



newsletter

Handicap tournament 17/18 May



L-R George Woolhouse, winner Alan Clark with Geoff Johnson behind him, Peter Aspinall, George Collin, Bryan Harral, David Woolley, Tim Brewer

The revival of the May tournament was on a hot and sunny weekend, but the one person unable to enjoy it was the manager. Eric Audsley's absence due to illness left us with nine players, but Tim Brewer, who had volunteered for catering duties, nobly offered to make up the numbers and had to dash home to change and collect his mallet. George Collin took over the management and ensured that, apart from one instance, the four visiting players never had to play each other.

The clear winner was Alan Clark, who won all his games. Although Tim lost his first game he won three others and a fourth courtesy of Rod Ashwell who stood in for him on Saturday evening and gained a narrow win over Nick Evans. Peter Aspinall, playing in his first tournament, had three wins, two by the maximum score, and won the prize for highest net points. John Bevington claimed the Specsavers prize when he tried to peel Geoff Johnson through rover and peg him out, failing to spot that Geoff's clip was already on the peg. He managed to peg the ball out a little later and finally got home +1 on time.

The weekend was enlivened by action on the adjoining pitches: football and cricket matches on Saturday and cricket coaching on Sunday. We were also treated to views of a pair of red kites, taking advantage of the thermals. And many thanks to Tim, who doubled up as player and caterer to great effect.

Alan Clark (Watford, 6)	5/5	+59	net points
Tim Brewer (3)/Rod Ashwell (-½)	4/5	0	
Peter Aspinall (18)	3/5	+63	
George Collin (1)	3/5	+13	
John Bevington (1)	3/5	-3	
Nick Evans (Northampton, 2½)	2/5	-2	
Bryan Harral (1)	2/5	-17	
Geoff Johnson (Watford, 5)	2/5	-25	
George Woolhouse (Letchworth, 2½)	1/5	-20	
David Woolley (8)	0/5	-58	

GC B level tournament 21st May

Report by Richard Keighley

This tournament is one of 18 qualifying events for a national final at Hamptworth in October. Managed by Richard Keighley, it attracted 12 players from seven different clubs, including Bishop Monkton near Ripon.

The players were divided into two all-play-all blocks. In Block A Les Heard (Northampton) won all his games, ahead of John Edwards whose only loss was to Les. Block B was won by Ross Bagni (Leighton-Linslade) with four wins, ahead of David Widdison, also on four wins but having lost to Ross. Les beat Ross 7-5 in the playoff for first place and David beat John in the playoff for 3rd and 4th.

The players were complimentary about the lawns and facilities but especially pleased to have had lunch provided, as GC players are apparently accustomed to bring their own. Thanks to John Bevington for the catering.



Not sure who's who, but I suspect that it's Richard and Louise Taylor in action on lawn 3

Match results

Beds & Herts League v Letchworth (away)

5 April

Lost 2-4

Bryan Harral (1) and David Morris (18) lost to Jeremy Scott (3.5) and John Hall (6) -3

Tim Brewer (3) and David Woolley (8) beat Keith Rhodes (3.5) and David Mathews (10) +1T

Bryan Harral beat Jeremy Scott +9

Tim Brewer lost to Keith Rhodes -8

David Woolley lost to John Hall -4

David Morris lost to David Mathews -18

Report by Bryan Harral

It's the first match of the season. Imagine the scene, we are playing on the immaculate Letchworth lawns and Bryan and David M are pitted against Jeremy Scott and

John Hall. Jeremy goes to penult. Bryan hits in, goes around, does the two peels on the way and pegs out Jeremy's ball. Fast-forward to the end. David M and John Hall are both for rover. David has the innings, he is in front of rover with all the balls nearby ready for the peg-out. It's going to be a well-earned victory, except for one tiny detail – David blobs rover and John Hall finishes off! Oh well, it's only a game. In the other doubles game (Tim and David W) the scores are level when time is called. David W scores the golden hoop and the match is poised 1-1 at lunch.

In the afternoon it's more Dunkirk evacuation than Normandy landing, Wrest Park all but go to pieces. Bryan is the only one to win a game, and what might have been a 3-3 draw is something else.

Western Area GC League v Watford (home)
30 April **Lost 4-14**

This was the first outing for the GC league team, whose handicaps ranged from 8 to 11, and they were up against a Watford side who were much stronger on paper (handicaps from 0 to 8). Experience told, but credit to Sue and Tony Meredith who had four wins between them.



Golf croquet players in training on 7 May.

Beds & Herts AC League v Melgrave (home)
1 June **Lost 1-5**

Bryan Harral (1) and Peter Aspinall (18) lost to Robert Skeen (7) and Peter Whiting (8) -13

John Bevington (1) and Geoff Strutt (9) lost to Duncan Hector (-½) and Keith Holgate (14) -5T

Bryan Harral beat Robert Skeen +11

John Bevington lost to Duncan Hector -13

Geoff Strutt lost to Peter Whiting -4T

Peter Aspinall lost to Keith Holgate -13

As all our matches were played away last season this was the first B&H match on the new lawns, and Bryan had to consult his table to work out the bisques for the doubles under the new rule. Both of these games were lost; John and Geoff succumbing to a late flurry by Duncan after the contours round 2-back caused problems for those who reached it. Bryan made up some ground with a win in the singles, but John was unable to progress after being peeled through the last two hoops and eventually pegged out, and Melgrave won the other singles to run out easy winners. But the sun shone, and, best of all, Duncan was complimentary about the state of the lawns.

Dates for 2014

June

- 4 Group booking (evening)
- 7 Inter Club v Colchester (home)
- 11 GC league v Leighton-Linslade (home)
- 14 Club GC singles tournament
- 21* Silsoe School football tournament

July

- 4† Silsoe School parents evening
- 5-6 CA AC Advanced tournament
- 12 Mary Rose v Colchester (away)
- 16 GC league v Northampton (home)
- 19 Club GC doubles tournament

August

- 2-3 CA AC Advanced tournament
- 24-25 Lawns closed (EH event access)

September

- 13-14 CA AC Handicap tournament
- 20 EACF AC Leagues playoff

* This a big event involving hundreds of players and spectators. Although individual games are possible it is a date best avoided for matches as access to the pavilion will be restricted. You will have to park in the field beyond the pitches.

† I gather this is a parents vs children games evening.

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 included in the calendar in the pavilion and on the website. Please provide approximate start/finish times and the number of lawns required. Although we will always try and keep a lawn free for casual play this cannot be guaranteed, particularly when a CA tournament is scheduled.

EACF AC Champions Day 27 April

Wrest Park were represented by Rod Ashwell and Tim Brewer in the Advanced and B level events. Tim won his event for the third year in a row. There is a report here: http://www.angliacroquet.co.uk/2014/ac_club_champions.php



All the winners: L-R Simon Hathrell (Watford), Tim Brewer, David Matthews (Letchworth). Photo by Rod Ashwell.

Social Day 10 May

The gloomy weather forecast meant this event was in danger of postponement, but we took the risk and only had to dodge the occasional shower. Advertising in Silsoe News failed to draw the crowds, but we have gained one new member. Many thanks to Tim Brewer for providing an excellent lunch for those who came.



The horse chestnut in bloom, resembling an exotic orchid.

Inter County Championship 24-27 May

We avoided promotion, but it was a close call. Had Jon Watson hit in at a vital moment against Sussex we would probably have won that game and with it the match, giving us the sixth win. As it turned out, Sussex took the third promotion place, and good luck to them.

Saturday began with losses to Kent and Sussex and a win against Warwickshire, with the afternoon games held up by heavy showers. A 3-0 win against Wiltshire on Sunday (unbroken sunshine) was followed by losses to Berks & Oxon and Essex. The latter match saw Bryan Harral and John Bevington's first defeat at 2nd pair and Howard Bottomley and Tom Anderson at 3rd pair undergoing the Fulford experience, with Robert doing a TPO at Howard's expense and peeling his wife Susan through a few hoops en route. Tom was left with a series of long shots, and they lost -4T.

On Monday we moved to Compton and were joined by Tim Brewer. His debut was delayed as Dorset were unable to field a 3rd pair and he and partner George Collin played singles instead. After a bye in the afternoon we came up against the might of Middlesex and were soundly thrashed as they notched up two TPs. It rained lightly but insistently throughout. Not much fun for a first day. We stayed at Compton on Tuesday and won against Shropshire and Hampshire.



The team during the early stages of the last match against Hampshire. Jon Watson shows David Marsh how it's done, Bryan Harral and Tim Brewer (seated) settle for a wide join across the corner, and Tom and Howard are transfixed by their opponents' play.

Division 1

	P	W	Games
Glamorgan	10	8	21
Surrey	10	7	18
Somerset	10	6	20
Cheshire	10	6	19
Notts	10	6	16
Suffolk	10	5	16
Gloucs	10	5	13
Herts	10	5	12
Channel I (R)	10	4	13
Lancashire (R)	10	3	10
Yorkshire (R)	10	0	7

Division 2

	P	W	Games
Middlesex (P)	10	10	28
Berks&Oxon (P)	10	9	24
Sussex (P)	10	6	16
Essex	10	5	17
Bedfordshire	10	5	16
Kent	10	5	13
Hampshire	9	4	12
Warwicks	10	4	12
Dorset	10	3	10
Shropshire	10	3	9
Wiltshire	9	0	5



You can't run a tournament without them – mowing and hoop re-setting at Southwick on Sunday evening.

Our thanks to Howard for combining the roles of travel agent, team captain and team manager, the latter role much in evidence when manipulating the 3rd pair to

accommodate study leave and a request for an early finish.

Full results and various statistics are on the board in the pavilion.

Amaizing grace



Parallel lines of maize in the field opposite, which, on close inspection, appear to break the rule by meeting some way short of infinity.

John Bevington

2 June 2014

PS Members should be alerted to the potential risks when parking next to the pavilion if a cricket match is in progress. On Saturday May 31st a Flitwick batsman sent a lofted drive towards deep mid-wicket. The ball sailed over the boundary and smashed through the rear window of a parked car, a shot of some 80 yards.

It happened to be his own car. The insurance claim should make interesting reading.