



newsletter

Annual General Meeting 2000

The AGM will be at 7.30pm on Thursday 23 March in the upstairs room at the Star & Garter in Silsoe. Please come along if you possibly can as it is your best opportunity to have a say about the running of the club. The provisional agenda is as follows:

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of 1999 AGM and matters arising
3. Reports: **Chairman**
Secretary
Treasurer
Tournament Secretary
Club Captain
Competition Secretary
Groundsman (to include equipment)
Publicity Officer
Development Officer
4. Election of officers
5. Club activities for 2000
6. Coaching
7. Catering
8. Any other business

The minutes of the 1999 AGM were included with the April 1999 edition of the newsletter. I will have a copy available at the AGM. Such reports as I have available are enclosed with or are part of this newsletter. If you cannot attend but want a topic discussed please let me know and I can raise it under AOB.

Committee Meeting - 20 Jan

The main points are summarised below:

- We have been asked to stage the local All England Area Final on 9/10 September, and we were also asked to move our September tournament as it clashes with one at Nottingham. We cannot move it earlier because it would then clash with the All England and we do not wish to have it any later, so it is proposed to leave it where it is.
- Every year clubs are asked to bid for future CA events. This year bids are invited for 2001 and 2002. We have put in for the Selectors Weekend (both years), the Home Internationals (2002) and the Juniors (both years). I have also expressed a willingness to hold the Schools events for the same years should the events be amalgamated.
- Irene Davis has negotiated the tenancy of some old tennis courts in Leighton Buzzard with a view to starting a croquet club. There is to be an inaugural meeting on March 16 and she would be very grateful if any club members could go along to lend support and offer advice. Anyone wishing to attend should call Irene on 01525 210260 for the time and venue.
- The subscriptions for 2000 are shown in Eric's Treasurer's report. The CA levy for 2000 is £5.75.

- Anyone wishing to get in some early practice is welcome to do so provided they use lawn 4 only.
- It was suggested that we have a minute book in order to keep an official record of club business. This raises a question I have mentioned in the past, namely the need for a club archive. I would suggest that a start be made by having a meeting at which anyone in possession of any records pertaining to the club brings them along so we can find out what we actually have.
- Tom Anderson will be standing down as Development Officer this year. It may be that we put the post in abeyance for the time being unless anyone wishes to take it on. Development is mainly about coaching, and this is a subject on which we would particularly like your opinions. I have put coaching on the agenda for the AGM.
- The new Custodian for Wrest Park has yet to be appointed, so I have sent details of our tournaments and other events for this year to the English Heritage area manager. It has been suggested that we try to get a mention of the club events included on EH's publicity material for the park and develop more of a relationship with EH along the lines of the East Anglian Federation's dealings with the National Trust.
- Our stock of club leaflets is exhausted. Any suggestions on form or content for the next revision would be most welcome (it has already been suggested that the leaflet includes a date reference).
- The publicity seminar I attended last October stressed the importance of developing links with the local press. As I live in Newport Pagnell and therefore never see the local papers for Luton or Bedford I was wondering whether any members living within the Luton or Bedford area might be interested in acting as a link to these papers.

Diary

- The Easter Egg tournament will be on Sunday 9 April. Details from Rod Ashwell (01582 504536).
- The dates for our 2000 tournaments are listed on Eric's attached subscription and entry form.
- There is to be a CA Gold Coaching Course at Wrest Park on 6/7 May. Details of this and other CA coaching courses are in the January Gazette.
- Oxford University have written asking to arrange a fixture. The suggested date of May 7 may not be possible (see above). They have suggested playing at Oxford as an alternative. If you are interested please contact George Collin indicating home or away preference.

EACF/NT croquet tournaments

The East Anglian Croquet Federation, in conjunction with the National Trust, are staging their annual short croquet and golf croquet competitions at various NT properties over the summer. Entries are invited from CA clubs or other groups.

Short Croquet - 2 small lawns at each venue. 4 teams of 2 players at each venue. Entry fee £5 per team.

25 June Melford Hall
16 July Anglesey Abbey
30 July Anglesey Abbey
6 August Felbrigg Hall
3 Sept Ickworth (Final)

Contact: David Hills 01223 502597 (evenings)

Golf croquet - 2 small lawns at each venue. Up to 16 teams (doubles). Entry fee £2 per team (doubles).

15 July Anglesey Abbey Doubles
3 Sept Ickworth Singles

Contact: Edme Robinette 01284 760738

I will bring the entry forms to the AGM.

EACF AGM 2000

This year's East Anglian Croquet Federation AGM will be on Sunday 26 March at 2.30. The venue is the Black Boy in Bury St. Edmunds. Anyone who has something for discussion at the meeting and who is unable to attend in person can raise it with either George Collin or Judy Anderson, who are Treasurer and Secretary respectively.

Where's my Fixtures Book?

The Croquet Association have had to send out a grovelling letter, which begins: *"It is with some regret and considerable embarrassment we have to inform you that the Fixture Book is unlikely to be issued before the 1st March 2000."* A list of this year's fixtures is available from the CA website on www.croquet.org.uk.

Secretary and Publicity Officer's Report for 1999

For some reason we had fewer requests from outside groups such as Tangent and Round Table this year. On the other hand we did run a course for the Bedord branch of the University of the Third Age (U3A) during June, but it didn't result in any new members.

The club, at English Heritage's request, submitted an application for Scheduled Monument Consent relating to the position of the hoops and other equipment on the lawns. The need for this came about as a result of considering what would be required to lay on an electricity supply to the pavilion, the first stage of which would be to submit an SMC application. Interest in this plan appears to have waned.

Our dealings with the CA have mainly lay in holding various events for which they couldn't find other venues. While this helps to bring in extra income it would be preferable to hold an event we have actually requested. I cannot help thinking that our lack of success in this is

partly down to the level of non-playing facilities we are able to provide, for which there is no easy answer.

Moving on to publicity, our Inter Counties success got a mention in one of the local papers, and we have the pack which came as a result of attending the publicity seminar. As explained elsewhere in this newsletter, I think that if we are to get more sustained coverage it might be better handled by members living within the respective papers' distribution area. More recently we were invited by 3 Counties Radio to do a talk on croquet for the Saturday afternoon programme on February 12. Every little helps.

The laminated poster has been installed in the display board and appears to attract a degree of interest at matches and tournaments, and we have got through all of the last printing of our club leaflets. We also have a new noticeboard in the pavilion to reduce the overlaps and congestion on the old one. This year we will be doing our annual club poster distribution to local libraries, and we have been offered a page in a forthcoming issue of the Silsoe News. The club's details are also featured on the CA website.

And finally. . . .

Please check your entry on the attached membership list and let Eric know the following details if they are not already present and correct:

- whether or not you are a member of the CA
- your **current** handicap, address **and postcode**
- your car (make, model, colour and registration)
- phone numbers
- e-mail address (if you have separate ones for home and work please give the one you prefer)

GB retain MacRobertson Shield

	GB	NZ	USA	AUS	Wins	Matches
GB		11-10	20-1	19-2	3	50
NZ	10-11		14-7	13-8	2	37
USA	2-19	8-13		11-10	1	21
AUS	1-20	7-14	10-11		0	18

Great Britain retained the shield for the fourth time in a row when they won the deciding game in the last singles match to clinch a win against New Zealand. For the reports see www.croquetworld.com.

John Bevington

16 February 2000