



newsletter

1998 Annual General Meeting

This will be held at 7.30pm on 5 March 1998 in the function room (upstairs) at the Star and Garter, Silsoe. The proposed agenda is as follows:

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of 1997 AGM and matters arising
3. Reports:
 - Chairman**
 - Secretary**
 - Treasurer**
 - Tournament Secretary**
 - Team Captain**
 - Groundsman**
 - Publicity Officer**
 - Development Officer**
 - Equipment Officer**
4. Election of officers
5. Club activities for 1998
6. Catering
7. Any other business

The minutes of the 1997 AGM are shown below:

1. Apologies for absence

Joan Miller, Mary Coleman, Vera Blunt, Susan S?, Betty Shaw

2. Minutes of 1996 AGM and matters arising

Minutes agreed and accepted.

3. Reports

Chairman:

- 6 out of 10 for year's performance
- congratulations to John Bevington, 3rd in All England final
- membership low but high hopes for planned membership drive

Secretary: No report

Treasurer:

- report attached to notice of AGM
- new annual subscription £36.50 agreed
- in accounts, grant/loan means grant and loan
- in 1997 budget, lawn care includes machinery hire

Tournament secretary:

- requested to avoid putting people from same club against each other
- asked to put people's full names on results sheets
- agreed to have a finals day for club tournaments
- there will be no additional charge for juniors in their first tournament

Groundsman:

- report provided at AGM
- lawns to be verti-drained next week, 1"wide x 12"deep (last tining/spiking work done 2.5 yrs ago)
- slab laying to be done at back of changing room hut

Team captain:

- report attached to notice of AGM
- All England full report in CA Croquet Gazette
- agreed to enter EACF local league in spite of our small membership

Golf croquet:

- now playing Mondays and Wednesdays
- number playing varies but stays about 9

Publicity+development:

- 5 newsletters produced
- about £150 made at Spring and Autumn events at Wrest Park
- it was suggested that we have a regular Sunday afternoon competition
- recruitment campaign planned for Spring 1997

Equipment:

- Allett mower arranged to be serviced by Rogers
- New balls will be ordered after inspection next weekend. Our aim is to maintain the existing standard, to increase it would be very expensive
- equipment hut to be cleaned out and hoops repainted next weekend
- excellent new centre pegs made by Rod's brother (many thanks!)
- investigate if white rubber mallet can be obtained

4. Election of Officers

The result of the elections was:

Chairman	John Wheeler
Chairman of meetings	Peter Smith
Secretary	John Bevington
Treasurer	Eric Audsley
Tournament secretary	Eric Audsley
Groundsman	George Collin
Team captain	George Collin
WI representative	Dorothy Craggs
Publicity officer	John Bevington
Development officer	Tom Anderson
Equipment officer	John Wheeler
High bisquers representative	Tim Brewer
EACF representative	George Collin

5. Club Activities for 1997

- competitions: same as 1996 plus Sunday afternoon?
- recruitment campaign to be held in early June

6. Any other business

- need to ensure beer is not out of date
- consider entry fees to the park for recruitment day

The following dates were agreed:

15-16 March:	work weekend
5-6 April:	reserve work weekend

10 April: lawns open for season
20 April: Easter Egg tournament
24 April: draw for club competitions at S&G.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm

Reports for the 1998 AGM

Secretary and Publicity Officer's Report

by John Bevington

1997 was a little different from recent years in that we decided to make a real effort to increase the club membership by having two Open Days. This meant a deal of work in arranging advertising in the local press and mounting a local poster campaign. The results were encouraging, but given the expense involved it is unlikely that we shall be repeating the exercise this year. As some of the posters for the Open Days were left up for some time and still managed to prompt enquiries after the Open Days were past it might well be worth distributing some posters to suitable sites early in the season as a means of publicising our existence to the general public. From time to time we also receive notes from the CA which give details of persons who have made enquiries regarding local clubs. I dutifully send a letter extolling the virtues of Wrest Park and enclosing leaflets and anything else that might prompt them into a visit and parting with a subscription, but to date there has been little response. It is not easy to judge how much time and effort should be expended on following up these introductions.

Last year we were also able to improve our on-site publicity through the loan of a display board from English Heritage, which has been used for posters advertising major events such as the Eastern Championships to visitors. Although this probably does not do very much in terms of attracting new members it can help in explaining the game and encouraging interest, as do the club leaflets. The local press were contacted prior to the Eastern Championships but there was no evidence of any interest and I can't imagine things changing unless we can persuade an editor or proprietor to take up the game. We were also enveigled into a Channel 4 game show whose name escapes me, which meant hanging around the park for the best part of an afternoon and evening waiting for some would-be players. Eventually a 4WD arrived containing a rather fetching blonde and her driver, who were escorted down to the lawns, played for a while and then left. It turned out that they were the ones who were supposed to be tracking down the real players, who of course failed to turn up. Needless to say we did not succeed in securing a fee of any kind.

One aspect of publicity we may need to consider further is the need for a proper map showing how to get to the lawns. I recently had sight of a letter from one of the All England area finalists, in which he stated: *"The directions for finding the lawns at Wrest Park were inadequate with the result that I walked about 2 miles in country fields before coming across another contestant from the High Wycombe club who was similarly lost and we managed to find the lawns together."* I could not help smiling inwardly at this image of a white-clad figure, walking between the fields of stubble and ascending the hill as he followed the path towards Upper Gravenhurst, possibly to meet at the top another figure coming in the

opposite direction. It must have been very reminiscent of the scene in Jacques Tati's 'Traffic' where we see M. Hulot walking down a straight and seemingly endless Route Nationale carrying a petrol can. He sees a figure in the distance, walking slowly towards him. As this other person materialises out of the heat haze he too is seen to be carrying a petrol can . . .

Other reports are included with this newsletter.

Notes from Committee Meeting on 29 January 1998

- Last season's new members to have their subscriptions waived for this season. Club to pay this season's CA levy (£5.40 per head)
- Arrange an internal competition for new members for this season (format to be discussed)
- Prepare posters advertising club and this year's events for distribution to libraries and schools/leisure centres
- Obtain copy of new Commentary on the Laws
- Prepare a map for tournament entrants showing access to lawns from car park, and advise Bill Arliss
- Write to Bedford Modern School asking for their season's schedule and offer of a friendly match
- 1998 full subscription agreed at £42.90 (£37.50 plus £5.40 CA levy)
- Wrest Park to bid for the 1999 Selectors' Weekend (10-12 September)

1998 Easter Egg

This early season pipe-opener is a spring companion to the Christmas Cracker and will take place on Sunday 19 April. There will be a separate event for new members. Please ring the manager, Rod Ashwell (01582 504536), if you are interested.

CA News

We have received copies of the 1998 Fixtures Book, the Jan 98 issues of the Croquet Gazette and World Croquet, plus subscription forms and lists of items for sale. Check the plastic box file in the pavilion.

John Bevington

18 February 1998