

Wrest Park Croquet Club Newsletter - October 1990

Internal competitions

The Steel Bowl (Advanced) was won by Howard Bottomley, who beat Eric Audsley, and the Archer Cup (Handicap) by Cliff Jones, who beat Rodney Ward. Our congratulations to the winners.

External competitions

by John Bevington

All England handicap

John Bevington and Cliff Jones went to Colchester to contest the area finals on September 1.) John went out in the first round losing narrowly to Ron McCoig, but Cliff had better luck and beat Nick Harris in the final the next day. He then went on to the national final at Himley Hall on September 22/23 and ended runner-up, the event being won by Richard White from Leicester. More congratulations to Cliff, who was reduced to 3½ and must be in the running for the CA's most improved player award.

Longman Cup • a hoop too far?

Having beaten Letchworth, Compton and Ipswich the team (John Bevington, Adrian Craxton, Rodney Ward and Paul Sharrock) arrived at Himley Hall on September 29 for the semi-final against Bath. A dismal day, cold and wet. No manager in evidence, and no ROT either. Maurice Boardman (Bath) kindly volunteered as the only qualified referee amongst those present, the other teams being Worcester and Leicester.

We had a fairly easy time of it against Bath and won 4-1, returning the next day for the final against Leicester, for whom the White brothers were playing well. Chris Hudson had been rung the night before and came to referee and manage. The morning doubles, played in continuous rain, were split 1-1.

The afternoon doubles, which pitted John and Adrian against the White brothers (with a bisque) was dramatic:

- 1 Adrian (Y) played to the East boundary.
- 2 Richard (Bl) laid a short tice
- 3 John (R) hit and did a split approach to hoop 1. After consultation he attempted the hoop, ran it and continued to 4-back, sticking in a short hoop with Yellow close by.
- 4 David (Bk) shot from B baulk and missed
- 5 John made 4-back and penultimate, but in making a leave sent Yellow off the West boundary leaving Blue with a rush on Red towards corner 4.
- 6 Richard only nicked Red and (memory fails here) ended up close to Black, Black having a rush to the middle of the South boundary

- 7 Adrian shot at Blue and Black and missed
- 8 David cut Blue halfway to hoop 1, rolled up, made it and went round, peeling Red through rover and pegging it out.

Poor Adrian never took croquet and we lost -13. Maybe I shouldn't have made penultimate. Maybe Red should have played into corner 3 on turn 7. Maybe when you go to 4-back on the third turn your state of mind isn't as composed as it needs to be when considering such things.

Paul recovered some form to beat Gary Yates +17 using sensible defence when required, so it all depended on Rodney's game against Richard Whiting. Richard took full advantage of his bisque and took a controlled 4 ball break to 4-back (or was it penultimate?) Rodney was becalmed for a while but got back into the game, only to fall victim to an incomplete knowledge of the laws when, after time was called, he tried to peg out his rover ball to level the scores, his other ball being on 4-back with Richard on penultimate and peg.

Plus 1 on time!

Beds and Herts League

We beat Colworth 2-1 at Wrest Park (an evening fixture) and drew 3-3 with Newport on September 30, this match described by *George Collin*:

Mike Hammelev and Hugh Williams stormed round in an hour to win their doubles against Ron Atkinson and Don Cornelius + 25. They were able to watch George Collin and Rod Ashwell's game against Justin Goddard and John Dakam go close to time, George and Rod throwing away an early dominating lead to lose -8. Justin attempted a triple peel but only succeeded in giving George 4-back. (Rod had peeled George through 3-back. George would have advised against this but was engrossed in a scarifier at the time).

In the afternoon singles Justin beat George +16TP, the triple starting from an unpromising situation and continuing with drama at every hoop. Although this game was played in a thunderstorm it was nothing compared to the downpour that followed. The other games were abandoned for a time due to flooding, but the value of well laid lawns was evident in the speed with which they drained.

Mike's and Hugh's singles were unmemorable (at least to your reporter). All the games were finished -Mike beating Don +14 and Ron beating Hugh +6 -but Rod spun out his game against John until the turn after the call of time, winning +15. He would have finished earlier but ran rover backwards on an Irish peel to get position to run it (i.e. peeled through the croqueted ball through the hoop as well), then, despite being in perfect position to run rover legitimately, he retired to the corner and was about to put his clip on the stick when his opponent pointed out the mistake. The gallery was greatly amused.

Thus endeth the playing season. Now let us rake.