



# newsletter

## Secretary's Shield final 28 Sept

The Secretary's Shield is a knock-out competition for the previous year's winners of the various Federation AC handicap league play-offs. The final is held at a neutral venue, and as this year's finalists were Enfield and Nottingham we were asked if we could host the event. Although Enfield managed a good win in the doubles it turned out to be their only success, and Nottingham won 6-1. There is a full report on the CA website.



*John Wheeler, Vic Rees and Omeid Hallam watch Ken Pickett and Brian Havill in play, while in the background Tim and Gill Brewer and George Collin carry out lawn repairs under the watchful eye of Ian Vincent. Note that the maize has been harvested.*

## All England Handicap area final 31 Aug/1 Sept

The All England Handicap is the most democratic of competitions. Anyone can enter and one would hope, given the need to encourage competitive play at handicap level, the CA and the host club will ensure that the National Final (which sometimes tends to pass by almost unnoticed) is accorded a full report.

But we are getting ahead of ourselves. This was an Area Final, the road to which is paved with good intentions. Wrest Park, being hosts, had the advantage in that the result of their own heat did not need to be reported, so it could drag on indefinitely. Even this home extension was insufficient to determine the winners (we had two entries), so the best-placed volunteers stepped forward. As the first count of the visiting entries was an odd number (9) we either had to drop one or find another to reach an even number.

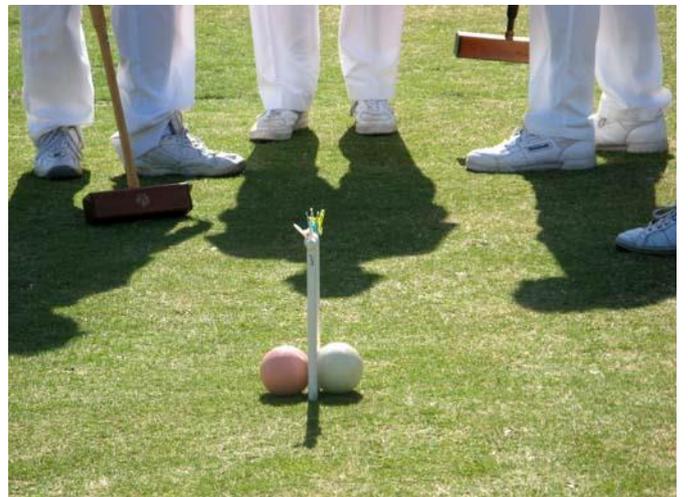
The visitors then increased by one (a club had two entries instead of one), but another entry dropped out followed by a further cancellation a few days later. One can't help wondering why people bother entering if they can't commit to the final stages (the dates of which are in the Fixtures Book). Be that as it may, the result was that Wrest Park cut their losses by having the manager available should the entry turn out to be one under the eight. I daresay other Area Final organisers past and

present are not unfamiliar with the circumstances I have described.



*Standing L-R: Brian Havill, Robin Barry, Joe Iddison, David Frost. Seated: Ian Whitlock, Carolyn Doswell, Tony Elliott, Keith Huggins.*

So, on the last day of August, the hoops were set, the lawns were pared, the management was quite prepared. Everyone who should have been there was there, which saved both much crossings-out and a change of costume. There were Robin Barry (10) and Brian Havill (9) from Watford, David Frost (10) and Tony Elliott (11) from Enfield, Keith Huggins (8) and Joe Iddison (16) from Peterborough, Carolyn Doswell (14) from Merton and Ian Whitlock (12) from Edgbaston. The first games got under way in the early sunshine and the only concern was the prospect of being called on as a referee. Being unqualified, this calls for a mixture of experience and bluff, as in a case that day referencing Law 14 d 3 (Special Situations). The relevant Law was not positively identified until more than 24 hours after the event.



*That refereeing moment (explanation available on request).*

Brian was the first to finish, beating Keith +26. Robin overcame Joe's eccentric opening and his six bisques. The Enfield pair both won and continued their winning form for the rest of the day, but the other winners fared less well: Brian lost -16 to Joe and then beat Carolyn +1 on time in the last game to finish as the light faded, and Robin, having lost to Carolyn -2 in the afternoon, had a more conclusive +10 against Ian in the evening. Only two games went to time on the first day (3 hours with an extra 15 minutes if double-banking).



*Joe Iddison, who went on to win the national final at Colchester.*

Sunday morning began with a discussion as to how winners and lesser places might be established should the event end in a mass tie. We agreed to use the hoop 1 shoot-out, in which each player has four attempts at hoop 1 from the yard line, gaining 1 point for hitting the hoop, two for getting the ball in the jaws and three for running the hoop. To the manager's great good fortune this device was not required. The Watford and Enfield players were pitted against each other, resulting in close wins for David and Robin. Ian broke his duck against Keith and Joe registered a +19 win against Carolyn, the only game not to go to time. Play was full bisque base 10, so in many games there were few bisques involved and as the stakes got higher they tended to be valued more highly, which may have been the cause of a reining in of some of the more ambitious manoeuvres (sometimes performed without a safety net) seen on the previous day.



*David Frost fails rover in his game against Robin Barry.*

Joe continued his good form in the final round, beating Ian +20. The other games again went to time, with wins for Keith against Carolyn and Tony against Brian. In what was effectively the final, David Frost beat Robin

Barry +7 to complete a clean sweep and become the undisputed winner, ahead of Tony Elliott on four wins (which reduced his handicap from 11 to 10) and Robin Barry and Joe Iddison with three each. David, Tony and Joe will be going on to the National Final.

|                                |     |        |
|--------------------------------|-----|--------|
| David Frost (10) Enfield       | 5/5 | Winner |
| Tony Elliott (11) Enfield      | 4/5 |        |
| Robin Barry (10) Watford       | 3/5 |        |
| Joe Iddison (16) Peterborough  | 3/5 |        |
| Brian Havill (8) Watford       | 2/5 |        |
| Keith Huggins (8) Peterborough | 1/5 |        |
| Ian Whitlock (12) Edgbaston    | 1/5 |        |
| Carolyn Doswell (14) Merton    | 1/5 |        |



*Hello, good evening and well done – David Frost with the trophy.*

## Handicap tournament 14-15 Sept

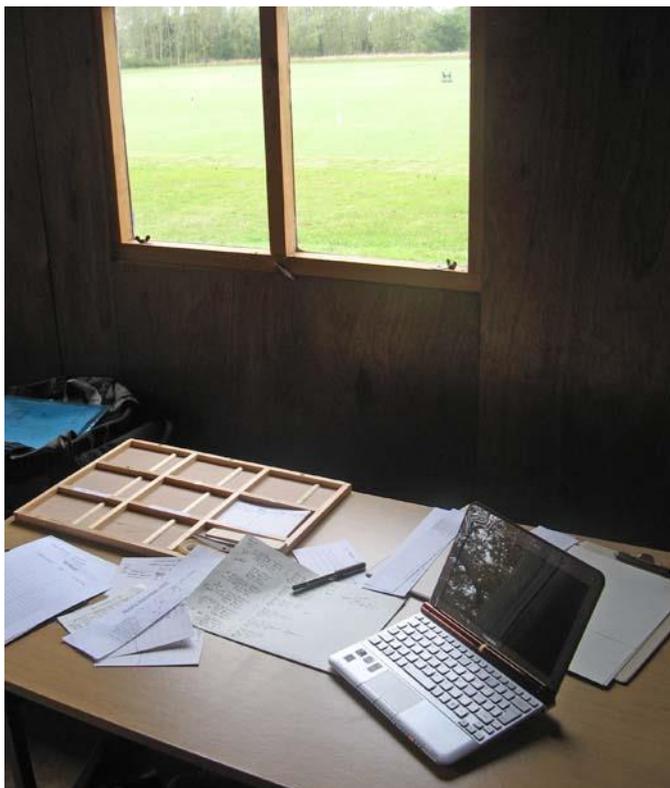
The last tournament of the first season on the new lawns had a home-grown feel to it. Of the seven entries only George Woolhouse and Heather Bennett were not club members and it was Heather who took the prize with five wins ahead of George, also on five wins but having lost to Heather and having a lower total net points score.



*Tim Brewer mowing the outfield, with the new gazebo in the background.*

Outplayers and the occasional spectator were able to take shelter in the new gazebo (green was out of stock).

Geoff Strutt was in charge, and the old changing room became more than just a storage facility. The tournament also saw George Collin's return to competitive play.



A room with a view - the managerial office in the old changing room.

Playing conditions were fairly easy, and the hoops were not too taxing. Nearly half (9/20) of the games were won with scores of a score or more and there were only three close finishes.

|                      |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| Heather Bennett (14) | 5/6 |
| George Woolhouse ()  | 5/6 |
| John Bevington (1)   | 3/5 |
| Bryan Harral (½)     | 2/5 |
| Rod Ashwell          | 2/6 |
| George Collin        | 2/6 |
| Geoff Strutt         | 1/6 |



Geoff Strutt presents Heather Bennett with the winner's prize, with Tim Brewer, Rod Ashwell and Georges Collin and Woolhouse looking on.

## Match results

### Beds & Herts League v Watford (away)

28 August

Lost 1-5

Bryan Harral (0.5) and Cliff Hayes (18) lost to John Smallbone (4) and Robin Barry (10) -6T

Tim Brewer (3.5) and Geoff Strutt (7) lost to John Bee (6) and Geoff Johnson (7) -12T

Bryan Harral lost to John Smallbone -25

Tim Brewer lost to John Bee -6T

Geoff Strutt lost to Geoff Johnson -6T

Cliff Hayes beat Robin Barry +11T

*Report by Bryan Harral*

In the doubles things looked promising when Bryan reached rover early on but Cliff had only reached hoop 3 when time was called while Watford were for rover and rover. Despite Cliff making more hoops in his last turn than he had done in the rest of the game Bryan and Cliff could not catch up. Tim and Geoff did not fare any better so it was 0-2 at lunch.

In the singles things started badly when Bryan was comprehensively beaten by John Smallbone using only 3 bisques. Tim and Geoff could not find their form either, but thanks to a win by Cliff we were not totally crushed. This is not the first time Cliff has saved us from a white-wash at Watford!

Two draws and four losses this season – last year it was four draws and two losses - mean we won the bananas again this year, but I am grateful to everyone who played. Win, lose or draw I have enjoyed the matches and your company.

### EACF Beds & Herts League player records

|                | Doubles |   |   | Singles |   |   |
|----------------|---------|---|---|---------|---|---|
|                | P       | W | L | P       | W | L |
| Bryan Harral   | 8       | 2 | 6 | 4       | 1 | 3 |
| Peter Aspinall | 5       | 2 | 3 | 5       | 4 | 1 |
| David Morris   | 3       | 2 | 1 | 3       | 0 | 3 |
| Cliff Hayes    | 2       | 1 | 1 | 2       | 2 | 0 |
| Tim Brewer     | 2       | 1 | 1 | 2       | 0 | 2 |
| Geoff Strutt   | 1       | 0 | 1 | 1       | 0 | 1 |
| John Bevington | 1       | 0 | 1 | 1       | 1 | 0 |
| Ray Percy      | 1       | 0 | 1 | 1       | 0 | 1 |
| David Woolley  | 1       | 0 | 1 | 1       | 0 | 1 |

### Mary Rose v Nottingham (away)

11 September

Lost 3-4

Bryan Harral (0.5) and David Marsh (0.5) lost to Ian Vincent (0) and Richard Huxley (0) -17

John Bevington (1) lost to Peter Death (3) -7

Tim Brewer (3.5) lost to Omeid Hallam (1.5) -19

Bryan Harral lost to Ian Vincent -20

David Marsh beat Richard Huxley +16

John Bevington beat Omeid Hallam +22

Tim Brewer beat Peter Death +5

*Report by Bryan Harral and John Bevington*

Things did not start well but in a remarkable turn of events the outcome was on a knife-edge until 6pm. In the doubles Bryan got to 4b early on but then a tactical mistake and poor shooting lost us the game. In the morning singles Omeid's very accurate hitting-in soon overwhelmed Tim. In contrast John's game against Peter was taking so long it was pegged-down so we could enjoy lunch. Score 0-2. When Bryan lost the first of the afternoon's singles to Ian Vincent the score was 0-3. Then suddenly, as if by magic, wins by David, John and Tim pulled us level, and the pegged-down game would be the decider. After 1.5 hours of cat-and-mouse play (4.5 in total) Peter pegged out to give Nottingham the match.

Our thanks to Nottingham for hosting the match and their kind hospitality, and especially to Martin Beacon for a lunch of coq au vin with all the trimmings, including wine, and a choice of desserts.

*John adds:* My morning game was littered with unforced errors: taking off long or short, mishits, you name it, and when Peter did stick in a hoop it always seemed to be off his own ball. When we pegged it down my clips were on 1-back and 4-back to his 3-back and 4-back. I had laid up for 1-back giving a lift, which he had hit. The memory of all this partially evaporated over lunch. I was not optimistic about the next game, having seen Omeid in action earlier, but somehow I just waltzed round and had plenty of time to take in Tim's comeback.

When we restarted it looked as though the game could go on until dark, but Peter got round to peg and peg and pegged one out. Having hit the lift I managed to hold him off for a while but failed 3-back off a stop shot approach. The crucial moment probably came some time earlier when I had laid up for 1-back. Peter took off from near hoop 4 rather enthusiastically and his ball would have crossed the west boundary with something to spare, but it clipped one of my balls *en passant*. Such is fortune.

**John Bevington**

**8 October**