



newsletter

Inter Counties - 23-26 May 1998

The Inter Counties is the biggest and best tournament in the calendar. It is a doubles event played to advanced rules with time limits. Each match involves three pairs from two counties, so matches are resolved by 3-0 or 2-1 in all cases. The event is played at Southwick, near Brighton (11 lawns) and Compton, Eastbourne (5 lawns). There are 21 counties in two divisions; Bedford play in the second division. What follows is an abridged account of the 1998 campaign by captain John Wheeler.

The Third Rank by Captain Wallace

My partner and I were transported to Hove in air-conditioned comfort, stopping at Devil's Dyke for a picnic lunch and a glass or two of our chauffeur's wine. We dined at Harry's English Restaurant and tried his bottles of house red then completed our training schedule with a game of cards and a bottle or two.

Day 1 - We beat Essex 3-0. All games go to time, two were wins by +1. In the third game Terry was pegged out by John Wentworth who also pegged out leaving JWh on two back with Justin on four. Justin's hitting was superb and before the ultimate point was made both players were on rover. The rest of the day produced just one game win when Jon and Howard beat Celia and Richard Kimmerling. The CA pair in the third game were steadiness personified; we missed, they hit.

Day 2 - Mostly a good day with two 3-0 wins which were offset by a 0-3 loss. We had a bit of luck against Warwickshire when Sam Tudor played with the wrong ball in corner one which allowed me the opportunity for a break to four back. Had a curry evening in the local tandoori restaurant followed by the usual team training.

Day 3 - We 'should have had' Yorkshire but lost two game by -1T. The start against Dublin was delayed because they had a long extension period in one of their games in the previous round. Terry and I had an exciting game where we were several points down with minutes to go but a long hit in followed by three hoops allowed us to peg out an opponent. The rover hoop was made after a roll-up with the ball to be pegged from a position wired by the stick. The remaining opponent hit in but failed to complete so we did. Frascati's again tonight. We had not realised that it was Pasquale's last night as proprietor until the gong sounded for a speech followed by communal singing of O Sole Mio.

Day 4 - High speed chase to Compton where some of the team and followers toured Eastbourne while others lounged around until lunchtime. We win three tight games against Kent; all pairs came from behind. We end the tournament knackered but happy. We forego the usual fish and chips and head for home.

Summary - Our bankers were Jon and Howard who lost just one of their nine games together. George and Tom

and Terry and I did well with six wins but were perhaps a little unlucky to lose to Yorkshire, both games were -1T. Had we won just one of these games we would have clinched promotion but perhaps at this stage of our development we are best suited to division two. I would like to thank my partner Terry for his valuable assistance. I also thank Judy, who played in one match, and Enid (Howard's mum) for their support and encouragement.

Results - The tables show the number of matches won (each county plays all the others) and the number of games won. For Division 1 the numbers of games does not include those from the last round. The bottom three counties from Div 1 are relegated and the top three from Div 2 are promoted.

Division 1			Division 2		
	Matches	Games		Matches	Games
Avon	9	23	Notts	8	23
Surrey	8	18	Essex	7	19
Dorset	7	17	Yorks	7	19
Gloucs	6	16	Beds	6	20
Middx	5	13	Warks	6	15
Lancs	5	11	Kent	5	17
Cheshire	4	14	CA Select	5	17
Sussex	4	10	Suffolk	4	11
Northants	4	10	Dublin	3	10
Berks	2	9	Herts	3	6
Glam	1	5	Ch Isles	1	8

Bedfordshire beat Essex, Warks, Kent, Dublin, Herts, Ch Isles (all 3-0), and lost to Notts (0-3), Yorks (1-2), CA Select (0-3) and Suffolk (1-2)

	Played	Won	Lost
1st pair			
Jon Watson (-½)	9	8	1
Howard Bottomley (2)			
Jon Watson (-½)	1	0	1
Terry Mahoney (3½)			
2nd pair			
Tom Anderson (2)	10	6	4
George Collin (2½)			
3rd pair			
John Wheeler (2)	9	6	3
Terry Mahoney (3½)			
Howard Bottomley (2)	1	0	1
Judy Anderson (5)			

Match results

Beds/Herts League vs St. Albans (home)

25 April

Drew 3-3

Wrest Park	H'cap	St Albans	H'cap	WP score
George Collin	3	Terry Mahoney	4	-8
Elaine Newman	22D17	Chris Frost	12	
Peter Berry	18D17	David Kitson	24D17	+1
Peter Newman	18D17	Dick Barnard	14	
George Collin	3	Terry Mahoney	4	+15
Elaine Newman	22	David Kitson	24	-?
Peter Berry	18	Dick Barnard	14	+21
Peter Newman	18	Chris Frost	12	-17

The wettest April this century, it finally stopped raining as play was due to start and the day ended in glorious sunshine. The captain's strategy of introducing fresh blood at least gained us a point for a draw. The match clashed with a St. George's day special event - Tudor archery between the club house and the lawns. John Wheeler was appointed referee in charge of the high bisque doubles, but unfortunately he had left when the players reported the game had finished as a draw. Playing the singles as full bisque games with a base of 10 resulted in the afternoon games finishing in good time.

Mary Rose vs Northampton (away)

6 June

Won 6-1

Wrest Park	H'cap	Northampton	H'cap	WP score
Eric Audsley	1	Derek Humphrey	3½	+5
Howard Bottomley	2	Norman Hicks	3	
George Collin	2½	Philip Shaw	4	+16
Rod Ashwell	2½	Leslie Carrick	12	+13
Eric Audsley	1	Derek Humphrey	3½	+2
Howard Bottomley	2	Norman Hicks	3	+12
Rod Ashwell	2½	Philip Shaw	4	-20
George Collin	2½	Leslie Carrick	12	+20

Both Eric and Howard were keen to finish early - what social lives! As it was the match was over at 2.45, all games by 3.20 and one ball games ensued until tea arrived at 4.00. Many thanks to John Wheeler for his support. Next stop Letchworth!

Longman Cup vs Ipswich (away)

13 June

Won 3-2

Wrest Park	H'cap	Ipswich	H'cap	WP score
John Bevington	3½	Jill Waters	3½	+10
Peter Berry	16	Claire Heritage	9	
Terry Mahoney	3½	Celia Pearce	5	-10
Peter Newman	18D17	Neil Thatcher	16	
John Bevington	3½	Jill Waters	3½	-4
Terry Mahoney	3½	Celia Pearce	5	
Peter Berry	16	Claire Heritage	9	+26
Peter Newman	18	Neil Thatcher	16	+14(T)

Shortly after 5.30, as the rain continued to pour down, Peter Newman won his game and with it the match - a great comeback after his frustrating morning doubles. The team was a classic Longman Cup formation, with two relative beginners and two old campaigners. John

and Peter had the luxury of some bisques in their doubles and were always ahead of their opponents who had trouble hitting in. In the afternoon Peter whitewashed Claire (for the first time in her life - will anyone ever forget?), but John and Terry lost narrowly after taking an early lead and pegging out Celia when Jill was for rover. During the afternoon we could hear the rehearsals for an orchestral concert in the park later in the evening - as we left we could see the crowds gathering, carrying the English summer combination of coolboxes and umbrellas in readiness for some singing in the rain.

Forthcoming events

Our first social event took place on Thursday 4 June when Gail Edwards and 10 ladies from the Hitchin Tangent group came for an evening's croquet. Many thanks to Peter Smith, George Collin and others for their coaching skills. A misunderstanding led to my returning half the fee - I had initially suggested that the charge would be not more than £5/head and perhaps did not confirm the final figure of £2.50, so was surprised when I counted out £55!

More events like this have been planned - please note the following dates:

- Mon 15 June - staff visit from Rod's school.
- Wed 15 July - visit from Ampthill Ladies Circle. 12 expected at 6.30, £2.50/head confirmed. Contact is Hilary Hastings (01462 813759).
- Mon Aug 10 - visit from Ampthill Tangent. 15-20 expected at 6.30, £2.50/head confirmed. Contact is Margaret Hatcher (01582 882282).
- Tue Aug 11 - visit from Ampthill 41 Club. 15-20 expected, time not fixed. £2.50/head confirmed. Contact is Mr. Hastings (01462 813759).

Please come along to help out if you possibly can. These events may not do much in terms of generating new members, but they do provide good PR for the club and generate a little useful income. Perhaps we could up our rates next year?

Car care - a word of warning

There have recently been a number of thefts from cars parked in the Institute car park. As a result we have been asked to give the Institute a list of all member's cars that might be seen in the car park on Thursday evenings, or indeed at any time. They would like to know your name and the make, model, colour and registration number of your car(s). There is a sheet in the pavilion on which you can enter the details, otherwise can you please ring them through to Eric Audsley or David Parsons at the Institute (01525 860000) as soon as possible.

John Bevington

14 June 1998