

Appendix 1

EACF AGM March 2020 Chairman's remarks:

It is normal and right that the chairman should thank the officers and committee for their work. At our autumn committee meeting, there were no apologies for absence – all were keen to attend, report and contribute. All have been equally keen to keep things going, although we are not able to hold a physical AGM. (pause for a round of applause)

Constitutionally, I have overstayed my position as chairman (five years maximum – none of us can count). I was asked by Judy Anderson to assist in the formation of the EACF and to be its first treasurer. I shall continue to support it. It has helped to form new clubs in the region and can play a role in assisting clubs to survive the crisis.

"You don't know what you've got till it's gone". Even a fortnight ago, some of us were playing croquet, adapted for Social Distancing. We were still planning the season. We may sometimes have cursed the administration side (so many emails!) and our own poor play. Now the emails (many time multiplied) are our lifeline and we miss the chance to play, even if badly – for the opportunity of fresh air, exercise, pleasant surroundings, company and the mental challenge. Many of us are not as healthy as we once were but, as long as we are fit enough to hit a ball, perhaps we should be satisfied.

There is plenty of advice around, as to how we should use our time, whilst socially distancing or self-isolating. I intend to try to get to grips with the Wrong Ball rules of golf croquet. Perhaps even the present crisis is not long enough for that.

As always, take care.

George Collin

EAST ANGLIAN CROQUET FEDERATION

Treasurer's Report

AGM March 2020

1. Bank Accounts

Barclays Bank

The balance on the current account on 13th March was **£6541.77**

Nationwide

There have been no transactions on the account and the current balance is **£3,579.28**

2. 2019 Examined Accounts

Copies of the accounts have been sent to clubs and copies of the signed accounts will be available at the AGM. There was a surplus of **£374.70** on the income and expenditure account compared with **£770.28** in 2018. Subscription income was down just **£10** from 30 member clubs of which 25 were Full Members. There was no income from the hire or sale of equipment as two clubs, Hickling Broad and Winterton-on-Sea, did not continue their membership and returned the equipment they had had on loan. The main factors causing a reduction in the surplus were the GC leagues going from a substantial surplus in 2018 to a **£87** loss and fewer bookings for indoor which only just broke even. Entry fees for the 2020 leagues have been increased from **£10** to **£11** and the committee is reviewing the number of indoor bookings depending on the anticipated interest. Both of these actions should help to reduce the risk of substantial losses.

It is to the webmaster's credit that the website costs, never large, have been reduced by the new arrangement whereby hosting costs are shared with Watford Croquet Club.

The figure of **£30** against "creditors" comprises **£10** paid by Doddington Croquet Club in advance for their 2020 Associate Membership and **£20** paid in advance by Ludlow Castle Croquet Club for the use of EACF's court booking system in 2020.

3. 2020 Payments

A schedule is attached summarising all subscriptions and entry fees for outdoor events paid to date. Great Dunham and Histon & Impington are the only 2 clubs that have yet to pay their subscriptions.

4. Bank Mandate & on-line banking

The current bank mandate for both accounts is any two of the following three signatories.

George Collin, Terrey Sparks, Arthur Reed

We need to approve the signatories going forward. Once these are approved we can introduce on-line banking on the Barclays account which will simplify making payments. On-line banking can be operated with the same level of security as that used for cheque writing. All signatories will have the facility to log in to the account. One signatory can initiate a payment but the transaction cannot be completed until one of the other signatories has authorised it.

5. 2021 Subscriptions

The surpluses achieved over the last 6 years have been generally falling with a possibility that we will achieve no surplus in 2020 because of increasing hire charges and uncertainties about the costs and interest in the indoor events at Soham. By next year the annual subscription rate will have been held at the same level i.e. **£20** for 8 years and I am therefore recommending an increase of **£5** for Full Members and **£2.50** for Associate Members with effect from 1st January 2021.

6. Examiner

John Noble is willing to continue as Examiner for another year.

A..Reed

Appendix 2a

EAST ANGLIAN CROQUET FEDERATION

Statement of accounts for the year ending 31st December 2019

	2019 £	2018 £
Income		
Subscriptions	550.00	560.00
Equipment hire and sales	-----	-----
Interest received	3.58	3.57
Fee for use of court booking facility (Ludlow Castle)	20.00	-----
Net surplus on playing activities		
GC Leagues –see deficit below		83.06
GC Inter-Counties –Ken Wheeler Shield	-----	-----
GC Champions Day	-----	12.00
AC League	23.00	51.00
Indoor Croquet	8.50	170.00
	<u>605.08</u>	<u>879.63</u>
Less Expenditure		
Sundry Expenses	63.60	-----
AGM Hall Hire	35.00	30.00
Website	36.43	58.35
Equipment indoor	-----	-----
Equipment outdoor *	-----	-----
Net deficit on playing activities		
GC Leagues	87.00	-----
AC Champions Day	8.35	21.00
	<u>230.38</u>	<u>109.35</u>
Surplus for the year	<u>374.70</u>	<u>770.28</u>
Balance Sheet		
Funds brought forward	8417.35	7647.05
Add surplus for the year	374.70	770.28
Funds carried forward	<u>8792.03</u>	<u>8417.33</u>
Represented by:		
Barclays Bank	5230.77	4861.63
Nationwide Building Society	3579.28	3575.70
Debtors and prepayments	11.98	-----
Less creditors-Subscriptions & fees paid in advance	(30.00)	(20.00)
	<u>8792.03</u>	<u>8417.33</u>
*4 mallets purchased for £400. Cost refunded by the CA.		

Arthur Reed
Honorary Treasurer

I have examined the books and records of The East Anglian Croquet Federation. The above accounts are in accordance therewith and with the information and explanations I have received.

John Noble
Honorary Examiner

2020 Annual General Meeting

Secretary's Report

For the year ending 31st December 2019 membership of the E.A.C.F. totalled 28 clubs of which 25 were full members and 3 clubs associates. This was roughly the same number as the previous year. Administration wise things ran smoothly and no particular tricky problems arose. Contact with Club Secretaries was excellent and I received excellent co-operation. However, in the lower GC handicap range there is still a persistent lack of willingness to travel.

As a point of interest for the first time since the web-site was introduced by the Committee 18 years ago, there is a 100% participation from our member clubs which not only saves time, is more efficient but reduces costs in both postage and stationery previously costing us around £250 - £300 per annum.

No particular problems arose in respect to the published calendar and all events went mainly without too many problems and are again fully reported on the Federation website for which thanks go to our Webmaster who does a sterling job not only upkeeping the site running efficiently but keeping a computer ignorant such as myself on the right track. Again, I should point out that prior to the arrival of the web, news and events was promulgated by the Secretary publishing twice a year a newsletter named 'Face East' copies which can be found in the archives and make interesting reading.

The draft calendar for the forthcoming summer events including both tournaments and relevant leagues is also published and is up dated on a regular basis. I should point out that were possible the Federation has adopted a policy of rotating semi and final events around the region to clubs who have the required facilities.

Finally, regarding national events congratulations go to St. Albans Club in bringing back to the region 'The Secretary's Shield' also to the Letchworth Club who in fact were winners of the 'The Longman Cup'. A further mention to St. Albans who finished 3rd in this event being presented 'The Longman Shield'.

I look forward to the forthcoming summer play.

Terrey Sparks
Secretary E.A.C.F.

March 2020

Appendix 4

EACF Development Officer's Report February 2020

We will be holding short croquet matches to determine a representative to play in the national finals at Bowdon on 12/13 September. These may be at National Trust properties (as in the 80s and 90s) or at clubs. Reasonable level of interest shown to date.

I will be setting up croquet for 6th formers at Wymondham College in April. This is a state boarding school in Norfolk.

Doddington (Cambs) are interested in trying out as a club following an enthusiastic response to their Come and Try in September 2019. They have equipment on loan and will receive further coaching.

Equipment collected from Winterton (Norfolk).

Jonathan Toye

Appendix 4a

EACF Development Report supplement

March 2020

I have conducted **Access Audits** of Hunstanton and Nottingham Croquet Clubs. The aim of the exercise is to make buildings and lawns as easily accessible as possible, by suggesting clear, barrier free routes. This makes life easier – and safer – for everyone, regardless of disability.

St Albans CC is interested in expanding to two lawns. Had a 'phone conversation with Roger Bowman, a member there, about various possibilities. Pointed out possibility of sharing with bowls club or taking over defunct grounds. Put in touch with Norwich CC.

Hope to be setting up croquet at **Wymondham College**, a state boarding school in Norfolk, as activity for 6th form, in Summer term. (Dependent of course on school being open...).

Three takers for **Short Croquet** – Bury, Ipswich and St Albans. Did not prove possible to set up matches at Ickworth House (Nat Trust) so they will play one another at clubs. One match only between each, following process laid out by CA. Deadline for notifying CA of EACF winning club is 14 Aug. Regional play offs by 30 Aug (EACF v Southern Fed) leading to a final at Bowdon on 12/13 Sept.

Jonathan Toye

Coaching Officer Report

November 2019

There has been a reasonable amount of coaching activity within the federation and nearby during 2019

Many clubs within the federation have conducted their own coaching using the club and graded coaches available to them.

Lionel Tibble has been organizing coaching for the GC International Performance Development Squad at Wrest Park and I have held a small Coaches Training Course at the same venue.

The Coaches Training Course produced 3 Club Level Coaches.

I also held a 2-day coaching course at Bury St Edmunds with 14 participants on both days.

I also ran various coaching courses in neighbouring federations and further afield, which were;

Courses at High Wycombe over 3 days

The Academy at Southwick - 4 days of various coaching

The Northern Academy at York - 3 days of 1 to 1 coaching

The South West Academy at Budleigh Salterton - 1 day of GC New Rules, 2-day Tournament Management Course and 1 day of 1 to 1 coaching.

Also 2 days of coaching at Ryde, Isle of Wight.

The 2020 season is already filling up with coaching activity.

Lionel Tibble is again using Wrest Park for the GC International Development Squad Coaching and I hope to offer coaching throughout the season at the same venue.

I will also be running a 2-day course at Bury St Edmunds, date to be confirmed and at least a couple of days at Pinchbeck.

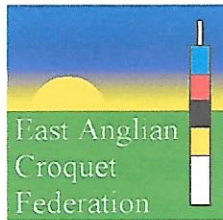
Further afield I will be coaching at The Northern Academy in York for 5 days which will include 2 days of 1 to 1 coaching, a graded GC Coaching Course and an AC Laws and Referee course.

I will also be running a Rules and Referee course at High Wycombe together with an AC Introduction to Advanced Play Course.

For The South West Academy at Budleigh Salterton I will be holding a 1-day Sports Psychology and Croquet Course, a GC Tactics Course and some 1 to 1 coaching.

Some coaching on the Isle of Wight is to be confirmed with dates.

Cliff Jones



2020 Annual General Meeting

A.C. Handicap League Report

15 Teams from 13 clubs entered the AC Handicap league during the 2019 year. The Beds/Herts region attracted 6 Entries and was won by St. Albans. The Essex/Suffolk region attracted 5 entries and was won by Colchester (South). The Cambridgeshire/ Norfolk region had 4 entries and was won by Norwich (Yare).

Unfortunately, due to the short notice and a small squad, Norwich (Yare) were unable to field a team in the final play-off round and despite offering their place to other teams in the section no substitute could be found so the play-off was conducted at The Newport Club on Saturday 21st September using The Longman Cup Format.

Played under a hot sun on lawns that were fast and flat both teams struggled to master the speed and it was noticeable that no game pegged out in time. However, it was a close match that went to the wire with the St. Albans club running out a close winner 4 -3.

St. Albans therefore, qualified to represent the region in the 2020 Secretary's Shield. However, it later transpired that as the current year's winner they qualified as champions in their own right, so their place was offered to the runners up Colchester (South) who declined to enter.

After a last-minute panic that only just beat the deadline for entry Watford took up the offer and will represent the region in the national tournament.

Terrey Sparks
AC League Organiser

March 2020

EACF – 2020 Season GC Leagues

From: Geoff Johnson

To: All Club GC Team Managers

Introduction

From my perspective the GC leagues seemed to run pretty smoothly this season, and I would like to thank you all for your efforts in making it so.

The 2019 season saw a number of significant changes to the 2018 league formats, and continued with the popular new 'B-level' League.

However, the 2020 season will soon be upon us, and it is close to when we need to get the various GC leagues organised. I will be continuing in the job of EACF GC League Manager for next season, so want to take this opportunity to advise you of some (small) changes that will be introduced.

I have now reviewed all of the replies to my questionnaire that I sent out to the clubs GC team managers at the close of the season, and would also like to thank all of you who replied for your thoughts and suggestions. As you might expect we don't have unanimity on everything, but for nearly all the questions there was a pretty clear majority view.

During the course of the season there were only two issues that came up multiple times:

- Slow play, sometimes excessively so.

This is particularly an issue in doubles games where partners can spend an unreasonable amount of time discussing tactics, but also happens in singles games as well. Clearly some of the older and more infirm players cannot help being a bit slower moving around the court, but this is no excuse for players standing about for what seems like hours deciding what to do. It is also incredibly frustrating and annoying for both opponents and double-banked games.

Fixing this is not easy, however the CA GC rules book is quite clear on the issue: see rule 16. This states that players should play with reasonable dispatch and the time for a "turn", that is to decide upon and execute your stroke, should not exceed 1 minute. This is of course almost impossible to police without a permanent neutral referee.

So I am proposing that one of the duties of the team captains at the start of the match is to remind all players of the requirements of rule 16, and to have a "quiet word" with people who still take excessive time over their shots.

- Players with what seem to be "dubious handicaps".

I think this is due to one (or more) of three reasons: [a] poor club handicapping when players start, [b] players with insufficient games outside their home club, (since they tend to have been playing with the same people all the time and they all get better together so their comparative handicaps don't change), and [c] simply the fact that the obvious "rapid improvers" just get better faster than their handicap reduces. The second two reasons we can't do much about, but getting consistency across club handicappers is something the Federation as a whole is going to work on. Simply giving someone an initial handicap and then saying the "automatic handicapping system will take care of it in due course" is not good enough. Club handicappers should be reviewing their players on a regular basis and making adjustments as necessary.

- One other "sort-of" issue was a few clubs saying "wouldn't it be nice to have some new clubs to play against"!

There appears to be three possible solutions to this:

- The first, and easily dismissed, is to abandon the regionalisation of the divisions and simply do a random draw. However this would result in some (very) long travel times for some fixtures, which nobody likes.
- The second is for more clubs to enter teams into several leagues, where the “opposition” tends to be different, both clubs and players. If you have a lack of suitable players for say the Open League or the B-level League, why not consider entering a joint team with another club? This is perfectly acceptable in the league rules, the only constraint being that a player cannot play for two teams in the same league. That is a player can play for Club-A in say the Handicap League and also in a combined Club-A + Club-B team in the Open League, but not in a combined Club-A + Club-B team in the Handicap League.
- The third is for **all of us** to try and persuade some new clubs to enter one or more leagues.

General Issues

Arranging fixtures

In order to spread the games out across the season more evenly, I introduced the system of fixed rounds during which specific fixtures should be organised. Generally every club except one liked this, and thought it worked well. We will therefore be using the same system in 2020.

Just to make it clear: the “rounds” are more than just a “guideline”, but also not completely hard and fast. If two clubs genuinely cannot find a mutual date within a given round I will almost always grant a reasonable extension.

No-shows, late arrivals, and abandoned matches

Although not specifically raised, no-shows and late arrivals, last minute rearrangements, and match abandonment, were sometimes a problem during 2019.

It is very difficult to “legislate” for these: given that the particular circumstances are so variable, however some basic guidelines are possible.

- No-shows of a single player are catered for by the standard CA tournament regs. So if you are still short of a player after a reasonable wait (suggested 30 minutes), the remaining 3 players are all promoted up a place to fill the gap, so if #2 is missing, #3 becomes #2 and #4 becomes #3.
 - Where doubles are concerned, the missing player’s ball is deemed and is placed, and left, in the starting corner. Their unfortunate partner then has to play “one ball against two” for the rest of the game, (or until the missing player arrives).
- Where a whole team doesn’t show-up, **and doesn’t contact the home side to explain why**, (and it is usually traffic mayhem of some sort), then the match is defaulted after 1 hour.

Traffic issues are getting worse each year, and no-one can predict major accidents etc., however teams should allow sensible amounts of time to get to venues, **and home captains should ensure that they provide a contact number to the opposition**, so they can let them know what their problem is.
- Where matches have to be abandoned, usually because of flooded lawns, the following is the preferred approach:
 - If one team already has an unassailable winning score, (E.g. match stands at 10 - 4 in an 18 game match), then that stands as the result.
 - Where the match is still undecided, **if more than half** the total games have been completed, and provided **both** captains agree, the result can stand. (E.g. match stands at 8 - 2 in an 18 game match.). If there is disagreement, then the match must be completed later.
 - Where **less than half** the total games have been completed, then the match should be completed on a subsequent date, **unless** one of the captains is happy to concede anyway.
- Requesting a fixture rearrangement **within 3 days** of a scheduled match, (so for example Tuesday or later for a Thursday match), constitutes grounds for the opposition claiming a default, unless the opposition team are prepared to accept a postponement and can find a mutually acceptable later date.

Draws

Whilst this can result in a tied fixture, **it is a league so that is not an issue**, except in the play-offs where we must have a result. This year we used hoop-difference to separate clubs tied on points, but a few people have questioned whether (total) game difference is a better/fairer decider, so **we will change to this for 2020**. In fact looking back over the leagues for some years it would not have made any material difference, but I think it "feels fairer"!

In a drawn semi-final or final the decider will still (obviously) be hoop difference, or in the unlikely event this is also tied, then a short tiebreaker game will be used.

Drawn games however are not acceptable, and are not permitted by the CA Rules. If games drag on too long captains should impose a 10 minute remaining time-limit. If that is insufficient to get a result, the CA standard 8 shots per player is to be used and the result stands at the end of that, unless tied in which case you play on until someone scores a hoop. Note this applies in **all the leagues**.

Team captain's responsibilities

From a league management point-of-view, can I also remind team captains of (some of) their responsibilities:

- All players **must** have a valid, up-to-date, handicap card, and it is the team captains' responsibility to check these at the start of the match.
"Errors" discovered after the match are very difficult, and often divisive, to sort out.
- Where players need to be listed by playing strength, current handicap is the first criterion. Where two players have the same handicap then their actual index, on their card, is used next.
- The team managers should agree what they wish to do about time limits:
 - Impose them on all games
 - Review match progress as the day goes along, and impose time limits for later games if considered necessary to get a result
 - Impose a "10 more minutes limit" on games which are clearly taking too long, and holding up the rest of the match.
- Remind all players at the start of the match about avoiding slow play, and that this is specifically covered in the GC rules in Section 16.
- It is the duty of the **home captain** to report the result and provide a copy of the score-sheet to the league manager as soon as possible. This means to me, and my contact details are on the bottom of all the score-sheets.
(Note: it does no harm, and indeed can be quite useful if the arithmetic is wrong, if the away captain also submits the result!).
- Where players have had a handicap change which makes them ineligible for a particular fixture, we will adopt the standard CA ruling that a change **within one week** of the match date is acceptable, but that the player must then play off their **new** handicap for the purposes of calculating extra turns and exchange of points.

Specific League Details

The following sections cover the specific details for the three GC leagues operating in 2020. There is some repetition, so you only need to read the parts that cover the league(s) you are entering!

1. Handicap Leagues

In the 2019 season we had 22 teams from 17 clubs, arranged in 4 area leagues to minimise the travelling distances. Assuming we have a similar entry for 2020, we will again aim to arrange 4 leagues of 6 (plus or minus), giving five fixtures in the season.

Match Format

First thing to say was the traditional format of 18 games made up of 2 doubles games and 16 singles games in an all-play-all format, continues to work well and be liked by (almost) everyone, guaranteeing everyone 5 games, (1 doubles and 4 singles). This will therefore carry on in 2020.

For single lawn clubs a reduced team of 3 players is used, with a total game count of 10.

Handicaps

The item prompting most comments was the vexed question of handicap range for this league. Purists will say that if the handicap system works properly, which mostly it does, then 16 to -6 is perfectly OK.

In reality this tends to be true except at the extremes. There is the additional issue of higher handicappers not wanting to play against minus players, despite the fact they get lots of extra turns.

After much debate, for the coming season the handicap rules will be:

- No maximum handicap, however any players included with handicaps 14 or 16 will play off a notional 12 for the purposes of calculating extra turns.
- No minimum handicap.
- Maximum **one** player with a handicap below 3
- In matches involving teams of 4 the aggregate handicap must be **at least 20**, and for teams of 3 the aggregate must be **at least 15**.

2. B-level Leagues

The B-level leagues continued in the 2019 season, and were enthusiastically supported. There were 14 teams entered, from 12 clubs, and these were run in two leagues, North&East and Central&West, again to minimise travelling distances.

There was a strong consensus for continuing with a B-level competition in 2020.

Issues raised were largely the same as in the handicap leagues: match formats, and handicap ranges.

Match Format

The majority view continues to be for an all-play-all format, and so for 2020 we will use (essentially) the same format as 2019. The only real debate was the "extra" doubles games, extending the match from 18 to 20 games, and requiring all players to play 6 games in the day rather than 5.

Some people found the extra game too much to cope with, and want a return to the 18-game format. However, opinion was fairly evenly split, with others really liking the extra doubles game. So for the 2020 season we will try a compromise:

- The first pair of doubles games will be the first games in the match.
- Then the 16 all-play-all singles games are played.
- Finally if both teams are happy to do so, the second doubles matches are played to complete the day.
So the doubles games are :
 - Game1 H1 & H4 vs. A1 & A4
 - Game2 H2 & H3 vs. A2 & A3
 - (Game19) (H1 & H4 vs. A2 & A3)
 - (Game20) (H2 & H3 vs. A1 & A4)

I suspect the second doubles games will mostly only be invoked if it offers a chance to get a result in the match, (i.e. the scores are tied at 9 all), but essentially I am leaving it up to the individual captains on the day to decide what they want to do.

There will be a default 50 minute time limit per game, unless both captains agree to waive this. In practice most people are sensible, and will probably start without time limits, but agree to impose them if the match is getting behind schedule.

The B-level league format needs a minimum of two lawns to work properly, therefore single lawn clubs are welcome to enter this league but will need to play all their matches "away", i.e. at the opposition or a neutral ground.

Handicaps

There were some comments about the handicap range allowed in a team, but the consensus was that we should mirror the CA definition of a B-level as closely as possible, and therefore:

- The handicap range is fixed at 3 + (note the CA have removed the upper limit of 8 to their B-level definition).
- To help with the problem of the larger and stronger clubs 'packing' teams with all 3's and 4's, there will be an **aggregate handicap limit of at least 20** introduced.

3. Open Leagues

The Open league caused the most problems in the 2018 season, largely because we were forced by the lower entry to run this as one league across the entire EACF region. This resulted in some very long, and sometimes unacceptable, travelling times for a match where you might only play four games. As a result there were 4 defaulted fixtures, with only 2 of the 7 teams competing completing all their fixtures.

In 2019 we still only had 7 teams but none-the-less reverted to two geographic leagues, (essentially East and West). The Western League ran pretty smoothly, with 4 teams playing 6 fixtures comprising a home and away match against 3 opponents. The Eastern League struggled a bit, despite having only 3 teams and 4 fixtures each to play. It appeared to me as league manger that this was primarily because they did not try and stick to organising matches within the "rounds boundaries" set out, resulting in an insoluble rush at the end.

For the coming season we sincerely hope to maintain two leagues of at least four teams, with a rough east-west split to minimise travel as much as possible. This is clearly contingent on another club entering the open league; however one has indicated their willingness to do so, provided we stick to a regional format.

Four teams in a league mean that each team will play the 3 other teams twice, with a home and away fixture.

Match Format

The majority view continues to be for an all-play-all format, and so for 2020 we will use (essentially) the same format as 2019. The only real debate was the “extra” doubles games, extending the match from 18 to 20 games, and requiring all players to play 6 games in the day rather than 5.

Some people found the extra game too much to cope with, and want a return to the 18-game format. However, opinion was fairly evenly split, with others really liking the extra doubles game. So as with the B-Level for the 2020 season we will try a compromise:

- The first pair of doubles games will be the first games in the match.
- Then the 16 all-play-all singles games are played.
- Finally if both teams are happy to do so, the second doubles matches are played to complete the day.
So the doubles games are :
 - Game1 H1 & H4 vs. A1 & A4
 - Game2 H2 & H3 vs. A2 & A3
 - (Game19) (H1 & H4 vs. A2 & A3)
 - (Game20) (H2 & H3 vs. A1 & A4)

I suspect the second doubles games will mostly only be invoked if it offers a chance to get a result in the match, (i.e. the scores are tied at 9 all), but essentially I am leaving it up to the individual captains on the day to decide what they want to do.

There will be a default 50 minute time limit per game, unless both captains agree to waive this. In practice most people are sensible, and will probably start without time limits, but agree to impose them if the match is getting behind schedule.

The Open league format needs a minimum of two lawns to work properly, therefore single lawn clubs are welcome to enter this league but will need to play all their matches “away”, i.e. at the opposition or a neutral ground.

Handicaps

This is an open level-play league so there are no handicap restrictions at all.

Conclusion

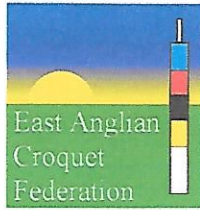
Once the draws have been made and the league fixtures are published on the EACF web-site, detailed rules and score sheets will also be provided for each particular league, however hopefully these will contain “no surprises”!

I will say immediately that the revisions I am proposing to implement will not satisfy everybody, although, if anyone takes *major* exception to any of the above, I promise to at least consider their objection(s).

However, I think they fairly reflect the majority views of the participating clubs:

And as the famous quote goes: *“you can’t please all of the people, all of the time”,*

so I have aimed instead for: *“most of the people, most of the time”!*



Soham Indoors Report 2019

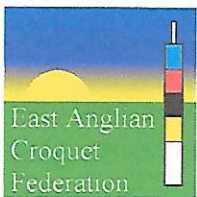
The winter programme of indoor games started encouragingly in January with the usual good attendances, however, the next month saw a slip in numbers whilst disappointing was made up for when we attracted a full attendance in March to wind up leaving the overall account in a reasonable surplus.

After the summer break November attracted a good attendance quickly followed by the final session in December when the attendance was disappointing to say the least. However, the overall account for the year just managed to struggle into the black finishing £8.50 in credit.

Over the year the take up of places was 141 out of 160 which equates only to 88% the lowest figure we have had since I took up the management in 2012 some 8 years ago and steps must be taken otherwise, this will be the end of the indoor croquet scene. I have to admit I've been feeling a little jaded lately and I have been looking for a willing person ready to take over the reins.

However, there is some light at the tunnel in that Paul Hetherington supported by Alison Maughan as a recruiting sergeant have volunteered to take up the baton so should introduce new ideas to improve the situation.

Terrey Sparks
March 2020



EACF Annual General Meeting

March 2020

Webmaster's report

The EACF website has continued to operate without any significant problems. The migration from the former hosting service with Fasthosts running on Windows to the new Virtual Private Server (shared with the Watford website) running on Linux took place before the start of the 2019 summer playing season, and the hosting contract with Fasthosts was cancelled with effect from the renewal date. The website response time on the new VPS has been considerably improved, with no more problems of slow page loading, and at the same time the hosting cost has also been reduced.

As part of the migration to the VPS, the website now uses the secure 'https' protocol, which means that all traffic between user and server is now encrypted. Therefore in particular, user login credentials are now better protected. There is no observable performance impact. A recent independent security check on the communications between the EACF website server and users' browsers scored 'A+'. (In comparison, the CA's website only scored 'C' in spite of also using 'https'. The CA is aware of the reasons for this and is working on plans to improve it.)

The website location has also now been moved from "angliacroquet.co.uk" to "angliacroquet.uk", and any visitors attempting to visit the former are automatically redirected to the latter. The former still remains a valid domain, but the former domain registration will be terminated in due course so all users are advised to update any browser "favourites" or "bookmarks" accordingly. Likewise for any associated email addresses.

The website as a whole is now approaching 2 million hits, and the most popular page is now the "Day" view of the Court Booking System - now 4 times as popular for non-robots as the EACF website home page.

Court Booking System

The EACF Court Booking System, which runs as part of the EACF website though as a largely stand-alone system, has also continued to operate without any significant problems. It is one of a few systems that the CA is now considering as a national recommendation to clubs who want a booking system.

Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire AC league

The Beds & Herts league ran the same way as usual in 2019, though without the participation of Enfield. St. Albans won again, so proceed to the 2020 Secretary's Shield – if that competition survives the interruption to play caused by the Covid-19 epidemic. Adjustments to the forthcoming 2020 Beds & Herts league arrangements have been proposed in the light of the pandemic, including allowing smaller teams and extending the end of the league season through the winter until March 2021.

SJH
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