

MONASH CROQUET CLUB STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2022

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Introduction

This document is intended to develop and to communicate a consensus plan for the Monash Croquet Club as part of a process to help ensure our continued success.

Its anticipated audience comprises: the Club membership including club office bearers, major stakeholders (City of Monash, Victorian Croquet Association, Eastern Metropolitan Croquet Association), sponsors (Roger Davis Real Estate, Bendigo Bank, Le Pine) and other interested groups (other croquet clubs, other clubs based at Electra Reserve and local neighbours). Its purpose is to identify issues in need of particular attention, facilitate understanding, and enable effective planning and governance.

The time frame addressed here is the period 2017 to 2022. Progress should be formally evaluated each year at the Committee meeting prior to the AGM and the plan be amended progressively as necessary. Toward the end of the period a detailed process should be undertaken to develop a strategy for the next phase of the Club's operation.

Background

The Monash Croquet Club was established in 1999 under the auspices of the Monash City Council. It is affiliated with the Victorian Croquet Association (VCA).

Membership

In 2017 the Club has 64 members. Approximately 55 members regularly play Golf Croquet, a small number of members play Association Croquet and One Ball Croquet, and a few are not active or play rarely. Interest from new and potential members keeps the numbers steady. A maximum of 75 members has been set.

Issue: The current low level of member interest in Association Croquet.

Courts

The standard court is a level rectangle measuring 32m long and 25.6m wide, called A-size. We have two A-size courts, and two poorer quality B-size (half A-size) courts, which can be configured to a maximum of six B-sized courts. A-size courts must be used for competitive play; B-size courts are acceptable but not desirable for social play.

Croquet courts should be level to allow accurate play -our courts have a significant slope.

The courts (like the club room) are leased on a five-year plus two basis from Monash Council, who are responsible for maintenance and mowing. The Club is responsible for line marking and supplying court equipment. The Doberman and Dog Obedience Club share both the courts and the surrounding areas.

Major issue: The large slope of the courts makes them unacceptable for high standard competitive play.

Major issue: The courts are prone to localised water logging from uphill runoff in wet weather.

Issue: Croquet should be played on standard size courts. In order to accommodate the number of players we often have to play on half-courts.

Issue: Even using half-courts, the courts are at full capacity on busy days.

Issue: The courts are vulnerable to damage from misuse by non-croquet players

Clubrooms

The Electra Community Centre is a purpose built facility owned by the Monash City Council, and is co-tenanted with the Monash Bridge Club and the CERES Calisthenics Club.

We have a small dedicated clubroom within the Electra Community Centre complex. This room is used for small meetings and Committee business. We have access to a large common area, including kitchen and toilet facilities, which is suitable for functions and informal gatherings. In addition, we have a separate secure equipment store; a part of a stand-alone building, the majority of which is leased to the Doberman and Dog Obedience Club.

The Club is responsible for the tidiness and cleaning of the dedicated clubroom, the deck outside our room, and the equipment store. Regular cleaning of communal areas is contracted to an outside company and funded by a levy on the tenant clubs.

Issue: The club needs extra storage area for equipment near the courts.

Competition

The Club fields teams in VCA pennant/shield competitions in season, and hosts eleven internal or open tournaments annually.

Issue: The sloping courts mean that top quality players are not attracted to our tournaments.

Social Play

We offer social croquet regularly on four days of the week: Mondays and Saturdays, Golf Croquet on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays, One Ball on 1st and 3rd Saturdays. Thursdays are for either competitive play for our top players or shield in season

Issue: Occasional court overcrowding occurs on social play Tuesdays.

Issue: The need to increase times people still working can play e.g. Twilight and Saturday.

Coaching and Refereeing

The Club has two Golf Croquet coaches and two Association coaches. Golf Croquet coaching includes a six week intensive introduction for beginners, a short coaching session once a month for members, and coaching to more advanced groups on an *ad hoc* basis.

The Club has five Golf Croquet referees (including one tutor referee) and two Association referees.

Issue: Members need to be encouraged to do training to become qualified coaches and/or referees.

Future of the Monash Croquet Club

Mission

The Monash Croquet Club welcomes and values players of all ages and skill levels. It exists to provide a safe and enjoyable environment to enable members and visitors to play croquet, continuously improve their skills and interact socially.

Vision

The Monash Croquet Club aims to foster an interest in Croquet, to strengthen membership skills and to encourage enjoyment of the game.

We aim to:

- Sustain active membership at 65 rising to an agreed sustainable maximum of 75.
- Field at least one team in any VCA pennant/shield event, and other eligible competitions.
- Encourage members to enter tournaments.
- Organise and host internal and open tournaments
- Foster an interest in One Ball and Association Croquet and encourage more members to take it up.

Values

The Club is committed to the provision of safe social and competitive opportunities for all members. It aims to provide all members with fair competition and access to Club facilities.

We value active participation, fair play, and harmonious relationships.

Member obligations

Members are expected to:

- Play fairly.
- Extend their croquet skills and foster the skills of others.
- Foster harmony.
- Assist in setting up and taking down courts.
- Take part and assist in social functions.
- Where able, assist in running tournaments.
- Contribute their time and expertise equitably.
- Perform rostered duties.
- Pay membership fees promptly.

Programmes

The Club undertakes a number of regular and one-off programs to promote interest and increase proficiency in croquet in general and the Club in particular.

These include:

- “Come and try” days held biannually in conjunction with the VCA and occasionally under the auspices of Monash City Council programs.
- Coaching as detailed above
- Community outreach programs as required and as members are available to contribute.

Member base

The Clubs member base comprises individuals from the City of Monash and surrounding areas who have the time, inclination and physical and mental ability to take up and continue to play croquet.

Our principal target group for new members has been active senior members of the community including the newly retired, those who have enjoyed other sports that utilise ball skills in the past, and players from other clubs who may have moved into the area.

Issue: Broadening membership demographic.

Strategic Intentions

Courts

We will continue to engage with Council to bring our courts up to standard, and to increase the number of full-size courts. We will contribute some degree of self-funding and subcontracting court improvements. Lighting for night play is a longer-term goal.

Participation

We aim to encourage participation by offering well run competitive opportunities, social play and social functions to all members, and to strike a balance between social and competitive play that suits all members and skill levels.

Membership

We aim to sustain current membership numbers and allow for an increase in accordance with our ability to cater for them. If necessary we will identify a procedure to limit or wait list membership if interest exceeds capacity.

Business Management

We will develop individual plans and strategies to effectively manage our finances, our equipment assets, courts, safety and communication.

For example, the Club Treasurer will competently and accountably manage the Club funds, create and maintain sound financial records, and arrange an independent annual audit of records. Records will be maintained so as to be easily audited and readily understood when handed over to a new treasurer or committee, even at short notice. The secretary will fulfil duties as required by the Model Rules for an Incorporated Association 2012.

Issue: Compiling policy documents and records of decisions

Maintain Financial Viability

To sustain financial viability, the Club will determine subscription and visitor green fees at a realistic level in relation to fixed costs.

We aim to develop alternative funding sources, in particular identifying and developing sponsorship opportunities.

People Management

To encourage and retain participation in Club management we will recruit, train and recognise Club committee members and encourage their assistance by other member volunteers. We have developed a strategy to mentor those taking on responsible roles for the first time and to provide formal individual backup as necessary.

Facility Management

We will effectively manage, maintain and seek funding to upgrade Club facilities. In particular:

- Courts: consider options to level the existing courts; and to develop one or two additional A-size courts
- Equipment: using our annual stocktake of club equipment, we will develop a replacement or upgrade timetable.

Marketing/Promotion

We aim to create a positive awareness in the local community of the Club's activities through the local press, advertised "Come and try" activities, and our website.

We aim to encourage and inform our members via a regular newsletter (emailed where possible), other email information and the Club website.

Quality Education and Training

In addition to regular coaching, we aim to develop and provide a range of services to increase knowledge of the game and awareness of the Club. These include arrangement of relevant magazine subscriptions, a library of books and videos, the Club noticeboard and our website.

Relationship with VCA

We aim to maintain cordial relationships with VCA; contribute to its policies via our membership of EMCA; and support its policies and activities; and support new clubs.

15 February 2010, revised May 2013, revised February 2017

Clubs are welcome to use our Strategic Plan as a basis for their own, with appropriate acknowledgement.