



Reigate Priory C C - Newsletter Spring 2012

Interim Chairman's Comments – *Laurence Hughes*

I would like to express a few thoughts in relation to the club. As I have already advised members, I will only be an interim chairman, but during this time I would hope to achieve a few things that increase our enjoyment both in the game and as a club. Thus I welcome your ideas and contributions.

Specifically, I hope to pave the way for a new chairman and, maybe, rearrange some of the responsibilities on the committee to achieve a better balance of workload.

I am also open to ideas that we should consider to reduce the underlying tension between some members, as regards the split of the lawn on Saturday mornings and Tuesday afternoons, between golf and association usage. Mike Bottomley has already suggested that association games on these days be limited to “short croquet” (rules are in the clubhouse). This would prevent a pair or foursome occupying the half lawn for the entire period and also encourage more people to cross-over – I am personally supportive of this idea.

On another topic, I am very pleased by the work of the gardening group. When I said I would take over as lawn supervisor, following Alan Theobald’s departure, I was horrified to discover that I was also head gardener. As my wife and I have a garden of some three-quarters of an acre, I felt that “her outdoors” had quite enough to do already. Naturally, I greeted the idea of the maintenance mornings with delight. However, attendance has not been requiring crowd control (as John Bristow puts it) and I have once been a “lonely little petunia”. Perhaps we can build on the gardening group concept and be more flexible in our maintenance plans. Finally, Freda’s catering group is now pretty thin, I think there are only two of us helpers left, whilst with home league and friendly matches being played, workload has actually increased – volunteers welcome.

Secretary’s report – *Geoff Gunton*

First, welcome to two new members: Martin Peacock and Judy Perry. I know many of you have met Martin and Judy has been in touch with us before but has now decided to join. Ian Cobbold, who liaises with new and potential members, is also in touch with a few others, so you may see some more new faces in the near future.

As I write, the Sports Festival is just a few days away and we hope to make some useful contacts there: Sue Rice joined the club after last year’s festival and is helping to man the stand this year.

One of the things we will be mentioning to visitors is a coaching course that Neil Coote and I will be running on May 26-27; see elsewhere in this newsletter for details.

Second, I am sure everyone in the club shares my appreciation for all the work Mike Bottomley has done for the club during his time as Chairman. His careful attention to all the minutiae that go with running the club has benefited all of us – especially when we were renegotiating our lease with the Cricket Club. As secretary, I have appreciated Mike’s wise counsel and advice on many occasions, which extended to offering comments on our constitutional position while the committee considered its options and appointed Laurence Hughes as acting chairman until the AGM in November.

There are reports elsewhere on our first inter-club matches and I hope that as many as possible will take part in these. But look out for friendly matches and opportunities to take part as an individual in events – both internal club day competitions and at other clubs. They all provide opportunities to meet other players and develop your skills.

In the meantime, I hope you are enjoying your croquet this year and that you are making progress with your competition games.

Coaching

Now that John Taylor has moved away, that leaves Neil Coote and I as the club's two Association coaches; we have both taken a CA course which gives us 'club coach' status, enabling us to coach at club level.

John kindly gave us a copy of his coaching material for the three-session course he developed a couple of years ago and we will be offering this on Saturday afternoon (2-4.30pm), May 26, and Sunday morning and afternoon, May 27th (10.30am-1pm and 2-4.30pm). It will be free of charge.

It will be aimed at high handicap players, so would be especially suited to new and recent members and those who don't play much Association and want to learn some basics. At present, we have not set the exact programme, as it will depend on whether we get any takers from the Sports Festival, in which case the first session will be for absolute beginners.

When we publish the programme, you will be able to select whichever sessions are relevant to you, but it would be helpful to know roughly how many members might be interested in taking part. So give me a ring on 01737 360374 or send me an email at reigatecroquetclub@yahoo.co.uk to express interest.

Other coaching can be arranged at any time; just contact Neil or me. There are also excellent courses available at the Croquet Academy at Southwick and details of some of these are in the club calendar. There are more course details available on line.

Ian Cobbold is our qualified Golf Croquet coach and can arrange coaching on request.

If you would like to qualify as a club coach, the CA runs excellent courses at Southwick and elsewhere. You don't have to be a top player to be able to coach; the courses are as much about how to teach as it is about croquet techniques themselves and, on the course that Neil and I did, there were some quite high-handicap players taking part. It would certainly be useful for the club to have at least one more qualified Golf coach so if you would like to know more about what's involved, please speak to Ian, Neil or me.

In addition to formal coaching, of course, we can all help each other to learn new techniques, so don't hesitate to ask another member for advice.

The mallet file

If you are thinking of buying a mallet, or are simply interested to understand how different sizes, weights and shapes of mallets suit how you play, don't forget that there is a ring-bound Mallet File in the clubhouse cupboard. I add fresh material to it from time to time but if you are able to suggest additions, updates or improvements, let me know.

Bridge Evening – John Hyde

The annual bridge evening at the Hyde's was the usual success. Perhaps the bridge was not of the top level but there was a very high standard of conviviality and gluttony. Twelve players changing partners throughout the evening, with a break half way for a sumptuous spread thanks to the ladies who all brought a dish. The men provided the wine and

plenty was consumed. The two star men both had remarkable results, Mike Bottomley with probably the highest score ever, and John Timberlake with probably the lowest score ever! The winning lady was Lorna Jenkins, runner-up Gwen Bottomley. Winner of the cup was Mike Bottomley, runner-up Charles Harvey. We are not planning to enter a team in the national championships!



Farewell from John & Doreen Taylor

Dear members

As many of you are probably already aware, Doreen and I have moved away to live in Cuckfield. As a result, we have decided that it is no longer practical to remain members of the Reigate Club, and have joined Southwick as our nearest club.

We are very sad to be leaving Reigate Priory after all these years. We first joined the Club 26 years ago, when we were living at More Cottage, literally on the other side of the wall from the croquet lawn. John was repeatedly coaxed at the gate to join by the Chairman of those days ("Bunny" Vulliamy). Eventually, John gave it a try and the rest, as they say, is history!

We like to think that we have been able to help in some way with the development of the Club into what it is today, through our roles over the years as chairman, treasurer, social secretary and coach (you will have to work out who was which!). For such a small club, it has achieved remarkable success, and is rightly known for its friendly atmosphere and welcome to visiting players.

We hope that we will be able to pop by from time to time when we are visiting Reigate, or that you will meet us when you come to play at Southwick. We are even hopeful that John can get a team of "Old Reigatians" together from Southwick, to come and play a Reigate team – watch this space!

Meanwhile, thanks to everyone for such good times at Reigate and good luck for the future!

John & Doreen

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Friendly Match Reigate Priory v Woking played on 16th April - *Jean Cobbold Non-playing team captain.*

This early-season friendly match has become a fixture in the calendar for our two clubs of recent years. It is always a very enjoyable and sociable event with some very good croquet, and this year was no exception.

It was our turn to host the match and our team was Frank Burch, Charles Harvey, Roger MacKinnon and Sue Rice, playing in her first match.

On a bright, sunny but not very warm day Reigate achieved a splendid win of 7 - 2. Most of the games were very close, with 3 going to a golden hoop, but Sue Rice achieved an outstanding win of 7 - 1 in her first singles match and narrowly lost 6 - 7 to a 6-handicap player. Woking are old adversaries so this result was very gratifying.

2011 SECF U-League Play Off against Surbiton CC – 17th April 2012 - *Mike Bottomley*

Not the brightest of weather, cold, rain early, some sun, couple of hail storms and steady wind! But it could have been worse; it could have rained all day.

Team was John Taylor, John Hyde, John Knight and failing to find a fourth “John”, me!

John T and I played the doubles hoping John H and John K would deliver wins whilst we acted as the sacrificial lambs. Well it almost worked, we duly lost the doubles –10, John H delivered magnificently with +21 and John K just lost –3. So 1-2 down at lunch. In the afternoon John H and John K both won closely fought games, John T and I continue to provide no support to the side whatsoever and Surbiton ran out winners and U-League champions 4-3.

PS We did not really fancy another trip to the North!

Handicap card entries – John Timberlake

Please note that you must enter results from external tournaments, SECF leagues, inter-club matches including friendlies, and internal competitions. Do not enter walkovers, abandoned games or friendly internal club games. If in doubt, please ask John Timberlake."

Getting cold feet? – *Geoff Gunton*

Those of us who played in our Longman Cup match at Surbiton, or in last year's Secretary's Shield match at Nottingham know all about playing in the rain. No matter how good your waterproofs are your feet get wet and cold. At least mine do. So that prompted me to do some internet searching for some white waterproof boots with flat soles. If you have ever thought the same, this might be of interest.

My searches mostly pointed to a Norwegian company, Viking Footwear. They make three designs of white boots: 'Regatta', 'Skagen' and 'Matros'; the Skagen is somewhat shorter than the others. You can see their whole range at <http://www.vikingfootwear.com/default.aspx?aid=9168930> and all these designs are included in both their men's and women's ranges, so they are intended as unisex designs.

But I struggled to find UK stockists – they don't list any on their website – and found only one: [Brandosa.co.uk](http://www.brandosa.co.uk) (Google will find other sites, but they mostly point back to Brandosa). They only have the Skagen and the Matros in white, and they list the Skagen in the men's section (£53, incl delivery; <http://www.brandosa.co.uk/viking/skagen->

42110-1-vit/a54732) and the Matros in the women's (£34, incl delivery; <http://www.brandosa.co.uk/viking/matros-1-1050-1-vit/a12304>), where it is only offered in two sizes that are probably too small for most men: EU 35 & 36.

I have taken the plunge and ordered a pair of the Skagen boots. I hope they will put an end to plunging my feet into cold soggy shoes on wet days.

Received from a member?

Golf croquet is a friendly game

Played by one and all

Some days the hoops are enormous

On other days, quite small.

Some days you play the wrong ball

Was it Black or Blue or Red?

It probably was the Yellow

But which went from your head.

You carry on regardless

With enjoyment by your side

And when you run a tricky hoop

You feel some warmth and pride.

Yes, the game is very friendly

The club is full of fun

There is laughter, there is banter

Enjoyed by everyone.

Anon



Presentation of CA Diplomas to Doreen and Freda, made at our AGM recently by Stephen Mulliner, vice-President of the Croquet Association.

Editors: Neil Coote and Martin Holland