



newsletter

Golf croquet B level tournament

23 June

Report and photo by John Cundell, as it appeared in the Leighton Buzzard Observer

13 players met at Wrest Park for the second B level level play singles tournament to be held there. They were split into blocks of six and seven. Eight of them were from Leighton-Linslade – in block A were David Ball, John Thorp, Roger Stroud and Martin Field, whilst block B had Pauline Lafrere, Jean Ball, John Cundell and Richard Keighley.

From other clubs round the country were Ian and Jean Cobbold from Reigate Priory, Terrey Sparks from Hunstanton, John Edwards from Broadwas, near Worcester, and Jane Collier from Colchester.

At lunch block A was led by John Thorp who had won his first three games, and John Cundell was in a similar situation in block B. John Thorp continued his march towards a clean sweep but John Cundell slipped back, and at the end of the block play there was a close finish with Richard Keighley and Terrey Sparks on four wins. As Terrey had beaten Richard he went through to play John Thorp in the final.

This was an excellent battle, enthusiastically watched by all the other players. It seesawed up to the inevitable 13th hoop where John Thorp kept his cool to win, going one better than his performance in the same tournament last year, in which he was runner-up.



L-R: manager Richard Keighley, winner John Thorp and runner-up Terrey Sparks

Advanced tournament 6-8 July

I suppose we should be grateful for the fact that the day before the tournament was sunny and we were able to get the lawns cut. They held up pretty well in spite of the

rain which fell during the night, and the following day, and the next day....

The handicaps of the 16 players ranged from $-\frac{1}{2}$ to 5, and manager Eric Audsley (himself just down to $\frac{1}{2}$) split them into two blocks, with eight on 1 or fewer and eight on $1\frac{1}{2}$ or more. The format was basically a Swiss with the second block pre-programmed with two initial losses. Prizes would go to the overall winner and the person in each block gaining the most index points.

Of the minus players, both Simon Hathrell and Cliff Jones finished Friday with 100% records, including in Simon's case a TP at the expense of Nick Steiner. George Woolhouse was the only other player not to have dropped a game, and Ian Mantle, Bryan Harral and Tom Anderson all had two wins. In contrast, Rod Ashwell and Mike Hills had yet to break their ducks.



George Woolhouse, Nigel Polhill and Cliff Jones watch their opponents on Sunday morning.

Saturday saw Simon's run ended by John Bevington, who at one point used local knowledge and dead weight to hit a perfectly wired leave. Cliff lost to Bryan, and Rod recovered his form by beating Nigel Polhill. Later in the day Nigel completed the only other TP of the tournament against Simon, and at close of play Simon, Bryan, Nick, John, Ian and George had four wins, so there was all to play for.

The first games on Sunday went some way to resolving the issue. Simon beat George, Bryan beat Eric, John beat Nick and Ian beat Philip Windred to leave them all on five wins. Ian did not play in the last round, which had Simon playing Eric, Bryan playing George, and John playing Rod. If they all won John would have had the edge, having beaten Simon and Bryan, but although Simon beat Eric and Bryan beat George, John lost to Rod (who won his last five games), which meant that Simon, who had beaten Bryan in his first game of the tournament, was the overall winner.

Bryan and George won the prizes for the most index points gained. In Bryan's case there were more than he realised, as he had forgotten the extra points which came his way as a result of beating minus players.

Our thanks, as usual, go to Vic, Cliff, Janice and Tim for keeping us all fed and watered.



Simon Hathrell receives his prize from Eric Audsley, with John Bee, Bryan Harral and Rod Ashwell looking on.

6/8: Simon Hathrell (-½) (winner), Bryan Harral (1)
5/7: Ian Mantle (1½)
5/8: Rod Ashwell (0), Nick Steiner (1), John Bevington (1)
4/7: George Collin (2), George Woolhouse (2)
4/8: Nigel Polhill (-½), Cliff Jones (-½)
2/5: Arthur Reed (2), Tom Anderson (3)
2/7: John Bee (5)
2/8: Eric Audsley (½), Philip Windred (2½)
1/8: Mike Hills (4½)

Match results

Inter Club v Sussex County (home)

13 July

Won 7-0

Bryan Harral (1) and John Bevington (1) beat Alan Cottle (-½) and Paul Castell (0) +6

Rod Ashwell (0) beat Luc Berthouze (2) +16

George Collin (2) beat John Taylor (2½) +15

Bryan Harral beat Alan Cottle +16

John Bevington beat Paul Castell +21

Rod Ashwell beat John Taylor +10

George Collin beat Luc Berthouze +13

This should really have been an away match, but in making the arrangements reference had been made to the archive material on the CA website, which erroneously had Sussex County as the home team in the club's previous encounter in 2010!

After Rod and George had won their singles Bryan and John struggled to finish off the doubles. John missed the pegout but his own ball ran onto the peg, leaving Bryan on his own while Paul was creeping round. The game eventually had to be paused while we had lunch – another feast from Sharman Harral with help from the Wine Society. Shortly afterwards Bryan hit in to finish, so we were three up with four to play.

John then sealed the match with a quick win against Paul. Bryan and George completed their wins and we then waited for Rod who was determined to finish in spite of already being two hours late for an engagement.

And so the run continues – we are now through to the semi-final against either Colchester or Nottingham B.

Beds & Herts League v Melgrave (home)

14 July

Drawn 3-3

Bryan Harral (1) and Peter Aspinall (20) lost to Robert Skeen (8) and Keith Holgate (14) -1T

David Morris (18) and Cliff Hayes (20) beat Alec Osborne (12) and Peter Whiting (18) +3T

Bryan Harral beat Robert Skeen +5

David Morris lost to Alec Osborne -13

Cliff Hayes beat Keith Holgate +1T

Peter Aspinall lost to Peter Whiting -2T

Report by Bryan Harral

No prizes for guessing what the weather was like mid-July. Bryan and Peter with half a bisque playing Robert and Keith with one bisque and the rain pelting down made the game extremely interactive. Hoop by hoop we crept up on the opposition but like the Saxons at Hastings we came second! David and Cliff with nine bisques were rather more successful, and so the score was 1-1 at lunch. After lunch there was standing water on lawns 2 and 4. In the singles, Bryan managed to beat Robert, David ran out of steam against Alec, and Peter Aspinall was narrowly beaten by Peter Whiting. The result hung on Cliff's game against Keith. Cliff was ahead by one when time was called, Keith was in position and could have drawn level if his ball had gone all the way through the hoop instead of half way. And so another drawn match, four out of four so far (to paraphrase a well-known slogan).

Golf croquet doubles day

15 July

Report and photo by managers Keith and Eileen Palmer

There were 14 pairs: three from Wrest Park and the remainder from other clubs. The competition was run on lines kindly suggested by Richard Keighley; the entry being split into three groups of four, four and five pairs. The weather was fair with no rain – the lawns were damp to start with and lawn 2 was very wet.



L-R: runners-up Martin Field and Pauline Lefrere, and winners Jean and David Ball

The three block winners and the runners-up from the larger group contested the semi-finals. David and Jean Ball beat Peggy Kenny and Judi Priestley 7-3, and Martin Field and Pauline Lefrere beat Linda Potton and Vera Pearson 7-4. In the final David and Jean beat Martin and Pauline 7-3.

CA Eastern Championship 27-29 July



To be concluded: David Maugham and Keith Aiton each with a hand on the cup.

Summer finally arrived the week before, so we were able to get the lawns in good order with new hoop holes and three cuts at the reduced height of 6.5mm, resulting in a speed of 11 Plummers as measured on Friday evening. Named after Dr Ian Plummer, this unit is the number of seconds it takes a ball to travel the length of the lawn. Anything below 10 might be regarded as slow, anything above 12 distinctly fast. Given that our lawns are usually quite slow, 11 Plummers is probably as fast as we could expect.



Saturday lunch. Clockwise from the corner: Debbie Cornelius, David Maugham, Keith Aiton, Lionel Tibble, Ailsa Lines, Gabrielle Higgins and Nick Mounfield.

It turned out that although the players had been sent directions these had omitted to mention the various

numbers for the gates, and with no-one available to act as escort they found themselves having to force an entrance through the hedge. Robert Wilkinson took things one step further, when, having been delayed by a thrown tread, he rang up asking for the postcode as his satnav had directed him to a nearby farm.

With only 13 entries manager David Maugham determined on best of five from the outset, with the use of super-advanced rules* optional. There were rolling time limits which only came into play once, but Lionel Tibble's match against Richard Smith came close, lasting all day before Lionel won the decider at around 9pm. All the quarter finals were won in three games.



Girl power: Ailsa Lines and Debbie Cornelius take on Richard Smith and Robert Wilkinson in a game of golf croquet on Saturday evening.

The semi-finals were more protracted. Ian and David both took an early 2-0 lead, but Keith and Nick pulled back to 2-2 at about the same time. As it was quite late some of us thought that they might finish off the next day, but they started the final game without further ado to leave George Collin, who had kindly offered to stay on, having to cycle home in the dark.



David Maugham and Nick Mounfield during their semi-final on Saturday. Ian Lines is in the background.

George arrived early on Sunday to cut lawn 4 for the final. Keith was 2-0 up and Richard Smith and Robert Wilkinson were engaged in the Plate final when heavy rain flooded the lawns making further play impossible. Although the sun reappeared it was always only going to be a temporary respite and play was abandoned. Richard and Robert shared the Plate, and Keith and David will be completing their match at a later date.

An indication of the standard of play is that 28 triples were completed in the 61 games played, 25 of them in the 44 games of the main event.



Robert Wilkinson and Richard Smith share the Plate.

* For details of the super-advanced rules see Appendix 5 of the Regulations for Tournaments on the CA website. Games played to these rules are designated by a (1), (2) or (3) after the score, indicating which variation was used.

1st round

David Maugham bt Debbie Cornelius -16 +17stp +17tp +26

Gabrielle Higgins bt Ian Vincent +5 +8tp +26

Ian Lines bt Mark Ormerod -2 +5 +11T +17

Lionel Tibble bt Richard Smith -5 +11 -6tpo +8tp +16

Keith Aiton bt Robert Wilkinson +7 -23tp +10tpo+23tp (3)

Quarter final

Nick Mounfield bt Ailsa Lines +26 +21 +11

David Maugham bt Gabrielle Higgins +17tp +22tp +12tpo

Ian Lines bt Lionel Tibble +26tp +13 +20tp

Keith Aiton beat Andrew Gregory +23tp +26tp +16tp

Semi final

David Maugham bt Nick Mounfield +16 +11tp -26 -17tp +25tp

Keith Aiton bt Ian Lines -25tp -25tp +9 +24tp +26tp

Final

Keith Aiton leads David Maugham +13otp +25tp

Dates for 2012

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.

A groundsman writes



Petrol engines? Trailing seats? Groundsmen today don't know how lucky they are. When I was a lad you had to get out there and push. The grass never grew under my feet, I can tell you. Made me what I am today, and while I'm on the subject (*continues p94*).

John Bevington

4 August 2012