



newsletter

Match results

Beds & Herts League v Letchworth (away) 4 May Won 4-2

Wrest Park	Letchworth	WP score
Bryan Harral (1)	George Woolhouse (2½)	+14
Cliff Hayes (20)	Colin Davies (11)	
Ray Percy (20)	Ian Mantle (4)	+1T
David Morris (20)	Robert Staddon (10)	
Bryan Harral (1)	George Woolhouse (2½)	-7
Cliff Hayes (20)	Ian Mantle (4)	+2T
Ray Percy (20)	Robert Staddon (10)	-1T
David Morris (20)	Colin Davies (11)	+5

The team pulled off another fine win, including several close finishes. It's not a game for the faint-hearted!

Mary Rose v Bowdon (home) 11 May Lost 1-5

Wrest Park	Bowdon	WP score
Bryan Harral (1)	David Walters (1)	+2
John Bevington (1)	Alan Mayne (2)	
Tom Anderson (2½)	Mike Sandler (3)	-11
Eric Audsley (3)	Mark Lloyd (3½)	-9
Bryan Harral (1)	Alan Mayne (2)	-14
John Bevington (1)	David Walters (1)	-12
Tom Anderson (2½)	Mark Lloyd (3½)	<i>unfinished</i>
Eric Audsley (3)	Mike Sandler (3)	-7

A blazing hot day for a change, but even though the four lawns had been cut the day before the thick growth made them relatively slow, as was the early play in the doubles. David got to 4-back, followed by John, and then Bryan had a good turn to take his ball to the peg. Alan then got in and attempted to peg Bryan out on a split shot from a few inches away but missed it, allowing Bryan to return the favour, this time successfully, and John eventually managed to finish at about 2.30. The others had already finished their lunch and started their next games. We were 2-1 down at this stage. Eric had had a slim chance in his singles when Mark's extravagant attempt at a pegout missed with the forward ball, but Mark hit in again not long afterwards.

Pegging out the opponent was a feature of the day, but things didn't always go as planned. In the afternoon singles Eric had pegged out Mike Sandler but then missed a relatively short shot and Mike hit in to take a three ball break round to win. Bryan found that lunch had rejuvenated Alan who finished quickly to win the game and the match. After John lost to David it was agreed that Tom's game be abandoned, and we waved goodbye before mowing lawns 5 and 6, on which some other members had been playing earlier.

EACF Golf League v Stony Stratford (home) 8 May Lost 8-10

Wrest Park	Stony Stratford	WP score
Linda Potton (10)	Rex Hales (9)	W 5-3
Vera Pearson (10)	Dawn Clark (10)	
Ann Lee (10)	Pam Hughes (10)	L 3-4
Maureen Watts (11)	Alfred Sawbridge (10)	
Linda Potton (10)	Rex Hales (9)	L 2-5
	Dawn Clark (10)	W 7-4
	Pam Hughes (10)	W 5-3
	Alfred Sawbridge (10)	W 7-3
Vera Pearson (10)	Rex Hales (9)	L 6-7
	Dawn Clark (10)	W 7-3
	Pam Hughes (10)	W 7-4
	Alfred Sawbridge (10)	L 4-7
Ann Lee (10)	Rex Hales (9)	L 2-7
	Dawn Clark (10)	L 4-7
	Pam Hughes (10)	W 4-3
	Alfred Sawbridge (10)	L 6-7
Maureen Watts (11)	Rex Hales (9)	L 1-7
	Dawn Clark (10)	L 4-6
	Pam Hughes (10)	W 4-3
	Alfred Sawbridge (10)	L 6-7

Report and photo by Ronnie Richardson

Our first match of the season took place at home against Stony Stratford on Thursday 8th May on a lovely sunny day. We managed to get the gas to work so we were OK for tea and coffee. A lot of games were closely fought and did not reflect the final scores.

Everyone took advantage of the good weather by staying for some friendly games after the match was over. Thanks go to Judi Priestley for organising the match and supplying cakes for afternoon tea and Ronnie for trying to keep the score card up to date. She promises to do better next time!



L-R: Judi Priestley, Alfred Sawbridge, Pam Hughes, Vera Pearson, Linda Potton, Maureen Watts, Ann Lee, Dawn Clark, Rex Hale.

Longman Cup v Roehampton (away)

7 June

Lost 3-4

Wrest Park	Roehampton	WP score
Ray Pearcy (16)	Peter Siddall (6)	-1T
David Morris (18)	Jean Oades (11)	
Tim Brewer (6)	Brian Rees (5)	+6
Elaine Newman (14)	Tony Salem (10)	-20
Tim Brewer (6)	Peter Siddall (6)	+12
Elaine Newman (14)	Brian Rees (5)	-1T
Ray Pearcy (16)	Jean Oades (11)	+14
David Morris (18)	Tony Salem (10)	-6

Report by Tim Brewer

Definitely a nail-biting finish as it was golden hoop time after Elaine drew level with Brian as time was called. Very fast lawns but the balls did go exactly where you hit them. You just had to remember to not hit them as hard as we do at Wrest Park! There was an excellent roast dinner in the restaurant at lunchtime for those who wanted one. Thank you to Jane for excellent navigation particularly just after Kew Bridge on the way back!

Handicap tournament

May 16-18

The tournament was won by Wrest Park's Geoff Strutt (8) who finished on eight wins from ten games, just ahead of Mike Clifton (11) from Northampton who had an identical tally but had lost to Geoff. Mike could have been the overall winner had he beaten Mike Hills (9, also from Northampton) in his last game, but his reluctance to use his two bisques when it mattered led to his losing by 7.

There were 17 players with handicaps ranging from 0 (Nick Evans and Nigel Polhill) to 20 (Ray Pearcy). Ray, back to competitive play at last, won three games on Friday with 8, 5 and 1 bisques standing and was summarily cut to 16. He still managed two more wins from his remaining five games. Manager Eric Audsley used a flexible format which allowed plenty of play for those who wanted it and Nigel, Ian Parkinson and Ken Pickett also managed ten games over the three days. George Collin (2½) won the prize for the best performance by a low handicap with five wins from eight games. He was also involved in the most close finishes and won the award for most weeds removed during a game. Eric himself managed 3/8, one behind the vocal Elaine Newman, who had a creditable +26 against old rival George Woolhouse.

Many thanks go to all those who helped with the catering, especially Margaret, whose personal Marshall Plan provided some tasty additions to the menu.

Get Back into Sport Morning

Redborne School – May 17

This has to have been the biggest flop since Dick Fosbury took up the high jump. John Bevington arrived on Friday afternoon to give the lawn a final trim with a manual 12" cylinder mower only to find the grass still uncut, but he was able to borrow a rotary mower and managed to get the grass down to a playable level.

The next morning Tim and Richard Brewer arrived with two laptops, one to provide a continuous slide show and the other a Powerpoint croquet demonstration. We had leaflets, membership forms, instruction books, you name it. Cliff and Richard were on the lawn with a supply of balls and mallets, all ready for the 10am start.



Cliff Hayes and Richard Keighley with their only customers.

Although 3500 flyers had been distributed a mere handful of visitors turned up, and when the rain began just before the scheduled finish at noon we packed up and left. It was all rather a waste of time, but we have at least established contact with the school, which may lead to something more positive in the future.

Inter Counties – May 24-27



On parade – the Southwick company of Dawson balls awaits the start of the Counties.

Spreading the talent across the pairings got off to a bad start on Saturday with losses to Wiltshire and Warwickshire, so for the last match against Gloucester we reverted to a more traditional arrangement, and Jon Watson and Ben Ashwell duly did the business against Paul Smith and Dave Kibble +24 on the tricky heights of lawn 10, but it wasn't enough as Howard Bottomley and Tom Anderson lost heavily and John Bevington and Bryan Herral went down narrowly on time.

A bye on Sunday morning gave plenty of time for Breakfast at Tiffany's (a café where we got a full English from a fetching Pole. Audrey, who looked on approvingly from the wall, was the only one allowed to smoke). John B had two attempts at trying to photograph the lawns from a passing train and was frustrated by tinted windows that wouldn't open and the attentions of a ticket inspector at the vital moment.



The view from the 10.03 travelling from Shoreham to Southwick.

The previous day's disappointments were forgotten, and we notched up wins against Suffolk and Northumberland (who finished 1st and 3rd), the only loss being Jon and Ben's game against Suffolk's power duo of Steve Comish and Mark Avery.

Monday saw flooded lawns and an anxious manager, who got things started with 14 point games (lifts at 3 and 4). We then graduated to two hour limits for full games and it was back to normal for the last session. John B and Bryan might have done better in their 14 pointer against the Channel Islands had they not elected to leave a one-ball game and then miss a wiring lift.



John Wheeler and John Solomon in conversation.

We then suffered the ignominy of losing to both Kent and Hertfordshire. John and Bryan's game in the latter match was notable for the good play of their opponents Duncan Hector and George Woolhouse, but more so for the entertainment value of watching George trying to play his turn while caught in the crossfire of James Death's sextuple attempt which sadly came to grief with four peels done. With two wins from eight matches the wooden spoon was a distinct possibility.

And so to Tuesday and a 7.15 start for Compton and the delights of the Sunshine Café, which set us up for a 3-0 win against Devon, the first and third pair conceding a mere five points between them, and a final win against Hampshire, in which Jon and Ben crowned an excellent display as top pair with their sixth successive win, this time +26 with a TP by Ben. The old firm of Wheeler and Anderson made a reappearance but lost on time, so it

was as well that John and Bryan managed to sneak home after James Tuttiett's triple attempt failed.



Yes, it's Tales from Topographic Oceans*. Monday morning's flood reveals hoop 5's natural defence.

The Division 2 table shows how tight it turned out to be. With a little luck we might have sneaked two more wins and been promoted, but perhaps it's better this way. After all, there's that match against Yorkshire to look forward to next year...

*For those familiar with 1970s progressive rock bands.

1 st pair	P	W	L	TPs for
Watson/Bevington	2	0	2	
Watson/ Ashwell	8	7	1	Ashwell (v Hants)
2 nd pair				
Ashwell/Harral	2	1	1	
Bottomley/Anderson	1	0	1	
Bottomley/Collin	6	3	3	
Harral/Bevington	1	1	0	
3 rd pair				
Bottomley/Collin	2	0	2	
Harral/Bevington	6	3	3	
Wheeler/Bevington	1	0	1	
Wheeler/Anderson	1	0	1	

Division 1			Division 2				
	P	W	Games		P	W	Games
Somerset	10	9	21	Suffolk (P)	10	7	20
Cheshire	10	8	21	Herts (P)	10	7	18
Notts	10	8	19	N'berland (P)	10	6	16
Surrey	10	6	19	Hampshire	10	5	17
Essex	10	6	16	Gloucs	10	5	16
Lancs	10	5	16	Wiltshire	10	5	15
Glamorgan	10	4	15	Devon	10	5	11
Dorset	10	4	10	Bedfordshire	10	4	15
Sussex (R)	10	3	13	Channel I	10	4	14
Middx (R)	10	2	10	Warwicks	10	4	13
Yorkshire (R)	10	0	5	Kent	10	3	10

The Anderson Shield – May 24/25

This event (an EACF version of the Inter Counties) was held at Newport and won by Hertfordshire. The Bedfordshire team, who finished fifth out of six, consisted of Geoff Strutt, Tim Brewer, Quiller Barrett and Jon Palin. For full results and a report see the EACF website at www.angliacroquet.co.uk.

Diary of events

June 20	Kempston Rotary (John Martin) pm
June 22	Golf croquet singles tournament (6)
July 4-6	Advanced tournament
July 16	Dunstable CC (Ronnie Richardson) 10-4 (6)
July 20	Golf croquet doubles tournament (6)
July 23	Irene Davis's group 6pm onwards (6)
Aug 2-3	Advanced tournament (6)
Aug 11	Dunstable U3A (Ronnie Richardson) 10-4 (6)
Aug 18	Golf league v Letchworth 10-3 (4)
Aug 23-25	Wrest Park Craft Fair
Sept 3	Hertford U3A (David Morris) 10-5 (4)
Sept 13-14	Handicap tournament (6)
Sept 21	EACF Champions Day (6)
Oct 4-5	CA Club Finals weekend (6)

- Anyone organising home matches (B&H league, golf croquet league, Longman Cup etc.), group visits or any other events must first let me know the proposed dates. I will then get clearance from EH (if the date is a Monday, Wednesday or Friday), check that it doesn't clash with anything else, confirm the date and put it on the calendar in the pavilion.
- For group visits it would be helpful to know approximate start/finish times and the number of lawns required (shown in brackets above).

The Grand Old Duke



Henry, 12th Earl of Kent, created Duke of Kent in 1710. Died 1740.

We owe Henry a great deal, as he was responsible for the development of much of the landscape of the park. His portrait by Godfrey Kneller hangs in the staircase hall in the mansion. This photo was taken at the impressive family mausoleum in Flitton church, which is open at weekends and contains a wealth of pious marble. If you do visit (see the EH website for details - you have to collect the keys) you are advised to shut the church door behind you, otherwise you may find yourself acting as custodian and guide to anyone else who happens to wander in.

Knowing that EH read this, I would like to suggest they produce an illustrated guide to the mausoleum, including the family tree. This would attract visitors and might help fund future upkeep and restoration.

More is less – a technical note

Those of you who notice such things will remember that the last newsletter, sent out as a PDF file, weighed in at a hefty 1.5 megabytes. This was unexpected as the Word version was a mere 716 kilobytes. I am indebted

to Simon Hathrell, who runs the EACF website, for getting to the bottom of this mystery. It appeared that the cause was the images of bark. As he explained *“It turns out that when they are printed - from any application, not just MS Word - the images appear to be expanded to a Postscript data stream that is sent to the PDF printer driver, and the PDF printer driver then re-compresses them. The snag is that the version of the CutePDF printer driver that I had been using appears to use a lossless 'deflate' compression algorithm which, although good for most things, happens to do particularly badly when faced with the kind of detail in those pictures of tree bark (because at the detailed level of a few pixels at a time there is very little repetition)”*.

On Simon's advice I updated to a more recent version of CutePDF and used the JPEG compression option. As a result this newsletter's original 711KB Word file has slimmed down to a willowy 281KB PDF file. This is good news for those of you without broadband, but it is something of a two-edged sword, as in theory one can now write a lot more and still end up with a relatively small file. An appropriate moment, therefore, to remind you that contributions are always welcome on almost any subject.

John Bevington

12 June 2008