



newsletter



"I've got sunshine on a cloudy day" - George Woolhouse and Don Gaunt in play during the August tournament, with Simon Carlsson looking on.

GC B level tournament 22 June

This was the first CA tournament to take place on the new lawns. Earlier in the season the May tournament had to be cancelled as the lawns weren't really ready for tournament play, having only been cut down to a height of 10mm which made hitting from one end of the lawn to the other a task that Hercules might have struggled with. However steady grass growth and regular mowing at the reduced height of 8mm made a significant difference, so the event went ahead as planned.

As only two lawns were available the entry was restricted to 10 players, four from Leighton-Linslade and two all the way from Newcastle. Manager Geoff Strutt organised them into two blocks, all play all, with further games to determine strict precedence within each block. This was followed by play-offs between the players in the same position in each block.

The final between the two top players from each block, Ian Norris and David Bell, was something of an epic, holding up tea and going all the way before Ian ran the deciding hoop. Ian's reward, apart from the trophy, will be an invitation to a national final for winners of national B level GC events, to be held in the autumn.

Advanced tournament 6-7 July

This was the first AC tournament on the new lawns, on the hottest weekend of the year thus far (the decision to make it a two-day tournament was indeed a wise one) and with a select entry of eight players, the visitors being Nick Evans and James Skelton from Northampton, George Woolhouse from Letchworth, and from Ealing the heavy hitters Nigel Polhill and Alain Giraud, the undefeated winner.

The bumpiness of the lawns could make it difficult to hit in, especially if the ball hit a ridge or furrow early on and immediately altered course. That said, it was perfectly possible to play breaks once you had gained some control, as Nigel demonstrated when he went straight round to 4-back in the fifth turn of his first game. The hoops were on the tight side, but perfectly runnable.

Late in the afternoon after two games Nick, James and George declined a third, so John Bevington and Eric Audsley did their bit by playing Alain and Nigel, who had finished the game between them much earlier. John very nearly got the better of Alain after pegging him out and giving contact when for 1-back versus rover, but took off long when trying to get behind partner for a rush to the peg and just missed the roquet.



Alain Giraud, Nick Evans and James Skelton taking lunch in the shade of the spreading chestnut tree.

Terry Mahoney had kindly donated two gazebos which were both in use on Sunday, when Alain completed his unbeaten run with wins over Rod Ashwell (+2 on time, a

limit having been imposed by manager Eric Audsley) and Nick Evans.



After the prizegiving: l-r Nigel Polhill, Rod Ashwell, George Collin, Alain Giraud, Eric Audsley and George Woolhouse.

All in all it went as well if not better than could have been expected, and our thanks to Geoff Strutt and John Wheeler for the catering.

Alain Giraud (-1)	5/5
Nigel Polhill (-1)	4/5
John Bevington (1)	3/5
Rod Ashwell (0)	2/4
Eric Audsley (1)	2/5
Nick Evans (2½)	1/4
George Woolhouse (2)	1/4
James Skelton (2)	0/4

Advanced tournament 3-4 August

The second AC tournament on Wrest Park's new lawns attracted a small entry, the home club's members being augmented by visitors from Letchworth, the West Country and Sweden. It was won by the manager, Rod Ashwell, who finished equal with David Marsh on four wins from five games having won the game between them.



L-R: Don Gaunt, Faith Gaunt, Simon Carlsson, David marsh, John Hall, George Woolhouse, Rod Ashwell, Jan Hayes, Sally Marsh, Cliff Hayes, Jonathan Wolfe and John Wheeler

David did not go unrewarded, having his handicap reduced from 1 to ½. Apart from the lightest and shortest of showers the sun shone all weekend, and the received opinion was that the lawns were playing much better than at the tournament a month previously, and this in spite of the fact that little mowing had been done in the interim.

The 3 hour time limits resulted in some tight finishes when the result swung on late changes of fortune, but there were more conclusive wins, among them Rod's against John Bevington where he was looking for a combination peg-out to complete a straight triple but just failed to get a forward rush on the spare ball by the peg.



Don Gaunt adjudicates Rod Ashwell's sweep shot in his game against John Bevington (it hit).

Sally Marsh took complete charge of the catering and served up delicious chicken and pork for lunch, following this up with a made-to-order sandwich service at teatime. All this while sharing the pavilion facilities with Flitwick Cricket Club on Saturday and Silsoe Park Rangers Football Club on Sunday. Our thanks to her and to Cliff and Jan Hayes.

Rod Ashwell (-½)	4/5
David Marsh (1½)	4/5
Simon Carlsson (0)	3/5
Don Gaunt (0)	2/5
John Bevington (1)	2/5
George Woolhouse (2)	2/5
Jonathan Wolfe (3)	2/5
John Hall (6)	1/5

Match results

Mary Rose v Chester (away) 28 June

Won 4-1

Bryan Harral (1) and John Bevington (1) lost to Mark Lloyd (½) and Jerry Guest (1½) -17

David Marsh (1½) beat David Guyton (6) +9

Tim Brewer (3½) beat Dennis Graham (4½) +2

Bryan Harral beat Mark Lloyd +18

John Bevington v Jerry Guest *abandoned*

David Marsh best Dennis Graham +12

Tim Brewer v David Guyton *abandoned*

After a very wet drive up to Chester it was a relief to find the rain had stopped before play began. The doubles was scrappy to begin with, but an intended wide join

which drifted down the slope to leave the balls much closer than had been intended gave Jerry the opportunity to go to 4-back. The games were paused for a much appreciated and very welcome hot lunch and concluded soon afterwards. Bryan recovered his form to beat Mark, who then had to dash off to appear in the Chester Mystery Plays.

The rain reappeared soon after lunch and got steadily worse, so when David had beaten Dennis to give Wrest Park a winning lead it was agreed to abandon the remaining games. Chester would in all probability have won at least one of these, as Jerry had just conceded the innings when on peg and peg against 2-back and 2-back. In typical fashion the rain stopped just after we had cleared everything away. Many thanks to Chester for their hospitality and the excellent lawns.

Beds & Herts League v Melgrave (away) **30 June** **Drew 2-2**

Bryan Harral (1) and John Bevington (1) lost to Duncan Hector (-½) and Chris van Essen (4½) -16T

Peter Aspinall (18) lost to Robert Skeen (8) -2T

Bryan Harral and Peter Aspinall beat Duncan Hector and Robert Skeen +2T

John Bevington beat Chris van Essen +3

This was a first visit to Meldreth, who only have one lawn and in the past have always been visitors to Wrest Park. However we had agreed at the start of the league season that as we could not at that time guarantee the fitness of our new lawns we would play all our matches away. The Meldreth lawn is in the extensive grounds of the village pub, surrounded by trees and next to a small enclosure containing a number of blackface sheep – a charming setting, especially on such a warm and sunny day.



The Meldreth lawn, with the pub in the background on the right.

Meldreth were playing as Melgrave (Meldreth + Bygrave) as the home duo of Chris and Robert were supplemented by Duncan Hector. Duncan was on form from the start, with an early break which proved the foundation for the win. Peter had his nose on front on several occasions but lost when Robert produced a late surge.

After lunch Chris made the early running in the singles but John responded and won when, after having pegged out one ball, Chris shot with his rover ball at the other ball near the peg and hit the peg dead centre. As the peg was not very firm in the ground the ball was left

within easy reach. Bryan and Peter were behind until Bryan got a good break together and left the balls widely separated with a two point lead. Duncan took the last shot and hit, but went off the boundary in trying to get a rush to 3-back, so we achieved a well-earned draw.

Beds & Herts League v St Albans (away) **13 July** **Drew 2-2**

Bryan Harral (1) and Peter Aspinall (18) beat Terry Mahoney (2) and Heather Bennet (16) +1T

Ray Pearcy (14) lost to Chris Frost (6) -19T

Bryan Harral and Ray Pearcy lost to Terry Mahoney and Chris Frost -9T

Peter Aspinall beat Heather Bennet +1T

Report by Bryan Harral

An hour and a half into the doubles game Terry misreads the clock and thinks he has only half an hour left. With his partner on 1-back and Bryan and Peter miles behind, he decides to go to the peg. Bryan hits in, goes round and pegs out Terry's ball. Fast-forward to the end. Peter is for 3-back, Heather runs 2-back putting her one ahead and time is called. Peter makes 3-back, putting us level. Needing a point to win both sides try to gain the advantage which eventually goes Peter's way and the doubles is ours. In the morning's singles Ray found the lawn difficult to master and lost to Chris who played extremely well. So, 1-1 at lunch.

In the afternoon's doubles Ray developed a severe allergy to hoop 5 and although he finally overcame it our opponents had swept on to win by 9T. Peter, on the other hand, continued his morning's form to beat Heather in the singles by +1T. Final score 2-2, one of our better results!

Beds & Herts League v Northampton (away) **2 August** **Lost 2-4**

Bryan Harral (1) and Peter Aspinall (18) lost to Nick Evans (2.5) and Gill Carrick (20) -4T

Cliff Hayes (18) and David Morris (18) beat Les Carrick (11) and Owen Bryce (12) +12T

Bryan Harral lost to Nick Evans -5T

Peter Aspinall lost to Les Carrick -18

David Morris lost to Owen Bryce -16

Cliff Hayes beat Gill Carrick +7T

Report by Bryan Harral

It takes practice and local knowledge (and maybe some aversion therapy) to play on the sloping lawns at Northampton. Having said that, Cliff and David managed to win their doubles match quite convincingly. Bryan and Peter, on the other hand, were outplayed by Nick's consistently good shooting and hoop approaches. But a lunch-time score of 1-1 looked promising.

After lunch, everything went downhill – excuse the pun. Bryan realised he was playing a master of the contours when, wired from Nick behind hoop 4, he was promptly roqueted by a ball curling around the hoop. He never recovered from the shock and lost. Peter and David struggled in their singles games despite having 8 bisques each. Cliff, who has unfortunately for us spent

most of our match days in Spain, changed the outcome from a 1-5 disaster to a 2-4 minor mishap.

Mary Rose v Letchworth (away)

6 August

Won 4-3

David Marsh (½) and Eric Audsley (1) beat David Tutt (0) and Ian Mantle (2) +22

John Bevington (1) lost to Terry Mahoney (2) -6

Bryan Harral (1) beat John Hall (6) +9

John Bevington beat John Hall +24

Bryan Harral lost to Terry Mahoney -14

Eric Audsley lost to Ian Mantle -12

David Marsh beat David Tutt +14

Team captains will know the feeling. You have used up all your powers in merely getting a team together, and then one of them has the temerity to get his handicap reduced, thus taking your team's total below the maximum limit. Thankfully the Regulations for Tournaments (H1f) allow a week's grace, so all was well.

The result of the doubles game was decisive, but both singles were much closer. John Bevington was ahead until Terry found his rhythm and went round in two turns, finishing soon afterwards. John Hall set off like a train, but Bryan managed to apply the brakes and got home first. Terry's good form (how could he do this to his ex-teammates?) continued after lunch, beating Bryan after John B had beaten John H. After Eric lost to Ian it was 3-3, but David Marsh won to give Wrest Park the match. It was David, of course, who had had his handicap reduced. The team captain now has to start all over again.

Northampton CC visit 24 July

As the result of a request from Lionel Tibble, a group of golf croquet players from the Northampton club came down for a day's play with our own members. They played 10 singles and five doubles games, and the visitors had the best of it, winning 11 of them. A return match is planned, and thanks to Keith Palmer for organising the event.

GC singles and doubles days

16 June & 21 July

These annual events went ahead as usual, and the winner of the singles was Vera Pearson, with Roger Downing runner-up. Vera also managed to win the doubles with partner Linda Potton, beating Richard Keighley and Roy (?Kemp).

A little learning . . .



David Marsh watching Reg Bamford in play during his World Championship semi-final against Paddy Chapman at Surbiton on Saturday 17th August. Note the three clips on Reg's pocket. During the fourth game later in the day I happened to be occupying the same seat and was the closest spectator at the critical moment when Reg stuck in 3-back (the hoops had been set to 1/64") having done all the peels of a TPO, leaving Paddy all the balls. Paddy won the game and with it the match.

Dates for 2013

August

31-1 All England Handicap Area final

September

13-15 CA AC Handicap tournament

25 ATC group 11-6 (2 lawns)

Recycling in action



This shows our old pavilion, now re-assembled in Scott Butler's garden. He sent this picture on 7th July, with the following message:

"I said I would let you know how we got on with the pavilion; so here it is. It took a lot of work and much cursing but after staying flat in the garden for a month or so we put it up. Initially a tarpaulin on the roof but a few weeks ago we put a new rubber roof on. All painted, creosoted and insulated (another eBay purchase 2mx2mx2m of Kingspan off cuts) in the walls and roof. It's good for another 40+ years."

John Bevington

28 August