



Cygnnet

Issue: 28
December 2020



The e-Newsletter for the South West Federation of Croquet Clubs

Welcome to the final newsletter for this year.

Casting an eye back to this time last year and we were looking forward to inaugurating our own Short Croquet League, welcoming new committee members (and seeking new blood), celebrating local club and individual successes, and preparing for a full scale review of our constitution.

Well, you certainly never know what's round the corner!

We may not have achieved everything we were hoping to, but we've all achieved a lot. We have lost some very valued friends, but over the region a lot of club croquet has been played, we've enjoyed meeting up through Zoom (thanks to Paul's enthusiasm and skill) and we are looking forward to 2021 with cautious optimism.

Contents

Apology	p1
AGM - the aftermath	p1
AGM - the future	p2
On the lookout - for help	p2
Coaching	p4
Catering	p4
Cartoon	p4
Every Shot is Tactical (ad)	p5
MyClubHouse	p6
SW Reps to CA	p6
GC extra turn ideas	p7
Recruiting already	p7
Advertising rates	p7
Appendix1: AGM feedback	p8

An apology - but a chance for more celebrations



A gremlin certainly got into the works in the last issue of Cygnnet - John Guy (Broadwas CC) received a CA award but was missed off the list.

He received a Diploma for Services to Croquet - another well-deserved gong. So many congratulations John - and here's some fizz just for you!

AGM - the aftermath

We held a very successful AGM - thanks to everyone who fed back their thoughts on this - they were overwhelmingly positive and constructive and have given us some useful pointers.

- One of the best organised of several large scale zooms I have taken part in, well done all.
- I thought it was great and I didn't have to drive anywhere or sit in an uncomfortable chair!
- I thought the meeting was excellent and well managed. As a relative newcomer it was interesting to see the range of activities that concern the SWF.
- I thought it was an excellent meeting. A large part of that was due to all the work done up front so that we had all the necessary paperwork.
- Thanks to the SW Fed for being so pro-active in running these various meetings and seminars - where the SW Fed lead, others follow.

The minutes of the AGM are on our website and you can read the full evaluation report in Appendix 1 on p8.

Cygnnet is emailed to our club contacts who are requested to pass it on to individual club members. It is also available shortly after publication on our website: www.swfcroquet.org.uk

We welcome queries, suggestions and feedback about Cygnnet or any aspect of the SW croquet scene. Contact: lindawithani@hotmail.com

AGM - the future

The feedback led us to make the ‘in principle’ decision to hold next year’s AGM by Zoom. We recognise the constraints this may place on detailed discussion and are thinking about how to overcome this.

So far our ideas include:

- Timely circulation of draft proposals to allow comment and amendment before the final proposals are submitted
- Using a preceeding Zoom for some discussion
- Not attempting any discussion or workshop activities immediately after the AGM

We consider that Zoom enables anyone to attend from anywhere (and it can be done over a telephone line) so clubs might like to consider discussing the impact of technology on communications both with their members and with the CA.

It’s not going to go away - let’s deal with it!

Please let us have your thoughts on this so we can build them into our planning.

And we will of course be changing the date to 21st November to avoid holding it on Remembrance Sunday.

We’re on the lookout



We’d love to involve more people in planning and organising activities here in the South West, and you don’t have to become a committee member to do this. We’re looking for hands-on people who can work with the committee and with our member clubs, helping us all create and deliver a range of activities that enhance croquet in the region.

We’ve developed experience in this over the last 12 months - Rhona very ably edited and produced our very last edition of SWAN without becoming a committee member and we’re delighted that from next year she will be helping with the production of Cygnet.

Our Constitutional Review Group (Keith Southern, David Harrison-Wood and Dave Kibble) worked with the Committee to produce the document you all approved at the AGM. This was a process that was surely enhanced by not being able to meet up - we didn’t even use Zoom, it was all done by email and a few phone calls.

We’re looking for a wide range of skills and we’d like the SWF Committee to become more representative of the region in terms of geography, age, gender, ethnicity; and with a balance of interest between AC and GC.

These are the sort of things we’re looking for:

Player recruitment and retention

Someone who’s interested in helping pull together and share ideas on recruiting and retaining new players - someone who understands the interplay between a welcoming atmosphere and good quality sustained coaching and who is interested in all aspects of diversity.

Handicapping Officer

This is a Committee role and encompasses encouraging and supporting the implementation of CA approved handicapping practice across the region.



We've identified the principal activities as:

- To maintain parity of handicaps between clubs
 - Currently undertaken by an analysis of the previous season's AC and GC league results
- To act as a focal point for handicapping enquiries in the region
- To provide guidance to clubs on good handicapping practice
- To resolve handicap queries concerning an individual player in consultation with relevant handicappers
- Monitor the overall equivalence of handicaps between clubs
- Liaise with club, federation and CA handicappers as necessary
- Liaise with the CA Handicapping Committee

Richard Jackson currently holds this position but has announced his decision to stand down. Information on the role may be found at: <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=games/coaching/fco>

Website Co-ordinator

Alison Maugham provides an excellent service to us maintaining our website and we're not planning to replace her. But what we do need is someone with the time and skills to devote a little TLC to the website content to make the best of what we have to offer and to work with Alison on making this a reality.

Clearly some understanding of how websites work would be really helpful, but enthusiasm and commitment are just as important.

Safeguarding Officer

The CA will be introducing an updated Safeguarding Policy in the new year and Federations will be required to appoint a Safeguarding Officer. The role will be of interest to someone with a concern for Safeguarding, sensitivity and a good feel for process

Communications / technology boffin

Are there more things we could or should be doing - we have our Zoom meetings, Cygnet, the website - but should we be thinking about Facebook, Whatsapp and so on. Would you like to help our member clubs use these more effectively?

We could think about training, funding - share knowledge and ideas between ourselves and with the CA.

Cygnet

This has developed hugely over its relatively short lifetime. It's often very long and not everyone will have the time or patience to read it through to find items they are particularly interested in. But then again, who reads everything written in their newspaper or magazine?

But perhaps there's scope for reducing the content and increasing the frequency - maybe monthly plus special issues on e.g. AGM, coaching, league fixtures etc etc. That would need a bigger team than Rhona and Linda - how could you help?

Archivist

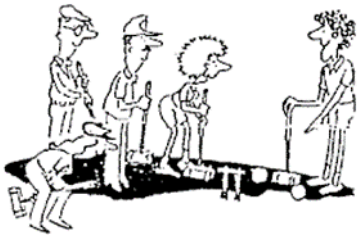
It's about time the history of the SWF was brought up to date - a couple of people have done sterling work on this in the past but it would be lovely to build this into a living and accessible record of our lives and times.



Maybe you know someone who's interested in this - they don't have to be a croquet buff.

Anything else you can think of that would enhance croquet in the region?

Coaching



Exciting times ahead on this front. Roger Mills who until recently headed up the SW Coaching Academy answered our call for a new Coaching Officer following Richard Jackson's announcement that health concerns meant he had to stand down.

Roger has been co-opted on to the Committee - excellent timing particularly in the light of the post-AGM discussion when coaching needs loomed large.

And there's more. . .

You may well have seen this already in the CA newsletter but Paddy Chapman has developed <https://croquetdev.com/> as a resource for AC players - with useful bits for GC players too. There is an interactive croquet board and an animated croquet court. So do check it out.

League Match catering

We were asked at the AGM to consider introducing guidance on catering at these events - some clubs have better catering facilities than others which may have left some clubs feeling disadvantaged and feeling they could not reciprocate at the same level.

We thought about this and came to the conclusion that guidelines were not necessary, it would be left to each club's discretion. We feel confident that catering is a lovely part of the day but that the chat and the welcome is of greater value than the food provided.

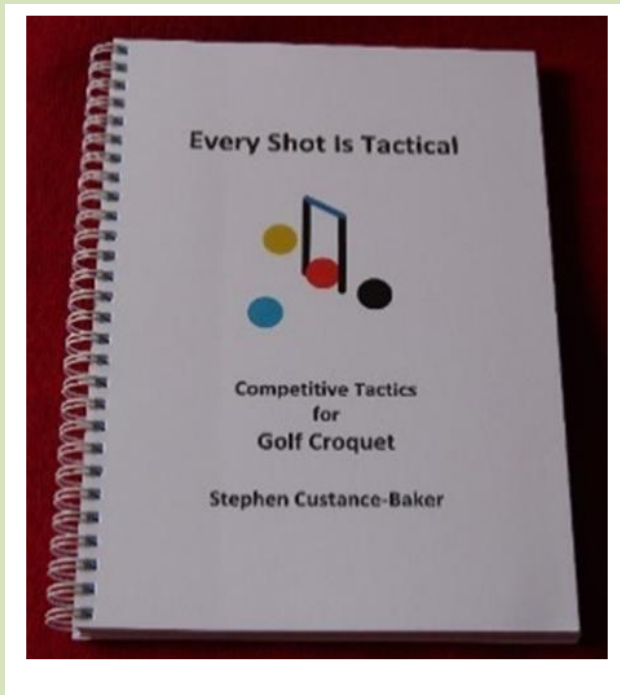
We would however like to remind clubs that while Covid-19 restrictions are in place, that self-catering is the order of the day and teams provide their own lunch and refreshments, bearing in mind the facilities available at the host club.

Boris has the key

Thanks to Budleigh member, Martin Hebdige, who drew this cartoon and sent it to the club's members. He has given us permission to reproduce it here so it can be more widely appreciated.



The perfect Christmas gift for a GC friend



£10.70 (inc. p&p)
from
StephenCB@MyCroquet.me

GC Croquet has waited for this publication for a long time.

Richard Carline, Director of The Croquet Academy

By far the best coaching book I have seen. The script is easy to understand and the illustrations exceptionally clear.

Robert Moss, Budleigh Salterton

I am very impressed by your croquet wisdom.

Brian Giffen, Roehampton

Interesting, and beautifully clear. Lots to think about!

Jennian Geddes, Ealing

After reading and re-reading your excellent book, I now not only have a new respect for GC but was also able to use much of what I had learned to win the final. Max Byfield, Woking

MyClubHouse

Budleigh Salterton have introduced this cloud-based system and are very pleased with how it has enabled the club to be managed more efficiently.

The MyClubHouse system has been developed during the last ten years by a husband and wife team who needed a solution for their own tennis club. The level of interest has taken a marked increase in recent years with several national sporting bodies adopting MyClubHouse.

Budleigh Salterton report that the level of support in setting up and managing the system has been excellent.

What does the system offer?

- ✓ Streamlines club administration
- ✓ Improves communications with members
- ✓ Improves the management of the following:

Lawn bookings
Teams

Handicaps
Subscriptions

Competitions

How much does it cost? £307 (including VAT) for clubs with up to 160 members but there may well be discounts for the SWF if several clubs take on the system.

If there is enough interest a specific Zoom meeting with MyClubHouse will be organised to give clubs a demo and answer their questions. Please contact Paul Francis at paulwfrancis@icloud.com

SW Reps to CA Council

At the AGM, Klim Seabright asked the Committee to consider including a Rep amongst its number. This was given careful consideration and it was agreed that having a Rep as an *ex-officio* member of the Committee would not be particularly helpful.

The Reps were informed that:

- the Committee considered it would not be helpful (and with 3 reps it would be complicated) to have a Rep as an *ex-officio* member
- that they could be invited to, or request to, attend as observers
- that we had previously tried to establish a more clearly defined relationship but nothing had been resolved
- that anyone meeting the criteria set out in our Constitution could be nominated for election to the Committee

Dave Kibble replied making the following points:

- that there was no clear reason to have a CA Rep as an *ex-officio* member of the SWF Committee
- that the role of the Council is fairly isolated from the operational aspects of the CA, focusing rather on policy setting and scrutiny of the application of policies
- that the Reps have no power to resolve issues, therefore any concerns or questions are better addressed to the CA Chair or relevant Executive Committee member
- that the structure probably works well for the CA but fails to make regional reps in any real way a rep for the region and there is no real accountability to their electorate

Playing to the Rules - but what about the extra strokes?

An interesting discussion followed on from one of Stephen's excellent series for GC players: what is the best way of counting the extra turns.

This offers huge scope for imagination and innovation and this is what's emerged so far. Ray Ransom (Bristol CC) made the suggestions and Stephen's thoughts are in italics.

- lap counters are available in mechanical and digital form - search on line for 'clicker counter'
 - *they work for hoops scored but not for counting extra strokes as any system must work for both sides*
- there are ubiquitous phone apps
 - *again, they only work for one person and mean a player has to take their phone out during a game - tut tut*

We are probably all familiar with passing marbles from one player to another

- but be wary of marbles being taken home or left in deep pockets from previous games
- and this frequently involves questions - how many have you/I got left?
- they could fall on to the court and wreak havoc with the next mower to come along

Rubber bands on the mallet is another option

- but is there a risk of them slipping unobserved to the wrong position?

Sticks in the ground akin to the bisques used in AC

- but players are often a long way away when an extra turn is used
- on the other hand, players and spectators know exactly what the state of play is

Clips attached to the jacket

- could get obtrusive
- not all clothing is suitable for this

Come on folks - let's have your ideas. Don't feel restricted by reality, have some fun over a sherry and mince pie and share your imaginings with us.

Recruiting tomorrow's stars today



Followers of Nailsea CC's Facebook page will have been enchanted by their Christmas promotion – a gift of a 6-week beginners' course in 2021 – fully refundable if we're still locked down.

If your club runs a Facebook page, do let us know and we'll publish the list in Cygnet next year.

Advertising in Cygnet

Many clubs used SWAN to advertise their tournaments. This is clearly no longer an option. Last year we introduced charges for commercial adverts in Cygnet and asked for feedback on the options for charging members. We received no feedback so at our last committee meeting we agreed to introduce a flat-rate advertising scale. So the following rates per issue will apply for Full-member clubs, Associate-member clubs, individuals and commercials.

Full page	Half page	Quarter page
£12	£6	£3

Adverts must be sent fully formatted so they can be easily inserted (copy and pasted) into Cygnet. We are not in a position to undertake any artwork or correct for errors or omissions.

Appendix 1 AGM 2020 Evaluations

All attendees, and clubs who did not attend, were invited to provide feedback along the following lines:

- Overall impressions
- What worked well
- What could be improved
- If you didn't attend – what were the reasons for this
- How we might use technology in the future - both for AGMs and in other ways

We were delighted to receive so many responses and positive suggestions and we'll be taking these on board as we plan future events.

	Clubs attending	People attending	Responses*
2019	22	53	N/A
2020	23	53	31

*Responses include two from clubs who did not attend.

The following pulls out the key points but all responses may be found at the end of this summary.

Overall impressions

These were overwhelmingly positive:

- One of the best organised of several large scale zooms I have taken part in, well done all.
- I thought it was great and I didn't have to drive anywhere or sit in an uncomfortable chair!
- I thought the meeting was excellent and well managed. As a relative newcomer it was interesting to see the range of activities that concern the SWF.
- I thought it was an excellent meeting. A large part of that was due to all the work done up front so that we had all the necessary paperwork.
- Thanks to the SW FED for being so pro-active in running these various meetings and seminars - where the SW FED lead others follow.

What worked well

The preparation

- For me, it worked well having all the reports before, and being told we had to read them - I studied them more than I usually do!
- Zoom worked well, you gave good support beforehand to those unfamiliar with technology.
- The organisation of the meeting, i.e. having a Chair, a moderator handling the technology and the voting, and a separate person monitoring hands-up and the chat log. Quite an investment of effort but it was worth it.
- The constitution changes were well prepared and well explained with the three proposals.

The technology

- I think Paul's working knowledge of Zoom played a significant part in the smooth running of the polling.
- The use of the blue raised hand and mute button was good.

The management

- The committee was supportive without being patronising.
- Chairmanship worked well
- Having an extra person watching for chats was a good move, freeing up Paul to focus on event management.
- Good slides - clear + the right amount of info on them + the right number and 'death by slides' avoided.
- Attendees were generally well behaved in Zoom terms - contributions were generally sound

Voting

- The voting system was excellent.
- I liked the voting which made life very easy all round - the odd wait of a minute or two is nothing compared to usual counting of hands etc and you could control who was voting easily.
- The voting was clear and the changes to proposals were clear for all to see.

Participation

- I actually, found it easier to participate than the normal meetings which, in the past, have sometimes been a bit intimidating!
- There were none of the usual unrelated questions, I think because people needed to compose their thoughts properly before asking a question.
- It was good to get to "meet" other club representatives and also useful to find out a bit more information as to how other clubs operate.

Travel

- I was pleased not to have to travel and probably wouldn't have come as an observer if it hadn't been online.
- A Zoom meeting does allow us to take only two hours out of our day and not 10!

What could be improved

The preparation

- The post AGM discussion did not work well for a number of reasons
We'll certainly be doing that differently next year.

The technology

- There were many references to peoples' competence on Zoom but opinion was divided as to whether the SWF or the individuals concerned were responsible for improving this!
We'll have to think about that one.

Voting

- The voting system was clear and functional with one exception - voting on one vote by show of both blue hands and real hands raised was less than clear cut.
- One thing I could not agree with was ruling out proxy voting for those clubs who could not join in.

Participation

- The general chat between the clubs is missing.
- I missed the lunch and chat after though. Can we have a virtual lunch?
- An added advantage was that there was nothing very contentious on the agenda. I've not been present at a Zoom meeting where there was the cut and thrust of an augmentative debate; does everyone feel they have a fair hearing?

Absent friends

Two of the clubs who couldn't attend gave very personal reasons for this.

What next?

There was a lot of enthusiasm for future AGM Zooms while recognising that the lack of personal contact is a significant drawback. One suggestion for overcoming this was to hold some sort of hybrid meeting with real and virtual attendance.

The Committee has made the 'in principle' decision to hold next year's AGM by Zoom - and Zoom only. But if you have strong views about these, please do let us know.

There was also enthusiasm for more frequent Zoom meetings (along the lines of our monthly Zoom sessions) on a range of topics - and for having these available afterwards e.g. on YouTube.

We'll certainly be continuing with these so keep an eye on your inbox.

Your responses in full

Overview

- One of the best organised of several large scale zooms I have taken part in, well done all.
- Well done SWF committee - a difficult year faced with some great innovations
- Thanks everyone - well done.
- Thank you for a well-organized meeting.
- Overall, I thought it was very well managed and organized. Well done to you all.
- Well done to all, I say.
- Thank you to all who made this a good experience.
- I thought this AGM was infinitely better than last year's fiasco.
- All in all, you did a great job. Well done.
- Just want to say thank you to you and all the committee for all the work you do.
- I thought it was great and I didn't have to drive anywhere or sit in an uncomfortable chair!
- Overall, I think it was very good.
- The whole went really well and was well presented throughout.
- May I offer my congratulations to the committee for bringing together such a successful event.
- I found it most interesting and am very impressed by the amount of work put in by the Committee.
- I have zoomed dozens of times for various reasons and I think the AGM was very good.
- I was very impressed by your knowledge and "grip" of what was going on, not only at the meeting, but of SWF matters in general.
- We thought it went well.
- I thought the meeting was excellent and well managed. As a relative newcomer it was interesting to see the range of activities that concern the SWF.

- Overall, it was a very positive experience. Well done to all those involved.
 - As this was my first SWF meeting, I thought it was well organised.
 - Very good indeed. Much better than last year's free-for-all.
 - The Committee had clearly done a lot of detailed planning for this.
 - Pity that the attendance was not significantly improved over a physical meeting - Covid may account for that, but I can't really see how it would.
 - I thought it was an excellent meeting. A large part of that was due to all the work done up front so that we had all the necessary paperwork.
 - I also thought that the pre-AGM Zoom meeting held a week or so before was very useful in sorting out protocols, voting etc.
 - I thought the meeting was well run. The chairman was very good.
 - Congratulations on the success of the recent Zoom SWF AGM. The management of those wishing to contribute to the discussions was excellent as was also that of the voting system.
 - I thought that the meeting was a great success. In some ways better than a conventional meeting.
 - Well done for running such a professional Zoom meeting
 - Thanks to the SW FED for being so pro-active in running these various meetings and seminars - where the SW FED lead others follow.
 - I have attended a number of 'Zoom' AGMs over the last few months and I have to say this was one of the better ones.
- The meeting was very well managed and the zoom technology worked brilliantly.

What worked well	What could be improved
<p>Preparation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having the reports from ALL committee members beforehand (I cannot recall previous meetings ever providing a full set) enabled them to keep their spoken comments to the major points rather than fully reading their reports. • For me, it worked well having all the reports before, and being told we had to read them - I studied them more than I usually do! • Good papers, sent out in plenty of time • The run through at the beginning was very helpful. • The organisation of the meeting, i.e. having a Chair, a moderator handling the technology and the voting, and a separate person monitoring hands-up and the chat log. Quite an investment of effort but it was worth it. • Helpful Zoom user guide for attendees provided. • Everything was well prepared which meant that there wasn't too much to argue about. • Zoom worked well, you gave good support beforehand to those unfamiliar with technology. • Distribution of papers beforehand in one email worked well • The constitution changes were well prepared and well explained with the three proposals. A lot of work had obviously gone into preparation by the SWF team, thank you very much. 	
<p>The technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul seems to be an expert on Zoom meetings. • I though Paul was excellent in controlling and explaining the technology. The success of any future virtual meeting would depend on having someone as capable as Paul to control the technology. • The use of the blue raised hand and mute button was good. • Access to the meeting was easy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I expect as participants get more used to Zoom then muting issues will get better; was surprised as to why some feedback was so pronounced in some cases. • Personally, having an issue with Zoom dropping out and reconnecting several times, not sure if this interferes with management of meeting? I think it was due to heavy rain around Plymouth which often affects phones and broadband supply.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting protocol session was helpful (essential, in fact). • Paul's management of screens and voting was essential for a successful meeting. It could so easily have gone pear-shaped but it didn't. • I haven't used zoom much before and was pleasantly surprised by how easy and effective it was. • I thought that the use of zoom to facilitate the meeting was really good - even if some attendees did forget that others could hear their private conversations if not muted! • I think Paul's working knowledge of Zoom played a significant part in the smooth running of the polling. In such circumstances I think there would be little to improve on in how the meeting was delivered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many members were hard to see because they were back lit rather than front or side lit. This is especially important when the images are so small. • In a similar vein, many members were seen from below (a common problem with laptops), giving an unfortunate view of their physiognomies! • Perhaps few hints to participants about lighting, positioning, backdrops etc would help. • Despite all the coaching provided I was surprised at the number of delegates who had trouble with some of the Zoom features. i.e. how to put their hand up, how to change their name to show their club. I suspect this inhibited the discussion a little. Compared to face-to-face meeting there was less input from the 'floor' but at least that meant there were fewer frivolous comments! Hopefully more Zoom meetings will get some of these folks to a better level of comfort with Zoom. • One thing that I found unnerving was the changes to my screen, until I twigged that it was someone's screen I was seeing. I don't mean typing changes. My screen went from grids of video feeds to one feed to side feeds and I thought that I might have inadvertently done something at my end. Think it just needs clarifying in pre meeting protocols. • My fear is that some Club members have not all got to grips with zoom etc. and full participation in such events may be limited. • Some way for others to join without zoom e.g. phone in. More practice beforehand for people to log in and set up their gallery, plus use mute/unmute and raise/lower hands would take away delay for the rest of us. • It did not need participants to have video on all the time we could have switched it off if you had mentioned it. Maybe have the papers accessible via Zoom. I had another window open with the email and clicked on documents as required but my video would have looked uncaring ... • Note that instructions for Zoom controls varies with iPads against PCs, so if trying to help someone then best to ascertain their machine.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The only improvement I can suggest is raised awareness of how zoom (other conference systems are available) presents itself on different hardware platforms. I think it is designed for windows computers and people on tablets and Macs seem to see a different screen set up. • My overall impression was that it passed off very smoothly. Even the chair of St Agnes is beginning to come to terms with the technology, though he is hampered by having to use an ipad (no camera on his computer). Obviously from Andru's and my perspective Whether a combined Zoom meeting and actual meeting would work and I'm not sure - would it be necessary to have a 'TV' screen so that the 'zoomed' delegates could be seen in the actual meeting place? There will be some members who have had this experience - ask them.
<p>Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I thought the Zoom AGM worked very well. It was generally well controlled by the committee members who fed in information to the Chair. • Very difficult to marshal 4 dozen people on Zoom, but the chairman managed it commendably. • The committee was supportive without being patronising. • I compliment the committee especially the chairman and Paul Francis for a well prepared and well-run meeting, and the new treasurer and yourself for your professionalism in helping. • Chairmanship worked well • Careful control with stepping through agenda. • Having an extra person watching for chats was a good move, freeing up Paul to focus on event management. • Tony scanning hands up or down to say when anyone had a comment/question. • Using the hands up or messaging system also made things run very smoothly. • All aspects worked well, not perfectly, but there are hiccups at live meetings. • Getting the Constitution changes through without massive discussion was testimony to all the pre-meeting preparation, and the clever structuring of it by yourself. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add 'ask for a seconder' to the Chair's script, to save you having to intervene all the time! • More clarity and forewarning of part 2 of the mtg; also, I was surprised there had been no thought beforehand to putting a time limit on it - that's enough to frighten everyone away! • One thing I wasn't keen on was the gentleman who was monitoring the chat and kept interrupting when someone had made a comment. I thought at times that disturbed the meeting flow. • I also felt it was difficult to have discussions when you are not face to face in a room. • I was surprised there wasn't more discussion on the amendment to Stephen's suggested league match schedule especially as he said he had contacted some clubs before the AGM. When one club - Nailsea? - objected and said they wouldn't have time to get it all set up nobody commented and the schedule was amended to suit him. • perhaps the discussion at the end was rather loose and could be helped by sticking to a specific topic.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well chaired, Committee did not disagree amongst themselves (as they did last year). • Good slides - clear + the right amount of info on them + the right number and 'death by slides' avoided • Attendees were generally well behaved in Zoom terms - contributions were generally sound • Good use of technology • Protracted discussions were also eliminated! • There were none of the usual unrelated questions, I think because people needed to compose their thoughts properly before asking a question. Having had all the relevant data before the meeting was a great benefit, and I think made all the delegates more likely to absorb the subject more so than at real meetings. <p>The nature of AGMs normally mean that there is, rarely, lengthy or controversial items to discuss but having someone keeping an eye out for people wanting to speak was a good idea.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 120 minutes I was screen and meeting fatigued and therefore felt the second session was not very productive. • I was less pleased with the post-AGM discussion. To me it lacked a coherent structure, maybe the topic was too broad. The fact that quite a number of delegates did not return for it perhaps suggests the meeting notification should have indicated how long it was likely to last. • Apart from no pre knowledge of the chat afterwards which I couldn't stay for I have no complaints - the time was used well.
<p>Voting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having an online vote made it as near to a face to face meeting as possible. • The voting system was excellent. • I liked the voting system especially the flexibility that allowed the proposals to be instantly amended if necessary. • I liked the voting which made life very easy all round - the odd wait of a minute or two is nothing compared to usual counting of hands etc and you could control who was voting easily. • The voting was clear and the changes to proposals were clear for all to see. • Polls worked fine. • Well done especially Paul and Tony for watching carefully for hands up and vote counts. • The voting system was really well done. • The voting system gives an accurate return which is excellent. • Very well-run meeting, clear and easy to be part of, well done. • I particularly liked the method of voting • Numbers were quickly counted and results shown on screen. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The voting system was clear and functional with one exception - voting on one vote by show of both blue hands and real hands raised was less than clear cut. • One thing I could not agree with was ruling out proxy voting for those clubs who could not join in. I may be being dim (not for the first time!) but cannot understand why this was done. If recording proxy votes is difficult when using Zoom, then perhaps postal or email votes through the Chairman could be arranged if another 'virtual' AGM has to be held next year.
<p>Participation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • However, the general chat between the clubs is missing. The one disadvantage of

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I actually, found it easier to participate than the normal meetings which, in the past, have sometimes been a bit intimidating! • It was good to get to "meet" other club representatives and also useful to find out a bit more information as to how other clubs operate. 	<p>Zoom is you don't get to meet people face to face. Being new to the area and new to croquet I only know people from my club. I therefore was unsure about making any comments in the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I missed the Lunch and chat after though. Can we have a virtual lunch? • From a purely business point of view a Zoom meeting is a positive experience however, once the formalities are complete there is also value in informal face to face gatherings that allows social interaction which can be constructive. • An added advantage on Sunday was that there was nothing very contentious on the agenda. I've not been present at a Zoom meeting where there was the cut and thrust of an augmentative debate; does everyone feel they have a fair hearing?
<p>Travel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good use of attendees' time - 3 hrs for me vs 9-10 hrs at a physical AGM • The fact that we didn't have to travel was a plus. • Saved on serious travelling time and cost at expense of meeting face to face, but regular monthly SWF meetings helps that. • Not having to travel significant distances for the AGM, or other meetings, does bring with it a positive and as someone mentioned during the meeting the expense for lunch was significantly less. • I was pleased not to have to travel and probably wouldn't have come as an observer if it hadn't been online. • a Zoom meeting does allow us to take only two hours out of our day and not 10! • I am more likely to attend a zoom meeting rather than having to travel to, say, Weston- s- Mare. • I support having a Zoom AGM as everyone can 'travel' to the meeting 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future use of technology • I believe that the SWF should consider continuing with virtual meetings as it has the potential to be more inclusive by allowing members to attend without having to travel long distances. If it is felt that a face to face meeting is preferable then I think it should be run in conjunction with a virtual meeting. If this is felt to be too complicated then I would suggest that the virtual meeting should be the preferred option. • A series of smaller Zoom meetings on particular areas of club management like lawn maintenance, publicity & marketing, grant applications, handicapping, organising competitions. • Zoom events (or pre-recorded sessions) on aspects of the game itself - AC, GC & SC tutorials at various levels, focusing on various aspects. • All publications electronic only • I know that a lot of this is already in place. Further development is to be encouraged. • Certainly, zoom for meetings, with recordings available on youtube or similar via web site for those who can't make it on the day. • You could do more with the web site e.g. I'd also like the coaching sessions eg Wed night GC rules to be available. • A comments or suggestions box, maybe via Chat might give people a chance to comment without interrupting. 	

- The zoom meeting format does give everyone the chance to attend so this certainly would help carers and the disabled and those with children.....sometimes even driving somewhere at distance is daunting for folk let alone the cost which might disclude some people working to a tight budget in these times.
- I would be happy if all AGMs were in that format (I'd get an extra couple of hours in bed as a bonus).
- My only comment on the proposal for future zoom AGM's is that it will involve the added cost of getting the trophies and plaques to the winning clubs. Otherwise I can see many advantages, particularly geographic.
- The fact it was a zoom meeting meant that the time taken was comparatively short, i.e. no travelling time. This can be a big plus, especially as the SWF covers a relatively large geographical area. However, "meeting" someone via zoom is not the same as meeting them in person. Hence, I would like to be present in person at another AGM.
- For members in Wales a trek over to the SW of England is not high on the agenda, consequently holding the
- AGM by zoom would be a good idea for the future.
- Having said that, I appreciate it may not be easy for all members to attend personally when the meeting is held some distance from their location. Would it be possible/practical to have a meeting that is by personal attendance with the option of it being on zoom at the same time?
- I think this is a way forward. Once people get used to it it is much more efficient than us all driving somewhere.
- I suggest that the open discussion session should be a separate Zoom meeting.
- All in all, I feel that this Zoom form of the AGM is here to stay.
- I know face to face contact is important and will be reinstated hopefully but, for a geographically dispersed group, zoom provides an opportunity for more regular and more meaningful contact than emails.
- The monthly zoom should continue.
- The Zoom system worked very well but let's hope we don't have to use it for too much longer.
- There is a danger in people becoming out-Zoomed, but Zoom seems to be the way forward now, and has the advantage of making geography irrelevant.
- There has been much talk of Zoom being used for coaching, but IMV it has important limitations for coaching, and this is in danger of becoming overlooked as many organisations / people jump on the Zoom bandwagon. Topics such as Laws, Rules, etc lend themselves to Zoom. But, could I have got the coaching I did from Dave by Zoom? Most definitely not!
- There is a place for video, and that is something Dave and I have talked about for next year (possibly!).
- Could this be a suitable platform for more coaching, including points of law. SCB's GC course is an example.
- It would be interesting to hear why some clubs didn't attend. If Zoom is the issue that's a shame because I think it's very useful for more regular general meetings, coaching sessions etc like we've already been having. People don't always want to turn out at night for meetings, especially if they have a distance to travel.
- I think the AGM should be face to face if possible but perhaps there should also be an on-line facility to allow more people to join if they can't attend in person.
- My overall feeling is that Zoom meetings are a boon in the world we find ourselves in, and likely to be for a further year at least. I also see everyone increasingly using Zoom meetings even if we return to normality. I suspect that it would still be necessary for members to meet occasionally to make face to face contact. Meanwhile let us all keep zooming and keeping in contact.
- Various skill levels, devices, local connections

- Peter hoped that there would be times when people could meet face to face and discuss topics, (covid allowing) so he wouldn't want zoom meetings for everything.
- Due to the current shut down situation, which looks as if it is going to continue for some time, the Zoom system etc is the only way for meetings to be held. However, when life calms down the Federation should again compare the take up of participation and engagement of clubs in the SW region to see which has most response. How many attendees go to meetings compared to how many people engage on Zoom. Obviously, the Federation want as many people as possible to be involved.
- Although I am not a fan of Zoom as I don't see it as inclusive. I commend the SWF committee for managing to hold an AGM during Lockdown, but would be interested to see how many clubs were unable to join in because of the method used.

If you didn't attend – what were the reasons for this

- The fact that a ball hasn't been hit on our lawn at the Royal Agricultural College (the college has been shut for much of the year) dampened many members' enthusiasm for the SWF AGM somewhat!
- As you know, our club was unable to attend using Zoom. Under normal circumstances I would have travelled up for the AGM as in some previous years, although could not have done so this year for four-legged friend reasons!