

**South West Federation of Croquet Clubs  
Minutes of AGM held 20<sup>th</sup> November 2022 by Zoom.**

- 1) **Welcome**
  - a) Tony Mayer welcomed everyone to the meeting
- 2) **Present**
  - a) See Appendix 1
- 3) **Apologies**
  - a) See Appendix 1
- 4) **Polling rehearsal**
  - a) Electronic voting system proved not to be working so agreed to use a show of hands.
  - b) Noted that only official club delegates and SWF committee members can vote.
- 5) **Minutes of last meeting**
  - a) Ken Southern should read Keith Southern in list of delegates.
  - b) 'Revival' appears twice in para10 b iii.
  - c) **Action: Linda** will amend and place corrected version on website.
  - d) The amended version was unanimously agreed as correct.
- 6) **Matters arising**
  - a) There were none
- 7) **Chair's report**
  - a) Tony presented his report which may be found in Appendix 2.
    - i) Noted that Linda Hicks from Budleigh is missing from the list of CA Diploma awards.
    - ii) **Action: Linda S** will amend.
    - iii) There will be a special Zoom meeting in January 2023 to discuss Advantage CG
    - iv) **Action: Committee**
- 8) **Treasurer's report**
  - a) This was presented by Tony in Peter's absence and Bob Whiffen, our Independent Examiner, was present to take any questions. The report may be found in Appendix 3
  - b) It was clarified that the income derived from The Bears closing was on account of their Constitutional requirements and these may differ from club to club.
  - c) The report was accepted unanimously.
- 9) **Appointment of Independent Examiner**
  - a) Bob Whiffen has confirmed he is willing to continue in this role
  - b) This was unanimously agreed.
  - c) Bob was thanked for his input and support.
- 10) **League Secretary's report**
  - a) Stephen presented this which may be found in Appendix 4
  - b) In particular
    - i) Please ensure result forms are completed clearly and accurately – typed for preference.
    - ii) Please let Stephen have feedback on your club's experience with Advantage GC.
    - iii) Please ensure team captains are familiar with the SWF League rules.
  - c) Members expressed their appreciation of Stephen's organizational skills
- 11) **Short Croquet Tournaments report**

- a) Stephen presented this on John Grimshaw's behalf.
- b) The report may be found in Appendix 5.
- c) Thanks were expressed to John for his hard work on these events.

#### 12) Regional Coaching Officer's report

- a) Paul presented this which may be found in Appendix 6.
- b) A request was received for referees' training to be included.

#### 13) Development Officer's report

- a) This was presented by Paul and may be found in Appendix 7.
- b) Noted that the use of Foxy hoops is proving to be really helpful when lawns are shared with Bowls clubs.
- c) Noted that a new club in Guernsey will be joining the Fed but will not be entering the Leagues.
- d) Any club with an interest in participating in the Next Generation project should contact Paul.

#### 14) Handicapping report

- a) This was presented by Tony and Paul and may be found in Appendix 8.
- b) There was significant discussion around the AC / SC handicaps relationship
  - i) While CA guidance is clear on the relationship between AC and SC handicaps, incorrect advice was given by a member of the handicapping committee at SC tournaments which has caused some confusion.
  - ii) Noted that the AC / SC conversion table is used only when the first SC game is played and when an AC handicap is reduced.
    - (1) Further discussion expected on whether the two should be kept completely separated.
  - iii) Discussion around GC / AC handicap conversion and how fair this might be is likely to continue.
  - iv) **Action: SWF Committee will consider further and persue with the Handicap Committees if appropriate.**

#### 15) Safeguarding Officer's report

- a) Andru presented this which may be found in Appendix 9.

#### 16) SW Rep to CA report

- a) Brian presented this which may be found in Appendix 10.
- b) Peter Nelson informed the meeting the Charity Commission have asked a couple of straightforward subsidiary questions to the CA's application for CIO status and no problems are anticipated with the application.
- c) There is a vacancy on CA Council for a rep from the South West constituency and if someone comes forward a bye-election will be held in January.
- d) **Several matters arose from the update**
  - i) **That CqE will have a relationship with Sport England but what about Sport Wales**
    - (1) Welsh croquet has its own governing body
  - ii) **Is it a good idea for clubs to seek Charitable status?**
    - (1) Webinar is planned by CA
  - iii) **That clubs with CASC status can claim Gift Aid on donations**
    - (1) Apply via HMRC

#### 17) Election of Officers

- a) Current members are standing for re-election with no contested vacancies. Full list may be found in Appendix 11.

- b) It was agreed to vote *en bloc*.
- c) **The nominations were agreed unanimously.**
- d) There are still vacancies on the committee and applications for co-option are welcomed from those who would like to become actively involved.
  - i) We are looking to expand the diversity of the group, including gender and geographical, so please get in touch if you might be interested.

### 18) Proposal 1

- a) Minor amendments to the rules were presented by Stephen and may be found in Appendix 12.
- b) Discussion around the removal of the Expiry of Time Limit in Appendix 4 to be replaced with a link to the CA website
  - i) On one hand the view was that it needed to be written there as people wouldn't follow the link to the CA website
  - ii) On the other hand, it is never a good idea to have rules in more than one place as it creates confusion.
  - iii) Also, whenever the rules change, the SWF would need to agree the amendment at an AGM.
  - iv) A compromise was achieved whereby the link is included and, in an addendum (not requiring SWF AGM approval) the current rules are written.
- v) **Poll result: carried**

For	%	Against	%	Abstain	%	Total votes
40	100	0		0		40

### 19) Proposal 2

- a) Concerning GC matches at 1-lawn clubs was presented by Stephen and may be found in Appendix 13.
- b) It was clarified that this arose as Stephen became aware for the first time that this was happening and he is concerned at the issues that might arise and any consequences for extra turns.
  - i) Noted there is no CA guidance on this.
- c) Significant discussion about the various issues relating to this.
  - i) Size of teams – these would be different for 1-lawn matches.
  - ii) Informing the visiting team in good time.
  - iii) That there are issues for the CA to consider.
- d) The proposal was put to the meeting with an amendment to allow clubs with 1 lawn to play as a half or full lawn and a requirement to notify their opponents of the format when they arrange the date.
- e) **Poll result: carried**

For	%	Against	%	Abstain	%	Total votes
39	97.5	1	2.5	0		40

### 20) Proposal 3

- a) Concerning timed and untimed was presented by Stephen and may be found in Appendix 14.
- b) Significant discussion about the relative merits of timed and untimed games and the practicality of untimed games in a 1-day match format which may involve significant travel time.
  - i) Experiences and opinions covered a wide range of views.

- ii) Stephen explained this proposal is made with the intention of clarifying the situation, not with the intention of changing the rules.
- iii) He also noted that with a maximum time limit of 75 minutes, most games will finish as if untimed.
- iv) Noted that e.g. in the Southern Federation, only singles games are played in GC Leagues.
- c) The proposal was put to the meeting with no amendments.
- d) Poll result: carried

For	%	Against	%	Abstain	%	Total votes
36	77	10	20.8	2	4.2	48

### 21) Proposal 4

- a) Concerning the introduction of a GC Level Play league for 5+ was presented by Stephen and may be found in Appendix 15.
- b) Very positive views were expressed.
- c) There was debate around the handicap limit with two separate amendments proposed.
  - i) That the handicap limit be raised to 7+
    - (1) This was not seconded so no vote took place
  - ii) That the handicap limit be reduced to 4+
    - (1) This was seconded but a minority voted for it
- d) The original proposal was put to the meeting.
- e) Poll result: carried

For	%	Against	%	Abstain	%	Total votes
41	89.1	1	0.2	4	8.7	46

### 22) Proposal 5

- a) Concerning the introduction of a tiered GC Level Play league was presented by Stephen and may be found in Appendix 16.
- b) Discussion concerning
  - i) The possible need to travel further as teams are promoted.
  - ii) What happens if a team does not want to be promoted
    - (1) It is a condition of entry that they will have to accept this
    - (2) The issue of how to manage this if there is a refusal has yet to be resolved
- c) Option 2 was put to the meeting and was approved so Option 1 was not presented.
- d) Poll result: carried

For	%	Against	%	Abstain	%	Total votes
40	81.6	0		9	18.4	49

### 23) Proposal 6

- a) concerning changes to the handicap range for AC Federation League was presented by Philip de Glanville and may be found in Appendix 17.
- b) Very useful discussion including
  - i) How to make this League attractive to higher handicap players
  - ii) How to bring on fast improvers
  - iii) A lot of handicap overlap across the AC Leagues
  - iv) A good level of support for the principle but concern at not being able to raise a team if the range were reduced
  - v) Perhaps consider playing Intermediate and Federation Leagues to a base.
- c) The proposal was put to the members

d) Poll result: not carried

- i) Bath was thanked for raising the issue and sparking a very useful debate

For	%	Against	%	Abstain	%	Total votes
13	28.9	21	46.7	11	24.4	45

24) AOB

- a) St Agnes raised concerns at the method of awarding points in the event of a walkover match
- i) Points are currently awarded consistently across the Leagues and there are no plans to change this.
- b) Worcester Norton raised concerns about the consequences of calling off matches in e.g. the event of extreme weather in relation to results and possible exclusion from the League in the following year and asked for clearer guidance.
- i) Noted that in Australia games are not required above a certain temperature
- ii) The benefits of playing matches earlier in the year was mentioned but not all club lawns are ready for this early on in the season.
- iii) Stephen and the Committee are able to exercise discretion already when deciding whether or not to exclude a team and they can be trusted to do this fairly.
- iv) **Action: Committee** to consider further
- c) Dave Kibble thanked the Committee on behalf of clubs, for their hard work and support.

25) Date of next meeting

- a) Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2023 subject to confirmation.

## Appendix 1

### Present

<b>SWF Committee Members</b>	
Tony Mayer: Chair	Linda Shaw: Secretary
Stephen Custance-Baker: League Secretary	Andru Blewett: Safeguarding
Paul Francis: Development Officer	Brian Wilson: SW Rep to CA Council

<b>Club</b>			<b>Non voting</b>
Abbey	Pam Branley	Doug Stembridge	
Bath	Philip de Glanville		
Beckford	Bob Honey		
Bradford on Avon	Martin Alabaster		
Bristol	Dave Kibble	Ray Ransom	Bob Whiffen
Budleigh Salterton	Ray Virr	Tim Spores	
Camerton & Peasedown	Fran Ralli		
Cheltenham	Naomi Whitehead		Darryl Whitehead
Dowish Wake	Keith Bryant		
East Dorset	David Fuller		
Exeter	Mark Macnair		
Glamorgan	Chris Williams		
Kington Langley	Caroline Tarran		
Lym Valley	John McCallum		
Moreton in Marsh	Gill Hindshaw	Christine McCormick	Gordon McCrae
Mumbles	Richard Wood		
Nailsea	Graham McCausland	Steve Durston	Peter Dyke
Plymouth	George Lang	Linda Lang	Ken Wilcox
Sidmouth	Sue Dent	Ed Dolphin	
St Agnes	Mike Rowe	Jackie Cotton	
Swanage	Keith Southern		
Swindon	Wendy White		
Taunton Deane	Beverley Tapper	David Jones	
Winterborne Valley	Ian Blaby		
Worcester Norton	Simon Clay		
SW Rep to CA Council			Peter Nelson

### Apologies

Broadwas CC	Cornwall CC	Palace Wells CC
Bude CC	Fowey CC	Wareham CC
Cary Valley CC	Llandaff CC	Tisbury CC
Wellington CC		
Peter Kirby: Treasurer	Margaret Murray: KL	Jane Hull: KL

## Appendix 2 Chair's Report

### 2022- Back to normal:

In my first report as Chair, I am pleased, as is everyone, that 2022 marked a return to a normal playing season after the disruption of the past two years due to COVID. We were able to return to a full season's activities for SWF and our member clubs starting with the Spring SC tournament at Nailsea and ending, as usual with its Autumn equivalent at Budleigh. Thanks go to John Grimshaw for arranging these enjoyable 'bookends' to our season.

The one big change was that 2022 saw yet another new edition of the GC Laws – this time including the introduction of Advantage GC. Quite a few clubs are now starting to use Advantage in their club competitions and others are 'dipping their toes' in the water. The CA has now announced that Advantage will be the handicap system used in its competitions as from 2024. We need to agree as to the handicap system (Advantage or Extra Strokes) to be used in 2023. Therefore, we shall be arranging a Zoom consultation with clubs early in the New Year – including hearing from the experience of those that have fully adopted Advantage – and coming to an agreement as to the way forward for SWF in 2023.

### Congratulations:

Congratulations go to everyone from our region whose contributions to croquet have been recognised by CA Diplomas. These are Nichola Davey (Bishop's Palace), Tony Curson (Bath), Don Clay (Worcester Norton), Roger Jenkins (Bristol), Hester Henebury (Bath), Linda Hicks (Budleigh), Andrew Thomas, Marian and Philip Harris (Sidmouth) and, of course and not least, our Secretary, Linda Shaw, for her immense contributions to croquet, especially in SWF.

2022 has been noteworthy for the Federation's success on the courts so congratulations go to Dowlish Wake for winning the prestigious CA Federations shield in handicap GC and to Somerset which won Division 2 of the GC Inter-Counties competition and together with second-placed Devon were promoted to Division 1. In the very competitive top division, Dorset came a very creditable third out of 12. The photo shows the Dowlish Wake winning team



Individual players kept the SWF at the forefront of the sport nationally and internationally so a special mention to Stuart Smith (Sidmouth) for winning the Shield competition at the World GC Championships and to Steve Leonard for winning the national GC Veterans' Championship.

### Welcome and Farewell:

A warm welcome to our two new clubs – Bradford on Avon (BoA) and Tisbury. I had the pleasure of playing at BoA and was very impressed with the use of 'Foxy' Hoops on the shared bowling green – an example of possible further links between the two sports. Moreton in Marsh is a great success story, now up and running as a competitive club playing in the GC High Handicap League. Unfortunately, we have to say farewell to The Bears which has folded after many years in the SWF, first as The Bear at Rodborough and later as The Bears playing at Cirencester Agricultural University.

### The SWF Committee:

As Chair, I am grateful to your Committee for all their time and energy spent on activities for the benefit of croquet and all our member clubs.

Our hard-working **Secretary**, Linda not only runs the Committee but compiles and issues our e-Newsletter – Cygnet – to the clubs and, hopefully, onwards to their members to keep everyone up

to date with informative articles. Since our previous AGM, we have produced 6 editions of Cygnet. We can always do with more contributions from you all about what is happening in your clubs of interest which can be shared with everyone

Peter Kirby, our **Treasurer**, runs our finances in order to works hard to provide value for money and keep our financial demands on the clubs as low as possible.

Andru Blewett has taken on the onerous task of being the **SWF Safeguarding Officer** working on this important topic with Linda. It is vital that, at all levels, we have robust procedures in place to safeguard our juniors (especially as we step up the recruitment of young players) and all vulnerable adults.

Paul Francis is our **Development Officer** but he combines this with much involvement at the national level being Chair of the Sport Development Committee (and leading the Next Generation initiative) and also sitting on the CA Coaching and Handicapping Committee. In SWF Paul is leading the coaching activities and, importantly, runs our monthly off-season Zoom meetings for clubs on key topics. In 2022, our Zooms included not only 'round robins' about clubs' progress and breakout sessions for discussion but also featured key topics listed below:

Croquet Matters: people	14.12.21	Clubs	Speakers
Advantage GC	11.1.22	20	Stephen C-B
Croquet Matters: development	8.2.22	22	Paul Francis
Handicapping	8.3.22	15	Brian Fisk
The future is rosy	12.4.22	20	Beatrice McGlen
Next Generation	11.10.22	18	Hope Bourton

A key role is that of **League Secretary**, ably performed by Stephen Custance-Baker who has the unenviable and complex task of sorting out all the entries for our leagues, dividing into blocks to minimise travel and inconvenience as far as is possible. One cannot satisfy everyone but it is a complex task with many variables. Stephen also handles all the queries that arise regarding interpretation of the rules and similar related matters.

Brian Wilson, my predecessor as Chair, remains a member of the Committee but is one of the three **representatives from our region on the CA Council**. It is valuable to have this link to the centre in order to understand what is going on in national developments and to help in dealing with issues of SWF concern such as national tournament entry rules, SC handicaps and coaching.

**Staffing the Committee:** Our constitution provides for up to 12 members of the Committee and, currently, we have 7 members. We hope that in the future more people will put their names forward so that we can both share our current tasks and also take on new activities to assist in the running of the Federation. We can always do with additional skills that you can provide. Ideally, we would like to increase our diversity (including a wider geographical spread) and achieve gender balance.

#### **CA Council and the South West Region:**

In addition to Brian, the South West Region was represented by Peter Nelson who is the Council Vice-Chair and Dave Kibble. Dave has now stepped down from this role – many thanks for your contributions on our behalf – and there is a vacancy. I encourage anyone with an interest in this role to come forward. What is still uncertain is when there will be major constitutional changes to



the CA as it becomes a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) with a formal legal 'personality'. How this may affect Federations is something that we are watching carefully.

**Defibrillators:**

The SWF is represented on the CA Federations Forum which brings together all the regional croquet federations. One of the topics concerned the provision of defibrillators with an increased general awareness of the need for access to this equipment and training in its use. This followed worrying and well-publicised instances of people, including young and fit sportspeople, suffering cardiac arrest. Following a survey of clubs by SWF and us raising this issue at the Forum I am pleased that there is now a link between the CA and the Community Heartbeat Trust. Details are given in the October issue of the Gazette.

**Conclusion:**

2022 has been a full and active year for SWF and its member clubs which can best be summed up in the phrase - It's Good to be Back!

Tony Mayer  
Chair  
November 2022

## Appendix 3 Treasurer's Report



### South West Federation of Croquet Clubs



### Treasurers AGM Report 20th November 2022

#### Financial Year-End Accounts (see page 3)

There has been a small surplus for the year, compared to the original 2022 projection of a loss of £340. This has been principally due to a windfall payment from the winding up of The Bears. The Residual Fund of the club is due to be distributed 50% to SWF Croquet and 50% to The Croquet Association. I have been informed that the anticipated distribution is expected to be in total £2,000, and therefore the SWF Croquet share is £1,000. The payment hasn't been received as yet and therefore as a contingency £100 has been withheld in the income and expenditure statement below, which shows a net amount of £900.

Without this windfall payment the loss for the year would have been approximately £700. This would have been higher than the projected loss of £340 for 2022 and this was due to a number of small miscellaneous factors, reduced entries in the Short Croquet Team Tournament, lower advertising revenue and increased costs associated with League Finals.

Reserves in the General Account of approx £5,500 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 2022.

SWF Committee have discussed and agreed in principle that a distribution of approx. £1,000 per annum for the next 3 years is used to develop SWF Coaching Program.

#### 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. "

I am therefore proposing no increase in fees compared to 2022 which in the context of underlying inflation of around 10% is consistent with the approach outlined above and agreed at the 2020 AGM and leads to a projected budget loss of £470 for 2023.

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.

### **Proposed Fees for 2023**

It is therefore proposed that for 2023 the structure of fees shall remain the same as for 2022 and be as follows:

- League Entries £4.40 per team
- Short Croquet Team Events £17 per team
- Full Members Fee 35p per playing member subject to a maximum fee of £19, and a minimum fee of £9.

If payment is received on or before December 1st 2022 a discount is applied to the rates above and the fees net of discount are as follows:

- League Entries £4 per team
- Short Croquet Team Events £15 per team
- Full Members Fee 30p per playing member subject to a maximum fee of £17, and a minimum fee of £8

Peter Kirby  
Treasurer – SWF Croquet  
November 20th 2022



# South West Federation of Croquet Clubs



Accounts Year-End 31st October 2022

## GENERAL ACCOUNT

### INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

#### INCOME

	2022	2021
Subscriptions	480	552
Association league fees	204	288
Short league fees	76	66
Golf league fees	248	330
Short croquet Tournament fees	782	420
Subscriptions and League Fees (Total)	1790	1656
Subscriptions and League Fees Refund	0	-18
Subscriptions and League Fees (Net)	1790	1638
Adverts	42	90
CTC Coaching Course	314	0
CA refund of travel expenses	0	0
Donations (Bears Residual Fund )	900	0
Sundries	0	0
	<b>3046</b>	<b>1728</b>

#### EXPENDITURE

Trophies	288	234
League finals	774	480
Short croquet (Tournament)	1056	480
Coaching expenses	362	0
Travel expenses	120	137
Bursary travel expenses	0	0
AGM Workshops Costs	0	0
SWF Website	135	135
AGM (net costs)	0	48
Administration	0	0
Sundries	144	67
	<b>2879</b>	<b>1580</b>

<b>SURPLUS / - DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>147</b>
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<b>ADD OPENING BALANCE</b>	<b>5381</b>	<b>5234</b>
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<b>CLOSING BALANCE</b>	<b>5549</b>	<b>5381</b>
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### BALANCE SHEET

#### REPRESENTED BY

<b>CASH AT BANK</b>	<b>4661</b>	<b>5394</b>
<b>DEBTORS</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>CREDITORS</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b>5549</b>	<b>5381</b>

## TOURNAMENT DEVELOPMENT FUND

### INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

#### INCOME

Bursary Received	0	0
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#### EXPENDITURE

Grants provided	0	0
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<b>SURPLUS / - DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
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<b>ADD OPENING BALANCE</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
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<b>CLOSING BALANCE</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
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### BALANCE SHEET

#### REPRESENTED BY

<b>CASH AT BANK</b>	<b>5000</b>	<b>5000</b>
<b>DEBTORS</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>CREDITORS</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b>5000</b>	<b>5000</b>

## CONSOLIDATED FUNDS

### BALANCE SHEET

#### REPRESENTED BY

<b>CASH AT BANK</b>	<b>9661</b>	<b>10394</b>
<b>DEBTORS</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>CREDITORS</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b>10549</b>	<b>10381</b>

Note : The estimate of distribution of residual funds from The Bears is based upon 50% of the NAV less a 10% contingency.

Peter Kirby Treasurer	Bob Whiffen Examiner
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I have examined the financial records of the South West Federation of Croquet Clubs, for the year ending 31 October 2022 and report that the above statement gives a true and fair view

## Appendix 4 League Secretary's Report

The leagues seem to have returned to normality after Covid with 130 teams from 28 clubs, which is more than any previous year except 2018. There were 343 matches, which is close to the total for 2018 and 2019.

All of the play-offs and finals were completed on schedule, except for one final that was awarded by walkover. One of the finalists was unable to raise a team for that date and their replacement was also unable to do so at short notice.

The main increase in numbers from last year came from the B League and the Short Croquet (Open) League. The B League was not run in 2021 as the entries were so low but 5 teams competed in 2022. Whether it will run in 2023 is dependent on the entries. The new Short Croquet (Open) league had 8 entries and this seems likely to increase.

### 2022 League Results

Congratulations to all the winners:

Advanced League Division 1: Nailsea	Short Croquet (Open): Exeter
Advanced League Division 2: Glamorgan	Short Croquet (Restricted): Bath
Advanced League Division 3: Nailsea	GC Level Play: Winterborne Valley
Federation: Winterborne Valley	GC Handicap: Swanage
Intermediate: Kington Langley	GC High Handicap: Cheltenham
B League: Weston super Mare	

There was a problem with the Short Croquet (Restricted) final. Cheltenham were unable to field a team as it coincided with their internal competition finals. The team that was second in their block was Nailsea, but they were also unable to make up a team at short notice. The trophy was therefore awarded to Bath by a walkover. This issue is addressed below.

One of the semi-finals needed a replacement team. Cornwall were unable to make up a team for the Intermediate (South West block) and were replaced by Sidmouth.

All of the trophies and award plaques were presented at the finals and have been left with the winners to be engraved.

A total of 325 block matches were scheduled, plus 18 play-offs and finals, giving a grand total of 343. Of these, 321 were actually played, 19 were conceded, 3 were awarded by walk-over and 1 was cancelled. As a result of the conceded matches, 2 teams have been barred from entering the league in 2023.

The winners of the Federation League, Winterborne Valley CC, will be invited to represent the SWF in the national Secretary's Shield.

The winners of the GC Handicap League, Swanage CC, will be invited to represent the SWF in the national GC Federation Shield.

### Leagues in 2023

There are several issues to be decided for 2023, but I propose to keep the block sizes to the same as 2022, i.e. 4, 5 or 6 games per team. Some of the issues to be discussed are the subjects of proposals; others are simply matters or complaints that have been raised for discussion. Specific proposals to be considered:

1. New GC Level Play league for 5+ Handicappers
2. GC matches at single-lawn clubs
3. New structure for GC Level Play league – two alternatives
4. Timed games in GC – re-wording of the relevant rule.
5. Change to AC Federation handicap limits – proposal from Bath CC

It is not proposed to change the GC Handicap leagues to Advantage GC in 2023. We will review the situation next year.

**NB: the decision to hold a consultation in January was made after this report was written.**

### Complaints in 2022

1. Complaints about finals dates coinciding with major tournaments and with clubs' internal competition finals.  
The season is very crowded in September, both locally and nationally. The only way to avoid clashes with club finals would be to have the SWF finals in early September or in October. Having them earlier would not avoid clashes with tournaments. Having them later would cause issues with weather and lawn maintenance schedules.  
Note that these dates and venues are published in January.
2. Complaint about play-offs on poor home lawns.  
Demands for clubs to be able to refuse to play away at clubs with poor lawns. They would need to arrange and fund a neutral (and mutually acceptable) venue. I have said that I will not be involved with any such arrangements because of the potential disruption of the whole finals schedule.  
If two clubs agree to organise, pay for and play at a neutral venue then they may do so, subject to the time limits for the play-offs.
3. Complaint about having 2 teams from same club in same block.  
I do my best to split teams between blocks, but it is not always possible. I cannot guarantee that a particular club's teams will be in different blocks because I can't promise the same to all clubs.  
The allocations depend on the entries I receive and their geographical distribution.
4. Complaints about uncivil behaviour at matches.  
There have been several complaints this year – and several different clubs involved. The complaints that I have become aware of relate to individuals, rather than clubs, but illustrate an unfortunate attitude, often based on ignorance of the AC Laws, the GC Rules or the SWF League rules.  
Team captains should be familiar with the SWF League rules and players whose knowledge of the laws and rules of the game is sketchy or out-of-date should not act as referees.

I am very grateful to all of the clubs who made their facilities available for the league finals. This involves several members at each host club giving up their time to prepare the lawns and set them out. Many also provided a referee and a report on these matches.

Stephen Custance-Baker  
League Secretary  
October 2022

## **Appendix 5**

### **Short Croquet Spring and Autumn Team Tournament Report**

We were back to Nailsea in the Spring after a two-year COVID absence with 25 teams taking part. A few guests were required to make up some teams, but everything proceeded calmly.

- Division 1. Kington Langley Bruins continued their triumphant performances in the last two Autumn competitions to win. Cornwall are relegated.
- Division 2. Sidmouth Fortfield won after a shoot-out with Bath B. Unfortunately, two of the Bath players had already left, so they were left with two shooters only. Bath A are relegated.
- Division 3. Swindon were the winners and Exeter A are relegated.
- Division 4. East Dorset were the winners and Bristol Allsorts are relegated.
- Division 5. Exeter B were the winners, so they join their other team in Division 4 next year.

Many thanks to Nailsea for their hospitality and preparation of the lawns and to Peter Dyke who helped manage on the day that I was playing.

Budleigh in October is always unpredictable, but this year we were blessed with good weather. I originally had an entry of 27 teams, and I found a further 3 to make up what I thought would be 6 divisions. However, one of those and a further 4 teams withdrew, so we were left with 25. I also had many changes in the last week to players, and, in the end, I had to break my own rule of no player playing for more than one team.

With 2 days to go, a KL Aardvark went down with COVID, and I had exhausted all guests completing other teams, so I had to play twice myself. I apologise to anyone who thinks this unfair, but I did not wish a team to withdraw at that late stage with all the further disruption that would have caused. I stress that I will only accept this in a last-minute emergency, and after all efforts to find a guest have been exhausted.

- Division 1. Glamorgan were winners and Budleigh Salterton Roquets are relegated.
- Division 2. Sidmouth Fortfield defeated Bristol Blues despite only having three shooters. Cornwall are relegated.
- Division 3. Bristol Allsorts beat Bath Salts in a shoot-out to win and Sidmouth Blackmore are relegated.
- Division 4. Budleigh Salterton Mallets won and Lym Valley A are relegated.
- Division 5. Nailsea were the winners.

Many thanks to Budleigh Salterton for their hospitality and superb lawns. Chris Donovan managed the tournament very ably, and especial thanks to him for revising my spreadsheets to make the paperwork preparation much easier in future years.

John Grimshaw  
SC Tournaments Manager  
October 2022

## **Appendix 6 Coaching**

For reasons beyond our control, the SWF were unable to build upon the success of our 2021 programme.

Of course, this was very disappointing for all our budding and existing coaches who were hoping to continue their coaching development.

As we approach the end of the year, it is hoped that the SWF's proposal for hybrid coaching courses will be fully endorsed by the CA Coaching Committee. This will then enable the SWF to put together a comprehensive coaching programme for 2023.

Look out for further updates in Cygnet and in the monthly Zoom meetings.

Meanwhile, we will be approaching clubs to determine the level of demand.

Paul Francis  
Coaching Officer  
October 2022



## **Appendix 7**

### **Development Officer's Report**

#### **New clubs**

Welcome to Bradford on Avon and Tisbury.

- Both clubs have been formed by bowls clubs and share all facilities.
- Recruitment has been strong and both clubs are considering entering SWF leagues in 2023.
- Many thanks to Brian Wilson for his mentoring/coaching input at Tisbury.

Elizabeth College (Guernsey) has also become a member of the CA and plans to join the SWF in 2023.

#### **Area Development Officers**

The wide geographic spread and number of clubs has always made it desirable to have Area Development Officers. We are pleased to report that Klim Seabright and Brian Wilson have agreed to take on these roles alongside the SWF Federation Development Officer.

- Klim will be responsible for the North of the Federation. This includes SWF clubs in Gloucestershire, Wales and Worcestershire.
- Brian will be responsible for the Central area of the Federation. This includes Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire and Wiltshire.
- Paul will be responsible for the South and West areas of the Federation. This includes Cornwall, Dorset, Devon and Somerset.

The development team are happy to support clubs with a range of issues including grant applications, nomination for CA club awards and general management questions.

#### **Zoom series**

There was another full series of monthly Zoom meetings in winter 2021/22.

The new series started in October 2022 with an introduction to the Next Generation Development Officer.

There will be short regular slots on the following issues:

- View from the referee
- View from the handicapper
- Club success stories e.g. funding, recruitment, lawn management etc.
- News from the CA e.g. CIO/Croquet England progress, safeguarding, lawn advisory service
- News from the SWF e.g. coaching in 2023

#### **Next Generation 2023**

2023 is the pilot year for the Next generation programme.

The SWF is one of the biggest and most influential of the nine federations and, we are looking to recruit SWF clubs to take part in this programme.

Clubs wishing to be involved will be invited to join a series of Zoom meetings in early 2023 and will be supported throughout the 2023 programme by the Next Generation Development Officer and FDO. Any club wishing to become involved should contact Paul Francis by email to [paulwfrancis@icloud.com](mailto:paulwfrancis@icloud.com)

### **CA Club Awards**

The SWF is blessed with many outstanding clubs and we have a good track record in terms of clubs winning awards.

Two SWF clubs have already applied but there is still time for a late application. Please contact Paul for more information.

Paul Francis.  
Development Officer  
October 2022

## Appendix 8 Handicapping Report

We have not been able to recruit anyone to this role and have therefore not been able to give this important subject much attention this year.

We had hoped to hold another handicapping information / training event, but were overtaken by our other commitments. We will pick this up again during one of our Zoom sessions.

However, we have noted several concerns which have been discussed at length at the Federations' Forum – a bi-monthly meeting for all the Federations where many issues are raised. If there are concerns and a consensus agreed, these can be brought to the attention of the relevant people / committees in the CA who, it is hoped, will resolve them.

Our concerns are:

- apparent inconsistencies between clubs and witnessed examples of handicapping guidance not being followed
- confusion in guidance about the inter-relationship between AC and SC handicaps which needs to be resolved
  - reference to AC handicaps only happens when the first SC game is played and when AC handicap is reduced
  - SC is developing as a distinct form of croquet and the only link between the two handicaps should be the initial one
  - a new lowest handicap of 4p might be timely
- automatic award of AC handicap 24 to erstwhile GC-only players is very unfair
  - there is a suggestion that e.g. those with GC handicap of <3 shouldn't come in higher than AC 18
  - there is a handicap conversion table from AC to GC, but not vice versa
- there is no one on the CA Executive Committee with a direct link to the CA Handicapping Committee.

Paul Francis is a member of the Handicapping Committee and will be raising these issues there.

Tony Mayer  
Chair  
November 2022

## **Appendix 9**

### **Safeguarding Officer's Report**

Following a brief mention in the February Cygnet that I had taken over the role of Federation Safeguarding Officer and a brief update from me in the subsequent issue you will have heard very little from me!

Being new to safeguarding I have found getting to grips this role to be quite challenging. Firstly, the Child Safeguarding guidance on the CA website is extensive, and takes considerable time to become familiar with. Also, this has now been added to with the publication of the guidance for Safeguarding Adults at Risk. This additional material was added to the CA website back in February, unfortunately with no publicity, so you may not be aware of its presence. It is easily found from the CA home page by searching Safeguarding.

Through this year I have only had one request for assistance which was in relation to obtaining DBS checks, and I have received no notifications of concerns raised.

The CA have as yet to produce a publicly available register of club Local Safeguarding Officers and so this is something I am looking to progress for the SWF member clubs. This will facilitate a direct line of communication from me and allow me to confirm that all member clubs have a Local Safeguarding Officer (LSO) as part of their management team.

Otherwise with support from the SWF committee I have been seeking clarification from the CA Safeguarding Officer Dr Ron Carter, on a number of aspects including the provision of training, and a possible review of the guidance in order to refine and simplify the content.

This remains ongoing, although the SWF via the Federations forum has been made aware of draft proposals for training that Ron is working on. Hopefully something will be in place for 2023.

Andru Blewett  
November 2022

## Appendix 10

### SW Representatives to CA Council Report

The current CA structure is:

- The Council has overall responsibility for the affairs of the Association, with a focus on high-level policy, strategic initiatives, scrutiny and transparency
- The Executive Board is delegated by Council to focus on the day-to-day business and can delegate specific responsibilities to its committees.

An opportunity to become a CA Council Member - to find out more you should contact one of the current regional reps, John Reddish (Hon. Secretary of the CA) or Linda Shaw SWF Secretary.

- After serving for 3 years Dave Kibble will not be seeking re-election – he will be sorely missed. He will be continuing his hard work on the members' website, in particular the membership database and tournament entry system that is expanding to allow levy-free one-day club and federation events this year – to be launched soon, so Marketing are looking forward to attracting new players
- The CA and the SW Federation invites you to consider how best you can support the CA, especially in these exciting times when there is a lot happening

2022 has been a very busy year for the CA Council we have been:

- Seeking charitable status
- Creating links with Sport England (SE)
- Reviewing Policies and scrutiny

#### Seeking charitable status

Should the CA become a Charity?

- The CA presented their recommendations to CA Members and Federations receiving wide ranging and comprehensive feedback
- As a result, the CA Council recommended that structure would be a Charitable Incorporated Organization (CIO) which is a corporate form of business designed for charitable organizations in England and Wales
- The key benefits are that the CA will have a legal personality, can enter contracts, sue and be sued, to hold property in its own name and its members have limited liability
- Recommendations were presented to CA Members and Federations including zoom. At the SGM a substantial majority voted to become a CIO and be renamed 'Croquet England'

Making an application and the future

- CIO status is conferred by the Charity Commission for England and Wales on application by the proposed members of the CIO.
- CA Council having completed the necessary forms and paperwork have made the application to the Charity Commission to become a CIO
- We are awaiting the outcome and expect that the CA will become a CIO in 2022/23

What does all this mean for you?

- The redrafting of policies and procedures in no way changes the objectives of the organization and will not affect the relationship with members or federations or their rights.
- However, the CIO rules requires a higher quorum than before. In the past we have found that many members do not take the opportunity to vote. Therefore the CA is reviewing the establishment of voting and non-voting membership – all members can apply, so if you wish to get or keep involved in voting things will not change

### So, what's happening now?

- Council have been working hard to review and revise all the current CA administrative documents to match the requirements of becoming a CIO and changing our name to 'Croquet England' (CqE)

### Sport England (SE)

#### Who are they?

- It is an arms-length body of government responsible for growing and developing grassroots sport and getting more people active across England.
- It began as The Sports Council, being rebranded as Sport England in 1999 and it works to keep movement, sport and physical activity central to the lives of everyone through a combination of National Lottery funding and grant-in-aid from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. Around two-thirds of their funding comes from lottery players.

#### What is your Council doing?

- We wish to develop a close link with SE – that will include accessing funding to secure the future of our sport
- We are reviewing our policies, schemes and procedures to reflect the approach of SE - making revisions as necessary
- We are looking to make a formal approach to SE in the near future

### Policies and scrutiny

- Council is liaising with the Executive Board to collate all Policies etc into one 'library' to aid the sourcing of all documents
- Council is also working with the Executive Board to identify those policies and schemes whose outcomes can be defined so that an effective monitoring and evaluation process can be operated

### **What's been happening elsewhere**

May we highlight certain key points from the Executive Board report to the CA's AGM which can be read in detail at: - <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?d=3259&pup=y>

#### After Covid

- There has been an increase in overall membership, both of clubs and CA Membership

#### Fifth Five-yearly Survey of Croquet Players

- Is helping to attract new players of all ages,

### Safeguarding

- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy is now found on the CA website. Further training for club/federation welfare/safeguarding officers is scheduled for the end of the year.

### New Inclusivity, Diversity and Equality Policy

- The launch of 'Opening Doors on Croquet' competition for clubs

### More Competitive Play

- The introduction of new quicker versions of AC.
- A garden croquet membership category has been introduced

The work of specific portfolios:

### Paul Brown is the Director for Development

- The Federation Forum discussions included relationships with local bowls clubs, shortage of referees, a marketing toolkit for clubs, exchanging ideas on local tournaments and leagues, handicapping, safeguarding, revitalising AC, Croquet Matters and short croquet.
- There have been 9 new clubs created this year - at least two more are in the pipeline.  
Next Generations. This focuses on increasing the number of young people playing croquet and to share best practice from clubs with successful programmes for juniors. This has led to the employment, on an 18 month contract of a National Next Generations Officer, Hope Bourton. Please contact Hope via the CA Office.

### Funding Committee

- The Funding Committee has made grants totalling £25,311, bursaries totalling £2,350 and £54 to 3 players in the young persons' sponsorship scheme

### Paul Hetherington is the Director for Marketing

- The Marketing Committee is chaired by Annabel McDiarmid
- The new front end of the website is ready to launch at the end of the year.
- The Gazette has seen a significant increase in advertising
- Monthly e-newsletter is becoming the main communication channel
- PR - We will do more in terms of press releases to give croquet a greater exposure
- The Shop - progress has been made in marketing and how to effectively on-line marketing
- Live Streaming - has been very well received – possible USA interest.

### Chairman of the Coaching Committee, John Harris

- 5 main recommendations: - a national coaching programme - adapting coaching to different people - identifying the gaps in coverage of the Academies - more guidance, support and professional development for the Federation Coaching Officers.  
A new coaching manual 'Introducing Association Croquet' has been published
- The use of electronic methods (e.g Zoom, webinars) is being encouraged and an on-line self-study guide has been produced.

### David Openshaw is the Director for Competitive Croquet and Performance.

- Working to have a strong development plan for the best players and more opportunities for them to play strong opposition.
- The International Committee has agreed a two-year programme of WCF events.

Roger Staples is the Director for Standards.

- The GC Rules Committee implemented the 6th edition of GC Rules.
- The Handicap Committee has been attempting to get official handicappers in all the Federations and in most clubs.
- The Equipment Advisory Group have been assessing new ball suppliers as possible replacement for Dawson balls.

The Director for Infrastructure, Andy Dibben

- Is focussing on the technical side of the new website and the CA online shop.

Dave Kibble, Peter Nelson, Brian Wilson  
SW Reps to CA Council  
2022



**Appendix 11**  
**Election of Officers**

<b>Proposal</b>	That the following nominations for Committee be approved		
<b>Post</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Seconder</b>
Chair	Tony Mayer	Clive Smith Chair Swindon CC	Wendy White Secretary Swindon CC
League Secretary	Stephen Custance-Baker	Louise Smith Tournament Manager Sidmouth CC	Keith Bryant Fixtures Secretary Dowlish Wake CC
Secretary	Linda Shaw	Chris Frew Secretary Bristol CC	Erica Malaiperuman Secretary Nailsea CC
Treasurer	Peter Kirby	Chris Frew Secretary Bristol CC	Neil Purchase Treasurer Bristol CC
Development Officer	Paul Francis	Lynne Passfield Chair Bath CC	Derrick Hunt Secretary Bradford on Avon Cc
Committee member	Andru Blewett	Mike Rowe Chair St Agnes CC	Sharman Rowe Secretary St Agnes CC
Committee member	Brian Wilson	Fran Ralli Chair Camerton & Peasedown CC	Valerie Fear Committee Member Camerton & Peasedown CC

## Appendix 12

### Proposal 1

**Proposal 1:** The following minor amendments be made to League Rules  
**Proposed by:** SWF Committee

**1a SC:**

Creation of separate document for SC rules: for ease of use  
Appendix 2 (Expiry of Time Limit) removed because CA Tournament Regs have changed.

**1b AC, GC, SC:**

Deadline for receipt of entries reduced to 10 days (previously 14) following AGM: to facilitate arranging match schedule

**1c AC, GC, SC**

Clarification about players whose handicaps have changed during the season so that they are outside the allowed range when the team plays a play-off or final. They must have played in at least half of the matches for that team during the season.

**1d AC:**

8d Reference to Wharrad Turns removed. They are not used and are no longer referred to in CA rules or Tournament Regs.

**1e AC**

Appendix 4 (Expiry of Time Limit) removed because CA Tournament Regs have changed.

**1f GC:**

Appendix 2 Line about Extra Strokes removed as rule has changed

## Appendix 13

### Proposal 2

**Proposal 2:** GC Rules – concerning single lawn clubs  
**Proposed by:** SWF Committee

This affects sections 5, 6.a.(1) and Appendix 1.

The current SWF League rules for GC include a provision, applying to the Level Play league only, that single-lawn clubs will play a reduced-length match. Instead of 20 games, including 4 doubles, these matches are to be 14 games, including 2 doubles.

This measure was introduced specifically to cater for the Kingston Maurward club and has not applied to any other. This club no longer exists and its successor, Winterborne Valley, has 2 lawns.

However, another club, Abbey, has played in the GC Handicap league this season with a single lawn, divided into two half lawns.

The CA handicap regulations for GC games played on reduced-size lawns are that there should be no changes to handicaps or extra strokes. It is unclear whether this is meant to apply to lawns as small as half size.

This proposal would extend the SWF league rule for single-lawn clubs to apply to all GC leagues, including the following changes:

The match would consist of 12 games, not 14, but including 2 doubles.  
Teams of 3 would be allowed, rather than the more usual 4 to 8.

#### **Reasons in favour:**

Playing on half lawns is unsatisfactory as visiting teams will be unused to the format and the handicap regulations may be controversial.

A 12-game match could be played in 6 rounds on a single lawn with normal double-banking. Reducing the minimum team size to 3 enables players to get a satisfactory number of games (i.e. 4 or 5) making an away match more enjoyable.

#### **Reasons against:**

?

## Appendix 14

### Proposal 3

#### **Proposal 3:** GC Rules – concerning timed games

**Proposed by:** SWF Committee

There have been various attempts over the years to change the phrasing of section 8, Time Limits, in the SWF GC rules. In each case the aim has been to encourage the use of untimed games wherever possible, but this has not always been successful.

The current wording has some ambiguities, such as “may agree to play” and “If a time limit needs to be used”.

*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.*

This proposal would change the wording to:

*Games should be played without a time limit unless it is believed that lawn availability will make it difficult to complete the games within the available time. In such a case, a time limit agreed by the captains and not less than 50 minutes shall be set (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.*

#### **Reasons in favour:**

Untimed games are better. They are also fairer in Handicap GC.

With proper organisation, a 20-game match can be completed in 6 rounds on 2 lawns within a reasonable time.

If there is reason to believe that some players might be particularly slow, giving excessively prolonged games, then a time limit of 75 minutes could be set at the start of the day, on the assumption that it would rarely apply.

Also, the captains could agree to a time limit on the remainder of a game, perhaps after it has been going for 75 minutes.

#### **Reasons against:**

## Appendix 15

### Proposal 4

**Proposal 4:** For a GC Level Play for 5+ League  
**Proposed by:** SWF Committee

(Note that this is quite separate from the proposal for a tiered structure for the current GC level play league.)

This proposal is for a new league in the SWF. The GC Level Play league is popular amongst clubs that have low handicap GC players as it involves the best version of the game (i.e. Level Play) but not all clubs have a sufficient number of low handicap players to field such a team.

The proposed new league would be identical to the current GC Level Play league in its structure, but would have a handicap limit so that only players with handicap 5 and above could play. (There would be the usual proviso to allow players whose handicaps improved late in the season to play in the play-offs and final.)

#### **Reasons in favour:**

##### Enjoyment

The Level Play version of GC is widely considered to be better than any handicapped version. It provides a good, competitive game with more continuity.

##### Acquiring a ranking

Entry to tournaments is open to all players, but when a CA tournament is over-subscribed preference is given to players whose names are listed on the World Ranking system. These players have a dynamic grade or 'D Grade', as well as a GC Handicap and a GC Index.

All match results from the proposed league would be submitted to the ranking system and the player would therefore acquire a D Grade.

#### **Reasons against**

##### More work for the Match Secretaries

An additional league means more matches to be organised by the clubs and greater pressure on the lawns.

##### Reduction in GC handicap entries

There is a possibility that some clubs will decide to enter this league, rather than the GC Handicap League.

##### Typed match results

When the League Secretary sends the results of each match to the World Ranking system, they need to be formatted in a specific way.

This can involve significant work and it will therefore be a requirement that all match results are sent typed on the official results sheet.

## Appendix 16 Proposal 5

**Proposal 5:** For a tiered GC Level play league  
**Proposed by:** SWF Committee

(Note that this is quite separate from the proposal for a GC Level Play league for higher (5+) handicap players.)

The current GC Level Play league has the same structure as all of the other leagues except for the AC Advanced League, which has three divisions. As in most of the leagues, there are two rounds of knockout after the end of the block matches.

The Level Play league currently has 13 teams from 12 clubs, in 3 geographically separated blocks:

In 2022 these were:

North: Bristol, Cheltenham, Glamorgan, Nailsea, Weston-super-Mare

Central: Bath, Bristol, Camerton & Peasedown

South: Budleigh Salterton, Exeter, Sidmouth, Taunton Deane, Winterborne Valley

There have been more entries in the past (pre-Covid) and, hopefully, the number will increase again.

This proposal has two alternatives to the current structure:

### **Option 1**

The GC Level Play league is restructured exactly along the lines of the AC Advanced league, i.e. Divisions 1, 2 and 3, with one team being promoted and one being relegated each year. Division 1 would have 5 teams with the others having the remaining teams distributed as equally as possible.

### **Option 2**

The GC Level Play league has a Premier division of 5 teams, with the remaining teams (including all new entries) being put into two regional blocks. At the end of each season, the block winners are promoted to the Premier division and two teams are relegated.

The initial assignments to the divisions for 2023 would be done by the League Secretary and would depend on the 2022 results, the entries for 2023 and their anticipated team handicaps.

### **Reasons in favour:**

Making the matches more enjoyable.

The range of handicaps in the GC Level Play league in 2022 was from -4 to 9, resulting in some very unfair individual games.

There are various ways of measuring the strength of a team, such as average handicap or number of players in selected handicap ranges. I have looked at the number of players in three groups {handicaps below 0, from 0 to 3, above 3}.

The extreme cases in 2022 were {11, 7, 0} and {0, 5, 10}. Clearly, any Level Play match between such teams is unlikely to produce many good games.

Making the September fixtures better

September, when our semi-finals and finals occur, is also full of season-end tournaments and national finals. These do not involve many players but can cause major problems amongst the lowest handicappers because of conflicting priorities.

Having a league structure with no play-offs would allow for September to be cleared of south west league commitments for these players.

#### Avoiding the travel associated with semi-finals and finals

There is a need, with the current structure, for some block winners to play semi-finals and finals a long distance from their home club.

#### No home advantage in the play-offs

Although the finals are at a neutral venue with high quality lawns, the current system involves semi-finals at a club's home lawns, with the potential for unfair home advantage.

#### **Reasons against**

##### Possibility of longer journeys

Divisions selected solely on standard, rather than location, could involve clubs from all over the federation, with the possibility of long distances to be travelled. (This would be most true for Option 1.)

## Appendix 17

### Proposal 6

**Proposal 6:** Changes to the handicap range for AC Federation League

**Proposed by:** Bath CC

To change the upper handicap limit for Federation teams from the current 14 to 12 and change the provision for one player in the team to be a 16 or 18 handicap to one player in the team to be a maximum 14 handicap.

Rationale:

Currently a player on a 16 or 18 handicap can play at three levels of handicap competition:

- B-League 16-24
- Intermediate 9-18
- Federation up to 14 (including one player of 16/18)

This seems to be against the spirit of the SWF where the competitions are designed to give players, of all handicaps, well matched games against other players. The slight overlaps should allow players transitioning from one level to another to do so in a controlled manner. The one player of higher handicap provision allows small clubs to field a team where choice is limited.