



# newsletter

## What's happening and when

Date	Event	Courts in use
Aug 17-18	Advanced tournament	All
Aug 24-26	Wrest Park Craft Fair	All (2-5pm)
Aug 31-Sep 1	CA All England Handicap area final	1-4
Sep 1	B&H League vs Watford (away)	
Sep 6-8	CA Selector's Weekend	1-4
Sep 13-15	Handicap tournament	All
TBA	Mary Rose vs Nottingham	

The next month will be the busiest of the year with events taking place every weekend. The highlights are the All England area final and the CA Selectors weekend, an invitational event for players on the fringes of selection for top events such as the President's Cup. Howard Bottomley will be playing in the Selectors and we will have someone in the All England area final, so do come down and watch.

We will be looking for helpers at the Craft Fair, either to man the stall or to offer assistance to members of the public who are having a go. Please support this event, as it can be a useful money-spinner, and the more people we have the easier it is. If you can help please call John Bevington or Tom Anderson.

## Advanced Tournament 5-7 July

Report by Howard Bottomley

No reports from the Anderson Shelter (corner 4) as our seasoned campaigner Tom declined the offer of the tournament report for the slowest first round loser. The weather tested the full contents of rucksacks, sports bags – and travelling cases, with shorts changed to wet suits and back by the hour as the rain and the heat tested our endurance over the week-end. Tips for playing against visitors and local dignitaries observed during the tournament are:

**Abdul Ahmad** - always leave him on the non-playing side of any hoop – he must be a golf croquet expert at heart, attempting anything in range (for example hoop 4 from the stick - successfully). **Gordon Hopewell** – always play on a lawn adjacent to noisy players or the playground of visiting families. Such distractions add colourfully to his repertoire of apt poems. **George Woolhouse** – always finish your turn after making 1-back or 4 back by leaving a ball in baulk. This will even up the match as George will always do this for you. Also, beware of George's telescope as this may attract all sorts of wildlife both as observer and observed.

**George Collin** – never play on a lawn with weeds, as the weed knife will be used to lift them but not always remove them. **Nick Harris** – always ensure your mallet is in good order and don't mention trundling with the side of his mallet – otherwise the blue book will be waived in the direction of the ROT. **Beware of young chaps from Oxford** – Stuart Romeril and Mark Gooding

play at such speed that us older chaps can easily lose track, and the manager run out of games.

The triple peelers included Howard Bottomley with a brace and Gordon Hopewell, with many attempted by the in-form Ben Ashwell.

The winners presented by the new, flexible, Swissy-Egyptian manager Eric Audsley were Ben Ashwell for his smash & grab Lamb point total, Nick Harris for the main event and Stuart Romeril for Block B, on a golden peg-out shoot-out long after Roger Ivill had packed his bags and relaxed. Thanks to Elaine Newman, for organising the non-playing activities that sustained us, and also our visitors for making the event so enjoyable.



Babes in the wood - two of the three kestrel chicks recently raised in the oak near the lawns.

## Match results

### Mary Rose vs Bowdon 14 July

Home  
Won 5-2

Wrest Park	Bowdon	WP score
George Collin (1½)	Philip Tidswell (1)	-5
John Wheeler (1½)	Ken Cooper (1½)	
John Bevington (2½)	Brian Medley (2½)	+16
Ben Ashwell (2½)	Andrew Keeble (3)	+2
George Collin (1½)	Philip Tidswell (1)	-8
John Wheeler (1½)	Ken Cooper (1½)	+6T
John Bevington (2½)	Andrew Keeble (3)	+22
Ben Ashwell (2½)	Brian Medley (2½)	+20

Wrest Park took their revenge in a re-run of last year's final, as Bowdon struggled to come to terms with the lawns (fast for us, slow for them) and a reacquaintance with Jaques balls. Ben's narrow win took us into lunch 2-1 up, and the food and drink produced its usual after-effects as John Bevington then played a wrong ball in a corner cannon, with Andrew doing the same thing on the very next turn. Two more wins sealed the match, and John Wheeler finished off with a time-limited win to allow Bowdon to leave for the long journey home.

## Inter Club vs Nottingham 21 July

Home  
Lost 3-4

Wrest Park	Nottingham	WP score
Jon Watson (-1)	James Death (-1)	-7
Rod Ashwell (0)	Richard White (-1)	
George Collin (1½)	Peter Death (0)	-18
Ben Ashwell (2½)	Jed Allen (½)	+3
Jon Watson (-1)	James Death (-1)	-12
Rod Ashwell (0)	Richard White (-1)	-4
George Collin (1½)	Jed Allen (½)	+11
Ben Ashwell (2½)	Peter Death (0)	+6

So near and yet... The match got off to a slow start and the doubles was pegged down to allow lunch to be taken at a reasonable time. Our three wins in the afternoon singles meant that the doubles had to be played out, and we came off second-best.

## Longman Cup vs St Albans 17 July

Home  
Lost 3-4

Wrest Park	St Albans	WP score
Peter Newman (12)	Terry Mahoney (5)	-7T
John Martin (20)	David Kitson (12)	
Bryan Harral (5)	Mike Gardner (9)	+9
Ben Marchant (18)	Chris Frost (10)	-20
Bryan Harral (5)	Terry Mahoney (5)	+12
Peter Newman (12)	Mike Gardner (9)	+7
Ben Marchant (18)	David Kitson (12)	-11
John Martin (20)	Chris Frost (10)	-9

## B&H League vs Letchworth 10 August

Home  
Won 4-2

Wrest Park	Letchworth	WP score
George Collin (1½)	Duncan Hector (-½)	-18
John Martin (24D20)	Sue Griffiths (20)	
Bryan Harral (5)	John Hall (11)	+2T
Peter Newman (12)	Tudor Hopkins (12)	
George Collin (1½)	Duncan Hector (-½)	-10
Bryan Harral (5)	John Hall (11)	+2
Peter Newman (12)	Tudor Hopkins (12)	+3T
John Martin (24)	Sue Griffiths (20)	+6T

Good wins for John and Peter in a victory over our local rivals. Interesting too to see the presence of a handicap of scratch or below in a league match, something that we might try ourselves one day.

## EACF Champions Tournament 21 July

This was a new tournament organised and managed by the East Anglian Federation President Terry Sparks, who invited clubs in the Federation to put up their best players to compete against each other in three events: Advanced, B level and Handicap. 21 players took part, Wrest Park being represented by Rod and Ben Ashwell (winner of the B level) and Ben Marchant. The event was a great success, and Terry is already planning next year's event, including the possibility of a pre-tournament eliminator to give more manageable numbers for the finals.

## Wrest Park Pro-Am 4 August



*The Pro-Am tea interval, with the photographer in shadow*

John Wheeler's long wished-for Pro-Am event took place on a sunny day only marred by a sudden shower halfway through lunch. Undeterred, the players swiftly carried the laden tables back into the pavilion with the efficiency of a well-drilled removals team and settled to their cheese (and more wine). The format was 14 point handicap doubles games of 1½ hours each, played to the whistle. Partners changed for each game, and if the game finished on time the Am's points decided it. The Pros were barred from any peeling.

The Pros: John Wheeler, John Bevington, Rod Ashwell, Ben Ashwell, Tom Anderson, Peter Newman

The Ams: Bob Barker, Mary Russell, John Martin, Gordon Sampson, Elaine Newman

And so to the winners: for the Pros Ben won all his games, as did Elaine for the Ams. I neglected to get some trophies, but they will be forthcoming soon. Many thanks to everyone who took part and/or provided items for lunch, and a special thank-you to Gordon Sampson, who provided the wine and struggled through the last match with a painful hip, knowing that every passing minute was increasing the risk of making him late for a family dinner.

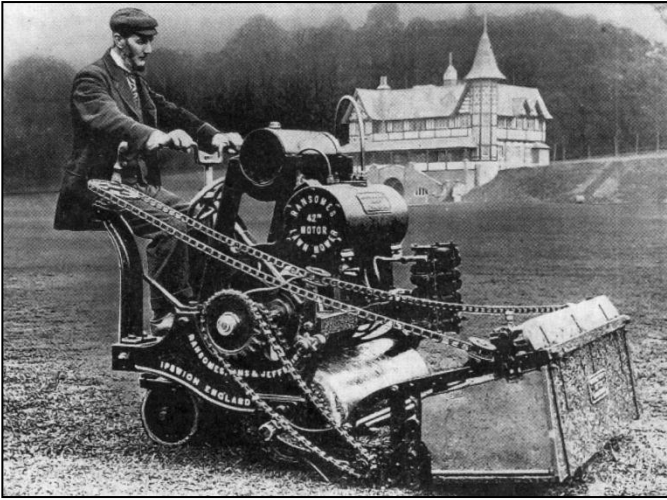
## Golf croquet competition

The block games are nearly complete, and you have up to and including Monday 19 August to finish any outstanding games. We will then put the top two players from each block into a knock-out to decide the overall winner - keep an eye on the notice board for details. As this is the first competition we would welcome views on the format, so if you have any comments please give them to Rod Ashwell.

## High bisque competition

Peter Newman has asked me to remind those of you taking part in this that there are still plenty of games that could be played, so call each other and issue the challenge while the sun still shines.

## Back on the chain gang



As the Atco is now long in the tooth, as well as being short in the blade, the committee are considering the purchase of a second-hand machine for the rougher work in the close season. Bearing in mind the historic nature of the park we have managed to unearth this "Heritage" model which, together with its operator, is felt to be more in keeping with our surroundings.

## Lights! Camera! Trees! Action!

Wrest Park was recently invaded by a production company filming an advertisement for a new stores loyalty card. One of their first moves was to partially surround the pavilion with greenery (some might think this a distinct improvement).



*It's a jungle out there - the pavilion camouflaged for filming*

They set up the centrepiece by the group of statues near the sundial - a rather tacky cornucopia of crockery, champagne and other goodies. The cameras rolled, people walked to and fro (including someone on an old bicycle - not one of ours - who rode interminably back and forth), and in the background extras played a farcical imitation of croquet on lawns 1 and 2. The real irony was that one of the filming days was a Thursday, and so club members were playing the real thing in the far background, Howard Bottomley completing a triple peel on lawn 4. How much of this will appear in the final cut is anyone's guess.

We don't know when, or indeed if, the results will appear on your TV screens, but if it does keep your eyes peeled and you may spot some familiar figures.



*Points mean prizes - the centrepiece topped with cups and saucers*

The fee the production company paid for the location, is likely to have been substantial, so I will take this opportunity to point out that the CA rates for lawn and ball hire are £20 per lawn per day, and as we are soon going to be faced with a substantial bill for renewing the felt on the pavilion roof any contributions would be more than welcome. The question of whether the CA should attempt to fine the production company for bringing the image of the game into disrepute is another thing altogether!

## Don't forget your key!

There have been a couple of occasions recently when group members have come down to play without a key and have had to get hold of one from one of our Institute members. This can be inconvenient, and is in any case somewhat risky as there is no guarantee that someone with a key will be available. If the keyholder cannot come, please make arrangements to borrow the key before you start out. I would appreciate it if those group members who get the newsletter pass the message on to others.

**John Bevington**

**12 August 2002**

*P.S. The mower depicted is in fact a Ransomes "New Automaton", pictured in front of Bournville House in 1904. One of these models is on display at the British Lawnmower Museum in Southport. More information at [www.lawnmowerworld.co.uk](http://www.lawnmowerworld.co.uk)*