allocated four or five clubs in his/her locality and acts as a main contact.

The committee member keeps in touch with his/her allocated clubs to improve the 'awareness' of the Federation, thus giving the Federation a better appreciation of the position and needs of clubs.

If possible each committee member visits each of his/her allocated clubs during the season.

15 Schools

We realise the importance of involving young people, contacts are being made with schools and arrangements made for pupils to visit clubs and 'have a go'.

We will also be giving full support to the CA in providing coaching at schools in our area.

16 Summary and Conclusions

This paper shows the background and the achievements in the SECF since it was formed in March 1987.

We are fortunate in having an experienced committee, three of whom have recently retired and will be able to devote more time to SECF affairs.

We now have RDO's, who with the ADO, can provide coaching, development, assistance with handicapping and other help that clubs require.

Our AGM is well supported, some twenty clubs attending.

We organise coaching and referees' courses through the CA, we also run the Summer School.

We will be stepping up our involvement with schools.

In the past most of the help and support has been from committee members, but this is changing and we are increasing the contribution that clubs and individuals can make.

We are getting clubs and individuals more involved through regular news letters, an annual calendar of events in the area, our 'godfathers' who keep in touch with clubs and our AGM where we invite input and ideas.

We have a healthy bank balance and are able to offer loans to our member clubs.

We regularly review the events etc. that we organise.

We appreciate the importance of publicity, have produced a pamphlet and have a display for use at events.

We will review our activities when the CA's forward plan has been finalised, so that we continue to complement their nationally agreed objectives.