



BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Held Thursday, 16th April 2020, via Go-to-Meeting

1. Attendance:

1.1. Directors: Megan Fardon (Chair), Jim Nicholls (Deputy Chair), Don Close (Treasurer), Jacky McDonald, Mary Marsland, Geoff Crook and Max Kewish

1.2. Officers: Jim Clement (Secretary), Rob Murray (Executive Officer)

2. Opening: The Chair opened the meeting at 17:10 AEST, acknowledging that the primary reason for the meeting was to update the Board and members on the Covid-19 pandemic, but that Strategic Plan Risk Identification and Management would also be addressed.

3. Minutes of Previous Meetings: It was agreed that the minutes of previous meetings, held 1st April 2020, 9th April 2020 (Risk Management) and of this meeting would be considered for adoption at the next full Board meeting, scheduled for 13th May 2020

4. Covid-19.

4.1. It was agreed that Croquet Australia would attempt to ascertain the impact of Covid-19 on member clubs. The Secretary shared a questionnaire that Croquet Victoria had sent to all clubs on this matter. Agreed that the questionnaire be sent to states, requesting collated replies by 6th May, for consideration at the 13th May Board meeting.

4.2. Max Kewish spoke to a paper (attached) from the informal, joint states publicity group, seeking approval to seek the services of a professional publicity consultant to advise on appropriate ways of publicising croquet when the current Covid-19 restrictions are lifted. The Chair advised that the funding approved at the March Board meeting was for that purpose.

4.3. After discussion, it was resolved that Croquet Australia invoice the states following the usual timetable, but that the invoices include a 50% rebate.

Action: Sec

5. Risks Associated with the Strategic Plan 2019-22.

The paper prepared by Geoff Crook, in consultation with Mary Marsland, was considered by the Board. This paper, attached, considered the risks under the Strategic Plan headings of Participation & Growth, Capacity & Capability, Brand & Image, and Governance & Management.

- It was agreed that the risks listed under Governance & Management had been considered at the previous (9th April 2020).
- It was agreed that the other identified risks be added to the Risk Management Matrix.
- There was general agreement that a Board member be assigned to oversee each strategic priority

Specific risks identified included:

- **Participation & Growth** Funding for the business aspects of Croquet Australia, which the EO advised was in train however funding for clubs from the federal government is highly unlikely.
- **Brand & Image** Mary Marsland advised that SACA has a “chat room” program which enables enrolled members to “chat” with any other enrolled member. She is

to follow up to ascertain if this could be adopted by Croquet Australia.

Action: MM

Jim Nicholls spoke of Greg Bury's vision of an online Croquet Academy and offered to coordinate/liaise

Action:

JN

Jim Nicholls observed that many of the recommendations to control the identified risks referred to obtaining funding and proposed the formation of a Grants Committee, to include members from the wider croquet community. It was agreed that the EO should be an *ex-officio* member of such a committee.

6. Next Meetings: 23rd April 2020 at 17:00 AEST – Covid-19 Update
13th May 2020 at 17:00 AEST

7. Close: The meeting closed at 19:00 AEST

Attachments: 1. Publicity Group Paper "Aftermath of the Coronavirus"
2. Paper: "Strategic Risks"

Aftermath of the Coronavirus.

Discussion paper for Croquet Australia, State Croquet Associations

“Social Distancing”

“Limit to two persons in public.”

“Complete lock down” in some areas.

ISSUES

Disaffiliation after isolation is a real risk – at individual and club level. United planning and investment in the future across Australia could help combat this.

Members’ experiences are likely to vary depending on what they were getting out of croquet beforehand.

Let’s distinguish between the sport-oriented members (who could be missing the competitive aspect and the thinking) and the social player who would be missing more the connection with other people.

A. Possible effects on the future of Croquet.

- 1 **loss of croquet members returning when restrictions are lifted.** If we don’t keep in touch with people, will they come back?

This may apply more to the social players (the majority?) than the competitive players.

- 2 loss of croquet as a “safe viable sporting opportunity” for people.

B. Possible effects on the health of our croquet members

1. Natural instincts or instinctive behaviour affected?

2. Feelings

- catching coronavirus in crowds of people.
- lack of trust of crowds (where virus can affect others)
- insecurity through loss of socialising opportunities
- mistrust of society (people doing the wrong thing)
- feeling of insecurity/unsafe
- missing their socialising (sharing their experience)
- effects on their personal value/worth which can affect their judgement
- will not want to return to a potentially unsafe environment. (some other sports for some time)

3. Mental Health

- effects on personal wellbeing from being locked up in your house for long period.
- can affect judgement and decision making.

The impact will be greater the longer lockdown goes on.

4. Health Benefits

- benefits from playing croquet could be forgotten by the members. (will need to be reinforced again)
- older members may find they have got used to activities at home

How do Croquet Clubs/State Associations /ACA deal with the issues above? Can Croquet Australia provide leadership and support to help get clubs engaged across the country? This is especially important to Croquet Tasmania which does not have club publicity officers.

ACTION – see also attached draft timeline

Issue **STAGE ONE: during the lockdown**

Immediate action required:

For competitive players:

- A 1 1. Create opportunities for the members to continue to be interested in croquet by preparing activities that can be used/played on the computers.
This will keep their interest going.
After six months absence it could take some effort from some of the members to start playing croquet again.
Develop means of participation to retain members.

Action. Get national / state coordinator croquet coaches or referees to prepare material. Quizzes, challenges, scenarios.
Who: Croquet Australia / State Associations.
Maybe on website **and** Facebook

For social players:

2. Members socialise with emails on the phone/computers regularly.
Club Presidents to encourage members to keep in touch in some other way, for instance via Facebook / fortnightly club "Skype" meeting.

Action Club management committees and members (prompted by State Association – we could ask them to share their initiatives for keeping in touch with members?)

STAGE TWO: preparing for after the lockdown

Immediate:

A2 1. Special media release promoting:

- the return of croquet
- B4 • the health benefits of croquet – perfect way to re-emerge into society. Outdoors, walking pace, sociable.
- addressing the perceived perception by the public of being for the "oldies."

Action. Joint State Publicity Group – with publicist?

A1, B3 2. Club support all their members and be conscious of the effect on their mental wellbeing after being locked up for a long period. Skyping members could help.

A1 3. Create special events for croquet that could last for 6-8 weeks (depending when we're released – would need to stop over Christmas when most people will have other priorities).

Action

(1) Publicity agency develops publicity material for national and local use

(2) State Associations promote local action, ask clubs what they are planning, share their ideas

(3) State Associations / clubs engage with other organisations who are also preparing for the return to normality

(4) Club committees of management plan local events.

How?

1. Publicity.

A2 Contract a publicity agency using the funds approved by the Croquet Australia Board.

Seek additional funds if required from the State Associations.

With agency, develop a marketing plan, to **invigorate the image** of croquet with outcomes and measures of success. A strong campaign is necessary.

Need to be ready to act when the time is right. We will only get one chance to get the results we need.

Campaign to include:

- A catch phrase/slogan or logo for the return - promoting the **"Return of Croquet."** (Hoop it up with croquet?)
- Material promoting croquet as a safe fun sport, the health benefits, played in the open air, non-contact body sport, is easy to learn/play, a friendly game and the social benefits to the community and wellbeing of the people.
- Material for national and local use to be ready for use when all the restrictions are lifted.

Remember that the Government is currently promoting 'exercise' as being OK and the only time that people are allowed out of their homes.

Resource material could be distributed to clubs for discussion – what activities will they be running? how can they make best use of the materials?

Action:

(1) Joint States publicity group to hire and brief agency

- (2) State Associations to keep in touch with clubs and share their ideas with other clubs and other states.

A2

1. Media release/advertising campaign.

Marketing plan to be implemented just prior to recommencement of croquet.

Teamwork is required here with the State Associations and all the croquet clubs pulling together.

2. Croquet Club level.

Hopefully clubs will use the promotion material provided by the publicist.

Clubs should welcome all the new people and especially all their members back. Make a fuss of them.

Possibilities:

- Clubs could advertise that at the celebrations for the return of croquet new people can play for three days for free.
- As an incentive to get all the members back playing croquet members will not pay green fees for the first three playing days.
- The first day could be like an “open day” with plenty of fun games played.

“Spring into something that’s easy to play, enjoying good health while playing croquet.”

**Max Kewish, Kate Patrick, Sarina Cevaal-Hewitt
for the Joint State Croquet Associations publicity group
Version 2, 15 April 2020**

DRAFT TIMELINE [needs to be flexible given that length of lockdown is unknown]

When	Joint States publicity group	Croquet Australia	State Associations	Clubs
Now / soon	Consider draft plan (this document)			
	Finalise publicity agency proposal	Consider publicity agency proposal	Consider contribution to funding Publicity proposal	
Now / within a month		Approach national/state coordinators re providing quizzes, links, resources via Facebook, website		Share links
	Organise appointment process for publicity agency		Contact clubs to find out how members are travelling, strategies clubs are using to connect with them. Share ideas (?via Facebook)	Provide State Associations with stories on how they're connecting with members. Share links to online resources with members.
Within 2 months	Undertake appointment process		Approach state sporting / community organisations re celebration of return to sport. Ask clubs if they would like to be part of a local celebration of return to sport.	Approach local sports assembly / local government / other local sports clubs to discuss potential for joint celebration. Start planning croquet club follow-up.
Within 3-6 months	Circulate information requests from publicity agency. Publicity agency to prepare campaign and resources for states, clubs	Publicise program as devised by publicity agency	Share proposals from clubs. Respond to publicity agency.	Firm up proposals for joint celebration. Advise what publicity resources would be useful for croquet club follow up.
On release from lockdown	Major publicity activity re celebrations, club activities		Ensure clubs have the resources they wanted	Celebration plus follow-up activities
Six weeks after release	Review progress to date. More activity if \$.	Consider report on activity to date		Give feedback on activities and interest



STRATEGIC RISKS

Author(s): Geoff Crook
Date Paper Written / Last Updated: 15 April 2020
Date of Meeting: 16 April 2020

Recommendation(s):

If not already done, then each strategic priority should be assigned a Board member to oversee the planned activities, manage associated risks and report progress and issues to the Board.

Set targets for the strategic plan so we can measure progress

Liaise with states to develop a high level Government lobbying plan to ensure Croquet clubs are sufficiently supported through the Covid-19 shutdown.

Focus our efforts on gaining recognition and funding status to enable access to ASC (and other) funded grants

Gather club/member data from the states to enable us to determine the potential impact of the covid 19 issue

Develop a communication plan for clubs to re-engage with members once Covid 19 restrictions lifted.

Purpose:

To initiate a Board discussion around the strategic risks faced by the ACA.

Background:

The Board held a meeting on Thursday 9th April 2020 to develop the ACA risk register. The Board identified and rated a number of operational risks but ran out of time to discuss more strategic risks. As a consequence, Geoff Crook had a meeting with Mary Marsland to discuss this issue further.

Discussion:

Set out below is a summary of the strategic priority areas, associated risk areas for discussion and some recommended actions.

Admittedly, I am not familiar with the organisation yet, or what activities are planned to meet these strategic objectives, but if not already done, then each priority should be assigned a Board member to oversee the planned activities, manage associated risks and report progress and issues to the Board.

We should also set some targets for the priority areas, so we can measure our performance against where we want to be.

Strategic Priority	Risk Areas	Recommendation
<p><i>Participation and Growth</i></p> <p>Increase numbers, diversify codes played, and age profile of players</p> <p>Innovative programs to attract new players</p> <p>Sponsor Tournaments and raise profile</p> <p>20% of top 100 world rankings Australian</p> <p>Formation of new clubs</p>	<p>1. Covid 19 will delay activities and if the response is insufficient, clubs will close and members be lost</p> <p>2. There is potential for some clubs to resist trying new programs</p> <p>3. Lack of skills/people to identify and implement new programs</p> <p>4. Insufficient funding</p> <p>5. Lost opportunity to plan / implement strategies</p>	<p>1. Liaise with states to develop a high level Government lobbying plan to ensure Croquet clubs sufficiently supported through the Covid-19 shutdown</p> <p>2. Focus on gaining additional funding</p> <p>3. Gather club/member data from the states to enable us to determine the potential impact of the covid 19 issue</p> <p>4. Develop a communication plan for clubs to re-engage with members once Covid 19 restrictions lifted</p>
<p><i>Capacity / Capability</i></p> <p>Develop pathways for players of all standards</p> <p>Develop and deliver programs for coaching and referee accreditation from entry level to high performance</p>	<p>1. Loss of access to training materials</p> <p>2. Lack of trained volunteers to deliver coaching and referee accreditation programs</p> <p>3. Lack of volunteers to undertake coaching and referee accreditation programs</p>	<p>5. Ensure sufficient funding applied to these programs to allow trainers to visit the states and train / accredit coaches and referees</p>
<p><i>Brand/Image</i></p> <p>Enhance and improve image of croquet through multi media including website, social media, and national publications</p> <p>Target opportunities for youth and young adult engagement</p>	<p>1. Lack of funding to undertake these activities</p> <p>2. Lack of skilled staff to complete these activities</p>	<p>5. Ensure sufficient funding is applied to these programs to ensure success</p> <p>6. Identify staff/volunteers for training where skill gaps exist</p>
<p><i>Governance / Management</i></p> <p>Ensure policies are current and relevant</p> <p>Provide templates for states and clubs to utilise</p> <p>Gain recognition and funding status to enable access to ASC funded grants</p> <p>Ensure governance standards are consistent with AIS Governance Principles</p>	<p>1. Lack of funding to undertake these activities</p> <p>2. Lack of skilled staff to complete these activities</p> <p>3. Lack of knowledge of funding opportunities</p>	<p>5. Ensure sufficient funding is applied to these programs to ensure success</p> <p>6. Identify staff/volunteers for training where skill gaps exist</p>