

Southern Croquet Federation

Annual General Meeting held on
Friday 25 November 2022 at 11.00am
at Winchester Racquets and Fitness Centre

Present:

Chairman: Chris Roberts.

Committee: Peter Allan, John Beckerleg, Steve Fisher, Ian Harrison, Brian Jamieson, Richard Jenkins, Richard Peperell and Roy Tillcock.

Apologies: Anthony Hardwicke

Club representatives: Alex Ball & James White (Basingstoke), Paul Wolff (Blewbury), Carol Jamieson & Liz Walker (Caversham), Keith Southern & Hannes Hamann (East Dorset), Neil Stewart (Eynsham), Janet Trueman (Hamptworth), Frances Colman (Phyllis Court), Pam Sim (Ryde), Lesley Hunter & Gillian Pett (Thames Valley) and Peter Fry (Winchester).

Apologies: Ian Shore (High Wycombe), Richard Keighley (Wingrave) and Richard Stevens (Hamptworth).

1. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 23 November 2021

Approved.

2. Reports

2.1 Chairman

Chris Roberts said that after two years of holding the AGM by Zoom, it was a pleasure to meet again in person. He highlighted increased activity in schools; Bradfield College and Shiplake College had played a match at Phyllis Court and he hoped this would become at least an annual fixture. The CA's main theme continued to be '*More croquet played by more people in more places*' and this was being delivered through its member clubs and their hard-working volunteers. In conclusion, Chris said he would be retiring from the Chairmanship after more than 10 years on the Committee. He was confident that the Federation would flourish in the good hands of Chairman-elect, Peter Allan.

In discussion, several other schools were mentioned as having an active interest in croquet. Perhaps the Federation should play a stronger coordinating role?

2.2 Treasurer and Annual Accounts 2021-2022

Presenting the Annual Accounts for the year to 31 October 2022, John Beckerleg confirmed that they had now been examined by Raymond Wood. Overall, income exceeded expenditure by £818, adding to the SCF's reserves. 22 clubs had paid subscriptions, which he recommended should stay at £25.

Brian Jamieson proposed and Pam Sim seconded that the 2021-2022 Accounts be accepted. Agreed unanimously.

Steve Fisher asked whether reserves of just over £6,000 were appropriate. The SW Federation maintained reserves equivalent to two years' expenditure. A clearer policy was needed. John

Beckerleg confirmed that the Federation, and indeed the CA, stood ready to help clubs with grants and loans to support development. He also pointed out that the Federation had a scheme for reimbursing club members' fees for courses such as coaching and refereeing which would benefit the wider croquet community.

Richard Jenkins proposed and Frances Colman seconded that Raymond Wood be appointed examiner for 2022-2023. Agreed unanimously.

2.3AC Leagues Manager

Steve Fisher said that his report was mainly about fine-tuning changes introduced in 2022 in the light of experience and a consultation with clubs.

On submission of results, he agreed with clubs that only one submission of a result was needed, usually by the winning club.

He said reports of scheduling issues and disagreements were a potential problem and he proposed these should in future be submitted to the League Manager within seven days. Unplayed games at the end of the season would be recorded as 26-0 in favour of the non-offending team. Where both clubs appeared to be at fault in the League Manager's view, any unplayed game(s) would be unrecorded.

Continuing, he said that in order to encourage clubs with insufficient numbers he planned to allow clubs to enter leagues with teams of two, three or four players (who would have to be matched by the opposition). To avoid any exploitation of this flexibility, he would reserve the right to refuse entry to a team which was unreasonably small in relation to the number available to the club. The initiative would be kept under review to see if it was working.

Looking ahead to 2023, he planned to introduce a new C-Level League for handicaps 7+ to be played to Advanced rules. In his consultation, several clubs had welcomed this development. The Short Croquet League would again be offered next year with teams of four. Clubs could choose an all-plays-all format or a shorter version with just three rounds including a doubles game.

Finally, Steve Fisher said that the outstanding AC Handicap final between East Dorset and Phyllis Court would be played at East Dorset on 1 December 2022.

2.4GC Leagues Manager

Roy Tillcock was pleased to report an increase in the number of teams entered in the various GC leagues, which were back to pre-Covid levels. Because of increased numbers the Advantage Handicap League had been split into three regional divisions. And the Doubles League had benefitted from four new entrants, though it been disappointing to lose Test Valley.

On Advantage play, he said the fine tuning introduced following the 2021 trial as well as the more explicit guidance in How to Play instructions had undoubtedly helped its acceptance. The One Court clubs had agreed to play their matches under Advantage Rules, including Doubles. And the CA Tournaments Committee had decided that the GC All-England competition in 2023 should be played with the Advantage format, as would the 2024 Federations' Cup.

Answering a question, Roy Tillcock said that it was up to clubs to decide whether to adopt Advantage rules for their internal GC Handicap competitions, but All-England qualifying rounds must be played to Advantage rules.

2.5 Tournaments Manager

Richard Jenkins said that entries for all four of the Federation’s tournaments were down on previous years. It was disappointing that neither Champion of Champion tournaments had reached their maximum of 16 entries. It was pointed out that the reduced demand for tournaments was part of a national picture, not just restricted to the SC.

The programme of tournaments proposed for 2023 was:

Champion of Champions AC Handicap Tournament	Hamptworth	Saturday 15 April 2023
Champion of Champions GC Handicap Tournament:	Hamptworth	Sunday 16 April 2023
Solstice GC Level Play Doubles Tournament:	Ryde	Sunday 4 June 2023
Armada AC One Ball Singles Tournament	tbc	tbc
GC Open Championship (NEW)	Phyllis Court	tbc

2.6 Coaching Officer

Introducing his report, Ian Harrison said that it had been a quiet year, possibly because of success of the Chiltern Croquet Academy, which was offering a wide range of courses. He was pleased to record that nine SCF players had qualified for CA Coaching qualifications during the year. He referred to the work of assistant Federation Coaching Officers who helped him provide coaching assistance across the clubs in the region. He drew attention to books on GC by Stephen Custance-Baker and on AC by Roger Mills, the latter available from the CA Shop, as well as his own GC and AC coaching videos available on the Basingstoke CC website where he had added a new module on AC Advanced play and on triple peels:

www.basingstokecroquet.co.uk

Basingstoke CC stored the SCF indoor croquet set which was available for loan to interested clubs at no cost. Collection and return was up to clubs to arrange. Finally, he mentioned that Winchester CC had shown an interest in 2-shot GC. He could circulate the rules to any interested club.

Neil Stewart outlined a coaching initiative at Eynsham CC catering for a range of AC and GC abilities and needs. He was working closely with the Chiltern Academy.

2.7 Development Officer

Peter Allan said that he had visited Ryde, Hartley Wintney and Eynsham clubs in connection with CA development grants. Ryde and Eynsham had now completed their building projects with assistance from the CA.

He had loaned one set of basic equipment from the SCF equipment pool. to Shiplake College and another, acquired when White Horse CC closed, to the emerging Hartley Witney club.

There were plans for a new club in Goring and he had been in touch with Abingdon School where about 80 students play croquet.

The CA Development Committee, of which he was a member, had discussions with the CA’s new Next Generation development officer, Hope Bourton, and had discussed the potential of AC-like games as a way of interesting more GC players in AC.

Finally, he said he had participated in the CA Federation Focus Group Zoom meetings held on a monthly basis as an information exchange forum.

Ian Harrison said he had tried the SCF's set of foxy hoops on the Basingstoke court, but they were not sufficiently rigid in the light soil. They might work in a heavy, clay-rich soil.

It was suggested the Federation should make contact with Winchester College, who played croquet regularly. Ian Harrison could provide contact details.

2.8AC Handicap Officer

Richard Peperell said that he had not been very active during the year. This was in part because he had not received AC league results. This would be corrected in 2023. He had not been approached by any of the clubs for advice, nor had he adjusted any individual handicaps. He intended to stand down at the 2023 AGM and asked clubs to let him know of anyone who would be prepared to take on the job.

2.9Webmaster

Steve Fisher said that the SCF website does an important job of providing information to clubs and their members. Recognising some of the content was dated, he asked for more news items to be submitted.

3. Prize giving

Chris Roberts announced presented trophies to winners of the Federation's leagues and tournaments in 2022, as follows:

Competition	2022 Winner
AC Advanced A-Level	Aldermaston
AC Advanced B-Level	Winchester
AC Handicap	Final to be played on 1 December 2022 between East Dorset and Phyllis Court
Short Croquet	Blewbury
GC Open	East Dorset
GC B-Level	East Dorset
GC Handicap	Phyllis Court
GC One Court Clubs Handicap	Caversham
GC Doubles	Eynsham
Solstice GC Level play Doubles	Art Wardle & Terry Huxtable (Bransgore)
Armada One Ball	Brian Jamieson (Caversham)
AC Champion of Champions	Aston Wade (Hamptworth)
GC Champion of Champions	Artur Da Costa (Winchester)

4. Election of Committee

Chris Roberts reminded the meeting that the entire Committee had to be elected at each AGM. He was standing down after 10 or so years on the Committee. Nominations were set out in the circulated Agenda. There was one amendment to the circulated papers, Roy Tillcock was unable to assume the responsibilities of GC Handicapper since he had a substantial load at Ryde in the coming year. Fortunately, Richard Jenkins was prepared to continue in the role.

The following were elected individually and unanimously:

Office	Nominees	Proposer	Secunder
Chairman	Peter Allan	Chris Roberts (Phyllis Court)	Brian Jamieson (Caversham)
Secretary	Brian Jamieson	John Wakeford (Caversham)	Liz Walker (Caversham)
Treasurer	John Beckerleg	Steve Fisher (Blewbury)	Chris Roberts (Phyllis Court)
Coaching Officer	Ian Harrison	Richard Peperell (High Wycombe)	Steve Fisher (Blewbury)
Development Officer	Peter Allan	Brian Jamieson (Caversham)	Chris Roberts (Phyllis Court)
AC League Manager	Steve Fisher	Richard Peperell (High Wycombe)	John Beckerleg (Winslow)
AC Handicapper	Richard Peperell	Chris Roberts (Phyllis Court)	John Beckerleg (Winslow)
GC League Manager	Roy Tillcock	Carol Jamieson (Caversham)	Richard Peperell (High Wycombe)
GC Handicapper	Richard Jenkins	Brian Jamieson (Caversham)	Richard Peperell (High Wycombe)
Webmaster	Steve Fisher	Brian Jamieson (Caversham)	Roy Tillcock (Ryde)
Schools and Safeguarding Officer	Anthony Hardwicke	John Beckerleg (Winslow)	Richard Peperell (High Wycombe)
Southern Constituency representative on CA Council	Peter Allan	This post is not elected at the AGM.	

5. Other business

5.1 Hannes Hamann (East Dorset) said that East Dorset had several tournaments on the CA Fixture list for 2023, including the National GC A-Level Final on 23 and 24 September 2023.

5.2 Janet Trueman (Hamptworth) expressed appreciation of the help the CA, in particular Beatrice McGlen, Chairman of the CA Executive Board, had provided in the Croquet Club's discussions with the new owner of Hamptworth about the importance of maintaining support for croquet as the Hamptworth Club developed.

5.3 Janet Trueman (Hamptworth) drew attention to the lack of diversity in the Committee.

The meeting concluded at 1.00pm.

November 2022