



newsletter

Match results

Friendly vs Oxford University (home) 7 May

| Wrest Park | H'cap | Oxford | H'cap | WP score |
|----------------|-------|--------------|-------|----------|
| George Collin | 1½ | Jack Bertram | 16 | -26 |
| Paul Sharrock | 8 | Oli Homer | 16 | |
| Rod Ashwell | 1½ | Ian Plummer | -1 | -lots |
| John Bevington | 2½ | Nic Farhi | 18 | |
| George Collin | 1½ | Ian Plummer | -1 | +17 |
| Rod Ashwell | 1½ | Jack Bertram | 16 | -18 |
| John Bevington | 2½ | Oli Homer | 16 | -24 |
| Paul Sharrock | 8 | Nic Farhi | 18 | +8 |
| John Bevington | 2½ | Nic Farhi | 15 | -22 |
| Rod Ashwell | 1½ | Ian Plummer | -1 | -8 |
| George Collin | 1½ | Jack Bertram | 13 | -5 |

One could have described our visitors as over-educated, over-bisqued, and over here. Even when the undergraduates' handicaps were cut back they were still winning comfortably. We even saw Ian Plummer using two bisques in his doubles game. In the circumstances Paul's win was something of a triumph, and George and Rod had good games against Ian, playing advanced. The quantities of bisques meant that the outplayers had time to chat, and it turns out that Nic Farhi is related to the fashion designer Nicole Farhi (a cousin on his father's side). When asked if Oxford had any female players we were told that they "had got two women in the club". Make of this what you will. The serious stuff was taking place on the other lawns, where Steve Comish and Robin Brown were conducting the CA's Gold coaching course for aspiring triple peelers, Steve finishing the course by demonstrating what turned into a delayed triple.

After play we settled to Marianne's sandwiches and chocolate cake, where we were joined (as predicted) by Nigel Gray. George and John settled to the washing up while the rest went off for a game of Pirates. Nature notes: a pair of kestrels were spotted in the big oak near lawn 3, and will, with any luck, be setting up home there. Any resident mice should start practising their rushes now.

Beds & Herts League vs Letchworth (home) 13 May Lost 2-3

A hot and sunny day to start this year's campaign, and a thoroughly enjoyable match, even if we did lose. Jeremy and George played resolutely to overcome the bisque deficit, but Peter and John crept home after having frustrated David and Robert who took an hour and a half to take croquet. In the singles Jeremy and George continued to impress, but Peter managed a good win against Robert (one of last year's All England finalists). John made a complete hash of the opening, leaving a Duffer tice the wrong side of the hoop, which David hit and left in the middle. John then shot from B baulk (!),

missed, and the ball bounced off the first hoop instead of going into the corner. David went to penult and held on to his lead. Maybe it was the wine at lunchtime.

| Wrest Park | H'cap | Letchworth | H'cap | WP score |
|----------------|-------|------------------|-------|----------|
| John Bevington | 2½ | David Tutt | 3½ | +2T |
| Peter Newman | 18D17 | Robert Staddon | 10 | |
| Peter Smith | 11 | Jeremy Scott | 7 | -11 |
| Tim Brewer | 10 | George Woolhouse | 8 | |
| John Bevington | 2½ | David Tutt | 3½ | -15 |
| Tim Brewer | 10 | Jeremy Scott | 7 | -14 |
| Peter Smith | 11 | George Woolhouse | 8 | -18 |
| Peter Newman | 18 | Robert Staddon | 10 | +3T |

Leighton Buzzard CC Open Day

Irene Davis' efforts were rewarded with fine weather for the opening of the new club at Pages Park on May 6. The lawn (an old tennis court) has been marked out as two small lawns, and after the Mayor ran the first hoop (with a photographer from the local paper lying down for the obligatory through-the-hoop shot) Irene and others demonstrated golf croquet on one lawn while John Bevington and Peter Newman demonstrated Association croquet on the other. There was a good attendance, a number of members have been signed up, and we wish the club every success.



Irene Davis (left), Linda Hindson, Leighton Buzzard Council Leisure and Community manager (2nd from right) with the Mayor and press photographer at the Open day.

Handicap Tournament 19-21 May

The three block winners were John Hall (Letchworth), John Wheeler (Wrest Park) and Martin Leach (Ipswich). The outcome of John Hall's block was determined by John Bevington, who lost to John Hall on Sunday morning in a game that went to time and was played for the most part in the rain. John B then had to play John H's rival Rob Edlin-White. Rob got off to a bad start when five of his bisques went down almost immediately. John then picked up a break with the aid of a fortuitous split from near hoop 3 which got behind a ball near

corner 4 leaving a rush to hoop 4. Rob never recovered, and finished with 6/8 against John Hall's 6/7 and John B's 5/8. John H picked up a silver award.

John Wheeler showed all his skills in winning his block with 6/7, often sitting and watching while opponents used their bisques to go nearly all the way, and then hitting in or capitalising on a mistake to establish all-round breaks. John's nearest challenger was David Jenkinson who finished with 6/8. In the other block Martin Leach swept nearly all before him with 6/7, followed by Bryan Judson and Ian Mantle with four wins each.

Moments to treasure: Derek Powell making a brave rover to level the score after time, and then watching as Bob Brashaw hit in from corner 3 to corner 4. Jean Ackermann pegging out one ball when for rover and peg against George Collin, in the same position. George ("I know the rules") called for a referee and Jean's ball was replaced by the peg. George then played his peg ball and roqueted Jean's peg ball. . . you guessed it. Tom Anderson won the shortest missed roquet prize with a distance of two inches.

Lest we forget - many thanks to everyone who helped with the catering and to those who prepared the lawns. Lawn maintenance never stops - as soon as everyone had left it was out with the mower and on with the summer fertiliser (which, as expected, was watered in by more rain the following day).

Inter Counties - Beds avoid drop

This year's Inter Counties Championship was held at Southwick and Eastbourne on May 27-30. The Bedfordshire team from Wrest Park, last year's Division 2 champions, put up a creditable performance and managed to finish just above the relegation zone to ensure another appearance in the first division next year. Essex were the overall winners and the Channel Islands won Division 2. Lancashire were promoted ahead of Berkshire under the "who beat who" rule.

Each match consists of three doubles games played to advanced rules with three-hour time limits. The order of the doubles pairings is given by the combined handicap of each pair, which can lead to some interesting combinations. As an example, John Bevington and John Wheeler, playing as our third pair, found that their opponents from Essex were Geoff Cuttle and the world's leading player, Robert Fulford. It is hard to imagine such a situation arising in any other sport, and it is the sort of thing that makes the Counties such an entertaining event.

The results board at close of play on Tuesday.

| Division 1 | | | Division 2 | | |
|-------------|----------|-----------|------------|---------|-------|
| | Matches | Games | | Matches | Games |
| Essex | 9 | 24 | Ch Islands | 9 | 22 |
| Gloucs | 8 | 18 | N'umberlnd | 8 | 18 |
| Avon | 7 | 19 | Lancs | 7 | 17 |
| Dorset | 7 | 18 | Berks | 7 | 21 |
| Cheshire | 6 | 19 | Kent | 5 | 13 |
| Surrey | 5 | 16 | Sussex | 4 | 14 |
| Suffolk | 5 | 16 | Devon | 4 | 13 |
| Beds | 3 | 10 | Warwicks | 3 | 13 |
| Northants | 2 | 9 | Glamorgan | 3 | 13 |
| Middx | 2 | 7 | Notts | 3 | 12 |
| Yorks | 1 | 9 | Herts | 2 | 9 |

The first two days were at Eastbourne, where the lawns are harder and faster than at Wrest Park. You need to find your touch early. Tom Anderson and George Collin, playing as second pair, managed our only win against Dorset, and we were then steamrollered by Essex and Cheshire, not winning a game. The next day, again at Eastbourne, saw a change in fortune. Jon Watson and Howard Bottomley, our first pair, and John Bevington and John Wheeler, playing at third pair, both won to give us the match against Yorkshire. The two Johns and Tom & George then won to give us a win over Middlesex, and we finished by taking a game off Surrey. A little more luck and we would have won the match - Howard was tripled out and Jon made up a lot of ground to level the score before Graham Gale made the vital point.



The Southwick lawns on the Monday afternoon.

Monday saw us at Southwick with matches against Suffolk and Gloucester, in both of which Jon and Howard won our only games, and the next day our first and second pair won against Northampton to give us our third match. In the last match against Avon we went down 0-3. At this level one missed shot is all it takes to lose, as your opponent is quite likely to do a triple peel and finish the game, as happened in two cases, and Howard and Jon's performance in winning four games against the top pairs deserves the highest praise.



Essex captain Michael Heap receives the Inter Counties trophy from Alan Oldham. Next to Alan are manager Chris Williams, and, in shorts, Bill Arliss

Childline Appeal

This year the CA requested that clubs hold an open day with the dual intention of recruiting new members and raising money for Childline. As we were unable to do anything on the intended day due to other events taking place it was decided to arrange something on the Bank Holiday Monday during the annual Garden Fair, as we would at least be guaranteed a large potential audience.

Peter and Elaine Newman, Peter Smith, Tim Brewer, Eric Audsley, Mary Russell and John Martin all came down to help, and although only four lawns were available because of the wet weather a number of people took out mallets and balls and had a go at £1 a time. We don't yet know how much we managed to raise but will doubtless find out once Childline have emptied the boxes. Many thanks to everyone who gave up their time to this worthy cause.

Club leaflets

These are now in stock - look in the box in the left-hand cupboard of the left-hand bench. If you hear of any people who may be interested in the club please pick up a leaflet and send it to them - I usually keep a few at home for this purpose. If you have a spare moment, there are still 500 that need folding up.

Internal club competitions

The draws are enclosed with this newsletter, and we apologise for the delay in sending them out. Don't worry too much about the deadlines - you won't be scratched - but please try and make a start as soon as you can. Remember that you are not restricted to Thursday evenings - you could arrange a game for the weekend, bring the family down for a picnic and make a day of it, or you can play at any time during the week. The first named player should organise the match, and the regulations are on the board in the pavilion. Because of the number of entries the two halves of the main handicap event are on separate sheets. Good luck!

Clothing suppliers

Have you had trouble trying to find white waterproofs, trousers or other kit? We have a catalogue from the Cotswold Bowls Centre (0118 9332916) which lists a vast range of items and will be available in the pavilion. There is also a shop in Luton which is worth trying - JS Sports in Nevill Road, 01582 494401.

What did he say?

We have been given a copy of this cartoon by Roy Wallis (whose work often appears in the Gazette) which refers back to last year's triumph. Readers are invited to suggest just what either or both of the open-mouthed players are saying.



Forthcoming matches

- Sat 10 Longman Cup vs Northampton (away)
Sun 18 B&H League vs St Albans (home)
Sat 24 B&H League vs Colworth (home)

Players are needed for the two league matches - please ring George Collin if you are available. We would like to see all club members play in at least one league match if at all possible - don't feel that as a low handicapper such events are beneath you. Why not volunteer for one of these home matches and save yourself being press-ganged into an away match later in the season?

Other events in June

Although there are no club tournaments this month there is still plenty going on, as you can see:

- Wed 14 Irene Davis' Golf Croquet group
Mon 19 Rod Ashwell's school staff visit
Wed 21 Paul Sharrock's Inst of M&C visit
Sat 24 Silsoe School Fayre
Mon 26 Tina Holt (National Childbirth Society)
Thur 29 Unversity of Surrey visit (afternoon)

We need volunteers for the Silsoe School event (call me - exactly what we are going to do for this hasn't been decided yet). And if anyone can help looking after Tina and about eight other women for an introductory croquet evening, please let me know.

Looking further ahead, we have been asked to host an evening for the Amptill 41 Club on Tuesday 8 August (contact is Gary Bedford 01525 404139).

Please note that our charge for any group evenings is £3 per head.

Groundsmanship corner

- Anyone doubting the effects of fertiliser (well-known to those who man the mower) should look at the strip of lawn by the south boundaries of lawns 1 and 2, which were left untreated when the fertiliser was applied after the May tournament and are distinctly yellower than the deep green elsewhere.
- Spot treatment for moss was done on June 2.
- We have ordered one set of primary and two sets of secondary Barlow GT balls, which means we will now have two sets of both colours. Use them for club games if you wish, but be warned that they tend to be closer to the official diameter than most of our Jaques balls, which means that if the hoops have been set to the Jaques balls your hoop approaches and hoop running will have to be more controlled if you want your break to proceed.

Barlow balls tend to play a little 'heavier' than Jaques on a slow lawn and need more urging in croquet strokes, especially in hot weather.

The Barlows are easily distinguishable from Jaques, being solid plastic and consistent in colour. We may customise some of the existing ball racks for them to make identification easier.

Golf croquet players contact list

The following is a list of our golf croquet members. You may or may not know each other; we hope that publishing all the names will give you a chance to arrange games with other players who you may not have already met.

- Hilda Allen**, 5 Poplar Close, Silsoe
Sheila Beale, 6 The Orchard, Eaton Bray LU6 2DD
Gillian Bennett, 25 Taylors Ride Leighton Buzzard LU7 7JN (01525 373889)
Vera Blunt, Lobbs Cottage, Old Silsoe Rd., Clophill
Margaret Brown, 40 Miles Ave., Leighton Buzzard LU7 8LG (01525 373860)
Mary Coleman, 71 Newbury Lane, Silsoe
Dorothy Craggs, Willow Cottage, Bedford Ave., Silsoe MK45 4ER
Marion Farmer, Orchard End, Dyers Rd., Eaton Bray, LU6 2BQ
Pam Godwin, North End, High St., Silsoe
Margaret Gummery, 1 Oak Tree Rd., Amptill MK45 2UH
Joyce Lett, 6 Poplar Close, Silsoe
Barbara Marriage, Great Green Farm, The Rye, Eaton Bray LU6 2BQ (01525 221597)
Joan Miller, 59a High St., Silsoe
Linda Potton, Melita, Tring Rd., Eaton Bray LU6 2JU (01582 662156)
Eileen & Keith Palmer, 8 Jaques Lane, Clophill MK45 4BS
George Savage - no address available
Susan Savage - no address available
Betty Shaw, Lilley - no address available
Helen Wilkinson, 18 The Orchard, Eaton Bray LU6 2DD (01525 221137)

Newsletter distribution list

Every so often, in the interests of rationalising the distribution list and saving postage, I ask if people on the list who are no longer interested in the club and do not wish to receive the newsletter could let me know. This never has any effect, but the offer still holds.

I am going to use another approach. If your name appears in the following list could you please let me know if you wish to continue receiving the newsletter. Just call 01908 614493 and leave a message. If I do **not** hear from you I will assume you no longer want to receive it. I hope you don't feel that this is too draconian a measure.

Peter Auken, Kevin Boon, Tess Crosbie, Dominic Goble, Janet Graham, Malcolm Hunt, Judy Kitchiner, Tim Palmer, John Pollard, Judy Priestley and Bob Styles.

John Bevington

5 June 2000