



Cheshire Association of Groundsmen

Chairman

Richard Cragg
Brook Cottage, 5 Mill Lane, Bollington
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Secretary

Dave Twiney
31 Clay Lane, Timperley
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Treasurer

CAG 2021 AGM 10/ Nov Warrington CC

Present: Dave Twiney, Paul Agar, Mark Samaru, Alex Kegg, Andy Horsfield, Ian Schora, Andy Pickles, Mike Cook

Apologies: Richard Cragg, Geoff Tomlinson, Matty Burns, Mike Boffey, Dave Ellwood, Bob Partridge, Jon Bardsley, Brendan Connolly

Chairman's Report :-

Richard was unable to attend but his emailed report (see attached) was read and summarised by DT

Secretary and Treasurer's Report

- we have £7743 in the bank. Our income comes from the two leagues. Clubs play a voluntary addition to the league fee to join the CAG. This was set at £20 which allowed us to run two level 1 courses provided by the IOG (typically a course costs around £1000 for 8 students.) We had problems booking with the IOG so switched to paying our Pitch Advisors to present the courses – this is a cheaper option, so we need to look at our income and see if the £20 fee can be justified.
- Dave and Richard are meeting with Gareth Moorhouse and Andy Wellsby to discuss training courses for young people.

Plans for the year

- a lot depends on the details of the Pitch Advisory Service . Mark Samaru described how it works for football. He and Alex Kegg will find out more next week and report back to the CAG.
- Andy Horsfield has plans for a machinery management day to be held in a workshop where care and maintenance of mowers can be demonstrated.
- Andy also hopes to arrange for a contractor to perform the Autumn renovation at Alty boys school (2 strips) as a demonstration.

AOB

- the perennial problem of pitchmarks was raised . Groundsmen are annoyed when a problem beyond their control (like bad weather) results in a low mark – should there be an option for umpires to not mark a pitch if it was clear that outside factors were involved in unsatisfactory performance? **Action DT to query this**

- Mark said the increased numbers of both senior and junior teams meant that pitches and groundsmen were under stress and that clubs were not reacting well to help alleviate the problem.

Action DT to discuss with CCB

- Mike Cook said there seemed to be a lot going on with different bodies involved - should the effort be coordinated? **Action DT to raise with CCB and 4Cs**

Next Meeting – CAG committee to discuss PAS next week

Chairman's Report:-

Good evening ,everyone, and thank you for supporting CAG's AGM this year. I apologise for my absence.

The Summer just gone probably provided the mix of weathers that we have come to know so well and with all the heavy showers no doubt you all have had to battle hard to provide the excellent cricket wickets you wish for each week.

Much kinder was the mild September weather just right for post-season cricket square renovation and successful new grass germination. So let us hope for season 2022, that a settled Springtime gives us the best opportunity to prepare our squares and outfielders in late March and early April.

Just a few words, if I may, on important CAG goings on over the past twelve months:

The CAG committee has had to put on hold an outline plan discussed in April with Patrick Hutchinson, the grounds co-ordinator of the UKFast Cheshire Cricket league to support a number of their clubs in the development of their squares . The reason for this delay is : coming up soon on the 16th of this month an important meeting of 'The English Cricket Board' and 'The Grounds Management Association' takes place with the country's cricket pitch advisers to set out a new policy governing the maintenance and improvement of grass cricket pitches across the whole of England.

Mark Samaru and Alex Kegg, two of our pitch advisers, will attend the meeting at Edgbaston and report back to us on its conclusions. Andy Welsby, our new regional cricket pitch adviser for The North and Midlands, will be working with us and The Cheshire Cricket Board on effectively implementing the findings.

CAG will inform you via our website of all the significant changes made and our reactions to them.

Before the end of this season just gone, an informative course was arranged by Dave Twiney at Warrington C.C. on the topic of 'end of season renovation'. 7 Cheshire groundsmen

attended and they agreed that having all three of our advisers, the host Paul Agar, Mark Samaru and Alex Kegg all giving their opinions, led to a real depth and range of knowledge being imparted . The meeting was a great success, with 'Campey Turf Care Systems' presenting some of their cricket ground machinery and giving variety to the day.

On a really serious matter, the biggest concern in the profession currently is the lack of young people coming into the career of groundsmanship. Nationally, two thirds of community workers are over sixty! There is now unsurprisingly a focus on how to attract and recruit young people into the sport; it 's not so bad a job , is it ? Lots of fresh air out in the open, plenty of variety in the activities, different machinery to enjoy, all in support of the game we love.

So understandably, The Cheshire Cricket Board' is keen to front a campaign to win over youngsters with thoughts of holding a dynamic, impactful groundsmanship course in the near future with a view to effectively engaging with the young attendees!

Lastly, our decision to award a trophy to the outstanding Cheshire groundsman of the year was postponed until 2022 when hopefully it could be presented at The CCCL annual dinner in public recognition of his achievement.

Thank you for all your hard work this season.

Please stay safe and healthy this Winter and may your groundsmanship be satisfying to you next year.

Richard Cragg, Chairman of 'The Cheshire Association of Groundsmen' : 8th. November , 2021.