

Wrest Park Croquet Club – milestones and tournament winners 1961-2001

1961

Wrest Park Croquet Club is formed by employees of the National Institute for Agricultural Engineering (NIAE) and appears for the first time in the Croquet Gazette's list of clubs.

1962

During the winter of 1961-62 the club's first four sets of mild steel hoops are made by the members at a material cost of £4/6/1d.

1963

The club's constitution is written and approved. The NIAE administration agrees to the creation of four courts north of the Long Water.

1964

Wrest Park win the Longman Cup for the first time, beating Parsons Green 3-2 at Hurlingham in the final, the team consisting of Vic Rees (6), Anto Davies (7), Joe Clarke (7) and Tom Marchant (9).

The club buys some Jaques Eclipse balls at £6/10/6d per set.

1965

The club reach the final of the Longman Cup, losing to Roehampton.

1966

In April the club buy a 1936 Dennis mower (36 inch cut) for £72/10/6d. This gives 30 years service before being sold to the Hall and Duck Trust in 1998 for £100.

Wrest Park win the Longman Cup again, beating Roehampton 4-0. The team was V.Rees, Harry Green, T.Marchant, A.Davies.

Club members begin entering CA tournaments when A.Davies and John Wheeler play in the Cheltenham October weekend.

1967

Wrest Park starts to make its mark on the tournament scene when J.Wheeler wins two trophies at the Nottingham week and V.Rees and H.Green both win at the Challenge and Gilbey.

1968

1969

1970

1971

The club win the Longman Cup for the third time, beating Hurlingham 3-1 in the final. The team was Anto Davies (3), Colin Cumming (4½), Trevor Wilkins and Norman Davren.

1972

Three more sets of mild steel hoops are made - the cost of materials is now £7.95, a doubling in price compared to the previous sets. Jaques Eclipse balls are now £10.95 per set, and a set of clips cost £2.60

This year saw the first Wrest Park tournaments:

23-25 June - Handicap - 18 entries

(A) R.Bateson (1½) (B) B. Keen (6½) (C) H.Bolton (6)

22-24 September - Handicap (Invitation) - 16 entries

(A) H.Bolton (2½) (B) B.Keen (2½)

The club wins the Apps award for services to croquet.

1973

18-20 May - Handicap

(A) N.Davren (4½) (B) J.Wheeler (-1½)

21-23 September - Handicap

(A) N.Davren (3) (B) R.Crane (C) G.Drake (6)

Vic Rees and John Wheeler reach the final of the Open Doubles Championship, losing to Humphrey Hicks and John Soutter.

The club win the Betty Pritchard award for producing referees.

1974

7-9 June - Handicap - 21 entries

(A) B. Neal (-2½) (b) R. Eades (7) (C) R.Forth (11)

20-22 September - Handicap - 21 entries

(A) A. Davies (5½) (B) D.Openshaw (6) (C) H.Green (3)

The club, representing Bedfordshire, enter the Inter Counties for the first time and finish third equal out of six.

Wrest Park win the Inter-Club for the first and so far only time, the team of V.Rees, H.Green, B.Keen and J.Wheeler beating Colchester in the final.

1975

16-18 May - Handicap

The tournament was abandoned after the first two rounds due to flooding.

July - Handicap (Swiss)

1. E.Bell 2. A.Davies 3. A.Dumont

19-21 September - Handicap - 21 entries

(A) T.Wood (3) (B) T.Anderson (9) (C) N. Robinson (0)

1976

21-23 May - Handicap - 21 entries

(A) E.Audsley (7) (B) H.Green (3) (C) P.Barlow (12)

July - Advanced - 18 entries

(A) 2 or below - E.Bell (B) 2½ or above - H.Green

This is the first ever open weekend tournament in the CA calendar.

24-26 September - Handicap - 21 entries

(A) J.Coutts (2) (B) D.Openshaw (-½) (C) B.Keen (2)

Bedfordshire and Midland Counties tie for the Inter-Counties Championship.

1977

20-22 May - Handicap - 21 entries

(A) E.Bell (1) (B) H.Green (1) (C) E.Audsley (5)

July - Advanced

(A) B.Neal (B) T.Wood (C) T.Anderson

September - Handicap - 28 entries

(A) B.Harral (10) (B) J.Coutts (2½) (C) J.Maude (6)
(D) E.Audsley (4)

Bedfordshire win the Inter-Counties with six matches out of seven. The team was V.Rees, J.Wheeler, H.Green, N.Davren, A. Dumont, T.Anderson, E.Audsley and B.Keen.

In October a start is made on the building of the new pavilion.

1978

19-21 May - Handicap - 21 entries

(A) B.Keen (1½) (B) M.Tompkinson (5) (C) B.Harral (8)

7-9 July - Advanced - 32 entries

(A) S.Hemsted (B) G.Roberts (C) S.Battison (D) R.Eades

22-24 September - Handicap

(A) I.Bond (3½) (B) T.Anderson (5) (C) J.Wheeler (1)
(D) Mrs J.Anderson (13)

A new club constitution is drafted and approved.

1979

18-20 May - Handicap - 24 entries

(A) M.Tompkinson (4) (B) T.Haste (5½) (C) Mrs J.Anderson (11)

6-8 July - Advanced - 32 entries

(A) M.Murray (B) I.Bond (C) A.Girling (D) E.Audsley

September - Handicap - 35 entries

(A) B.Harral (6) (B) J.Wheeler (1) (C) R.Jones

(5½)

(D) R.Smith (10) (E) D.Foulser (0)

In the Open Doubles Championship, J.Wheeler and H.Green lose in the final to B.Neal and S.Hemsted.

1980

May - Handicap - no record

4-6 July - Advanced - 24 entries

(A) S.Mulliner (B) J.Rose (C) S.Battison

19-21 September - Handicap - 35 entries

(A) B.Keen (1) (B) J.Wheeler (1) (C) G.Roberts (-½)
(D) P.Cordingley (4) (E) Mrs M.Cotterell (10)

Wrest Park are successful in two CA individual events when **Vic Rees wins the Chairman's Salver** and **Mike Wilson (9) wins the All England Handicap.**

1981

15-17 May - Handicap - 21 entries

(A) M.Cotterell (8) (B) R.Allim (6*) (C) V.Rees (0)

3-5 July - Advanced - 25 entries

(A) D.Openshaw (B) E.Bell (C) P.Alvey

18-20 September - Handicap - 35 entries

(A) A.Girling (8) (B) Mrs J.Anderson (8) (C) R.Martin (13)
(D) R.Smith (5½) (E) Mrs P.Hague (6½)

Harry Green wins the Veteran's Championship.

1982

14-16 May - Handicap - 35 entries

(A) D.Goulding (4) (B) E.Audsley (3) (C) T.Anderson (3½)
(D) Mrs J.Anderson (6½) (E) G.Collin (6)

2-4 July - Advanced - 32 entries

(A) S.Mulliner (B) T.Haste (C) R.Hilditch (D) J.Coutts

17-19 September - Handicap - no record

The opening of the house and grounds by English Heritage leads to discussions about charging for the use of the lawns, and an annual rental is agreed which allows club members free access to the park at weekends.

1983

13-15 May - Handicap - 32 entries

(A) B.Harral (5) (B) M.Coward (-½) (C) T.Harrison (8)
(D) J Guest (3½)

1-3 July - Advanced - 36 entries

(A) P.Cordingley (B) R.Hilditch (C) J.Coutts
(D) F.Rogerson

16-18 September - Handicap - 35 entries

(A) R.Allim (1½) (B) C. Irwin (0) (C) B.Storey (5)
(D) J.Wilson (5) (E) H.Bottomley (2)

1984

18-20 May - Handicap - 16 entries

(A) J.Wolfe (5) (B) Mrs M.Collin (4)

July - Advanced - no record

21-23 September - Handicap - 41 entries

(A) Mrs M.Collin (2) (B) D.Goacher (5½)
(C) E.Audsley (5½) (D) R.Sutherland (7)

Swiss block winner: T.Harrison

1985

17-19 May - Handicap - 24 entries

(A) T.Anderson (1) (B) H.Bottomley (1½) (C) A.Kirby (5)

July - Advanced - no record

September - Handicap - 24 entries

(A) W.Lamb (3) (B) R.England (12) (C) D.Goacher (4½)
(D) N.Gale (4)

Judy Anderson wins a Sports Council award for services to croquet.

Wrest Park host the All England Handicap Final for the first time, the winner being A.Sedcole (8).

1986

16-18 May - Handicap - 16 entries

(A) D.Trotman (11) (B) P.Gregg (6)

4-6 July - Advanced - 21 entries

(A - Swiss) P.Cordingley (B) D.Reeve

September - Handicap - 24 entries

(A) D Warhurst (6) (B) W.Wortley (18) (C) G.Collin (3½)

Robert England (10) wins the All England Handicap.

1987

13-15 May - Handicap - 23 entries

(A) H.Bottomley (½) (B - Swiss) M.Ansell

3-5 July - Advanced

(A) D.Reeve (B) T.Anderson (C) E.Bell

15-16 August - Advanced - 9 entries

Winner: P.West Runner-up: M.Hutchison

18-20 September - The Peel Memorials - 26 entries

Winner: D.Appleton Runner-up: R.Jones

The new changing room is constructed.

1988

13-15 May - Handicap

(A) D.Appleton (B) P.Smith (C) H.Bottomley

1-3 July Advanced

Winner: D.Openshaw

13-14 August - Advanced

(A) M.Coward (B) P.Elliot

16-18 September - Handicap - 24 entries

(A) A.Judge (9) (B) S.Comish (3½) (C) D.Hector (8)

1989

19-21 May - Handicap

(A) D.Hector (B) D.Appleton (C - Swiss) A.Parry

7-9 July - Advanced - Swiss

Winner: B.Aldridge Runner-up: D. Openshaw

19-20 August - Advanced

(A) B.Hallam (B) J.Watson (C) A.Parry

22-24 September - Handicap - 27 entries

(A) D.Hector (4) (B) D.Powell (15) (C - Swiss) T.Burge

Wrest Park are runners-up in the Mary Rose, losing to Bristol. The team was E.Audsley, J.Wheeler, V.Rees and J.Watson

1990

18-20 May - Handicap - 30 entries

(A) J.Coutts (B) T.Burge (C - Swiss) D.Hector

6-8 July - Advanced - 16 entries

Winner: P.Cordingley Runners-up: J.Coutts and E.Bell

18-19 August - Advanced

(A) D.Reeve (B) A.Craxton

21-23 September - Handicap

(A) J.Goddard (B) R.Ward (C - Swiss) J.Dyer

Wrest Park lose to Leicester in the Longman Cup final. In the team were J.Bevington, A.Craxton, P.Sharrock and R.Ward.

1991

17-19 May - Handicap

(A) H.Williams (B) R.Brown (C) P.Sharrock
(D) J.Bevington

5-7 July - Advanced

(A) C.Jones (B) J.Ruddock

17-18 August - Advanced

Winner: J.Watson Runner-up: B.Hallam

September - Handicap - no record

1992

15-17 May - Handicap - 28 entries

(A) G.Fowler (B) I.Mantle (C) Miss
C.Townsend
(D) E.Audsley

10-12 July - Advanced (Patagonian system)

Winner: G.Willard Runner-up: B.Hallam

15-16 August - Advanced

Winner: D.Harrison-Wood Runner-up: D.Hector

19-20 September - Handicap

1. J. Norris 2. Mrs J.Anderson 3. D.Taylor

1993

21-23 May - Handicap (Swiss)

1. L. Tibble 2. M.O'Connell 3. H.Bottomley and
J.Bevington

July - Advanced

Winners: D.Hector and G.Collin

14-15 August - Advanced (the Matterhorn)

1. D.Hector 2. H.Bottomley and J.Wheeler

17-19 September - Handicap

(A) D.Powell (B) D.Cornelius (C - Swiss)
I.Gatenby

1994

20-22 May - Handicap

(A) P.Windred (B) D.Tutt (C) R.Pitt

July - Advanced

Winner: P.Cordingley

13-14 August Advanced (Swiss)

Winner: B.Hallam Runner-up: W. Steadman

September - Handicap - no record

Wrest Park enter the 1995 Secretary's Shield.

Although only second in the Beds & Herts
League, winners St Albans were ineligible as the
club was not affiliated to the CA, and Wrest Park
went on to win the East Anglian Federation
League winners play-off.

1995

19-21 May - Handicap

(A) B.Kennedy (B) A.Burn (C) K.Ham

7-9 July Advanced

(A) D.Openshaw (B) I.Mantle

12-13 August - Advanced - 23 entries

1. B.Hallam 2. L.Tibble 3. I.Mantle

15-17 September - Handicap (Swiss)

Under 2½: I.Mantle 3 to 8: N.Evans 9 to 12:
J.Rusted

**The club wins the Mary Rose for the first
time**, beating Nottingham in the final. The team
was Howard Bottomley, Eric Audsley, George
Collin and Rod Ashwell. Wrest Park also reach
the Inter-Club final, losing to Woking, and the
Secretary's Shield final, losing to Dyffryn.

1996

17-19 May - Handicap

(A) N.Evans (B) D.Harley (C - Swiss) R.Ivill

5-7 July - Advanced

1. P.Cordingley 2. J.Walters 3. E.Audsley

10-11 August - Advanced

Winner: E. Duckworth Runners-up: A.Leggate
and B.Hallam

13-15 September - Handicap (Swiss)

Winner: P.Allnut Runner-up: N.Evans

1997

16-18 May - Handicap

(A) R.Hall (12) (B) R.Ivill (14) (C - Swiss)
J.Hall (12)

4-6 July - Advanced (Swiss)

Winner: G.Fowler Runner-up: G.Hopewell

9-10 August - Advanced

Winner: C.Tuthill Runners-up: B.Sidebottom
and R.Ashwell

12-14 September - Handicap

1. J.Norris 2. N.Evans 3. M.Lester

**The club hosts the Eastern Championship for
the first time**, the winner being S.Comish, and
are runners-up in the Longman Cup, losing to
Bowdon in the final.

1998

15-17 May - Handicap

(A) J.Hall (B) J.Davies (C) B.Kennedy

3-5 July - Advanced

(A - 2 or below) G.Fowler (B - 2½ and above)
M.Roberts

22-23 August - Advanced

Winner: J.Dyer Runner-up: D.Kibble

18-20 September - Handicap

(A) J.Norris (B) T.Mahoney (C) J.Shelton

**Wrest Park host the All England Handicap
final**, the event being won by J. Gibbons (9). The
club reach the final of the Mary Rose, losing to
Nottingham.

The restriction on weekday daytime play is lifted.

1999

21-23 May - Handicap - 26 entries

(A) N.Parish (12) (B) M.Gardner (12) (C) D.Jenkinson (8)

2-4 July - Advanced

(A) D.Openshaw (B) G.Hopewell (C) D.Tutt

21-22 August - Advanced - 24 entries

Winner: Nick Evans (after five-way tie)

17-19 September - Handicap (Egyptian)

(A) K.Davies (B) G.Dodd (C) D.Harley

Bedfordshire are Inter-Counties Division 2 champions, winning 8 out of 10 matches, and **Wrest Park win the Mary Rose for the second time**, beating Sussex County in the final. The team was E.Audsley, G.Collin, J.Wheeler and R.Ashwell.

The club host the Inter-Counties Golf Croquet Championship, won by Kent.

2000

19-21 May - Handicap

(A) J.Hall (B) J.Wheeler (C) M.Leach

7-9 July - Advanced

(A - Swiss) Winner; R.Brown Runner-up:
N.Evans (B) Winner: J.Potter Runner-up:
A.Edwards

19-20 August - Advanced

Winner: T.LeMoignan Runner-up: N.Evans

15-17 September - Handicap (Swiss)

(A) E.Audsley (B) K.Davies

Wrest Park host the Eastern Championship, won by D.Maugham, **and the Inter-Counties Golf Croquet Championship**, won by Essex

The club purchase a new Sisis scarifier.

2001

17-19 May - Handicap

(A) C.McKenzie (B) P.Newman

6-8 July - Advanced

(A) R.White (B) J.Bevington (C) R.Alexander

18-19 August - Advanced - 25 entries

Winner: Brian Hallam Runner-up: H.Bottomley

14-16 September - Handicap (Egyptian) - 16 entries

Winner: Dennis Graham Runner-up: George Collin

Bedfordshire finish bottom of Division 1 in the Inter-Counties and are relegated. Wrest Park reach the final of the Mary Rose for the fifth time.

Ben Ashwell (9) wins the All England Handicap.

Wrest Park host the All England Golf Croquet Handicap Final.