

South East Croquet Federation – 2007 AGM 18th March 2007 – Surbiton CC

Minutes

The meeting started at 10:50am with 35 representatives from Canterbury, Caterham, Compton, Crawley, Dulwich, Ealing, Ember, Hurlingham, Merton, Purley Bury, Ramsgate, Reigate Priory, Rother Valley, Surbiton, Sussex County, Sydenham and Tunbridge Wells.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Bexley, Imperial College, Ivychurch, Littlehampton and Worthing.

2. Minutes of 2006 AGM

The minutes were accepted without correction.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising.

4. Approval of accounts for the period ending 31st December 2006

The treasurer presented the accounts. There was a surplus of £789. This was due to a healthy surplus on the summer school and only providing £500 in grants. The SECF has assets of over £7500 and clubs are reminded that grants and loans are available for capital projects. The meeting accepted the accounts unanimously.

5. Annual subscription for 2007

The subscription was agreed to be unchanged at £10 per club.

6. Report on 2006 events and presentation of trophies

The new level play golf croquet league had a healthy entry of 7 teams; a new trophy has been purchased for this. Trophies for the league winners and other events were presented. Unfortunately the B league trophy was not available for Reigate Priory.

7. Development and coaching report

Michael Hague reported that although there were no new clubs, substantial improvements were made during the year. Tunbridge Wells completed a major project of lawn levelling, irrigation, storage and the acquisition of new lawns making it into a centre of excellence. Rother Valley has improved their facilities providing what Michael described as “probably the most beautiful club in the South East”. Tunbridge Wells have been awarded the Apps Heley award for their progress and it is likely that Rother Valley will make an application for the Townsend award.

The coaching courses were well-attended attracting visitors from Germany, Austria and Italy. Schools work is being assisted by Mike Huxley at Charterhouse and Paul Salisbury at Harrow. The southeast is in need of more qualified coaches at all levels. It would be possible to arrange courses at clubs that can gather a few interested people. We also need more referees for both Association and Golf croquet. There are a couple of places still available on the March 31st Golf croquet laws course at Woking.

Daphne reported on the summer school, this attracted 25 participants from as far afield as Germany, Austria and the USA. The mixture of different coaches is particularly helpful in allowing players to learn things in different ways; a ratio of 1 coach to at most 4 players is always maintained. The event was enhanced with excellent catering and a visit from John Solomon to encourage the players. The aim to promote and enjoy croquet continues to be met. The reasonable fee of £100 for 5 days allowed us to make a useful surplus and will be kept for 2007. Daphne thanked all of the coaches, caterers and others at Southwick who make this event such a success. She is also indebted to her personal assistant, her husband.

8. Election of officers and committee

The following were re-elected unopposed:

Chairman – Bill Arliss

Secretary and Treasurer – Richard Hilditch

Committee – David Collins, Daphne Gaitley, Michael Hague, George Noble, Roy Ware (one vacancy)
(CA Rep: David Mooney)

9. Election of independent examiner

Roger Weeks was re-elected as independent examiner for the financial year ending 31.12.07.

10. 2007 League rules

We had a general discussion of the existing rules. The wording of the fact that non-U league matches can be varied in format by mutual agreement needs to be improved. The balance of playing the same teams year after year against travelling further was discussed. It was agreed to keep the current pattern of most games being as local as possible but to allow clubs to ask to avoid certain repeated fixtures. The scoring of a walkover was changed by a vote of 15 to 3 to be 3 points (the same as for a win) rather than 2 points. Where a qualified referee was not available for a match the two captains would agree beforehand that one senior player would have the final say on matters of law. The following items will be added to the checklist: agree a referee or senior player for laws, provide a law book, bring handicap cards, ensure that the lawns are cut and hoops set.

11. Other 2007 events

We are running all the 2006 events in 2007. The club events calendar will be fixed after the AGM and circulated quickly.

12. Handicapping

There was a general discussion of handicapping for golf and association croquet. Clubs are reminded that they may operate club handicaps above the CA maxima of 6 and 24 respectively, allowing indices to drop below 100 and 850 respectively. There were mixed views on full bisque play. One idea that can be used is a variable base (for instance the Yorkshire Variable Base Handicapping System uses a base of $\frac{1}{4}$ of the sum of the two handicaps rounded down).

13. A.O.B.

Mick Belcham asked whether clubs had had problems with using email when constitutions referred to “notification in writing”. The SECF constitution is not exposed.

Bill Arliss has prepared a paper that the CA council are discussing called “The need for change” that recognises the equality of golf and association croquet and seeks to integrate social players with the CA. We have moved far beyond golf croquet just being a patronised poorer relative to association croquet. The paper proposes constitutional changes to the CA to bring the two forms of the game onto to an equal footing and other mechanisms to address the gap between the CA and the ordinary club member who may be only interested in the social element of croquet. We discussed the idea of a “mother club” to associate smaller clubs with larger nearby clubs and adding a section to the gazette for club members who are not interested in the tournament circuit. The 10-point association game was commended for beginners.

There is a course on the maintenance of croquet lawns on 31.10.07 in Bingley, Yorkshire. The CA can assist with expenses for anyone who is interested.

Posters for the National Garden Croquet Classic and the summer school were distributed.

The Surbiton club, and particularly George Noble were thanked for their excellent hospitality and lunch.

R. Hilditch 21.3.06