

**Minutes of the 23rd Annual General Meeting
of the South East Croquet Federation
held at
Surbiton Croquet Club
on Sunday 28 February 2010**

The following 21 Clubs were represented:

Caterham (J Rushby and K Slatter); Canterbury (J Byers and M Poole); Compton (H Smith); Dulwich (D Collins; J Reddish and S Whiteley); Ealing (D Wedmore); Ember (M Lambert); Guildford & Godalming (M Godfrey); Hampstead Heath (R Hilditch); Hurlingham (P Browne); Littlehampton (G Holdsworth and M Holdsworth); Merton (C Doswell); Parsons Green (G Duke); Purley Bury (D Davey and P Davey); Ramsgate (G Wallin); Reigate Priory (G Gunton); Roehampton (D Mooney and P Siddall); Rother Valley (D Smith); Royal Tunbridge Wells (J Diamond); Surbiton (D Beck; N Graves and G Noble); Sussex County (W Arliss and J Isaacs); Woking (M Hague; E Mackenzie-Gray; A Jacot and B Jones).

Apologies for absence were received from:

D Gaitley (Committee); Bexley; Chichester & Fishbourne; Crawley (A Jenkinson and L Nash); Hampstead Heath (G Higgins); Hayes, Bromley & Keston; Ivychurch; Sydenham (S Carter) and Temple Bowling (D Whyte).

A warm welcome was extended by the Chairman to Quiller Barrett (a former Secretary of the Federation who attended in his capacity as President of the Croquet Association)

The minutes of the 22nd AGM held on 15 January 2009 were approved as a true and accurate record.

Matters arising from the minutes

The Treasurer (R Hilditch) reported that the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2008 had been examined and approved by the Independent Examiner (R Weeks) as drawn. The Secretary (R Hilditch) reported that appeals for equipment for use by members of the Federation had been very successful.

Approval of the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2009

The Treasurer (R Hilditch) presented the accounts as approved by the Independent Examiner and explained their contents, pointing out that the reduced income and reduced expenditure reflected the fact that last year the Federation handed over responsibility for its sponsored coaching courses to the Croquet Academy. The Treasurer also noted that the deficit (of £500) was deliberately incurred as grants (amounting in total to £800) had been made. The flagpoles in the new car park at Surbiton were, in part, a testament to the efficacy of such grants. The accumulated cash assets of the Federation (£7,341 as at 31 December 2009) would, he said, continue to be distributed by way of development grants and loans to members of the Federation as the Committee thought appropriate. Applications for financial assistance for suitable projects were invited.

The Chairman (W Arliss) pointed out that the fees for entry to the Federation's tournaments would be slightly increased this year to reflect the increased lawn hire charges authorised by the CA and the Committee's decision that all Federation tournaments should be "self financing".

The accounts were approved *nem. con.*

Annual Subscription for 2010

The Committee's proposal that the annual subscription rate should be maintained at £10 was approved unanimously and by acclamation.

Report on 2009 events

The League Organiser (R Hilditch) reported the following successes:

“A” League winners: **Woking**

“U” League winners: **Canterbury** (after a deciding match played in November 2009)

“B” League winners: **Ember**

GC Level League winners: **Woking**

GC Handicap League winners: **Woking**

Representatives of each winning Club collected the trophies; received congratulations from the Chairman and were photographed for posterity by the Federation’s CA Representative (D Mooney). One of the representatives of Woking (as winners of the “A” League) left empty handed but with the congratulations of all present. The “A” League does not yet have a winner’s trophy.

The Chairman reported the following further successes in 2009:

AC Team Doubles Champions: **Dulwich II** (D Collins, a team member, received congratulations on behalf of the Team Captain, Mark Ormerod)

Golf Croquet Individual Champion: **D Beck** (Surbiton)

Ladies’ Team Champions: **Sussex Scorchers**

Golf Croquet Team Doubles Champions: **Royal Tunbridge Wells II**

Golf Croquet Team Singles Champions: **Royal Tunbridge Wells I**

One Ball Team Champions: **Sussex County**

The Chairman drew attention to the Roll of Honour now on the Federation web site at www.southeastcroquet.org.uk.

Development and Coaching reports

The Development Officer (M Hague) reported that:

- (a) Hurstpierpoint College have been added to the list of participating schools and are using equipment provided by the Federation;
- (b) Epsom Sports Club has formed a Croquet Section and has 40 new players who will benefit from the use of the equipment acquired by the Federation from Ron Welch (Ramsgate) on his retirement from coaching;
- (c) Angmering, Sydenham and Sussex County have received grants towards the cost of a hut, lawn resurfacing and a tining machine;
- (d) Surbiton was about to receive a grant from the Federation towards its irrigation system (which was obviously working well, judging by the quantity of standing water on the lawns);
- (e) lawn mowers may now be regarded as an “enhancement” for grant purposes by the CA (whose lead is rigorously followed by the Federation when making its own grants);
- (f) consideration should be given by Clubs to offering free play for undergraduate students (which may be underwritten, as at Nottingham, by the CA and/or by the Federation);
- (g) Clubs may also wish to consider the purchase of equipment for use by school pupils (which might be funded by the CA and/or by the Federation); and
- (h) there will be no AC tournament in Corfu in 2010 but there will be another GC tournament on the island in September 2010 (manager and organiser: M Hague).

Jon Isaacs (Sussex County) reported on behalf of Daphne Gaitley that the Academy had had a successful year and its coaching courses were well attended. New manuals were being developed and would be published on line soon. A 3-day course on triple peels in August (to be run by Cliff Jones) and 1-day course dealing with the psychology of croquet in April (to be run by Keith Aiton) promised to be highlights in 2010.

The Development Officer reminded the meeting that, although the annual coaching courses had been handed over to the Academy, the Federation still offered to undertake ad hoc

coaching sessions at member Clubs. Any Club wishing to receive the benefit of such courses should contact the Coaching Officer, Daphne Gaitley.

Election of Officers and Committee for 2010-11

The Chairman called for a vote of thanks to be given to Richard Hilditch (sometime member of Harrow Oak, Ealing and now Hampstead Heath) upon his retirement from the posts of Secretary and Treasurer, noting that Richard had been present at the inaugural meeting of the Federation in February 1987; had taken the Chair at the 1st AGM in November 1987; had been elected to serve on the first Committee of the Federation (1987-8); had further served as Chairman (1988-2001); Secretary (2002-9) and Treasurer (2003-9) and had therefore been closely involved as an Officer the Federation for the whole of its 23-year history. The Chairman presented Richard with 2 framed croquet prints as a token of the Federation's appreciation of his extraordinary contribution, noting that it had not finished yet, since he would be continuing as the member of the Committee responsible for the organisation of the Leagues. The meeting indicated its thanks by acclamation and applause.

The following persons offered themselves for election and were elected unopposed:

Chairman: **Bill Arliss** (Sussex County)

Secretary: **John Reddish** (Dulwich)

Treasurer: **Hilary Smith** (Compton)

CA Representative: **David Mooney** (Roehampton and Surbiton)

Committee members: **David Collins** (Dulwich); **Daphne Gaitley** (Sussex County); **Richard Hilditch** (Hampstead Heath); **George Noble** (Surbiton).

There was therefore one vacancy on the Committee. An invitation was issued, particularly to any Club member from the otherwise unrepresented county of Kent, to offer himself or herself to fill that vacancy. A suitable volunteer would be co-opted by the Committee in due course.

Election of Auditor (Independent Examiner)

The Treasurer proposed Graham Thompson (Compton) as an appropriately qualified candidate and the meeting approved his appointment *nem. con.*

The 2010 League Rules

The League Organiser (R Hilditch) opened a debate on the question of whether the current rule relating to the award of a "walk over" should be amended. After extensive discussion the following motion was proposed:

"That there should be an additional provision in the Rules to the effect that, if a match has been arranged and a team then withdraws and no alternative date can be agreed, a walk over may be claimed against the defaulting team".

The motion was carried by 14 votes to 6.

The Chairman reported that requests for permission to enter to the Golf Croquet Level League had been received from two Clubs (Ryde, IOW and Winchester) who are not members of the Federation but are members of the Southern Federation. The Southern Federation had been consulted and had raised no objection. After discussion (including of the question whether the Clubs would be required to pay the annual subscription and of the hazards of overseas travel) the following motion was proposed:

"That Clubs from outside the Federation's geographical boundaries may be permitted to enter the SECF Golf Croquet Level League on the basis that all matches must be played within the geographical boundaries (i.e. must be played as away games by the Clubs from outside those boundaries) unless otherwise agreed by the participants".

The motion was carried by 17 votes to 1.

Other 2010 Events

The Secretary announced that the dates for all of the 2010 events had been fixed and would be published on the Calendar which was presently in draft but would be published soon.

The Chairman reported that a member Club had entered the 2009 Golf Croquet Team Event but had failed, without warning, to enter an appearance on the day. This had caused anguish and difficulty, not least because the tournament had been over-subscribed and other Clubs had been disappointed when their entries had been declined. The defaulting Club had been reprimanded and warned as to its future conduct. The Committee sought authority from the meeting to impose a suitable penalty (e.g. refusal of any subsequent entry from any defaulting Club, at least until after all other entries had been received and accommodated) in the event of any similar default. The meeting gave its authority for the Committee to take such action as it thought fit.

Electronic Communication

The Chairman announced that the Committee had decided that, for the future, all communication from the Officers and Committee to the member Clubs would be undertaken electronically, to reduce costs and to reduce the burden placed upon the Secretary. The representatives of member Clubs would be invited to consult the web site as a matter of routine. Newsletters, entry forms and the like would be sent to all Clubs' nominated representatives but only by email. It followed that every member Club would have to nominate a representative with an email address to receive essential communications. Most Clubs had already done so but four Clubs had, so far, only supplied postal addresses and telephone numbers. Payment of the annual subscription and of entry fees would still have to be made by cheque or postal order but direct payment to the Federation's bank account by electronic instruction might be facilitated in due course.

Other business

The Chairman reported that the "Godfather" scheme was perceived to have outlived its usefulness and would be discontinued. However, member Clubs were reminded that members of the Federation Committee had particular expertise upon which member Clubs could draw whenever they needed it. Full details appear on the web site but members should note the special expertise of the following:
Bill Arliss (laws and handicaps); David Collins (corporate events); Daphne Gaitley (coaching); Michael Hague (club development, funding and coaching); Richard Hilditch (Leagues) and George Noble (lawn maintenance and repair).

The Chairman invited Quiller Barrett (President of the CA) to address the meeting on the matter of the relationship between the Croquet Association and the regional Federations. Mr Barrett did so eloquently, informing the meeting of some of the history; noting that croquet players with handicaps of 8 or 9 can rise to high office and commending the Federation for its achievements, which had resulted in it being held in high regard by the Association.

Don Beck drew attention to the forthcoming event at Surbiton on Sunday 21 March 2010: "10:10 Golf": a Golf Croquet Handicap Doubles competition with pre-scored hoop points and 10 minutes play per side per game. He invited entries as pairs or individuals to be sent to him at dbeck@iee.org.

There being no further business the meeting closed and Club members' representatives partook of a magnificent lunch prepared and served by George Noble and his staff.