



newsletter

Match results

Beds & Herts League v St Aldreth (home)

11 April **Won 5-1**

Wrest Park	St Aldreth	WP score
Bryan Harral (1)	Terry Mahoney (3½)	+1T
David Morris (20)	Bob Brashaw (12)	
George Collin (1½)	Chris van Essen (3½)	+7
Ray Percy (14)	Robert Skeen (9)	
Bryan Harral (1)	Chris van Essen (3½)	+2T
George Collin (1½)	Terry Mahoney (3½)	-7
Ray Percy (14)	Robert Skeen (9)	+1T
David Morris (20)	Bob Brashaw (12)	+11

Report by Bryan Harral

Wrest Park started off the 2010 season where we left off last year, with a win over a combined team from St Albans and Meldreth – now christened St Aldreth! Although convincing in terms of games won, several were a bit too close for comfort. Yours truly will not be forgetting the pegging-out laws which saved us from certain defeat in the doubles. Near time Terry pegged out his ball having peeled me through rover putting them one ahead – or so he thought. Reference to the laws to see if I could peg myself out reveals that Terry's move is illegal, so ball replaced and we are level when time is called. Red and blue are for 4-back and it's golden hoop time. Red (Bob) blobs 4-back, blue (David) is four feet away to the side, he can only see one inch of blue. David plays a superb shot and nicks red. Croquet stroke: roll both balls back through the hoop. Red goes, blue sticks. Continuation shot: move blue two inches into rush peel position. What does he do, he moves blue ten inches, we must be doomed. But no, Bob rushes blue into the jaws, then gets into the same tangle that David was in two minutes earlier and we are back in again. This time David makes no mistake, takes the hoop and we have won. 2 – 0 at lunch.

In the afternoon David rediscovers his form and wins comfortably. Ray, on the other hand, says he is playing badly but goes on to win by one on time. Meanwhile I snatch a narrow victory in my last turn. It was the first time most of us had lifted a mallet this year so not a bad result.

Beds & Herts League v Northampton (away)

24 April **Won 5-1**

Wrest Park	Northampton	WP score
Bryan Harral (1)	Peter Stansfield (1)	+6T
David Morris (20)	Jill Carrick (16)	
Tim Brewer (4½)	Les Carrick (8)	+12T
David Marsh (12)	Rex Hale (14)	
Bryan Harral (1)	Peter Stansfield (1)	-5T
Tim Brewer (4½)	Les Carrick (8)	+18
David Marsh (12)	Rex Hale (14)	+6T
David Morris (20)	Jill Carrick (16)	+1T

Report by Bryan Harral

Five of the six games going to time shows just how difficult everyone, including the hosts, found the Northampton lawns. There's not much to say about one-hoop turns but the sloping lawns did produce lucky accidents. Tim, taking off from 3-back to a pioneer at 4-back, ran 4-back so cleanly he missed the return roquet. Peter Stansfield got perfect position in front of hoop 1 by trickling through the hoop after taking off near hoop 6. Our patience paid off and we were 2 – 0 up at lunch.

In the early part of the afternoon Wrest Park were behind in all the singles. Tim finally broke away and after several good breaks pegged out +18. David Marsh, in his first Beds and Herts match, forged ahead to win by +6 on time. David Morris and Jill Carrick were level on time, but David is used to golden hoop finishes and coolly won the game by +1T. Our thanks to Northampton for a hard fought match and their warm hospitality.

Longman Cup v Edgbaston (home)

3 June **Won 5-2**

Wrest Park	Edgbaston	WP score
Tim Brewer (4)	Ian Whitlock (11)	+5T
Cliff Hayes (20)	Richard Thompson (7)	
David Marsh (12)	Paul Trafford (4½)	+24
Ray Percy (14)	Ian Slater (6)	+15
Tim Brewer (4)	Paul Trafford (4½)	-9T
David Marsh (12)	Ian Slater (6)	-1T
Ray Percy (14)	Richard Thompson (7)	+3T
Cliff Hayes (20)	Ian Whitlock (11)	+13

Report by John Bevington

I arrived just after the teams had had lunch to hear that we were 3-0 up, and David had had a good win, so had every confidence that the team were well on their way.

The afternoon games seemed to be going well, but then the bisesques ran out for some and we seemed to have lost the initiative. A pity I couldn't stay for the final stages, as Ray and Cliff got it all back together and won their games to give us the win and the opportunity of playing Dyffryn or Cheltenham in the next round.

Handicap tournament 21-23 May

The tournament was played in hot sunshine, a welcome change from previous years, and players sought shade, drinks and suncream in equal measure. Played as a Swiss, there were three players all on six wins going into the final round with two of them (manager Eric Audsley and Nigel Polhill) due to play each other, and the third, Terry Mahoney, playing David Marsh. If Nigel won he would win by virtue of having earlier beaten Terry, if Nigel and Terry both lost then Eric would win, and if Nigel lost and Terry won then Terry would win, which is what happened.



Lunch al fresco. L-R: Nick Evans, Patricia Duke-Cox, David Gillett, Philip Windred and Nigel Polhill

We were honoured by the entries of both the Chairman (Patricia Duke-Cox) and the President (Quiller Barrett) of the CA, who were given Wrest Park mugs as souvenirs of their visit. Patricia also won a prize for the best performance in the higher handicap group, with five wins in nine games. Quiller had four wins, as did David Marsh, Arthur Reed, Keith Rhodes and George Collin, with David Gillett going one better with five.



Eric Audsley and George Collin watch Arthur Reed in play against Philip Windred late on Saturday while David Marsh and Patricia Duke-Cox look on.

The relatively fast conditions had several games going to time, and there was one which was never completed: Wendy Spencer-Smith (16) on peg and rover and out of bisques against John Bevington (1½) on hoop 5 with one ball, the innings and a laid 3-ball break. An intriguing prospect, the outcome of which we shall never know.

Our thanks to Sally, Tim, Linda, Vera, Peggy and Margaret for keeping us fed and watered in the heat.

Inter County Championship

29 May-1 June

Bedfordshire had gone up like the rocket and duly came down like the stick, finishing bottom of the 1st division to return whence they came. Ben Ashwell, having just become a proud father, was unavailable, so George Collin was promoted to first pair with Jon Watson. They started in fine style, winning their first two games on time, but were brought up short by a TP by Samir Patel of Surrey in the last game of the day. None of the other

pairs managed to win, Bryan Harral and John Bevington losing their first game to a TP by Suffolk's Mark Avery.

We were at Compton again on Sunday, with thankfully better weather but little change in fortune when in the first match against Cheshire the first and third pairs both lost by one on time. Against Nottinghamshire the top pair lost when Jon was TPOed by James Death in our third consecutive 3-0 defeat, but in the last game against Gloucestershire Jon and George overcame the heavyweight pair of Davids Foulser and Kibble and Howard Bottomley and Tom Anderson had their first win against Don Gaunt and Louise Bradforth, so we had at last won a match.

Monday saw us at Southwick being comprehensively beaten by eventual winners Somerset, where Marcus Evans completed a straight triple against Howard and Tom and Ed Duckworth did all the peels of a triple against Bryan and John but then managed to rush partner into the jaws or rover instead of near the peg. Against Lancashire on the top two lawns the team only scored six points between them, so there was no problem getting back to the hotel in time for dinner.



Looking towards the clubhouse at Southwick on Monday afternoon.

The first game on the last day, against Glamorgan, was enlivened by a TPO by Ian Burrige on Bryan, leaving John to try and catch up. Ian eventually pegged himself out, and Kevin Ham had a chance to win by jumping over rover to try and hit the peg. He cleared the hoop but missed the peg, hitting it next turn. Kevin was faced with a similar position in the last game and this time the shot succeeded, drawing the biggest round of applause of the tournament.

And so to the final game against Essex. Jon and George lost to Michael Heap and Jonathan Hills, but Bryan and Jon took advantage of some loose play and managed their first win. Meanwhile Howard saved his best till last, playing an inspired turn to go round from hoop 1 and TPO Jack Wicks, leaving Guy Willard to try and defeat the canny Scot. Tom finally pegged out to win +6 and give us our second match win.

Of the 66 players in the 1st division only ten had handicaps higher than scratch, and we had four of them. When you are playing in such company any mistakes are likely to be punished severely, and so it proved.

For the full story, read Sue Mackay's excellent Counties report on the CA website.



Tom Anderson and John Wheeler do their impression of Eric and Ernie while enjoying a wee doch-an-doris on Monday evening.

1 st pair	P	W	L
Jon Watson and George Collin	10	3	7
TPs against:: Samir Patel (Surrey), James Death (Notts) TPO			
2 nd pair	P	W	L
Howard Bottomley and Tom Anderson	10	2	8
TPs against:: Marcus Evans (Somerset) STP			
TPs for: Howard - TPO on Jack Wicks (Essex)			
3 rd pair	P	W	L
Bryan Harral and John Bevington	10	1	9
TPs against:: Mark Avery (Suffolk), Ed Duckworth (Somerset) FTP, Ian Burrige (Glam) TPO			

Division 1

P W Games

Somerset
Notts
Lancashire
Glamorgan
Suffolk
Cheshire
Surrey
Middlesex
Gloucs (R)
Essex (R)
Beds (R)

10 9 23
10 8 20
10 6 16
10 6 16
10 5 16
10 5 16
10 4 16
10 4 13
10 4 11
10 2 12
10 2 6

Division 2

P W Games

Dorset (P)
Sussex (P)
Herts(P)
Channel I
Yorkshire
Kent
Hampshire
Warwicks
Berks & Oxon
CA Select
Wiltshire

10 8 23
10 8 23
10 8 20
10 6 18
10 6 16
10 6 15
10 5 15
10 3 12
10 2 10
10 2 7
10 1 6

Sic transit latrina sodalitatis

Tournament-playing members will know that we have always provided a latrine behind the groundsman's hut, using a tarpaulin tied to the yew tree (the erection and/or dismantling of which invariably caused a bang on the head). Alas, this facility is no longer to be permitted, so everyone will in future have to take the long walk to the loos near the Orangery.

Managers should bear this in mind when allocating time limits, and players should negotiate the stopping and restarting of clocks with their opponents. Do not be tempted to save time by concealing yourself in the shrubbery as you are bound to be spotted and there will be hell to pay. You have been warned.

Breakfast of champions



George the giant killer tucks in, watched by Enid and Howard Bottomley

Wrest Park have for many years supported the tournament at Hunstanton at the beginning of May. The traditional start was breakfast at the bus station café and I asked for a photo of this time-honoured ritual. Unfortunately the café is no more, so our contingent had to go elsewhere.

George Collin, who obviously understands the role of nutrition in preparing for competition, was particularly successful, coming second with six wins from eight games, including the notable scalp of tournament winner Mark Avery, an ex-GB player.

Complete Croquet

This is the title of a new book on Association croquet by James Hawkins, ex-Gazette editor and founder of the new club in Liverpool. Having used some of my photos he was kind enough to send me a complimentary copy, which I will leave in the clubhouse for members to look at. It is well worth reading and has useful advice for players at all levels, and there are numerous photos including several of Wrest Park. Publishers are The Crowood Press, the ISBN is 978 1 84797 168 5 and the price is £16.99.

Wrest Park ground staff gets new recruit

About us

It is our job at English Heritage to make sure that the historic environment of England is properly maintained and cared for:




This image is from page 14 of the 2009/10 English Heritage handbook and implies that your club secretary is employed as one of the ground staff. This is not the first time that EH have used photos of the club or its members – you may remember last year's Life Membership flyer, which was dominated by a photo of the lawns during one of our tournaments. I contacted EH Marketing hoping that as a quid pro quo we might be

allowed to display the club's own leaflets in the shop. This looks unlikely, but there is a possibility that the club could be mentioned in the Wrest Park entry on the EH website. Every little helps, as they say.

Social on 10 April

Over a dozen turned up for this on a pleasant early spring day. Tim Brewer brought the lunch and we whiled away the time with playing, eating, drinking, chatting and a bit of maintenance work.

Weddings and conferences

The current list is shown below. If you want to get into the park on a Saturday or Sunday when there is a wedding you will not be able to go in through the house after 2.30pm. New visitors are not admitted after that time because the area in front of the house and the house itself is in use for the wedding. If you do arrive after 2.30pm you will have to go in via the Clock Tower Yard and sign in by phone using the Shop number (01525 860152). For weddings and conferences on other days you are advised to ring ahead, in case you are unable to sign in at Reception in the usual way.

May 1, 2, 8, 12 & 13 (Conf)
June 19, 20, 24 & 25 (Conf), 26
July 3, 9, 10, 17, 24
Aug 1, 5, 14, 21
Oct 2, 9, 23

Membership forms

I'm assuming that anyone who received a membership form in February and hasn't returned it doesn't want to renew their membership and is happy to have their name taken off the list. However it is always possible that the form has been mislaid or you have had second thoughts, so if this is the case do let me know as soon as possible.

Dates for 2010

June

18 Kempston Rotary-John Martin (eve)
19 Inter Club v Sussex County from 10am (4)
20 Golf croquet singles tournament
27 B&H league v Watford 9.30-6 (4)

July

2-4 Advanced tournament
14 Dunstable CC 10-4 (6)
17 Harpenden Probus-Gavin Montgomery-Smith
18 Golf croquet doubles tournament
19 Ray Percy's group pm (4)
20 B&H league v Enfield 9.30-6 (4)
21 Trefoil group pm (?4)
27 Selex systems plc 1-6 (?4)

August

7-8 Advanced tournament
9 Dunstable U3A 10-4 (6)
17 Harpenden Probus group 5-8.30 (?4-6)
28-30 Wrest Park Craft Fair

September

8 Hertford U3A-David Morris 10-4 (4)
11-12 Handicap tournament
25 EACF Leagues playoff

■ Anyone organising home matches, group visits or any other events must let me know the proposed

dates as soon as possible so they can be cleared with EH. Please provide approximate start/finish times and the number of lawns required.

■ There is no lawn booking system, so please do not write individual bookings on the calendar in the pavilion.

The club website

This is nearly ready. We are sorting out the hosting service and with luck the site should be up and running by the end of this month.

Club competitions

Just a reminder to all of you to arrange and play your first round games as soon as you can.

John Bevington

9 June 2010