



Ipswich Croquet Club



NEWSLETTER

Issue 27

March 2024

Members have a voice

This was particularly evident at our March AGM. So often, nodding off at annual meetings can prove hard to resist. That was not the case this year.

Members were in excellent voice and not shy to express their views. There was healthy debate culminating in a positive contribution on a variety of issues.

Members spoke and the Club listened

At the AGM members raised the following:

2024 subscriptions. The club has invested heavily in its new facility at Bucklesham Road and much of the money has come from its own savings. Members agreed overwhelming that to help safeguard the club's financial stability, subscriptions for 2024 should **not** remain the same but be increased by at least inflation.

A vote was taken and carried to increase Full Membership from £150 to £160, Second Club Membership to £80, Winter Membership to £55 and non-playing Social Membership to £20. Members also recognised the need to encourage juniors. Those who are under 21 years old in full time education will pay £10 per annum and those, **not** in full time education, will pay £35 per annum.

Proposed new membership categories. The Committee's proposal to offer discounts to Joint Members, Family Members, Distant members and Off Peak Members was put to a members' vote and rejected. It was felt that the need to maximise income outweighed the benefits of such discounted memberships.

The Club's name. Several members expressed the view that the name "Ipswich Croquet Club" was geographically too restrictive. The status of the club (Charity versus CASC) is under review and any change of name should wait until this has been resolved. Previous ICC constitutions, prior to incorporation, stated 'Ipswich and District Croquet Club' as the clubs full name. Several members would favour this option if and when considering a change of name.

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Tea and coffee etc. Members felt that the provision of beverages in the pavilion free of charge was a small but unnecessary club expense. A proposal to charge £1 per cup was carried. A register will be provided in the pavilion in which each member will have a page on which to record each cup he / she /or a guest consumes. Payment will be requested by the Treasurer on a quarterly basis. If you wish to bring your own drinks and thus avoid the charge, that is absolutely fine.

Club sessions. These sessions were originally introduced to make members new and old feel welcome, and for them to get to know and play with other members.

At the request of a good number of members attending the AGM, the club intends to reinstate the rules regarding changing partners and opponents at club sessions (Monday and Wednesday afternoons, Tuesday and Thursday evenings in the summer, and Saturday mornings.)

There are 3 simple rules.

1. *After each and every game players should leave the court and team up with different partners and /or opponents, and ensure that any waiting players are included.*
2. *If you are in a game of less than 4 players you should invite any waiting player to join in your game.*
3. *If you arrive at the club and spot a game in progress with less than 4 players, don't be shy ask if you may join in.*

Members of the Committee in attendance at club sessions will, if necessary, encourage players to follow these rules.

If you prefer to stay in the same group and not change partners/opponents that is absolutely fine. However if that is your preference please choose a day/time other than a club session to have your game. The club is open to members from dawn till dusk 7 days a week.

Association Croquet

Some members would like to try their hand at Association Croquet – something the club is keen to promote.

Martin Hart has kindly offered to start the ball rolling by setting up AC sessions on Thursday mornings from 10 AM, and also give tuition to newcomers if requested.

A notice will be posted in the pavilion for you to enter your name if interested in playing AC, and request tuition if you so wish.

Regrettably while we still have only 2 courts, GC players are advised to avoid playing on Thursday mornings for the time being.

Tournament Prizes. Again by overwhelming majority the members voted to stop giving prizes to the winner(s) of each tournament, but instead reintroduce Singles and Doubles trophies for the most wins at the end of the season. All the entry money will go to support the club.

Sunday Singles Tournaments. The Committee was asked if Sunday in-house Singles Tournaments could be reintroduced. There are a growing number of members who find Wednesday mornings difficult, and there are members who enjoy playing full day tournaments.

After initial enquiries we are reasonably confident that they will take place on the first Sunday of each month starting next month (April). A notice will be posted in the pavilion and on the website.

To make these events more interesting, consideration is being given to inviting a few players from neighbouring clubs to join us in these tournaments.

Also if you would like to participate but can only play a half day, we will try to set up partnerships where one plays in the morning and the other in the afternoon. Such partnerships will be treated as one player. Unfortunately their results, while counting on the day, cannot be taken into consideration for the end of season trophy.

The 2024/25 Officers and Committee Members.

- The following Officers were appointment:**
- Chair.** Brian Hunt. *(This appointment is for a maximum of 6 months while a new Acting Vice Chair – to be appointed by the committee- prepares to take over as Acting Chair until confirmation at the next AGM).*
- Treasurer.** Bernard Button. *(Continues as Treasurer as he enters the second of his three year term).*
- Club Secretary.** Martin Brown. *(Newly elected for 3 years).*

- The following were elected to the Committee:**
- Committee.** Simon Down. *(Simon will continue as Members Secretary).*
- Committee.** Richard Watts.

- The following have stepped down:**
- Ria Hunt.** After serving as Club Secretary for over 4 years we thank Ria for her hard work and commitment to the club. She remains a member of the club and has offered to help out with non-committee matters. We wish her all the very best.
- Val Thurtle.** Val has been an active member of the Committee for the past year, and played an important role developing club policies and setting up a secure filing system. Unfortunately other commitments prevented her from standing for re-election. Val remains a member of the club, and we wish her all the very best.

Croquet England Voting Membership

As a member of Ipswich Croquet Club you automatically qualify for membership of Croquet England (CE). You can opt not to join, but we strongly recommend that you do.

Membership of CE give you access to the Croquet England website which has pretty much everything you want to know about croquet, UK tournaments and competitions, and the croquet online shop. You will also receive Croquet England's online monthly newsletter and the Croquet Gazette.

CE members can attend and vote at CE general meetings (held on Zoom) but they need to register as a voting member to do so. This is a simple once off online process via <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=members/VotingMembership> (Highlight the https address, hold down Ctrl and left click).

Easter Monday Open Day

On Easter Monday (1st April) we will be holding the first of the new season's Open Days. In addition to the general public we hope all members that are able will attend with their friends and families.

The purpose of Open Days is to introduce croquet to the wider public and convert as many people as possible to ICC membership. Your support in this quest for new members will be much appreciated. If every current member were to produce just one new member we would exceed our annual target!

Gates will open at 10 AM and close at 4 PM. We have no idea how many people will turn up and at what time of day. Catering for food therefore is an extremely difficult task. However, it would be good if attending members provided snacks as they did on our Opening Day last summer. Cilla Steed has kindly volunteered to co-ordinate food and drink donations and will be in touch with you.

To add interest to the day we will hold an Easter Egg hunt, a series of competitions with nominal monetary prizes, and a raffle. To cover prizes and our costs we will charge a nominal entrance fee for the Egg hunt and competitions – we might even be able to put a little towards club funds. In addition we will be inviting people to become a "Friend of Ipswich Croquet Club" (*see below*).

Friends of Ipswich Croquet Club

This scheme will run throughout the summer and be featured at all Open Days, the Suffolk Show, Home Start Sports Day etc. We will also promote it in the CE Newsletter and Croquet Gazette to attract sponsors from the wider Croquet Community; and we will promote it locally to the general public wherever possible.

To become a Friend of Ipswich Croquet Club each person will sponsor one or more squares of lawn. Courts will be divided into 100 squares each costing £10. By way of extra incentive, on Finals Day at the end of the season all squares

will be put into a hat and the lucky winner drawn out will receive a £500 prize, transferred to the winner's bank.

The names of "Friends" will appear in the squares they sponsor and be published, with their permission, on our website, in the Newsletter and in the pavilion.

Future Events

1. The next Open Day will be held on Monday, 6th May – Early May Bank Holiday. This will follow a similar programme to that of Easter (*without the Egg Hunt*) and possibly improved by our Easter experience.
2. Saturday, 18th to Sunday, 26th May is National Croquet Week. Details will be published soon.
3. Wednesday, 29th & Thursday, 30th May is the Suffolk Show where we will have a stand.
4. Saturday, 15th June (Father's Day weekend) will be the 3rd Open Day.

Summer Evening Club Sessions

Summer evening club sessions are from 6 PM to 8 PM on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Sunset in Ipswich will be at 7.29 PM on 1st April, and by 19th April 8 PM. This means that full evening sessions can be enjoyed by the latter part of April.

These session present a great opportunity for working members and non-members to meet and enjoy croquet.

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We would like your feedback. If you have any comments about this or other newsletters or would like to contribute to the newsletter please contact the Club Secretary—contact details at the bottom of this page. Copy and photographs should be submitted by Friday, 5th April for inclusion in the April issue.