



Wrest Park Silsoe Bedfordshire

September 2010

newsletter

Match results

Longman Cup v Dyffryn (played at Bath)

1 August **Won 4-3**

Tim Brewer (4) and Cliff Hayes (20) beat David Scott (5) and Peter Balchin (16) +1T

Geoff Strutt (9) beat Sue Mackay (10) +12

Ray Percy (12) lost to Sarah Melvin (7) -2T

Tim Brewer (4) beat David Scott +4T

Geoff Strutt (9) beat Sarah Melvin +8

Ray Percy (12) lost to Sue Mackay -2T

Cliff Hayes (20) lost to Peter Balchin -5T

Mary Rose v Nottingham (home)

19 August **Won 5-2**

Eric Audsley (1) lost to Peter Death (1/2) -11

John Bevington (1 1/2) lost to Gordon Hopewell (3) -8

Terry Mahoney (2) beat Rob Edlin-White (3) +16

Tim Brewer (4 1/2) beat Lawrence Whittaker (3) +13

Eric Audsley (1) and John Bevington (1 1/2) beat Peter Death (1/2) and Gordon Hopewell (3) +13

Terry Mahoney (2) beat Lawrence Whittaker (3) +5

Tim Brewer (4 1/2) beat Rob Edlin-White (3) +25

A midweek match, and the lawns were fully occupied as the golf croquet team were taking on Letchworth in the league. As Nottingham were not due to arrive until 11am there was time to use the switches to clean up the top two lawns, mown the previous day, and refresh the white lines, which were very faint after a heavy downpour two days earlier. Bryan Harral and George Collin were away, so Eric Audsley and John Bevington were joined by Terry Mahoney and Tim Brewer.

It was decided to play the four singles first and leave the doubles until the afternoon, on the assumption that the doubles might run on and hold up the remaining games. Although three of the games finished within a reasonable time John's game against Gordon dragged on somewhat, so there was at least one sitting for lunch with the match even at two games all.

Tim then romped home +25, and Eric got us off to a flying start in the doubles when he went to 3-back early on. Later John got in and went round, and Eric eventually finished after a couple of opportunities went begging. Terry had a tough game against Lawrence and came home +5 to give us a 5-2 win and a trip to Bowdon for the semi-final. This easy passage is explained by the fact that we had a bye in the first round and then had a walkover against Bury when they were unable to raise a team for any of the available dates.

Beds & Herts League v Letchworth (away)

25 August **Lost 2-4**

Bryan Harral (1) and Cliff Hayes (20) lost to Duncan Hector (-1) and Nick Mounfield (1.5) -9

John Bevington (1.5) and David Marsh (10) lost to Ian Mantle (2.5) and Keith Rhodes (8) -18

Bryan Harral beat Duncan Hector +24

John Bevington beat Nick Mounfield +7

David Marsh lost to Ian Mantle -13

Cliff Hayes lost to Keith Rhodes -13

We needed to win or draw to retain our league title, whereas Letchworth needed to win to wrest it from us, so it was perhaps no surprise to find that they had brought out some heavy artillery in Duncan and Nick, who quickly found their range in the doubles. After Bryan had got round to penult he was peeled through the last two hoops and pegged out by Duncan, and Nick then went round on what was mostly a two-ball break to win with six of our bisques still standing. John and David at least used their half-bisque but it wasn't enough.

There was something of a recovery after lunch, when the rain arrived and became steadily heavier as the afternoon went on. Bryan won quickly and John got the better of Nick after being pegged out, but Ian and Keith's solid play gave Letchworth the win they needed, the Hector Shield as league champions and a place in the EACF leagues playoff to be held at Wrest Park on 25 September.



Bryan presents the Hector Shield to (l-r) Ian, Keith, Duncan and Nick

EACF Beds & Herts League player records

	Doubles			Singles		
	P	W	L	P	W	L
Bryan Harral	5	2	3	5	4	1
David Marsh	4	2	2	4	2	2
Ray Percy	3	2	1	3	3	0
David Morris	2	2	0	2	2	0
Elaine Newman	2	0	2	2	0	2
George Collin	1	1	0	1	0	1
Tim Brewer	1	1	0	1	1	0
Cliff Hayes	1	0	1	1	0	1
John Bevington	1	0	1	1	1	0

The Western Area of the EACF golf croquet league was won by Stony Stratford, who had the same number of wins (4) as Leighton-Linslade A but won the match between them. Wrest Park finished seventh and bottom with two wins, having lost their last match narrowly 9-10 to, inevitably, Letchworth.

Longman Cup v Ashby (away)

4 September

Won 4-3

Tim Brewer (4½) and Cliff Hayes (20) beat Richard Sanville (9) and Derek Buxton (11) +11T

Geoff Strutt (8) beat Arthur Rowe (4½) +11

David Morris (20) lost to Mick Haytack (8) -3T

Tim Brewer (4½) lost to Arthur Rowe (4½) -18

Geoff Strutt (8) lost to Mick Haytack (8) -2

David Morris (20) beat Richard Sanville (9) +5T

Cliff Hayes (20) beat Derek Buxton (11) +10T

Report by Cliff Hayes

The games actually started and finished in that order so you can see it was a nail-biting match. Tim played superbly in the morning, gallantly assisted by Cliff. Geoff does what he does regularly, beating a good player handsomely. David started slowly and, although he picked up well, eventually ran out of bisques.

Tim's afternoon opponent was on fire and Tim never really got a look in. Geoff had a chance to win but missed an important roquet and it was left to the high bisquers to hold their nerve and ease us home, David almost completing and Cliff restricting his opponent to 6 points. The Ashby crowd were very hospitable, even to the extent of letting us play in the afternoon on the lawns we had become familiar with in the morning.

Mary Rose v Bowdon (away)

5 September

Lost 2-4

George Collin (½) and Eric Audsley (1) lost to Richard Smith (1) and Mark Lloyd (1) -6

Terry Mahoney (1½) beat Mike Sandler (1) +12

John Bevington (1½) lost to David Cotton (3) -4

George Collin v Mark Lloyd *unfinished*

Eric Audsley lost to Richard Smith -21

Terry Mahoney (1½) lost to David Cotton (3) -12

John Bevington (1½) beat Mike Sandler (1) +22

Bowdon was busy: there was a league match going on when we arrived and our match was on the upper tier of lawns, which are flat and fast but with some unevenness around the boundaries. Mike elected to go round and give contact, which gave Terry the chance to do the same, peg him out and go on to win. With his game evenly poised John had a potential finish in prospect after running 4-back off partner (for the peg) with David's balls near corner 2. A split put partner to rover, but the other ball swung over towards the north boundary and stopped close enough to require a second opinion. A referee arrived with two mallets and aligned the edges on the less than crisply defined boundary either side of the ball. He then lowered himself to the ground to look along the line. Unable to decide, he called for Brian Storey ("he's a championship referee"), who repeated the process with evident discomfort, as it was rumoured that he had just polished off the remains of the lunchtime trifle. The spectacle prompts the suggestion that the word *crush* be adopted henceforth as a collective noun for a group of referees. The ball was finally pronounced off, David finished, and we went in to our own lunch 2-1 down.

The first two afternoon singles to finish were divided, so when Terry lost to David (rather good for a 3, we both thought) it was all over and George's game was eventually abandoned. It had already become farcical: Mark, laying up just outside corner 1, intended to leave a rush to hoop 6 but left the balls the wrong way round. He then missed the three-foot roquet, leaving the rush he should have had in the first place.

Advanced tournament 7/8 August

Most of the fifteen entrants who assembled on Saturday, on what turned out to be yet another warm and sunny weekend, were regular visitors, but we also welcomed back John Meads and Jonathan Wolfe after an absence of many years. John spent his first game against John Bevington trying to bully the hoops into submission, but they stood firm in their ground and for the most part rejected his advances.

Tom Anderson had offered to act as Fisherman's Gate monitor to ensure everyone got in safely, and had the bye for the first round. He ended up being ready for a second game before others had finished their first, being disposed of in short order by Graham Gale +22TP. Graham managed nine games during the weekend, winning five and a handicap reduction.



Jonathan Hills in play on Sunday morning

The winner was Jonathan Hills (-1½), who won seven of his eight games, his only loss being one of three games he played against Graham. He completed two triples, against Graham and Philip Windred (who also managed eight games, winning half of them). Nigel Polhill did the only other triple against Ian Mantle, who had four wins from six games, including a narrow +3 win against manager Rod Ashwell, and won the prize for the best performance in the higher handicap group.

Closest to Jonathan was Nick Mounfield, who lost his first game against Nigel but then proceeded to win the next five. His handicap went down from 2½ to 1½ and is bound to fall further.

Our thanks to Peter, Jaqueline, Judith, Hilary and Geoff for keeping us fed and watered. Players in July had suggested we stock some better beer, so we bought in some London Pride and Greene King IPA. All of this went; the Boddingtons remains on the shelf. Another example of the North - South divide?

Handicap tournament 11/12 Sept

Should anyone ask Geoff Strutt what he would like for Christmas one item near the top of the list might be a laptop with a screen big enough to display the program he was hoping to use to manage the tournament on the Egyptian format. As it was he had to use the old-fashioned methods of pencil, paper and eraser. Every detail was recorded, so the correction of any error required multiple amendments, and it was perhaps a wise decision that he elected not to play as well.

There were only 12 entrants, half being Wrest Park members, and it was the first time for a very long time that Eric Audsley was playing in a tournament which he was not also managing. We also saw the welcome return of Brian Hallam after many years, together with sons Omeid and Sanaa. Omeid was the overall winner.



Omeid receiving his prize from Geoff. Note the board leaning against the table – this held player cards to show who was on which lawn and who was waiting for a game.

The weather was great yet again, and it proved a most enjoyable weekend. Not having to double-bank helped. Our thanks to Tim Brewer, Richard Keighley and Ray Percy for helping with the catering.

Of course there were times when things didn't quite go according to plan, and Tim was on hand to capture one such occasion. It would appear that blue should have

run the hoop to finish the far side of black, so that blue could then have rushed black to hoop 5, where there was also a potential rover peel in prospect . . .



It's that man again – Tom Anderson's blue ends up short.

More detailed results will follow in due course.

Golf croquet Inter Club final

18 Sept

This was the third year that Ashby have played Surbiton in the final at Wrest Park, and it proved third time lucky as they won 4-3. Details are on the CA website.



The winning Ashby team of (l-r) Rachel Rowe, Will Gee, Mike O'Brian and Tim King, flanked by team manager Ray Mounfield and Christine Mounfield holding Sasha.

Craft Fair 28-30 August

Many thanks to everyone who helped with this annual event. The weather was less than kind and Sunday was a complete washout. Takings amounted to £92 (Sat £34, Sun £3, Mon £55). One visitor on Saturday paid his money and proceeded to go out and practise four-ball breaks; it turned out he used to play at Bristol and may be entering our September tournament.

EH news

Members are asked to treat the handle on the Fisherman's gate with care and not to try and force it if it sticks. Also please do not take short cuts between the piles of hardcore and the newly seeded area.

The Hopewell hoop



This is an example of a new hoop design whose development and manufacture was funded by Gordon Hopewell from the Nottingham club. When the team came for the Mary Rose match he brought one along to show us. The hoop is cast iron, and the uprights and crown are $\frac{3}{4}$ " in diameter, which is the upper limit ($\frac{5}{8}$ " \pm $\frac{1}{8}$ "). The carrots are also more substantial - we had planned a field trial but were unable to make holes deep enough to accommodate them. The hoops cost £295 per set, so perhaps it's as well that the opportunity to be tempted was denied us.

The MacRobertson Shield

As you probably know, Great Britain won for the seventh time in a row after beating the USA, surviving a collapse to beat New Zealand by the narrowest possible margin in the second round of matches and going on to complete a clean sweep by beating Australia.

If you didn't know you would not have found out through the national media as they failed to mention it. It is hard to tell at this point whether it was because they chose not to make use of material provided to them by the CA or because the CA failed to provide them with the material in the first place. Conspiracy or cock-up? Time will tell. Given that the event won't be back for 14 years or so, to say it represents a missed opportunity is something of an understatement.

Annual Dinner

As announced previously, this will be at the South Beds Golf Club on Friday 26 November at 7 for 7.30pm.

John Bevington

23 September 2010