

## **Minutes of SWF Committee meeting 16.1.25 7.00pm held by Zoom**

### **1. Present**

- a. Paul Francis, Tony Mayer, Mike Rice, Stephen Custance-Baker, Andru Blewett, Peter Kirby, Linda Shaw, Gill Wheeler, Chris Ham

### **2. Apologies**

- a. Brian Wilson

### **3. Minutes of last meeting**

- a. Agreed as correct

### **4. Matters arising**

- a. All covered in the agenda

### **5. Treasurer's Report**

- a. Previously circulated – see Appendix 1 – no questions

### **6. League Secretary's Report**

- a. Report Previously circulated – see Appendix 2
- b. Noted there have been some issues around arranging matches etc and that block info was circulated later than usual, but overall matches are being arranged satisfactorily
- c. Agreed it would be helpful to review the Leagues later in the year e.g. B-League, Restricted SC, managing travel distances **Action Gill**
- d. B/F Stephen has updated League Rules on website
- e. Noted that Llandaff say they have not received information re our decisions on issues raised last year **Action: Linda** following up
- f. Stephen presented his Home Advantage / Win bias 2021 – 2014 – see appendix 3
  - i. **Action: Mike** will review and consider any possible action
- g. Short Croquet Leagues – noted there are issues that may arise during the year around the Restricted League which will be included in the mid-season League review as above
- h. Many thanks to Gill for managing her first year's arrangements so well

### **7. Proposal 8 Aligning with CE Regs**

- a. Agreed that response drafted and circulated by Linda – see Appendix 4 – be sent to Bristol CC **Action: Linda**
  - i. Not necessary to contact other Feds on this

### **8. AGC Working group**

- a. Extensive discussion of issues raised by the group and previously circulated particularly with regard to use of Advantage posts

- i. Agreed *inter alia* that working group decide on the best method and that this will be compulsory – other methods may be used simultaneously **Action: AGC working Group**
- ii. **Action: Peter** will draft outline of points to be covered at Feb Zoom and others will help formulate this into a presentation
- iii. Agreed the meeting will be extended to 90 mins **Action Paul**
- iv. **Action: Andru** to further modify results sheets
- v. The group convened for a brief meeting after this meeting to agree next actions
  - 1. Brian's suggestion re further coaching was noted but decided against as GC coaches should have the skills to do this and starting scores etc will be covered at the Feb Zoom

## 9 Short Croquet Tournaments – content missed off agenda

- a. 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> April at Nailsea
- b. 3 – 5<sup>th</sup> Oct at Budleigh
- c. B/F – Linda asked John and Chris if the results of previous days' play could be kept posted for subsequent days' players
  - i. They are both happy with this and will incorporate it into their processes
- d. B/F – John G has quite a few paper records but is happy for the SWF to consider these destroyed
- e. Stephen informed the meeting that Taunton Deane is planning a 6-club Short Croquet teams' tournament during the summer in memory of Jonathan Wolfe. He is planning to invite the clubs in the very limited South block, which may help to make up for the small League entry.

## 10 Development Report

- f. Report previously circulated – see Appendix 6
- g. Zooms - Second Tuesday of the month at 7pm
  - i. February 11th
    - 1. Advantage GC review – update
  - ii. March 11th
    - 1. Handicapping- getting ready for the new season.
  - iii. Agreed not to plan one for April but *ad hoc* ones could be held during the season

## 11 Coaching Report

- a. Report previously circulated – see Appendix 7
- b. Following discussion it was agreed that in future, a fee be paid on booking and part of this would be refunded on successful completion of the course. **Action: Paul**

## 12 Handicapping Report

- a. Report previously circulated – see Appendix 8
- b. Checking cards – **Action: Mike** to continue to explore ways of ensuring this happens
- c. Noted that many clubs have not identified their club handicappers on their Directory entry **Action: Mike** to follow up

## 13 Welfare Report

- a. Chris has undertaken lots of reading, orienting himself to the post and discussed with James Death
- b. He has plans to introduce himself to clubs and will write an article for Cygnet **Action: Chris**
- c. **Action: Chris** to undertake online training module

#### **14 Policies Review**

- a. Presented but not discussed - C/F

#### **15 Complaints Policy**

- a. Presented but not discussed - C/F

#### **16 Feds Focus Group update**

- a. Presented but not discussed – see report Appendix 9

#### **17 Rep to CqE Report**

- a. No report presented

#### **18 AOB**

- a. Linda's suggestion to create a SWF Committee `presence at the Nailsea SC Tournament was not agreed

#### **19 Schedule of committee meetings**

- March 13
- May 8<sup>th</sup>
- July 17
- Sept 18<sup>th</sup> – apols Brian
- Oct 16<sup>th</sup> - must be between 14<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> – AGM preparation
- AGM 23<sup>rd</sup> November
- December 11<sup>th</sup> – after deadline for league entries

## **Appendix 1 Treasurer's Report**

### **Summary of Expected Income & Expenditure for 2025**

I refer to the table on page 3, this shows the budget for 2025, the actual income & expenditure for the period up to January 8th, the expected income & expenditure for the full year and in the last column the difference between the expected position and the budget.

Income is forecast to be £58 higher than expected in the budget with income from subscriptions, League Entries, and Short Croquet Tournament entries are broadly in line with the Budget.

It is too early in the financial year to give an accurate projection of expenses, however there is currently a small overrun of Expenses of £91 for the Year to Date.

In summary the net impact is that there is a projected deficit for the year of around £344 vs the expected deficit of £311.

#### **Creditors / Debtors**

None

#### **Balance Sheet**

At January 8th there was £6,940 cash at Bank excluding the Judith Moore Bursary (see below),

#### **Judith Moore Bursary**

Income and Expenditure has been recorded for the next Referees course, but additional transactions are anticipated, and therefore it is too early to calculate the surplus / deficit from this event.

At January 8th there was £3,953 cash at Bank

It is anticipated that payments from the Fund of c. £1,000 will be made in the current year to support coaching projects as outlined at the AGM. It is too early to give an updated estimate.



## South West Federation of Croquet Clubs



Cash Reconciliation to 8 January 2025

RECEIPTS	2025	
Subscriptions	503.20	
Association league fees	176.00	
Short Croquet league fees	68.00	
Golf league fees	316.00	
Short croquet Tournament fees	870.00	
Adverts	6.00	
Bank Compensation	0.00	
Referees Courses (February)	150.00	
Budleigh Coaching Course (June)	0.00	
Bank Interest Received	53.41	
Donations / Bursary received	28.75	
Sundries	0.00	
	<u>2,171.36</u>	<u>                    </u>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>		
Subs Refund	0.00	
Cygnets production	0.00	
Trophies	33.74	
League finals	0.00	
Short croquet	0.00	
Referees Courses (February)	230.48	
Laws Course - Bristol (March)	0.00	
Budleigh Coaching Course (June)	0.00	
Travel expenses	0.00	
Bursary travel expenses	0.00	
AGM Workshops Costs	0.00	
SWF Website	159.00	
AGM	0.00	
Administration	143.88	
Sundries	20.39	
	<u>587.49</u>	<u>                    </u>
<b>RECEIPTS LESS PAYMENTS</b>	<b>1,583.87</b>	
<b>ADD TO OPENING CURRENT ACCOUNT BALANCE (30/10/24)</b>	<b>9,310.73</b>	<u>                    </u>
<b>CALCULATED CLOSING CURRENT ACCOUNT BALANCE</b>	<b>10,894.60</b>	<u>                    </u>
<b>ACTUAL CLOSING CURRENT ACCOUNT BALANCE</b>	<b>10,892.20</b>	
<b>PLUS CHEQUES RECEIVED NOT YET BANKED</b>	<b>10,892.20</b>	
<b>CURRENT ACCOUNT BALANCE RECONCILIATION</b>	<b>-2.40</b>	<u>                    </u> <u>                    </u>

Difference due to pre-payment of 2025 fees amounting to £8.40, less £6 payment of Debtor (Advertising)

## Appendix 2 League Secretary's Report

### League Secretary's Report

#### League summary at the end of December 2024

- 30 clubs have entered at least 1 league excluding the Short Croquet tournaments at Nailsea and Budleigh
- 141 league teams entered
- Nailsea Short Croquet tournament: 16 clubs have entered at least 1 team. 29 teams in total
- Budleigh Short Croquet tournament: 17 clubs have entered at least 1 team. 29 teams in total.
- Only 5 entries were received for the Short Croquet Restricted, spread over a wide geographical area (2.5 hours travelling). After discussion with the clubs, the teams transferred to the open league.

League	Teams	Matches
Advanced	15	30
Federation	16	35
Intermediate	11	30
B League	3	6
Short Croquet Open	16	35
GC level play	18	46
GC level play 5+	14	32
GC handicap	24	72
GC high handicap	24	72
Total	141	358

- League blocks have been grouped geographically to minimize the travel requirements.
- Several clubs are playing 'home and away' giving 6 matches.
- Several clubs have multiple teams in the same block, which is OK for some clubs and not liked by others.
- As the e-mail with match details was sent at the beginning of January, the final date for confirmation of dates has been moved to 9 February.

#### Issues this week

- Exeter is having issues with membership and will be withdrawing from AC Advanced Div 3, AC Federation, Short croquet open, Golf Croquet Level play and the Short croquet tournaments at Nailsea and Budleigh. The affected leagues are in the process of being reorganised.
- Llandaff have provided match dates by e-mail as the Match secretary is unable to fill in the spreadsheet. A reminder about the SWF form 3 has been sent.

## Appendix 3

### Home Advantage and Win Bias 2021 to 2024

This is a report on a study of the SWF league results for 2021 to 2024. Its two purposes are:

- (1) To find whether the advantage of playing at home varies with the quality of the home lawns.
- (2) To identify those clubs whose handicap results differ consistently significantly from 50%.

Definitions:

Lawn Quality at each club is on a scale from 1 (Excellent) to 4 (Poor). The values I have used are the averages of my own estimates and those sent to me by four of the SWF committee.

This includes at least one estimate for every club except Barnstaple and Beckford, (both of which I have estimated as 3). A very simple scale has been used because precision is impossible. Lawns vary from year to year, and within a season, and different assessors have differing opinions.

Home Advantage is the difference between the percentage of home matches won and away matches won. For example, if a club plays 15 home matches, winning 12 (80%) and 16 away matches, winning 8 (50%) then its Home Advantage is 30%. It has little meaning if only a small number of matches have been played.

Win Bias, which is only calculated for handicap matches, is the percentage of handicap matches won minus the percentage of handicap matches lost. It is intended to act as a basis for discussion with a club about its handicapping policy.

The initial report used analysis at the level of 'matches' rather than 'games'. This has been corrected for this final report and the better precision of 'games' has been used.

Another change from the initial report is to consider each of the four years separately, as well as the accumulated statistics. The sample size is smaller but significant and consistent bias shows up more clearly.

## Appendix 4

Suggested feedback to BCC – ultimately to AGM 2025

### **Your proposal to SWF AGM 2025: That SWF League Rules should align with Croquet England Regulations**

You will recall that this proposal was accepted by the AGM and the SWF Committee was tasked with exploring this with a view to improving the situation.

This is to inform you of the work that has been undertaken and our recommendation.

- Reviewed League Rules and any references to CqE Tournament Regulations
  - There are none
  - We do note that we set out methods for managing
    - Managing incomplete blocks
    - Determining final block positions
  - We consider that these meet the particular needs of League play
- Reviewed CqE Tournament Regs (2024 as 2025 not yet published)
  - The Regulations apply to Calendar Fixtures
    - While our Leagues might be eligible to be Fixtures, we do not choose to be and have no plans to change this position

We take the view that

- The needs of League play are significantly different from those of Tournament play
- SWF League Rules meet our needs, are open to review and modification by our members annually
  - They are in practice modified most years and any unhelpful conditions are addressed in this way
- That to build in a process of annual comparison with CqE Regulations
  - would be a poor use of our resources
  - would be inconsistent with our time frame for organizing the Leagues
  - would yield no benefit

In the absence of any more concrete evidence of how League play is adversely affected by our current Rules, we do not intend to take any more action and will be reporting to that effect to the 2025 AGM.

However, we would be very pleased to hear from you if you can evidence the need for a different course of action.



## **Appendix 6**

### **Federation Development Report**

#### **January 2025**

##### FDOs

Still need to set up the FDO meeting and the allocation of clubs and the extent/change in the role.

Main point to discuss is whether the FDOs should be the source of handicapping development between clubs and the federation.

##### Croquet England Club Awards 2025

Greatly enhanced prize money with £750 per award

Three awards

- Newly formed clubs in last five years
- Clubs with one to three courts
- Clubs with four or more courts

Applications close on June 30th

FYI, Tisbury has already submitted an application for the first award (newly formed club).

##### Croquet England Sports Development

The Sports Development Committee has been re-structured with no FDOs.

Responsibility for development initiatives have been allocated as follows

Stephen Wright: Chair and marketing

- Mike Prince: Marketing
- Ian Draper: Next Generation
- Paul Chard: Funding for clubs
- Debbie Lines: AC development
- Paul Francis: Bowls England partnership, lawn management support for clubs and Federation Forum link.
- \*Mike Prince is a member at Lym Valley so the SWF is well represented.

##### Club News

- Winterborne Valley looking to potential re-locate again
- Cornwall have completed the purchase of the land.

## Appendix 7

### **Federation Coaching Report**

#### **January 2025**

##### Coaching course 2025

Tuesday January 13: Coaching course to be announced at monthly Zoom

Friday January 17:

Thursday February 6: Initial Zoom meeting for prospective participants to learn more about the course

Thursday March 6,13 and 20: Zoom sessions

Wednesday April 30: Practical day at Bradford on Avon

##### GC Referees

Friday February 14 pm: Refresher Course for existing referees (5 participants)

Saturday February 15 all day: Assessment day (5 participants)

Sunday February 16 all day: Assessment day (4 participants)

SWF subsidy between £400 and £500.

## Appendix 8

### Handicapping

#### Handicap Cards

I've just sat down and read all the points from your emails, and they are summarised below in receipt order I'm really encouraged by some of the points, and I hope that we can come up with a proposal for both our clubs and the Handicapping Committee. I will prepare a summary at the end.

Brian – when we do the zoom it should include becoming a club handicapper, how to set handicaps and how and when to review handicaps

Linda – we need to be wary of amending CqE guidelines and be wary of too much admin and checking. Avoid use of words – spot checking.

Tony – unnecessary to include competition name on card and replace AC score of +5 by 26-21

Peter – advice on how to record score for time limited AGC game

Linda – query about electronic records

Brian – don't need a competition column

Chris – supports Peter's AGC format. Don't need an extra column. Him and Martin have filled in cards for their players. Likes opponents club to be shown.

Stephen – problems occur due to club handicappers not doing regular checks. Would like column H/L replaced by A/H/L. Cards without date column should not be used.

#### Summary

Just to remind everyone that what I was trying to achieve was a handicap card that easier to fill out, read and review. I couple of you have said that we don't need a competition column – do you mean competition row? So unequivocally, in my opinion, if this is to work, we need a competition row.

I don't think we are amending CqE guidelines we are tidying them up and reflecting recent changes to our game.

Proposed changes to handicap card:

- Line for name of competition or tournament (current guidelines say could, we would like should)
- Line to highlight a handicap change with sign off (current guidelines say make a notation in the margin)
- For AC replace +5 with 26-21
- Replace H/L with A/H/L
- Circle winning score in GC AGC timed game with circle
- Stop using any cards without a date column

Hopefully we accept this as a standard that players in our leagues use. Then I propose to send to CqE as a template that everyone can use. I feel that we should police and I accept Linda's suggestion of using competent checkers. However, I don't think that

issues can be resolved on the day hence photos and back to me. Something I am happy to do.

#### One-Ball Handicapping

I have had email discussions with Chris Roberts and Chris Williams on this. I now know that if I copy Chris W, Chris R will reply.

We play a lot of one-ball in our club in the winter, and I feel there is an issue with bisque calculation. One-ball is a good way to get GC players introduced to AC. However any GC player with a handicap of over 8 is penalised as is any AC player with a handicap over 20.

## Appendix 9

### Feds' Forum

Linda's summary of the Jan meeting:

#### Aim of the meeting

- to focus on how to improve nature of discussions
- to understand change to Sport Dev Committee

#### Discussion points

- A forum for discussions re matters of interest to all Feds e.g. complaints policy
- How all the interests of a Fed can be covered – not only about FDO work
  - How Fed officers relate to their counterpart committees in CE
- Sport Dev Comm
  - to be more strategic
  - but has lost link with FDOs – so Paul's attendance at FF is an effort to redress this
  - useful method for determining
  - What Croquet England can do for the Federations
  - What Croquet England can do for the FDOs
- That CE is looking outward more than inward at the moment
- CE communications ineffective? e.g. not picking up on work with Bowls Clubs, recruiting the 45+, working with volunteers, recruiting to key roles, keeping AC alive

#### Decisions

- Group to be known as Federations' Forum (has been referred to as Feds' Focus Group for historical reasons)
- try and find meeting times that suit more Feds
- consider meeting agenda / topic specific meetings that are prepared for
- Alison will continue to be invited to attend the meetings

Linda will do a bit of work on

- Standard draft agenda
- Briefing on
  - Complaints
  - CE Tournament Regs
  - Other CE policies