



newsletter

Longman Cup - beaten by Bowdon

The campaign came to an ignominious end when we lost comprehensively to Bowdon in the final. Giving at least three bisques in every game did not help, and play in the doubles was cripplingly slow. We did not even have the opportunity to finish the last doubles, as once the match was lost manager Don Gaunt decided to do the prizegiving (by this time Bowdon, having already won the Secretary's Shield the week before, had also beaten Woking in the Inter Club final) and told the players they could finish the remaining games if they wished. Roger Deacon was not feeling well and wanted to get back before dark, so the game was conceded. A rather flat ending, but all those who took part in the long campaign can take some pride in having at least reached the final.

21 August 4th round: Wrest Park 4 Northampton 1

Peter Smith (12) and Terry Mahoney (4) beat Philip Shaw (4½) and Owen Bryce (11) +15

David Woolley (9) and David Parsons (11) beat Peter Stanfield (4½) and Dennis Shaw (16) +1(T)

David and Terry lost to Phil and Peter -18

Peter beat Dennis +8 David beat Owen +1(T)

20 September Semi-final: Wrest Park 5 Ipswich 0

Played at Newport

Terry Mahoney (4) and Paul Sharrock (8) beat Neil Jackson (4) and Olive Jackson (14) +4(T)

John Bevington (3½) and David Parsons (11) beat Celia Pearce (5) and Claire Heritage (11) +1 (T)

Terry and John beat Neil and Celia +11

Paul beat Claire +6 David beat Olive +8(T)

28 September Final: Wrest Park 1 Bowdon 4

Played at Cheltenham

Terry Mahoney (4) and Paul Sharrock (8) lost to Roger Deacon (8) and Hamish Stoddart (11) -17 (T)

John Bevington (3½) and David Parsons (11) lost to David Walters (7) and Andrew Winn (14) -22

Terry and John vs Roger and David - game conceded by Bowdon

Paul lost to Hamish -14 David lost to Andrew -22

Mary Rose - defeat in Dorset

A damn close-run thing. With everything hanging on the last turns of the last game John Bevington made three hoops on a two-ball break, but stuck in 3-back allowing Ian Scott to take a short lift shot and make the two points required. Earlier Howard and Eric had raced round but then took an age to finish, and George ground out a narrow win. In the afternoon Eric had a remarkable

game when he pegged out John (whose other ball was well advanced) and then crept round to win +2. The lawns were quite fast, if a little tricky round the hoops.

7 September Semi-final: Wrest Park 3 Parkstone 4

Played at Parkstone

Eric Audsley (1) and Howard Bottomley (2) beat John Simmonds (1) and Paul Rowcliffe (2½) +11

George Collin (3) beat Ian Scott +1(T)

John Bevington lost to Roy Edwards (2½) -13

Eric beat John +2 Howard lost to Paul +6

George lost to Roy -7 John lost to Ian -1(T)

All England area final

This fated event was originally scheduled for the weekend of 31 August/1 September. It was then moved to the weekend of the 6/7 September. Other events then intervened, and our own entrant, George Collin, stood down as he was required for the Mary Rose team. The event was held on Sunday 7 September and involved Robert Staddon and Jeremy Scott from Letchworth, David Earl from Ealing and Brian Judson from - well, we don't know but he lives in Chesham. Rod Ashwell and John Wheeler shared management duties. David grabbed two early wins and it became a showdown between him and Jeremy Scott, who had earlier allowed Bryan to come back from one and one against rover and rover before finally winning +1. David blew up in his second break which allowed Jeremy to catch up by running some long hoops, but his luck ran out and David won +5. John discovered that David's daughters aged 8 and 6 have both appeared in films made at Ealing Studios and one of them can soon be seen in "Fairy Tale: A True Story". Co-starring, among others, are Peter O'Toole and Mel Gibson.

	DE	JS	BJ	RS	Wins	Pos
David Earl (11)		+5	+19	+15	3	1
Jeremy Scott (7)	-5		+1	+1 (T)	2	2
Bryan Judson (8)	-19	-1		+5	1	3
Robert Staddon (14)	-15	-1 (T)	-5		0	4

Wrest Park tournaments

Sept 12-14 Handicap Manager: Cliff Jones

I should be able to paraphrase my official report, but can't as it hasn't been written yet. Reports are supposed to include "general atmosphere" and "amusing or unusual incidents". Well, you all know about the atmosphere of Wrest Park, so we are left with the incidents. These included that rarity, a misplaced hoop (placed in the wrong holes and not noticed until Friday evening), players getting muddled over the old and new lines (even the manager was guilty) and Tom and Judy forgetting for whom the bell tolled. The weather was

kind, there were some new faces, a wide spread of handicaps (-1 to 18) and a triple peel. The winner was John Norris (7/8), followed by Nick Evans (7/9) and Michael Lester (5/6)

Club competitions

The notion of a finals day didn't quite work as planned; two of the competitions had already been decided and the only match that actually took place was the semi-final of the Steel Bowl, in which Jon Watson beat Eric Audsley. This was enough to secure the cup, as he was already through to the final in the other half of the draw.

Steel Bowl (Advanced) **Winner: Jon Watson**
Runner-up: Eric Audsley

Archer Cup (Handicap) **Winner: Eric Audsley**
Runner-up: Steve Jones

Ashwell Cup (All England) **Winner: George Collin**
Runner-up: John Bevington

Congratulations to the winners, who will be presented with their trophies at the . . .

1998 Annual Dinner

. . . which will take place at the Leaside Hotel, Luton, on Friday 28 November, 7.30 for 8pm. New members especially welcome. To get to the hotel drive down Villa Road (see enclosed map) and continue down the private road which leads to the hotel car park. It would be appreciated if intending attendees could get in touch with Rod Ashwell (01582 504536) as soon as you can. Please consult the menu and tell Rod your preferences for starter and main course. Nominate your favourite soup and, who knows, you might be lucky.

New members Pro-Am doubles events

This was held on Sunday August 17, managed by John Wheeler, and consisted of three rounds of alternate stroke doubles and some golf croquet, with tea breaks punctuated by village gossip. Peter and Elaine Newman, Mike and Jan Jarrard, Mary Russell, Judy Kitchiner, Vip Peirce and Peter Berry were kept busy by their "professional" minders, and the Newmans scooped the magnificent prizes, Peter winning the Golf Croquet and Elaine the doubles.

The follow-up took place on September 21. A new format - handicap doubles, full game, two-hour time limits, five bisques (Ams for the use of), four peels allowed, Ams score to count if games unfinished, Pros score to count if tied. I state these here because the first game had revealed some differences in interpretation but this was resolved over lunch. The nine pros (I won't list them all) partnered Vip Peirce, Peter Berry, Peter and Elaine Newman and Irene Davis. And what became of it at last? Peter Newman and Irene won all their games and received Basic Laws books as prizes (there will be a test later). Peter Berry made five hoops in a turn with the aid of a single bisque. To quote the official report: *"The turn was ended when Peter was advised to use a bisque after a readjustment at 2-back. Unfortunately time was called seconds before the adjustment was completed and George reminded John W that bisques after time were not*

allowed. Oh bother!" This law is not to be found in the Basic Laws; to find it you have to be aware of the Regulations for Tournaments, in particular paragraph 13 subsection (d). And you thought croquet was easy! John Wheeler has requested comments on the format with a view to encouraging beginners and improving their skills - please let him know what you think.

At this point we would like to offer an invitation to new members to share the delights of the annual . . .

Christmas Cracker

. . . to be held on Sunday 14 December. A series of 4 one-hour games starting at 9.30 sharp, punctuated by a break for mince pies and liquid refreshment and followed by a traditional Christmas dinner in the Star & Garter at about 2pm. The final format will depend on the number of entries, so if you are interested please ring the manager, Rod Ashwell (01582 504536) before the middle of November. It is a convivial affair.

Indoor croquet

There will be four tournaments at Soham (just off the A142 about 12 miles NE of Cambridge) during the winter. Dates are 8/9 Nov, 17/18 Jan, 14/15 Feb (a special Centenary event) and 7/8 March. Doubles play, short croquet, one hour games with clocks. We can enter one team for each of the weekends, and there may be room for a second team for the Nov, Jan and March weekends. You get at least three games a day, it costs £12.50 per player per weekend, and you could play champions like Clarke and Fulford. If you are interested in next year's events please ring Terry Mahoney (01727 863791) as soon as possible.

Beds and Herts League

The league is run as an all play all, with 2 points for a win and 1 for a draw and was won by Letchworth. For the record: Letchworth 10 points, Meldreth 7, St. Albans and Colworth 6, Enfield 5, Cassiobury and Wrest Park 4. As we beat Cassiobury I suppose we should not feel obliged to share the wooden spoon.

Groundwork

Lawns 3 and 4 have been scarified, overseeded and received 10 tons of top dressing. The fact that the last operation was completed in a day without the need for the usual blood, toil, tears and sweat was due to our Treasurer sanctioning the expense of a powered spreader. Many thanks to all who helped, especially to Tim Brewer and his Herculean effort with the dragmat.

John Bevington

27 October 1997