



newsletter

Match results

Beds & Herts League v Watford (home) 17 April Drawn 3-3

Bryan Harral (1) and Cliff Hayes (20) beat Ian Parkinson (1½) and Adam Huby (12) +15

Geoff Strutt (8) and David Morris (18) lost to Quiller Barrett (9) and Robin Barry (10) -1T

Bryan Harral beat Ian Parkinson +14

Geoff Strutt beat Quiller Barrett +13

David Morris lost to Robin Barry -12

Cliff Hayes lost to Adam Huby -1T

Report by Bryan Harral

*"There was no wrecks...nobody drowned
Fact, nothing to laugh at, at all."*

These lines from The Lion and Albert just about sum up this match, and as a result of some not very good croquet by either side it was 1-1 at lunchtime. The afternoon singles got off to a better start with Bryan and Geoff winning, and when David lost to Robin the chances of a win depended on Cliff and Adam's game. Scores were level when time was called but Cliff was beaten to the golden hoop. I should mention that Cliff saved us from a whitewash when we played Watford last year!

Mary Rose v Newport (home) 28 April Won 7-0

Bryan Harral (1) and John Bevington (1) beat Andrew Gregory (1) and Jim Potter (2½) +11

George Collin (1½) beat Arthur Flutter (7) +8

Terry Mahoney (2) beat Chris van Essen (4) +23

Bryan Harral beat Andrew Gregory +7

John Bevington beat Jim Potter +22

George Collin beat Chris van Essen +6

Terry Mahoney beat Arthur Flutter +18

Report by John Bevington

Newport were unable to field their best team as Mike Porter had to fulfil a family engagement, so we had an advantage from the start. The weather was foul, and the corner 4 area of lawn 2 made it unplayable so games were switched to lawn 6. Sharman Harral restored our spirits with steaming plates of chili for lunch before the afternoon games. Bryan went to 4-back on the fourth turn and held on to beat Andrew, Jim Potter's hitting-in deserted him and George and Terry continued where they had left off to give us a clean sweep and the prospect of a home game against Cheltenham in the next round.

Beds & Herts League v Enfield (home) 17 April Drawn 3-3

Bryan Harral (1) and David Marsh (3) lost to Ken Pickett (3) and Brian Dawes (20) -14

John Bevington (1) and Peter Aspinall (20) beat Brian Havill (18) and Alan Foott (18) +1T

Bryan Harral beat Ken Pickett +3

John Bevington lost to Brian Havill -13

David Marsh beat Alan Foott +11

Peter Aspinall lost to Brian Dawes -15

With bisques in plenty Enfield made the early running in the doubles and won the first game to finish. The other game had a more dramatic finale. With only a few minutes left and no bisques Alan stuck in hoop 5 off partner, who was for the peg, with Peter (for hoop 5) and John (yet to start) joined up. In splitting Peter's ball to hoop 2 John ended up on the playing side of hoop 5 and peeled Alan's ball in roqueting it, which meant having to peel Peter through hoop 6 en route to the peg in order to establish a one-point lead. It all worked out in the end, the balls were left near the corners and Alan missed the last shot to give us the win.

The afternoon singles divided 2-2. Bryan pegged Ken out to win +3, and Brian (who won the handicap event at the EACF Champions Day tournament) did the same to John to win with five bisques standing. David earned us the draw when he beat Alan in a game featuring a 20 minute delay to allow him to pick up his children, who returned to take a ride on the visitor bus and share in the teatime cake.

EACF Champions Day tournament 22 April

This event involved 23 players from 11 clubs, more than ever before and certainly more than are expected in any of our CA tournaments this year. It coincided with the St George's Day Festival, so play was punctuated with volleys of musket fire and the hero's battle with the dragon, which took place at regular intervals with the crowd being whipped up by an enthusiastic commentator.

Wrest Park's two entrants both reached the final of their events. John Bevington lost to Duncan Hector in the Advanced, but Tim Brewer beat John Palin to win the B level Advanced competition.

There is a full report with more photos on the EACF website.

CA Handicap tournament 18-20 May



Winner David Marsh and runner-up Heather Bennett

The tournament provided further evidence regarding the decline in tournament attendance – there were only 14 entrants and six of these were Wrest Park members. Of the rest, Nick Evans and Mike Hills travelled down from Northampton, Ken Pickett and Wendy Spencer-Smith came up from Enfield. David Gillett is almost an honorary member, having relatives living close by, Heather Bennett made the journey from St Albans, Jonathan Toye from Downham Market and Kevin Ham all the way from Cardiff. Handicaps ranged from 20 to 0, with half the players on 3½ or fewer. The lawns were in good condition, although one was still feeling the effects of all the recent rain and was left alone. The weather was grim throughout: cold and damp with the merest flicker of sun. There was a run on soup at lunchtime, and your reporter took to lacing his coffee with a tot of rum.

Heather (20) had been encouraged to enter the tournament after playing in the East Anglian Federation Champions Day event a month earlier. She lost her first game against manager Eric Audsley, who then took her to one side for some practical advice on how to best deploy her array of bisques. Just what was said remains unrecorded, but it obviously had the desired effect as she proceeded to win six of her seven remaining games, losing only to David Gillett and recording two scores of +22 and +26 in the process. Impressive as this was, she was pipped as winner overall by club member David

Marsh (3), who continued his good form of last season by winning seven of his eight games, his only loss being to Heather, and gaining yet another handicap reduction.

Time limits of 3¼ hours and shortened games for large aggregate handicaps, coupled with the easy pace and not too challenging hoops, meant that only one game went to time, in which Kevin Ham (4½) beat John Bevington (1) +3 – a game which, like quite a few others, featured a pegged-out ending. Geoff Strutt took this tactic to extremes in using several bisques to peel John through the last two hoops before pegging him out, winning +7 after John missed the pioneer at 1-back when set up with a 3-ball break. John was also involved in Wendy Spencer-Smith's (16) only win after a run of narrow losses, when she got the first ball round with a few bisques and carried on to win +24.

In David and Heather's wake were Nick, Kevin and David Gillett with five wins, John, Geoff and Rod Ashwell with four, Jon, Mike, Ken and Eric with three and George Collin with two. Our thanks to Vic Rees, Sally Marsh and club chairman Tim Brewer for keeping everyone fed and watered. There is another handicap tournament in September, and the weather can only get better.

Dates for 2012

June

- 11 GC Improvers course 9.30-4.30 (4 lawns)
- 14 Harpenden Tangent group (evening)
- 16 Inter Club v Nottingham (4 lawns)
- 17 Golf croquet singles tournament
- 23 CA B level golf croquet tournament
- 28 Mary Rose v Cheltenham (4 lawns)

July

- 2 Stotfold Salvation Army (evening)
- 6-8 CA Advanced tournament
- 11 Geoff Strutt's ATC group
- 15 Golf croquet doubles tournament
- 27-29 CA Eastern Championship

August

- 11-12 CA Advanced tournament
- 23 Dunstable U3A 10-4 (6 lawns)

September

- 1-2 CA All England area final
- 14-16 CA Handicap tournament
- 22 EACF AC 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 notified to EH. Please provide approximate start/finish times and the number of lawns required.
- Note that all six lawns are likely to be busy when a CA/EACF tournament is scheduled. There may be a lawn free depending on the number of entries but this cannot be guaranteed, so if you turn up hoping to play you will have to take pot luck.

John Bevington

22 May 2012