

Minutes of the AGM of the Welsh Croquet Association held via Video Conference on Sunday 1st November 2020

Present

Ian Burrige (Chairman), John Evans (Vice Chairman & Llandovery), Chris Williams (Secretary), Garry McElwain (Treasurer), Sarah Andrew (Llanfairfechan), Kevin Ham, Kath Martin (Cardigan), Paul Pristavec (Glamorgan), Chris Roberts, Brian Shorney, David Walters, Rich Waterman, Richard Wood (Mumbles), Andrew Wright & Kath Wright (Mumbles)

Item 1. Apologies

Quiller Barrett, Dayal Gunasekera, John Hannah (Craig Y Don), Peter Jones (Llandaff), Sarah Melvin

Item 2. Minutes of the previous meeting on 7th July 2019.

The minutes of the meeting of 7th July 2019 were not read to the meeting, but taken as read. R Waterman proposed and GJ McElwain seconded that they be accepted as a true record and the meeting approved.

Item 3. Matters Arising.

None.

Item 4. Chairman's Report.

The Chairman reported that he was standing down as Chairman after nine years following his recent election to being WCF President and CA Treasurer, but was willing to stay on the committee. One of his aims during his Chairmanship had been to increase the number of Welsh clubs linked with the Welsh CA. This had failed until the start of the pandemic, but the pandemic has led to more contact being made between the Welsh CA and we see that in the clubs being represented at this meeting.

On the playing side Ian Burrige and Gareth Denyer represented Wales in the WCF AC World Championship in Melbourne, Australia in February 2020. The WCF GC Teams Tier 2 (Spain in May 2020) and the AC and GC Home Internationals for 2020 were all cancelled, because of the pandemic. The Welsh Championships were held at Cheltenham for the third and hopefully final year with Tudor Jenkins (GC) and Ian Burrige (AC) being successful.

The Chairman ended his report by thanking all those who had worked to setup new clubs and a special thanks to John Evans for all that he had done to assist the various clubs.

Item 5. Accounts.

The accounts for 2019 were presented to the meeting and they showed a surplus for the year to 31st December 2019 of £305.74 and a balance of £3305.81. Income was £617.74 and expenditure £311.00.

The 2019 AGM had agreed to give £2000 to the Glamorgan Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club for their lawn improvement fund and at the time of this 2020 AGM the sum had not yet been paid.

The accounts were proposed by John Evans and seconded by Kevin Ham.

Item 6. Reports from clubs

Written reports from a number of clubs had been received and are attached to these minutes.

The following verbal comments were made during the meeting.

Cardigan – thanked John Evans for all his help

Mumbles – reported that they had 34 members including one 11 year old.

Glamorgan – reported that the season had been a shortened one because the lawns had been relaid in August/September. The club thanked John Evans for all his work in sorting out the relaying. The relaying had gone well and the lawns were already looking good. They were being cut regularly by Jim Beach and Mike Parry.

Llanidloes – reported that they will have 2 lawns.

Brian Shorney reported that there had been some activity at Aberdovey and there may be the possibility of forming a mid Wales league. Brian asked about the policy of allowing clubs outside of the Welsh CA's domain to join. In particular he was involved with Eardisley near Hereford.

Llandovery – John Evans reported that they were starting to see some competitive play; in particular Tim Crowdy played in a GC event at Wrest Park off a handicap of 1.

Craig Y Don – it was reported that they had had a very high income – mainly from visitor's green fees.

Item 7. Fixtures and Events.

As reported earlier the Welsh Championships (AC and GC) had been held over a weekend at Cheltenham. It was hoped that they would be able to return to Wales at Merthy Mawr in 2021 and would be able to be played as separate events. The WCF GC Teams tier 2 event that had been due to be held in Spain in May 2020, is likely to be held in Spain in October 2021.

Wales were due to host the GC Home Internationals at Nailsea in 2020. These were cancelled and it is hoped that they will be played in June 2021.

The AC Home Internationals for 2021 are due to be held at East Dorset in June 2021.

Kevin Ham described a format for a Welsh GC Teams event to be held in north and south heats with a play-off possibly at Llanidloes. Kevin suggested each heat would be limited to 6 teams and a single match would consist of one singles and one doubles.

The meeting agreed that it would be desirable to hold such an event in 2021 – possibly on the last Saturday in July with a play-off sometime in September.

There was a discussion over an inter-club league based on a merit table format. It was agreed that it would be nice to start one in 2021 or 2022.

Ian Burrige suggested that the Welsh CA played an annual match against a CA team in a format such that weaker players could play and that the format included both AC and GC. Perhaps it could be held at Llandovery or Llanfairfechan.

Item 8. Election of Officers and Committee.

Under the constitution the three Officer bearers are elected for three year terms whilst the two ordinary members are elected annually. The following committee had been elected in 2019

Chairman	IJ Burrige (retires 2020)
Secretary	CN Williams (retires 2022)
Treasurer	GJ McElwain (retires 2021)
Committee	MJ Evans, DR Walters

The following new committee was elected for 2020-2021

Chairman	R Waterman (retires 2023)
Secretary	CN Williams (retires 2022)
Treasurer	GJ McElwain (retires 2021)
Committee	IJ Burrige, DR Walters

Item 9. Election of Selection Committee

The following were elected to the Selection Committee. IJ Burrige, DR Walters, CN Williams.

Item 10. Any Other Business.

It was agreed that it was much better holding the AGM by video conference and that future meetings should be held by video conference, rather than in person at the Welsh Championship. It may be necessary to changed the Constitution to allow this.

The Secretary reported that 23 members had paid their subs for 2020.

Date of next meeting

The 2021 AGM will be held by video conference at a date after the end of the 2021 season.

The meeting closed at 12.33

Reports from clubs

Cardigan Croquet Club

We formed our club in October 2017, had 2 good learning seasons very much as beginners, with much advice and practical coaching from John Evans of the Llandovery CC

We became members of CA in John's advice, and belong, according to how they 'split' their affiliated clubs, to their West region though not been partakers of any events due to distance

We now number 20 members, including our MP Ben Lake. It would have been our main focus this past summer to handicap players, but have played little this year, as well as gov restrictions on sports clubs, we play - at no charge - on the lawns of the Cliff Hotel and so have had additional COVID restrictions

Previous 2 seasons, we played matches in 2018 and 2019 against Llandovery and Aberdovey CCs both home and away, and in 2018 surprisingly beat both of them! We did sign up to the All Wales tournament in John's advice, which should have taken place this year.

We did get funds from Sports Wales for equipment and with no club expenses, are financially quite sound

Our season runs from 1 April to 31 October and this 2020 season with various lockdowns and shielding, only about half a dozen members have played this year and due to this current lockdown and the Hotel being closed for the 17 days, we have decided to end the season and meet again in the New Year to decide details of our 2021 season.

Kathleen Martin
Sec Cardigan Croquet Club

CRAIG Y DON CROQUET CLUB REPORT TO THE WELSH CA:-October 2020

The 2020 Croquet Season was shortened from 26 weeks to 14 weeks because of Corona virus.

A total of 34 playing members took part in games where lawns had to be pre-booked with smaller numbers allowed on the lawns than usual. No formal competitions were allowed either within the club membership or with visiting clubs. No social events were permitted. This led to income falling from £10,000+ to circa £3,000. Costs of keeping the lawn in good order for the full summer was close to normal as were the monthly standing orders to the CYD Sports and Community Centre which means those running costs caused our small reserves to become even more depleted.

Fee paying, 'Playing Members' dropped from circa 55 to 35. We hope to recover numbers next year, but if we start under the same restrictions as we ended this September, that is unlikely to happen.

The club would like to see a rebate on its standing orders bearing in mind the main provision of toileting from the Community Centre was not available for the whole season and no electricity was used, because use of our clubhouse was not permitted. A 'portaloo' toilet had to be provided by the club.

The Croquet Club is intending to launch a new club section of 'Shuffleboard' in 2021 to increase membership and hopefully income. Four roll out mats plus discs and cues are planned to be in place within the first 12 months at an approximate £5,000 cost to allow 16 folk to play simultaneously. The U3a will be offered Shuffleboard interest Groups in addition to the successful Croquet group. The game will be played outside on flat tarmacked areas in summer but in winter and inclement weather, it is envisaged that there will be bookings made for the Community Centre Hall when a Group of 20-24 players could take part in a three hour session. A grant application for a starter set of Shuffleboard equipment has been made to the Llandudno Town annual grant fund.

The Croquet Club gained CASC (Community Amateur Sports Club) status from HMRC in February 2020 but some recent grant applications have required a Charity number. Since we are still an integral part of the CYDS&CC Charity, we have used that number in those circumstances.

The club has just been awarded a grant from the National Lottery of £2,700 to erect the Composting toilet agreed and approved by Conwy Council as landlord and Planning and the CYDS&CC Directors meeting last year. It will be operational by April 1st 2021, the start of our playing season. It will be used whilst Corona virus restrictions prevent our use of the Community Centre facilities and hence forth as an emergency loo for club members, when the Centre is closed.

John Hannah Croquet Club Chairman

Glamorgan Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club (formerly Dyffryn Croquet Club)

GLTCC have had a short season, not just due to the pandemic, but due to the re-laying of the club's 2 lawns at Merthyr Mawr. This was agreed to start in early August, so the lawns were closed to members to allow work to commence. Work was completed and the lawns were watered by members for a short while. They are now being helped by Mother Nature. The lawns have germinated and are doing quite well. The plan is that they should return to full club use from about June/July of 2021.

This shortened season has meant that we have not been able to try and increase members. We need to be able to do this in 2021 – if we're allowed out – so that we can sustain the lawns at the standard we would like to have. At present we are at 33 members.

As with other clubs, we have to do everything ourselves. Without the many volunteers that have stepped up to the mark this year, we would not be looking forward to the rather more rosy future than we had in a, shall we say, former existence.

Paul Pristavec (Secretary)

October 2020

Llandaff Croquet Club in Cardiff

The club was established in 2005 and was based at Insole Court Llandaff, and later moved to the Llandaff Fields Bowling Green. However, in August of this year the club relocated to the Old Bowling Green in Fairwater Cardiff. As the lawns had been maintained by the Cardiff Parks Department as a Bowling Green up until September 2019, the lawn was found to be in far better condition than that of Llandaff BC. The new site also benefits from a large well-equipped clubhouse and Croquet Storeroom

We are the only Croquet club located in the Welsh capital.

The club is considered to be a friendly club and attracts players of all standards of play. The membership has grown over the years and as of September 2020 has a membership of 17. However, during the past few months many of the players from the Dyffryn Club have joined the club on a reduced subscription. We now consider our membership is of a size that fits the size of the lawns.

The club has always entered the South West Division :-

- High Handicap GC tournament
- 'B' League Association Croquet tournament

In 2019 the club came top of the High Handicap tournament, and went on to beat Dawlish Warren to win the cup.

Up to date information on the Llandaff Croquet Club can be found on our website:

<https://llandaffcroquetclub.weebly.com>

Prepared by Pete Jones

Club Secretary

October 21st 2020

Llandoverly Croquet and Bowls Club

2020 season report for WCA

Our sixth season started in July with club afternoons limited to 8 players. A number of members didn't join this season due to the pandemic, despite a reduction in annual fees from £50 to £20. Fortunately we managed to recruit 4 new members resulting in a total playing membership of 15.

For club afternoons we divide our bowling green into 2 courts measuring 35 x 21 yards. So we get the full length and $\frac{3}{4}$ width. Occasionally a small group organise play on a single full size court at a different time. The green is well maintained to 6mm which provides a reasonably flat and well-paced surface.

We only played GC this season and were unable to organise matches, as we have done in previous seasons with Cardigan, Llanidloes and Mumbles. The only match was against Glamorgan, who we beat 11-7. One of our new players, Tim Crowdy, played in a tournament at Wrest Park, where he was given a handicap of 1.

Playing standards have definitely improved since last season and we are now looking to get involved in more serious competitions rather than only the social events which we have had in the past.

John Evans (Secretary)

Llanfairfechan and North Wales Croquet Club

Report for 2020

The Club Committee decided to open the season early this year to make up for closing early for maintenance the previous year. Working parties prepared the playing areas and set up the hoops on 16th and 18th March. Everyone knows how long the early playing period lasted, precisely 4 days. Through the rainless, sunny months that followed a few of us watered the lawns and maintained the white lines and our gardener mowed. On 13th May England was allowed to play croquet, but not Wales. Then golf re-opened in Wales and we decided croquet could be played again from 1st June. Word came from the Welsh Assembly (not croquet players) that we could not play croquet so we closed again on 2nd June. The Club finally opened for the 2020 season on 22nd June with risk assessments, distancing, sanitizers and a booking system. At first we did not allow visitors, but as confidence grew in our safety measures, we allowed a few small groups to return. We even set up coaching sessions. The Committee decided to open the lawns until 31st December, weather permitting, to make up for the late opening. At the time of writing we are closed again, but only until 9th November. We did an intensive day of aeration and feeding of the lawns along with other more ambitious maintenance on 17th October so allowing the lawns to rest for a few weeks is welcome. Our extended playing period and the lack of many other outside activities has led to a very large number of new members. We have recruited 26 new members while only losing 7 this year. This takes our total membership to 69, although 20 of these are second club or country members. We have approximately 6 non-playing members. The vast majority of our members play Golf Croquet, but two years of Association Croquet Coaching sessions mean that we will be able to enter an AC team in the NW Federation League as soon as it

starts again. We were successful in obtaining a grant from the charity associated with the local hydroelectric scheme to buy new hoops for our two large lawns this year. We have plans to start enlarging the lawns, which are not quite full size, during the winter months.
Sarah Andrew, Secretary, Llanfairfechan Croquet Club

Mumbles Croquet Club

Report on the 2020 season

Mumbles Croquet Club started in 2019 so this report relates to our second season. The club has an arrangement with the Mumbles Bowling Club to use their green on a Monday and Sunday. We have access to a small pavilion where we store equipment in locked cabinets. Usually we set up two half size lawns but on the penultimate session this year we introduced members to a full size lawn. We have 34 members down from 44 last year.

Due to the Covid-19 restrictions our playing season eventually started on Sunday 12 July. This was preceded, on the previous weekend, by a trial session involving only session 'convenors' which enabled us to test out our Covid sanitisation procedures. We followed CA guidelines and developed protocols for convenors and players.

We ran an online booking system using the Google sheets facility. This worked well although members were warned it is not secure. The drawback of the booking system is that the same members tend to book the same slots which mitigates against the opportunity of playing a variety of members with different standards of play.

We initially started with one session on a Sunday and two on a Monday but this was soon extended to two sessions of two hours on each day. On Monday, the 28th of September, we had an end of season competition which, despite the rain, was a great success.

We have a dedicated group of players; consequently we do not envisage recruitment problems next year. Looking to the future, friendly competitions with other clubs in Wales would be a welcome development.

Richard Wood

(Secretary)

22 Oct 2020

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