

**South West Federation of Croquet Clubs
Minutes of AGM 21.11.21 held on Zoom
To be approved at the AGM 2022**

1) Present

- a) See Appendix 1

2) Welcome

- a) Brian Wilson welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced the committee and asked Paul Francis to explain the meeting protocols in terms of voting and asking to speak

3) Apologies

Barnstaple	Cornwall
The Bears	Dowlish Wake
Charlton	Montacute
Cheltenham	Wellington
Andru Blewett SWF	

4) Minutes of last meeting

- a) Noted one amendment: in point 4a the word 'virtual' to be inserted after 'first'

Proposal 1	That the minutes are accepted as full and accurate record of the AGM 2020 subject to the above amendment	
Proposed	SWF Committee	
Seconded	East Dorset	
For: 95%	Against:	Abstentions: 5%

5) Matters arising

- a) None

6) Chair's report

- a) Previously circulated and key points highlighted – see Appendix 2

7) Treasurer's report

- a) Previously circulated and key points highlighted – see Appendix 3
 b) Nailsea queried the use of the current surplus and suggested acquiring hoop and ball sets for newly establishing clubs who could hire them for e.g. 5 years then buy them at a discount
 i) Paul explained this service was provided by the CA
 c) Bristol would like the SWF to further consider useful ways of spending the surplus
 i) Peter K explained this has been discussed by the SWF Committee and we don't want to spend it just for the sake of it.
 ii) The process of reducing the surplus began last year with the reduction in membership and League entry fees and that this will continue for the time being
 d) **Action:** The SWF will re-visit this matter

Proposal 2	That the accounts are accepted as full and accurate	
Proposed	SWF Committee	
Seconded	Sidmouth	
For: 100%	Against:	Abstentions:

Proposal 3	That Bob Whiffen (Treasurer Bristol CC) examines the accounts for 2022		
Proposed	SWF Committee		
Seconded	Sidmouth		
For: 100%	Against:	Abstentions:	

- e) Proposals 4 and 5 were taken in reverse order
- f) Proposal rationales may be found in Appendix 4 and 5

Proposal 4	That the Affiliate category of membership be removed from the Constitution		
Proposed	SWF Committee		
Seconded	Bristol		
For 98%	Against 2%	Abstentions	
Discussion on this proposal revealed some opposition but it was overwhelmingly passed including support from erstwhile Affiliate members.			

Proposal 5	That the fee structure described below be agreed for 2022		
Proposed	SWF Committee		
Seconded	Bristol		
For 98%	Against 2%	Abstentions	

8) League Secretary's report

- a) Previously circulated and key points highlighted – see Appendix 6
- b) Nailsea queried why no middle-sized group had been included as an option when the poll re the size of blocks was debated
 - i) Stephen replied that the exercise was undertaken to compare the past with 2021 not to establish the preferred size of blocks
 - ii) He pointed out all blocks will have 4, 5 or 6 matches which evens out any home advantage as there will never be fewer than 3 in a block
- c) Swanage asked what system of handicapping will be used in GC Leagues in 2022 as the Advantage system, while a move in the right direction, needs further modification.
 - i) Stephen confirmed that matches will be played using the traditional handicap system

9) Regional Coaching Officer's report

- a) Previously circulated and key points highlighted – see Appendix 7

10) Development Officers' report

- a) Previously circulated and key points highlighted – see Appendix 8
- b) Additionally:
 - i) clubs are encouraged to enter the CA awards scheme
 - ii) new clubs are desperately short of mallets so contributions would be very welcome please
 - iii) The CA Development Committee is now the Sport Development Committee with specific targets including the revival of Croquet Matters
 - (1) Paul is very happy to support clubs working through this so please contact him
- c) Mumbles noted that Sport Wales and Bowls Wales missing from the slides
 - i) **Action:** Paul acknowledged this and will pick up at CA level

11) Handicapping report:

- a) Previously circulated and key points highlighted – see Appendix 9

12) Report from SW Reps to CA Council

- a) Previously circulated and key points highlighted – see Appendix 10
- b) Peter Nelson added:
 - i) The CA will be moving to becoming a CIO and the CA will hold an SGM in the late spring to agree a new constitution
 - ii) One of the key issues in this will be voting – discussion paper is imminent
- c) Tony Mayer reported on the SWF Committee response on the original consultation which supported incorporation but we were of the opinion that the consultation was prejudiced because didn't have full info e.g. advice from solicitor
 - i) We support a club based voting system

13) Election of Officers 2021- 2022

- a) List of nominations, proposers and seconders may be found in Appendix 11

Proposal 6	That the nominations for Committee be approved		
Proposed	SWF Committee		
Seconded	Glamorgan		
For: 100%	Against:	Abstentions:	

14) Proposals: Constitution:

- a) Rationales for all constitutional proposals may be found in Appendix 12

Proposal 7	That Clause 6c be removed from the Constitution		
Proposed	SWF Committee		
Seconded	Nailsea		
For: 95%	Against:	Abstentions: 5%	

15) Proposals: League Rules:

- a) Rationales for all League rules proposals may be found in Appendix 13
- b) The section on background was understood to be a proposal in itself but was in fact just background and was poorly worded which led to some discussion.
 - i) In the end, its contents which are essentially those in Proposal 15, are all cosmetic / grammatical and were all passed.
- c) There was some discussion about increasing the threshold from 20 teams to 22 teams before the League Secretary is required to create at least 4 blocks. The change was approved by a vote, within a package of small changes to the SWF League rules.

Proposal 8	That the Short Croquet League become two Leagues: Open and Restricted.		
Proposed	SWF Committee		
Seconded	Sidmouth		
For 77%	Against 5%	Abstentions 18%	

Proposal 9	That the eligibility criteria for the Short Croquet League be amended as set out below.		
Proposed	Bath CC		
Seconded	Exeter		
For 34%	Against 54%	Abstentions 12%	
Discussion			
There was discussion about this with concerns expressed including			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of Leagues is increased • That a team may find it has insufficient players later in the season if handicaps fall <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This can also be an issue in AC leagues and clubs were advised not to enter teams if this was a real risk 			

- If, on the day of a match a team arrives without the full quota of high handicaps then the home team might have to accept this but it does lead to complications for Stephen when checking results from a broader perspective
- Bristol queried why handicap restrictions were necessary in a handicap league
- Analysis shows that low handicap players are actually disadvantaged more than high handicap players in open competitions

Proposal 10	That the eligibility criteria for the various Leagues be amended as set out below	
Proposed	SWF Committee	
Seconded	Nailsea	
For 90%	Against	Abstentions 10%

Proposal 11	That the scoring for walkovers and abandoned matches be amended as set out below.	
Proposed	SWF Committee	
Seconded	Glamorgan	
For 90%	Against 2%	Abstentions 8%

Proposal 12	That determining final block positions be amended as set out below	
Proposed	SWF Committee	
Seconded	Bristol	
For 93%	Against	Abstentions 7%

Proposal 13	That the wording of GC League Rule 8, para a be re-ordered as set out below.	
Proposed	Plymouth CC	
Seconded	Moreton in Marsh	
For 93%	Against	Abstentions 7%

Proposal 14	That the wording regarding League winners representing the SWF be amended as set out below	
Proposed	SWF	
Seconded	Winterborne Valley	
For 98%	Against	Abstentions 2%

Proposal 15	Minor changes to the League rules be made as set out below.	
Proposed	SWF	
Seconded	Camerton & Peasedown	
For 98%	Against 2%	Abstentions
This includes matters discussed under 'Background' which was referred to as 7a in discussion.		

16) AOB

- a) Nailsea raised the issue of catering at matches — the trend has moved towards what can be quite elaborate lunches - and asked if the SWF could give a ruling on this
 - i) Linda replied that this is a topic which has been raised by one or two other clubs during the year and the concerns include: club catering facilities, diets, allergies hygiene (with regard to Covid)
 - (1) The rules have never included instructions on this and the SWF committee has agreed it is not in favour of introducing such a rule, preferring to let teams sort it out themselves

- ii) The SWF asks all clubs to be sensitive to all the issues and knows of one club that has made a policy decision neither to offer lunches to visiting team or to accept lunches as an away team
 - iii) The provision of drinks and cakes has not been identified as a problem
 - iv) Chris Donovan noted that cricket is likely to be going the same way
 - v) If a club wishes to propose this be included in the rules at next year's AGM, then it is free to do so
- 17) Brian Wilson thanked everyone for their work during the meeting and its preparation and asked Tony Mayer, as incoming Chair, to say a few words.
- 18) Tony thanked Brian for his work as Chair over the last three years during which he has steered this trans-national federation through the exceptional circumstance of COVID..
- a) He noted we are not losing him as he remains as a committee member
 - b) As one of the SW Reps to CA Council, it will be helpful to have his input from this perspective and we sincerely hope there is no potential for a split in loyalty – acting as a committee member, the SWF comes first.
 - c) The Committee will be taking this opportunity to take stock of our member clubs' needs and priorities, so do keep telling us what these are
 - d) The CA is tackling the lack of diversity at its level, but this is mirrored on the SWF Committee particularly with regard to gender balance and geographical spread – we will be seeking people to fill the gaps – volunteers welcome!

19) Date of next meeting

- a) 20th November 2022 – to be held on Zoom

Appendix 1: Present

Abbey	Pamela Branley	Moreton in Marsh	Gill Hindshaw
Bath	Lynne Passfield		Christine McCormick
	Philip de Glanville	Mumbles	Richard Wood
Beckford	Robert Honey		Kath Wright
Bristol	Dave Kibble	Nailsea	Peter Dyke
Broadwas	Eileen Holt		Graham McCausland
Budleigh Salterton	Margaret Brett	Plymouth	Linda Lang
Camerton & Peasedown	Mo Boys		George Lang
East Dorset	Jonathan Powe	Sidmouth	Ed Dolphin
Exeter	Mark MacNair		Chris Donovan
Glamorgan	Paul Pristavec	St Agnes	Ivan Corbett
	Chris Williams	Swanage	Keith Southern
Kington Langley	Margaret Murray	Swindon	Clive Smith
	Caroline Tarran		Wendy White
Lym Valley	John McCallum	Taunton Deane	Beverley Tapper
	Ken Wilcox	Winterborne Valley	Ian Blaby
Stephen Custance-Baker	SWF	Peter Wilson	SW Rep to CA Council
Paul Francis	SWF	Dave Kibble	SW Rep to CA Council
Peter Kirby	SWF	Brian Wilson	SW Rep to CA Council
Tony Mayer	SWF	Jane Hull	Individual
Linda Shaw	SWF	Bob Whiffen	Individual
Brian Wilson	SWF		

Appendix 2: Chair's report

2021 has a year of changes

- Clubs have been dealing with impact of Covid – both financially and sporting
- Your Federation rose to the challenge by reorganising League Matches and Tournaments to ensure as many clubs and players could take part as possible
- So, thanks to SCB and everyone in clubs who worked so hard to ensure we had so many players taking part, even in these difficult times.
- As Croquet was one of the few sports that were allowed to restart - we went from 'stir crazy' to 'croquet crazy' and the public seemed to agree as clubs witnessed a marked increase in 'beginners' - long may it reign

A year of Challenges and how your Federation supported clubs

- I have already highlighted that both the Federation and Clubs rose to the challenge of taking part in League matches – not forgetting Regional and National Tournaments many clubs experienced a marked number of people wanting to try croquet and their membership has increased – long may it reign
- Paul Francis has a more detailed Development Report, but as a 'trailer' we welcomed our new member club in Moreton in Marsh, plus another new club in Bradford on Avon (it is a part of the town's bowling green)
- 2021 has been the year of coaching - there will be more about this later, but I would like to thank Roger Mills for developing and leading on a programme that blended zoom meetings and

'on lawn' face to face teaching and assessment. The result is that the region now has 23 more Club coaches with two more expected to be accredited next year.

- The SW Fed is leading the way again. Roger has stepped down from the Committee as, rather unsurprisingly, he is finding more people are asking for his services. But he will still lead and support the continued success of coaching across the Federation – thanks Roger
- Zoom seminars led by Paul Francis, have continued - clubs benefitting from an excellent series of seminars and there will be more to come
- Paul has also re-launched 'Croquet Matters' – an excellent programme that really gets to grip with your club's future - I strongly advised that you take part – it will be worth it
- Your Federation has continued to produce Cygnet - I know that this is much appreciated by one and all – but you probably do not appreciate the work that goes into each issue. Thank you for all the contributions from clubs – news, photos, quizzes, reports – more please!

Celebrating Achievements

- This year's league has produced so many excellent matches and many players have improved their handicaps – congratulations to one and all. I will not 'steal SCB's thunder' – he'll tell us the full history later
- Congratulations - many South West people have been recognised by the CA
 - The Coach of the Year Award for 2020 was presented to Stephen Custance-Baker - we all know how much he puts into his coaching – congratulations SCB
 - Winterbourne Valley and Sheffield were joint holders of the Townsend Award
 - Andrew Wimshurst of Nailsea was awarded a CA Diploma

Your Committee

- We continued to meet by zoom
- We co-opted Andru Blewett and Louise Smith. Unfortunately Louise stepped down due to pressure of other commitments, but we hope to see her back in the future
- We have an excellent team presenting themselves for election – but why not consider being part of the committee, or even taking on a specific responsibility
- On behalf of the whole Federation I wish to thank everyone on the Committee for all their hard work over the year

CA Council representatives

- Our 3 Representatives have received copies of relevant papers and have added their own specialist knowledge and experience
- We value their involvement and support for the Federation
- Klim Seabright is standing down after his term ended - we thank him and appreciate all his hard work
- I was elected as the SW Fed's newest CA Council member and look forward to supporting both the region and the CA for the next 3 years – there's certainly lots to get my teeth into!!

Your Federation's plans for 2022 includes:

- More Development work to support clubs
- More zoom seminars - you never know, we might be able to meet face to face!!
- More Coaching and Refereeing support
- League tournaments for more people, for all skill levels and across all codes – AC/GC and Short Croquet

Can you help?

- There is even more to do and we are looking for people to lead on a number of key activities including Coaching, enhancing our web site, leading us into the world of Social Media – go on, get involved
- Please encourage your members (especially the new ones) to consider helping us to help you

And finally

- I come to the end of my 3-year tenure as your Chair. It's been a hectic time with so much happening - but it has been enjoyable and challenging – one thing is certain I owe a debt of gratitude to the Committee – that's why I am standing for election as a committee member and look forward to serving the Federation as your 'new' CA Council member
- So, here's to the rest of the year and I'll raise a glass to croquet's continuing health in 2022 and beyond

Brian Wilson
SWF Chair

Appendix 3: Treasurer's report



South West Federation of Croquet Clubs



Treasurers AGM Report 21st November 2021

Financial Year-End Accounts (see page 3)

Due to the cancellation of the Nailsea Short Croquet Tournament and the B League income was lower by approximately £560. There has been an associated fall in expenditure due to the cancellation of these events of around the same amount.

Travel expenses have been lower than forecast by approximately £600 due to the move to hold all committee meetings in 2021 on zoom, in addition there has been a re-statement of the 2021 budget.

There have been small increases in the cost of trophies, and lawn hire fees as specified by the CA.

In summary the net impact is that there is a small profit for the year, compared to the original 2021 projection of a small loss.

Reserves in the General Account of nearly £5,400 are more than adequate to cover any reasonable short-term fluctuations in income and expenditure.

Judith Moore Bursary

There have been no grants applied for under the bursary during 2021, the existing criteria for availability of grants will remain in place during 2022, but looking further into 2023 it is anticipated that there will be a wider remit to ensure effective distribution of the fund within its general aims.

Commentary of Fees & Level of Reserves

I said in my 2020 Treasurers report :-

"At the year-end reserves are just over £5,200 which at 210% of 2019 turnover of c£2,500 (excluding costs of printing SWAN) which in the Treasurer's opinion appears to be rather high. There are further reasons to believe these reserves are high :-

1. Income & Expenditure are comparatively stable.
2. Fixed costs are low
3. Around 50% of expenses are "internal" to member clubs (Lawn Fees), and represent transferring of funds from one group of member clubs to another.

I therefore propose that these surplus reserves are distributed to member clubs over a number of years by setting fees to give a small projected budget loss (a loss of £200 for 2021) and keeping fees suppressed. "

The proposed fees given in the section below on average represent a 16% cut are consistent with the approach outlined above and agreed at the 2020 AGM and lead to a small projected budget loss of £340 for 2022. This budget Loss assumes that the number of League Entries increase by 20% compared to 2021, this assumption has been made following advice from the League Secretary.

It is proposed that the Short Croquet Team Events fees are to remain the same as 2021 as the income & expenditure are already roughly in balance for these events.

A discount for early payment is proposed to ensure that payment is made in a timely manner consistent with the timetable for the organisation and start of League play.

With the move to more support online and zoom meetings it is felt that the existing fee level for affiliate clubs (£3) and the full member fees for very small clubs doesn't fully reflect the services that SWF are offering. Therefore it is proposed to remove the affiliate category of membership and introduce a minimum club fee of £8.

Proposed Fees for 2022

It is therefore proposed that for 2022 the structure of fees shall be as follows :-

League Entries reduced to £4.40 per team (currently £6.70 per team)

Short Croquet Team Events remains at £17 per team (currently £17 per team)

Full Members Fee reduced to 35p per playing member (currently 45p per playing member) subject to a maximum fee of £19 (currently £29), and a minimum fee of £9 (new rule)

If payment is received on or before December 5th 2021 a discount is applied to the rates above and are as follows :-

League Entries reduced to £4 per team (currently £6 per team)

Short Croquet Team Events remains at £15 per team (currently £15 per team)

Full Members Fee reduced to 30p per playing member (currently 40p per playing member) subject to a maximum fee of £17 (currently £26), and a minimum fee of £8 (new rule)

The category of affiliate membership is to be removed and all clubs shall join as full members.

Peter Kirby

Treasurer – SWF Croquet



South West Federation of Croquet Clubs



Accounts Year-End 31st October 2021

GENERAL ACCOUNT

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

INCOME

	2021	2020
Subscriptions	552	811
Association league fees	288	504
Short league fees	66	104
Golf league fees	330	544
Short croquet Tournament fees	420	1200
Subscriptions and League Fees (Total)	1656	3163
Subscriptions and League Fees Refund	-18	-2468
Subscriptions and League Fees (Net)	1638	695
Adverts	90	60
CTC Coaching Course	0	0
CA refund of travel expenses	0	0
Donations	0	0
Sundries	0	0
	1728	755

EXPENDITURE

Swan Production	0	710
Trophies	234	0
League finals	480	0
Short croquet	480	0
Coaching expenses	0	0
Travel expenses	137	133
Bursary travel expenses	0	0
AGM Workshops Costs	0	115
SWF Website	135	135
AGM (net costs)	48	15
Administration	0	0
Sundries	67	66
	1580	1173

SURPLUS / - DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR **147** **-419**

ADD OPENING BALANCE **5234** **5653**

CLOSING BALANCE **5381** **5234**

BALANCE SHEET

REPRESENTED BY

CASH AT BANK	5394	5234
DEBTORS	13	0
CREDITORS	0	0
TOTAL NET ASSETS	5381	5234

Note : The Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet above do not reflect the possible payment of £600 from the CA in respect of CTC Coaching Course Subsidy and the associated coaching expenses of £317.

TOURNAMENT DEVELOPMENT FUND

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

INCOME

Bursary Received	0	5000
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EXPENDITURE

Grants provided	0	0
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SURPLUS / - DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR **0** **5000**

ADD OPENING BALANCE **0** **0**

CLOSING BALANCE **0** **5000**

BALANCE SHEET

REPRESENTED BY

CASH AT BANK	5000	5000
DEBTORS	0	0
CREDITORS	0	0
TOTAL NET ASSETS	5000	5000

CONSOLIDATED FUNDS

BALANCE SHEET

REPRESENTED BY

CASH AT BANK	10394	10234
DEBTORS	13	0
CREDITORS	0	0
TOTAL NET ASSETS	10407	10234

Peter Kirby
Treasurer

Bob Whiffen
Examiner

I have examined the financial records of the South West Federation of Croquet Clubs, for the year ending 31 October 2021 and report that the above statement gives a true and fair view

Appendix 4: Proposal 4 rationale

Proposal 4	That the Affiliate category of membership be removed from the Constitution
Rationale:	With the move to more support online and zoom meetings it is felt that the existing fee level for affiliate clubs (£3) and the full member fees for very small clubs doesn't fully reflect the services that SWF are offering. Therefore, it is proposed to remove the affiliate category of membership and introduce a minimum club fee of £8.

Appendix 5: Proposal 5 rationale

Proposal 5	That the fee structure described below be agreed for 2022
Proposed fee structure	<p>For 2022 the structure of fees shall be as follows:</p> <p>League Entries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• League Entries reduced to £4.40 per team (currently £6.70 per team)• Short Croquet Team Events remains at £17 per team (currently £17 per team) <p>Membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full Members Fee reduced to 35p per playing member (currently 45p per playing member) subject to a maximum fee of £19 (currently £29), and a minimum fee of £9 (new rule) <p>If payment is received on or before December 1st 2021 a discount is applied to the rates above and are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• League Entries reduced to £4 per team (currently £6 per team)• Short Croquet Team Events remains at £15 per team (currently £15 per team)• Full Members Fee reduced to 30p per playing member (currently 40p per playing member) subject to a maximum fee of £17 (currently £26), and a minimum fee of £8 (new rule) <p>Rationale</p> <p>I said in my 2020 Treasurers report:</p> <p>"At the year-end reserves are just over £5,200 which at 210% of 2019 turnover of c£2,500 (excluding costs of printing SWAN) which in the Treasurer's opinion appears to be rather high. There are further reasons to believe these reserves are high:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Income & Expenditure are comparatively stable.2. Fixed costs are low3. Around 50% of expenses are "internal" to member clubs (Lawn Fees), and represent transferring of funds from one group of member clubs to another. <p>I therefore propose that these surplus reserves are distributed to member clubs over a number of years by setting fees to give a small projected budget loss (a loss of £200 for 2021) and keeping fees suppressed. "</p> <p>The proposed fees which on average represent a 16% cut are consistent with the approach outlined above and agreed at the 2020 AGM and lead to a small projected budget loss of £340 for 2022.</p> <p>It is proposed that the Short Croquet Team Events fees are to remain the same as 2021 as the income & expenditure are already roughly in balance for these events.</p> <p>A discount for early payment is proposed to ensure that payment is made in a timely manner consistent with the timetable for the organisation and start of League play.</p>

Appendix 6: League Secretary's report

2021 Overview

Nobody expected the 2021 season to be normal but we have come to the end of it in a much better state than many expected. The season got off to a very late start and some leagues were slightly disrupted by travel restrictions and reduced squads due to Covid.

However, all the leagues and play-offs were completed, almost on time, and all of the finals took place on the published dates. There were 14 conceded matches, but it had already been made clear that these would not be penalised. Although this is higher than in 2019 (when 9 were conceded) it is much better than in 2018 when 21 were conceded.

111 teams were entered from 28 clubs, which is slightly down on 2019, when there were 127 teams, and well down on the 2020 entry of 143 teams. We are all hoping that 2022 will get us back to where we should have been in 2020.

It wasn't possible to run the B League as there were too few entries, but the new Short Croquet league had two blocks of 5 teams.

Altogether we had 184 league matches, which is roughly half the number in the previous two years, but this was largely due to the deliberate use of smaller blocks to fit in with the reduced season length.

Two breaches of the GC SWF rules occurred.

- One match had to have the result adjusted when it was found that a player had played off too high a handicap and the team forfeited a game, changing the result from 10-10 to 9-11.
- In a play-off GC match the score finished 10-10 and the match should have been resolved with an extra doubles game. Instead, the teams agreed to award the match to the team with most hoops scored.

2021 League Results

All of the trophies were presented at the finals and have been left with the winners to be engraved and all of the league results are on the SWF website. Congratulations to all of the winners

Advanced League Division 1	Bristol
Advanced League Division 2	Bath
Advanced League Division 3	Budleigh Salterton
Federation	Winterbourne Valley
Intermediate	East Dorset
Short Croquet	Bath
GC Level Play	Winterbourne Valley
GC Handicap	Plymouth
GC High Handicap	Budleigh Salterton

There were no issues at the finals. The draw in the GC Handicap final was resolved with an extra doubles game, as per the SWF league rules.

The 9 award plaques were either handed out during the Short Croquet inter-club tournament or sent to the winning clubs. Winterbourne Valley will be representing the SWF in the national AC Secretary's Shield handicap knockout competition in 2022.

Plymouth, as the winners of our GC Handicap League were invited to enter the national GC Federation Shield handicap knockout competition in 2022. They decided, however, that it would be impossible for them, for geographical and cost reasons. The runners-up, Dowlish Wake, have agreed to take their place and will therefore represent the SWF.

Leagues in 2022

I had a good response to my enquiry about the preferred size of leagues in 2022. Although 6 clubs preferred the smaller sizes that we had this year, 15 voted for a return to the larger sizes of previous years.

My plan, therefore, is to create as many blocks as I can with 6 teams in them, giving 5 matches, but varying that up or down by 1, if necessary. Where smaller blocks have to be formed, for geographical reasons, I plan that any block of 4 or 3 teams will play home and away, giving 6 or 4 matches.

There also appears to be good support for an additional Short Croquet league with unrestricted handicaps. I have therefore proposed that we have one league as in 2021, to be called the Short Croquet (Restricted) League and one with no handicap restrictions, to be called the Short Croquet (Open) League. If a club chooses to enter a team in both of these leagues, then, as they are separate, players are entitled to play in both teams. The new Open league and the handicap rules for the Restricted league are both subject to proposals to be debated at the AGM.

Finally, I am very grateful to all the clubs who made their facilities available for the league finals, and to the people who gave up their time to prepare the lawns, referee and report on these matches.

Short Croquet

We are grateful to John Grimshaw for continuing these events, although there was only one this year, the full report of which appeared in Cygnet Issue 32. With these, and the possibility of two SC Leagues next year, this is a really popular version of the game, giving players of all abilities the opportunity to enjoy the matches.

National SC

We were unwilling to field a team in this year's competition due to the different handicap restrictions to that event, willingness to travel and the need for an overnight stay. We have made representation to the CA about the handicap restrictions, but to no avail. We may face a similar problem next year and need to think how we want to proceed with this.

Stephen Custance-Baker
SWF League Secretary

Appendix 7: Coaching report

In 2021, the SWF under the excellent leadership of Roger Mills introduced a new approach to coaching.

In reaction to club's requests for more courses, Roger planned two levels of course; one for club level (CTC) and one for the level 1 qualification.

In a change to previous courses, the plan was to deliver the face-to-face training at various clubs across the SWF. This meant that travelling for participants was greatly reduced. The face-to-face training was delivered at: Bath (two courses), Budleigh Salterton, Cheltenham, Cornwall and East Dorset. Many thanks to all these clubs for their co-operation and to Bob Burnett for delivering the Cornwall course.

In addition, a carefully planned programme of Zoom training sessions with the focus on participant contribution was delivered. Opportunities for group work and teaching peers were integral to these sessions.

We are pleased to report that 24 people completed the CTC having attended the formal training and completing a coaching portfolio. In all 16 clubs were represented. Several more, who started in 2021, will complete in 2022.

Unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond our control, the level 1 coaching course has been delayed to 2022.

The feedback from participants has been very positive and reflects the huge commitment Roger made to the delivery of the courses. His energy and commitment to coaching is second to none and we hope he will continue to be involved in 2022.

Congratulations to the following new club coaches:

Peter Allan; Blewbury	Martin Isles: East Dorset
Pamela Branley: Abbey	Michael Kay: Budleigh Salterton
Kate Brice: Winterbourne Valley	Martin Kerly: Nailsea
Gill Clark: Bath	Tim Lacy-Hulbert: Kington Langley
Simon Clay: Worcester Norton	Gordon MacRae: Moreton in Marsh
Ed Dolphin: Sidmouth	David Milford: Camerton & Peasedown
Sue Drew: Winterborne Valley	Anthony Myers: Taunton Deane
David Enticknap: Bristol	Lynne Passfield: Bath
Chris Greensted: Plymouth	Jacqueline Raby: Cheltenham
Andrew Higgins: Budleigh Salterton	Geoff Scutt: Bude
Gill Hindshaw: Moreton in Marsh	Naomi Whitehead: Cheltenham
Lyndon Hughes: Bath	Ian Wills: Kington Langley

2022 plans

The plan is to run a similar series of CTC courses and the Level 1 Coaching Qualification. If you are interested in either course, as a participant or host club, please email Paul Francis paulwfrancis@icloud.com

Paul Francis and Roger Mills

Appendix 8: Development Officer's report

The national picture:

The calendar year started with a change in direction for the CA Development Committee. Previously responsible for the awarding of grants and loans, the CA Executive Board delegated this task to the new Funding Committee.

This move released the Development Committee to focus on the development of our sport. The newly named Sport Development Committee (SDC) now has the following objectives:

1. Recruitment and retention of young players
2. Identifying new funding streams for clubs.
3. Developing Croquet's infrastructure e.g. the quality of playing surfaces
4. The introduction of Croquet sections at bowls clubs.
5. The re-launch of Croquet Matters (Sport England's Club Matters)

Progress since the launch in February has been mixed.

In terms of the recruitment and retention of young players, a Task Force has just begun work on this project. Its task is to "help and inspire clubs to recruit young people" through practical advice and encouragement.

Looking at three age groups: the under 12s, 13-17 and 18 to 24 the task force will build upon existing best practice in the UK and beyond. This will also include researching best practice from other sports.

Initial research into funding streams revealed that, in the past ten years, our sport was slow to appreciate the opportunities for funding from Sport England's various fund options. Of course, Sport England's focus over the past 18 months has switched to dealing with "Returning to Play" but, in the long term, it is anticipated that new funding opportunities will arise.

The SDC has established links with Sport England and is engaging in Its "Uniting Movement" ten-year vision to transform lives and community through sport and physical activity.

As funding opportunities arise, SWF members will be updated.

In terms of developing infrastructure, the SDC has focused on sourcing training and specialist advice for lawn managers. There are ongoing discussions with the Grounds Management Association (GMA) and we are close to agreeing a package of support, on line and face-to-face training to commence in Spring 2022. After positive discussions with Sport England, we have been encouraged to apply for funding for the project.

The SDC has met with Bowls England to explore the introduction of croquet sections at bowls clubs. Despite an encouraging start, Bowls England have gone quiet on this initiative. However, the good news is that two Wiltshire bowls clubs will be introducing croquet in April 2022. We envisage more bowls clubs will be choosing to join us in 2022 and we will be targeting locations where croquet is under represented.

The re-launch of Croquet Matters has happened with two SWF clubs attending the Zoom meeting. Nationally, one club in the North West has undertaken the self-assessment with Dave Gunn. We are still willing to run these sessions for clubs and I am very happy to discuss the options with any club.

Final Thoughts

You might have noticed that Sport England feature large in this report. I would urge clubs to regularly visit its website to view funding and recruitment opportunities. On a local level, Sport England's Active Partnerships are a good way for clubs to promote themselves. In addition, these Active Partnerships are promoting the "Living Longer Better" campaign for the over 55s. These tend to be organised on a county-by-county basis in the SWF where we have eight Active Partnerships (apologies to our Welsh clubs):

- Active Cornwall
- Active Devon
- Active Dorset
- Somerset Active and Sports Partnership
- Active Wiltshire and Swindon
- Wesport (North Somerset, Bristol and Bath)
- Active Gloucestershire
- Active Herefordshire and Worcestershire

Follow this link for more information on your local Active Partnership
<https://www.activepartnerships.org/active-partnerships>

SW Club Development News in 2021

- Congratulations to Moreton in Marsh for its official launch.
- Congratulations to Winterbourne Valley for the CA Townsend Award
- Two bowls clubs in Wiltshire join the CA and plan to start croquet in 2022

Future Monthly Zoom Meetings

These will continue to run on the second Tuesday of each month at 7pm.

The meetings are a chance for clubs to meet up and discuss issues, exchange ideas and share best practice.

We are always willing to listen to requests for topics you would like included.

Grants and Loans

Please feel free to contact me with any development plans. The new Funding Committee now offers a quick turnaround for any application.

Visits

I am very happy to make visits to clubs if you so wish.

Paul Francis
SWF Development Officer

Appendix 9: Handicapping Officer's Report

As 2021 was an abbreviated season there is little to report with most League results showing reasonably close matches. This would imply that, overall, handicapping is about right. There will always be an occasional outlier and there will also be occasional disputes over players' handicaps. In addition, there will always be cases of players having an off-day or, conversely, playing well above what their handicap may indicate. Analysis of one block of matches in the High Handicap League gave an overall picture of well-balanced results

Use of the automatic grading system applies to both AC and GC results but a handicapper may adjust handicaps where a player shows a rapid improvement but maybe playing too few competitive matches for the automatic system to reflect such progress.

I am grateful to Stephen Custance-Baker, the League Secretary for his article in Cygnet (Issue 22 October 2021) showing how the automatic grading system works with regard to 'thresholds' whether one is ascending or descending the handicap 'ladder'. I commend this to everyone.

Handicapping is an important aspect of the competitive game and clubs should have a handicapper or handicap committee that regularly reviews handicaps. Ideally, this should be prior to the start of the coming season.

SWF will be organising Zoom handicapping workshop(s) before the start of next season, having previously done so in 2018.

Also, SWF can provide both guidance and practical help to clubs should they need an 'independent' assessment of handicaps.

Tony Mayer
SWF Handicapping Officer

Appendix 10: SW Representatives to CA Council: Report on CA Council Activity

The restrictions of the Covid pandemic have resulted in all Council meetings being virtual by means of Zoom. Whilst the lack of face-to-face contact is regretted there have been benefits which include, inter alia, the ability to schedule additional meetings and considerable savings in travel costs. Going forward the Council will use both physical and virtual meetings with more emphasis on the latter.

The Council has established a number of working groups to make specific recommendations. Notable among these was the Competitive Play Working Group whose report and recommendations have been passed to the Executive Board for implementation. There is much to consider in this report for both Federations and Clubs in furthering the sport.

Other working groups are reviewing Coaching and Performance and the Tournament Levy System. Both these groups have only submitted interim reports at this stage.

An Equality and Diversity Policy has been approved and published. A Children's Safeguarding Policy was approved in 2020 and a policy for safeguarding vulnerable adults is currently being developed. Other policies reviewed this year include the Disciplinary and Appeals Procedure, Complaints and On-line Communications. Involvement by Federations and Clubs will be fundamental to successfully implementing these policies.

After years of debate, the Council has decided to become incorporated and to seek charitable

status. After seeking specialist legal advice, the Council favours achieving this by becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). Any decision will require the approval of the membership and the current plan is to hold a Special General Meeting in early 2022. the proposals are currently out for consultation and a constructive response has been received from the SW Federation.

Thanks are due to Klim Seabright steps down as a council member representing the SW Federation and is replaced by Brian Wilson who makes a welcome return to Council.

Peter Nelson on behalf of the SW Reps:

Peter Nelson, Dave Kibble, Klim Seabright

Appendix 11: Nominations to Committee

Proposal 6		That the nominations for Committee be approved	
Post	Name	Proposer	Second
Chair	Tony Mayer: Swindon CC	Clive Smith: Swindon CC	Neil Morrison: Swindon CC
League Secretary	Stephen Custance-Baker: Taunton Deane CC	Beverley Tapper: Taunton Deane CC	George Lang: Plymouth CC
Secretary	Linda Shaw: Bristol CC	Dave Kibble: Bristol CC	Graham McCausland: Nailsea CC
Treasurer	Peter Kirby: Bristol CC	Bob Whiffen: Bristol CC	Neil Purchase: Bristol CC
Development Officer	Paul Francis: Bath CC	Lynne Passfield: Bath CC	Margaret Murray: Kington Langley CC
Committee member	Andru Blewett: St Agnes CC	Ivan Corbett: St Agnes CC	Colin Leigh: St Agnes CC
Committee member	Brian Wilson: Camerton & Peasedown CC	Maureen Boys: C&P CC	Paul Francis: Bath CC

Appendix 12: Constitutional Proposals rationale

Proposal 7	That Clause 6c be removed from the Constitution
Commentary: The clause currently reads: <i>Any Member Clubs wishing to resign from the SWF must inform the Secretary not later than the AGM.</i>	
Rationale: That this has rarely, if ever, been invoked and is unnecessary for the satisfactory running of the Federation or its membership.	

Appendix 13: League Rules proposals rationales

Background
A number of rule changes have been proposed both by the committee and by member clubs. The new version of each set of rules is attached with changes for approval by the AGM identified in red.
These have been broken down into their constituent parts so that each may be voted on separately.
If adopted, several grammatical and numerical amendments will be made which do not need to be presented to the AGM including for both AC and GC League Rules:

- 1 a Changed order of list of leagues.
- 1 b Changed 20 to 22. 20 is anomalous as 19 teams in 3 blocks requires a block of 7.
- 12 a (3) iii Inserted agreed reference to "nett games" after "who beat whom".
- Appendix 1 Reference to other appendix concerning Safeguarding:

During reformatting line got removed so just putting it back

Safeguarding of vulnerable players, including minors, is the responsibility of their team captain. **The procedures described in the CA Child Safeguarding Policy must be followed and the Local Safeguarding Officer of the host club should be made aware when a vulnerable player is included in either team.**

Proposal 8	That the Short Croquet League become two Leagues: Open and Restricted.
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Rationale

At the moment, the rule is that half of the games must be played by players with SC handicaps of 6 or more, but what happens if a player has improved their SC handicap before the final? Fortunately, this didn't arise this year. But clubs are experiencing difficulty in forming teams.

If adopted, paras 1 a) and b) would read as stated in red in the amended document and further amendments to handicap restrictions (eligibility) in several leagues are described separately below.

Proposal 9	That the eligibility criteria for the Short Croquet League be amended as set out below.
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Explanation

Would like to propose that the new SWF Short Croquet League should continue next year (2022) in its current format, but that players whose handicaps are SC6 or more at the start of the season, making them eligible to play in the team as one of two required higher handicap players, should remain eligible to play in these roles throughout the remainder of the season, even if their handicaps fall below SC6 because their croquet playing has improved.

Rationale

We are all in favour of encouraging less experienced players to take part in the Short Croquet League but feel that having to leave them off the team as soon as they show signs of playing better makes no sense!

Moreover we, here in Bath, think it unlikely that we shall have more than two potential higher handicap players next season, and so would have to drop out of the league as soon as one of them dropped to SC5 or less. We anticipate that the league would be even more disrupted, on this account, than it was this past inaugural year, with teams having to offer walkovers.

Proposal 10	That the eligibility criteria for the various Leagues be amended as set out below
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Section 4 b (1)

A club entering a team in more than one division of the League for Advanced Play **should** declare each team squad to the League Secretary before the first game of the season

These consequent of acceptance of props 8 & 9

Section 4 c

- a. On the day any match is played, each player shall comply with the appropriate handicaprestriction from the following.

- (1) **League for Advanced Play.** There is no handicap restriction.
- (2) **Federation League.** Players with handicaps of 14 or below, subject to (d.1) below. In addition, a team may field one player whose handicap is 16 or 18.
- (3) **Intermediate League.** Players with handicaps within a range of 9 to 18, subject to (d.1) below. In addition, a team may field one player whose handicap is 20 or 22.
- (4) **'B' League.** Players with handicaps within a range of 16 to 24, subject to (d.1) below.
- (5) **Short Croquet Restricted League.** At least half of the games played by each team must be played by players with Short Croquet handicaps of 6 or above, subject to (d.2) below.
- (6) **Short Croquet Open League.** There is no handicap restriction.

Section 4 d

- (1) **Federation, Intermediate and 'B' Leagues.** If a player has played for a Handicap League team throughout the season and is still eligible to play for that team when it plays its final block match then, if the team qualifies for the play-offs, that player shall be allowed to participate if his/her handicap is within, or not more than one step outside, the range for that league.
- (2) **Short Croquet Restricted League.** If a player has played for the team during the season but their Short Croquet handicap has improved to a level below 6, then any games played by that player in a play-off or final match will be counted as having been played by a high handicapper.

Section 13

The following be inserted as the new 13 e

a. Short Croquet Leagues

- (7) If, at the end of a play-off or final, the game score is 8-8 then the winning team is the one that has scored most hoops.
- (8) If the teams have scored an equal number of hoops, then the tie is to be resolved by a shoot-off.
 - i. Each team will have four shots by different players at hoop 1 from the yard line in front of hoop 1. Only a ball that completes running the hoop will count.
 - ii. If the scores are level after the first four shots, then the teams will play alternate shots until a winner is found.
 - iii. No player may play a second shot until all players have played at least one and no player may play a third shot until each player has played at least two etc.

Rationale

To correct the omission from the original rules which did not cover this possibility

Proposal 11

That the scoring for walkovers and abandoned matches be amended as set out below.

Section 11 a (2) Walkovers and abandoned matches

- I. Short Croquet League. A walkover win shall be scored 7-0, each game being scored as 14-7, for block position calculations.

II. All other Leagues. A walkover win shall be scored 3–0, each game being scored as 26-13, for block position calculations.

Rationale

Proposal 12

That determining final block positions be amended as set out below

Section 12 3 a) Final block positions

If two or more teams are still equal then, for a mini-block of the equal teams:

- iv. match points awarded; then
- v. "who beat whom", using the nett games where teams have met twice; then
- iii. nett games between the teams in the mini-block.
- iv. average nett hoop points per game between the teams in the mini-block.

Rationale

Lost in re-formatting a couple of years ago

Proposal 13

That the wording of GC League Rule 8, para a be re-ordered as set out below.

Rationale

The aim of this proposal is not to do away with time limits, but rather better remind teams that time limits are neither necessary nor compulsory by these rules;

At present this is worded as follows:

8. Time Limits

- a. A time limit of not less than 50 minutes shall be agreed by both team captains before the start of each game (except as directed under Rule 13e); if they wish, they may agree to play any game without a time limit. If the two captains cannot agree on a time limit, the shorter of the two suggested time limits shall be used.*

Over the past couple of years our experience has shown that almost all opposing team captains believe that a 50-minute time limit is compulsory for league matches. There is usually surprise when the full rule wording is shown to them.

Proposed new word order:

8. Time Limits

- a.** Team captains may agree to play any match or game without a time limit. If a time limit needs to be used then a time limit of not less than 50 minutes shall be agreed by both team captains before the start of each game (except as directed under Rule 13e). If the two captains cannot agree on a time limit, the shorter of the two suggested time limits shall be used.

Benefits:

Where matches have been played without time limits the games overall have usually averaged out at no longer than 60 minutes anyway (50-minute time limit plus allowed extra turns).

Players from the teams in these matches have reported that taking out the need to monitor time and adjust strategy because of it, where extra shots are involved, has been a relief, taking away the distraction of clock watching and so adding to a focus on the game itself.

There have been reported problems about use of timing equipment.

- Where clocks are left on the sidelines they often do not get heard when alarms go, and are not big enough to see from a distance.
- It is rare that there are sufficient spectators to manage timings throughout a complete game, so players can be seen having to regularly go over to the clock to timings themselves.
- It is being reported by several clubs that where clocks are carried round, either attached to players or in pockets, they get in the way or buttons get pressed accidentally.
- Match referees have reported being called by players due to loss of time awareness because of this.
- Where double banking is being used then without time limits there is no pressure about remembering to stop and restart the clock.
- When a time limited game is played where one player has a high number of extra shots then a bias may be perceived to exist in favour of the higher handicap player.

Considerations:

Presently club captains are generally reluctant to play other than a 50-minute limit.

They generally will not agree to a longer, say 60-minute, limit, even for doubles, because "they always play to 50 minutes because the rules say so."

It is believed that this change of wording will help team captains to regularly consider the option of playing with no time limits.

The option of playing without a time limit will make things both simpler and fairer for everyone without making any significant overall difference to the overall match timings.

It is accepted that where there are less than, say, three courts available then time limits might be needed, although even with just 2 courts this may often be unnecessary.

Interestingly, winners of the SWF GC Handicap League Final represent the SW Federation in the national GC Federation Shield competition; Rule 10 of this competition states "Time limits shall be used only with the agreement of team captains".

Some other Federations seem to agree:

Southern Federation Regulations:

..... Handicap and Advantage games will NOT be timed.

- Level games may only be timed if BOTH captains specifically agree.
- In a time limited game the CA Tournament Regulations T.4 will apply.

East Midlands Federation

Timed Games

Timing of games is only permitted with the agreement of both captains.

Proposal 14

That the wording regarding League winners representing the SWF be amended as set out below

GC: 13.f The winner of the Handicap League final shall be invited to represent the South West Federation in the GC Federation Shield in the following season.

AC: 13.e The winner of the Federation League final shall be invited to represent the South West Federation in the Secretary's Shield in the following season.

Proposal 15 | Minor changes to the League rules be made as set out below.

AC Rules only

- New Short Croquet league changes (apart from changing "league" to "leagues").
 - 1 a (5), (6)
 - 4 c and d
 - 7 d 3 Changed "Short Croquet" to "Short Lawn" to avoid ambiguity.
 - 10 Added missing reference to SC
 - 13 e New section to deal with the issue of a drawn match in a play-off or final.

- 4 b (1) Change "must" to "should". This becomes optional and removes the contradiction.
- 7 d 1 Because the AC Laws have changed.

What will be changed depends on voting