



CROQUET NORTH---(www.croquetnorth.org.uk)

Secretary's Report for 2020

Our plans for the year were completely disrupted at the end of March by the Covid-19 virus and the consequential government advice and restrictions. The CA were quick to address the implications for croquet; they reviewed their national competitions and provided valuable guidance to member clubs.

For the first time we communicated our annual Newsletter content via our website rather than delivering paper copies to club member home addresses, but we are unsure how successful this has been since there has been little feedback and no CN competitions to enter.

Clubs eventually overcame difficulties of site access and developed suitable protocols to comply with restrictions to play at least some croquet. Access to clubhouses and toilets were often restricted. Many clubs managed to hold their regular club competitions. There were two instances of friendly inter-club croquet when Alnmouth invited Belsay to play pending the opening of the Belsay Hall site.

Some national competitions did take place, but CN teams chose not to take part because of travel and accommodation difficulties. Three Middlesbrough members and Durhams John-Paul Moberly played at clubs other than their own.

At the end of the season the CN Committee had their first virtual meeting. Derek Johnson agreed co-option for a further year as Coaching Officer and Roger Staples has been co-opted as our Development Officer. In December Dennis Scarr replaced Derek Knight as our constituency representative on the CA Council.

The total membership of our seven clubs remains at about 230 but with some club variations; notably at Bamburgh where they increased their membership by 10.!

and from club reports---

Alnmouth were able to start play in May and when restrictions eased were able to attract up to 27 players/day for friendly croquet. In July they invited Belsay Hall to play on two occasions. Some of last years members did not renew their subscriptions but 8 new members were recruited and at the end the season membership was 44.

Auckland.— The Chilton Town Council and the Trustees of the Miners Recreational Ground did not allow access until late in the season. Four members played regularly and with others occasionally on lawns that were not in good condition. Currently there are 13 playing members but it is known that two regular players will soon be leaving the area.

At **Bamburgh** croquet got underway via special arrangements which precluded access to the Pavilion. There was no club play and booking arrangements were via WhatsApp. Surprisingly, more players played than expected. Coaching took place on several occasions and by the season end membership had increased to 45. The very successful annual Club Calendar continues to both publicising croquet and contribute to the club funds.

English Heritage did not open their **Belsay Hall** site until late July and it was early August before croquet play could commence. Half the membership played via a double booking system (one for site access and the other to book courts) but without the traditional club afternoons. Lawn conditions continue to improve and regular grass cutting is now with a cylinder rather than a rotary mower. Membership is currently 33, excluding 3 honorary members.

Croquet Durham were not able to gain access to their ground until the end of July and then without the use of the clubhouse. Previous work on the lawns and the delayed start to play resulted in an improved playing surface. Club competitions were completed but no external games were played. Membership at 26 is the same as last year.

John-Paul Moberly had another successful year which included—

- Travelling to New Zealand for the GC World Team Championships as Captain of the England Team where they won the bronze medal.
- Winning the First Eight tournament
- Winning the Pendle GC Ascot qualifier.

At **Middlesbrough** membership is 28 and all are also CA members. Like many clubs no CA or CN competitions or matches were played but club play and some club competitions were possible when Albert Park eventually opened. A few members have played at other locations, one of whom was Julian Gibson who won the Corfu Tournament Handicap.

Concerns remain regarding the condition of 3 of the 4 lawns and the need for access to toilets and water.

At **Tyneside** the covid lockdown period prevented watering of lawns which resulted in their deterioration. However, a decision made later in the season to employ a contractor to do remedial work combined with closing the lawns over the winter should improve lawn conditions for next year.

There was a moderate amount of both AC and GC play throughout the latter part of the season and most club competitions were played. Membership remains at about 40.