

newsletter

WREST PARK WIN THE LONGMAN CUP



Tim Brewer holding the cup, with l-r David Marsh, Cliff Hayes and David Morris. In the background, CA President Quiller Barrett. Photo by John Wheeler.

Longman Cup v Bury (played at Surbiton) 2 October Semi-final - won 5-2

Tim Brewer (4½) and Cliff Hayes (20) beat Matt Holmes (3½) and Graham Saunders (10) +4T

Geoff Strutt (8) lost to Malcolm Hardman (14) -17

David Marsh (9) beat Tony Philips (4) +20

Tim Brewer (4½) beat Matt Holmes (3½) +7

Geoff Strutt (8) beat Tony Philips (4) +23

David Marsh (9) beat Graham Saunders (10) +7

Cliff Hayes (20) lost to Malcolm Hardman (14) -1T

Longman Cup v Guildford & Godalming (played at Surbiton) 3 October Final - won 6-1

Tim Brewer (4½) and Cliff Hayes (20) beat Mark Godfrey (4) and Audrey Porter (18) +1T

David Marsh (9) beat Andrew Fewster (12) +3T

David Morris (20) beat Arthur Lindley (9) +2T

Tim Brewer (4½) lost to Mark Godfrey (4) -14

David Marsh (9) beat Arthur Lindley (9) +9

David Morris (20) beat Andrew Fewster (12) +13T

Cliff Hayes (20) beat Audrey Porter (18) +3T

In what was an outstanding team performance, played for the most part in thoroughly miserable conditions, Wrest Park won the Longman Cup for the fourth time to add to the wins in 1964, 1966 and 1971.

The fact that the event necessarily takes place very late in the season means gambling with the weather, and waterproofs were the order of the day. Bury were something of an unknown quantity as no details of their results had been posted on the CA website, but Tim and Cliff got the all-important doubles win, which, with a good win by David, put us 2-1 up at lunch. Nerves were apparent, but Geoff steadied the ship with a solid win before Tim and David saw us home.



Tim Brewer



Cliff Hayes



Geoff Strutt



David Marsh

The players arrived for the final to find the lawns soaked after 44mm of overnight rain. There were many patches of standing water which made the early play somewhat farcical, but the Surbiton squeegee was brought into play and enough was removed to make the lawns at least playable, although conditions deteriorated later when the rain returned, accompanied by a strong wind. Not surprisingly all the morning matches went to time.

Tim and Cliff's win was especially noteworthy as they managed to turn round a small deficit just before time was called – this after an earlier period in the game when nothing much happened for nearly half an hour. The tactics provoked trenchant comments from John Wheeler and Tom Anderson in a shelter on the far side of the lawn, who needed pints of beer to steady their nerves as the tension mounted and the match seemed to be slipping away. Both Davids held on for narrow wins and the team went in to a well-deserved hot meal with a 3-0 lead.

Only one win was now required and David Marsh duly supplied it when he beat Arthur, with David Morris and Cliff following up to give us a comprehensive 6-1 scoreline. Congratulations to the team, and a special word of thanks to team organiser Ray Percy, who got us through the all-important first round against Edgbaston with his two singles wins.

The 1964 Longman Cup team



The Longman Cup team from 1964. l-r Joe Clark (7), Tom Marchant (9), Vic Rees (6) and Anto Davies (7).

Joe and Tom are no longer with us, but Vic and Anto are honorary members. All their names and handicaps are hand engraved on the cup itself. Why this was done rather than getting a new plinth and band is a mystery, as the available space was soon used up and a new plinth had to be fitted. Nowadays the name of the

winning club is engraved by machine. The handicaps cannot be translated into current equivalents as all handicaps were raised at various times before the automatic handicapping system was adopted in 1991.

William Longman and the Cup

The Longman Cup was originally presented by William Longman in 1928 for the encouragement of match play between clubs. It was not awarded that year as the competition was unfinished, the first winner being Edgbaston in 1929.

William Longman (1882-1967) was a member of his family's publishing firm which in 1864 had printed John Jaques' code of laws, a copy of which was included in all their croquet sets. His uncle, Sir Hubert Longman, Bt., was CA Chairman from 1914-1920 and a Vice President from 1932-1940. William served as Chairman from 1924-1926 and was a vice president from 1948 until his death. As a player he was a model of consistency and played in the Champion's (later President's) Cup 21 times between 1914 and 1957.

He was also prominent in the CA Council's drive to reform the laws and regulations in the inter-war years. Many innovations were tried and later abandoned, but this period saw the introduction of the either-ball game (1920), the single centre peg setting (1922), the start from either baulk line (1924), the reduction in hoop width from 4" to 3¾" (1920), painting the top of the rover hoop red (1924), and the introduction of lifts in advanced play and peeling restrictions in handicap doubles (both 1928).

EACF leagues playoff 25 Sept



Separate tables: Letchworth (nearest camera, clockwise from left): Keith Rhodes, Nick Mounfield, Ian Mantle, Duncan Hector, and Hunstanton: Jeff Race, Terrey Sparks, Ken Wheeler, Mary Coombs

We had heard that Hunstanton might not be able to raise a team, but in the event it turned out to be Colchester North who were the non-runners, with "players committed elsewhere". On a cold day Letchworth proved the stronger, winning 6-1, although the result does not reflect the closeness of some of the games, which included more than one pegged-out ending.

Spreading the word

In the knowledge that plans for the new Visitor Centre at Wrest Park were going forward as a result of the Heritage Lottery Fund grant, we enquired as to the possibilities of the club being able to put up a small

display, as the Centre's planned opening will coincide with our 50th anniversary next year. Our case was put to EH's property presentation team, but I'm sorry to say that it was not accepted. A suggested alternative was a link to the club website on the EH website; this has to go before their web team and web board and we will let you know what happens. Our thanks to Lisa Owens, Wrest Park's audience development manager, who has been pursuing these initiatives on our behalf.

Website archive

Once a site has been running for a while the question arises as to what to do with old material. The current plan is to archive the previous year's news and diary pages and all old tournament and match reports.

Given that we have plenty of space available on the server I am bound to ask if there is anything else we might include, such as old newsletters and photos, historic documents and letters, internal and external competition records, etc.

If anyone has any views on this, do let me know.

The club's 50th anniversary

Next season marks the club's fiftieth anniversary. We are including a little discreet advertising in next year's Fixtures Book to try and attract entries from those who have supported our tournaments in the past, and it may be that we can offer a bit extra when it comes to catering, perhaps negotiating with EH for a barbecue at the July tournament.

But what about something suitable for club members themselves? If you have any suggestions (and are prepared to do assist with their implementation) please pass them on to Tim Brewer for consideration at the next committee meeting.

Club competition winners

Steel Cup (Advanced)	John Bevington Runner-up: Rod Ashwell
Archer Cup (Handicap)	Geoff Strutt Runner-up: David Marsh
Ashwell Cup (All England h'cap)	David Marsh Runner-up: Eric Audsley
Thomas Philip Earl de Grey Cup (B level)	<i>unfinished</i>
14 point advanced	Rod Ashwell Runner-up: Tim Brewer
De Grey Plate (14 pt h'cap)	<i>unfinished</i>
Golf croquet	Rod Ashwell Runner-up: Elaine Newman

Two competitions are still unfinished. The cup of Earl Grey is a best of five series between Geoff Strutt and Tim Brewer, with Geoff currently 2-1 up.

The three main competitions will all have names appearing on the trophies for the first time, which hasn't happened since 2003.

Annual Dinner

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

Golf croquet players are seriously underrepresented at the moment. It's always a convivial evening and there are still places available, so if you would like to come do send the form off if you haven't done so already. Playing or non-playing partners are of course welcome.

Mirror, mirror in the water

When visiting with a neighbour and her daughter on Sunday 10 October (a gloriously sunny day), we were near the Long Water and I was asked if there were any fish in it. One of them must have been listening.



I had no idea what it was, but Dave Smith has since told me it's a mirror carp, and I daresay someone from the Fishing Club can probably tell me its name.

Winter play

We have yet to confirm this, but I am hoping that it will be possible for members to play over the winter on the same basis as last year, i.e. ring Reception in advance to let them know when you intend coming, then book in and out as usual.

John Bevington

22 October 2010