



Reigate Priory Croquet Club Newsletter Spring 2009

Welcome – Neil Coote

Hi everyone, hope you are all looking forward to the start of a new season.

This seasons competitions have all been on the notice board for a while now, so let's see some games starting to be played now the weather is getting better! Don't forget to put the finals days in your diaries, 11-13 September and also the 11th July, for the All England club finals.

Geoff has sent out the club diaries, so take a moment to see what has been organised and look out for sign up sheets in the clubhouse for the various events. A lot of these are a good chance for our newer members to have a go at some friendly competitions, and meet the other members.

I hope you all enjoy the competitions and let's hope we have more sun than last year!

Secretary's notes

First of all, I am sorry that this newsletter did not go out with the renewal material this year and that there was no winter newsletter (as you'll see, from some of the match reports dating back to last September). I got a bit bogged down with other things during the winter and I wasn't able to give Neil any support on the newsletter front.

Although it's not a big or difficult job, it has proved to be one job too many for me and I am stepping down as co-editor. If you would like to take on this role, please let me know and I will tell you what's involved. Neil and I worked out a simple division of labour which could easily work for you. I will continue to contribute, of course.

Because the renewal letters were a couple of weeks later than last year, that gives you a bit less time to get your response forms back to you. I hope you will all renew again this year and that you will consider signing up for the various competitions listed with the letter.

The calendar includes details of various members' achievements and you will see in that section in the calendar that Jamie Burch has gained some significant recognition. You can read the details in the calendar, but I am sure all of you will join me in paying tribute to Jamie's success on the national and world stage. I omitted one contribution from that paragraph: Neil Coote won the National Seniors Class D & the Nash Trophy in the Crawley Handicap last year.

Those of you who came to the annual dinner will also know that Neil was awarded this year's Certificate of Merit for the best improvement in his Association index points during 2008: 163. Ian Cobbold won the certificate for best improvement in Golf with an 80-point rise in index points.

These certificates are intended to encourage members to play games that will count on their handicap card. As long as you win more games than you lose, your points will increase. So you can get a certificate

without winning any competitions, just individual games, and I hope you will look for opportunities to enter suitable events – either at the club, by signing up for our various teams or by entering events elsewhere on your own behalf.

Ask me for more details about the scheme and keep your eye on the notice board; from time to time I receive details of events elsewhere that may be of interest to you. And there is the CA Fixtures book in the cupboard with a huge number of events available to you.

Those who were at the AGM will recall that I suggested that we support the council's efforts in improving the lawn in Priory Park by holding some of our Club open sessions over there, if it reaches a standard suitable for that. The idea received a general murmur of support and I will follow this up with the relevant people at the council. What I failed to say at the AGM is that I had been contacted by a local firm of solicitors who expressed interest in some sort of sponsorship deal with us, especially if we used the Priory Park lawn (which would obviously give them more publicity opportunities). Again, I'll keep you posted.

I think that's all I have to say, so enjoy your croquet.

Geoff Gunton

Chairman's Thoughts

Firstly, particularly for those not at the AGM, I would like to reiterate the Club's thanks to Tim Hazell for the sterling work he has done as our Chairman for the past Six? Years. I am pleased to tell you further that Tim has agreed to continue to front the Club's discussions with the Cricket Club in connection with the new lease. He is much better placed than I am in that he knows most of the players from his Chairmanship of the Reigate and Banstead Sports Council.

Secondly I would like, on behalf of the Club, to congratulate Jamie Burch on his selection as one of the GB representatives at the World Championships in Florida in May.

My third point is a series of pleas for help:

- The Club recruits a lot of its members from personal recommendations, and I would ask that if you have friends or associates who you think are likely members, that you invite them to the Club to experience the game. Similarly if you are a member of a society (Round Table, U3A, WI etc) who occasionally runs social events, then suggest croquet as an ideal evening. The Club gains some immediate visitor's revenue and might, longer term, gain some members.
- Having recruited new members we want you to become fully involved in the Club. Many of the Club Days are designed to allow all standards to compete and I would strongly encourage you to come along to the Club days. I can assure you that you will be made most welcome and however new you are to the game you will not feel out of place.
- Geoff Gunton our Secretary does an outstanding job, but his task would be rather easier if you returned forms and subscription fees to him without him having to issue multiple reminders. The last subscription in 2008 was received, after much chasing, in July. Please remember all our Committee are volunteers and we should try to make their job as easy as possible (remember you might be the next Secretary!!)

- Finally why don't you make a note of a couple of the Maintenance Mornings in your diary? We have some dedicated attendees but a few more bodies would help tremendously.

Mike Bottomley

Finals Day Match Reports

Salver Final 14 September 2008 - Jamie Burch v Roger Tedstone

Roger won the toss and Jamie started with the supershot opening (a ball near hoop 5). Roger put a ball on the East boundary and the next three shots all missed. Roger then took a well controlled three ball break with Black to 3-back. Jamie hit in with the lift and took Yellow to 1-back leaving Roger, with no lift, cross-wired at hoop 1 and his own balls in corner 3.

Roger cleared one ball to the East boundary and Jamie started a break with Red but uncharacteristically ran off the lawn having only made hoop 1, allowing Roger to take Black to rover.

Jamie again hit in from the lift and played a fine break, firstly peeling Yellow through 1-back, and later 2-back, before taking Red to peg, peeling Black through rover on the way, and pegging out both Red and Black. This left a one ball game with Jamie on 3-back and Roger still on hoop 1 – a lost cause regrettably for Roger, and after a few minor exchanges Jamie ran out the winner +10.

Mike Bottomley

Jubilee Final – John Timberlake v Geoff Gunton

Finals weekend actually commenced with a semi-final of the Jubilee between John Timberlake and Ian Cobbold. John took the match 7-6 in a close fought game with the initial dynamic with John, a fightback from Ian and John coming back with the "golden hoop".

John then took on Geoff Gunton, in a best of three final. In the first, game neither player achieved more than a one hoop advantage till the very end, when Geoff secured both hoops 11 and 12 to win by 7-5. The second game saw Geoff in more commanding form securing and holding an early lead to win 7-3 and win the match.

Congratulations to both players on some excellent tactical play and some spectacular shots.

Laurence Hughes

Team News

Association B League 2008 - John Timberlake

We played 4 matches, winning against Compton and Ramsgate and losing to Merton and Rother Valley. Twelve different people were able to play, including the "workers" Lucy, Geoff and Andrew, and the "retirees" John Hyde, Frank Burch, John Bristow, John Staddon, John Knight, Ron Farr, Tim Hazell, Jon Criddle and myself.

Golf Croquet 2008 - Laurence Hughes

The year 2009 was an exceptionally successful one for the club in terms of Golf Croquet. Not only did we win the SECF Handicap League, as the only club with four wins out of four (beginning with a crushing 8-1 victory at Hurlingham) but we also triumphed at the SECF teams day, where we fielded two teams and team A won the singles event and team B were runners up in the doubles. Particularly given that our second team was pulled together at extremely short notice to infill, we came away a pretty cheerful bunch.

However, perhaps most pleasing was that in total 17 members of the club took part in these matches, making the year a real club success.

Southwick Invitation 14 pt Doubles Teams Sept 5/6/7 2008

Unfortunately, this was reduced to 6 teams by the last minute withdrawal of Compton, and the draw had to be altered to 4 games on the Friday and 3 on the Saturday & Sunday. Nevertheless, we came a valiant second to one of the 2 home club sides, which was pretty good after winning it last year.

We were represented by 12 different players which is a testament to the strength and depth of RPCC. They were Lucy Beach, Mike Bottomley, Frank Burch, Jon Criddle, Rex Davis, Wendy Dominguez, Andy Gray, Geoff Gunton, John Knight, John Taylor, Roger Tedstone, and John Timberlake. Everybody contributed with 1 or 2 wins.

John Timberlake

Southwick Golf Croquet - Aug 10th 2008

On Sunday 10th August, we won the singles golf competition at the Southeast Croquet Federation team day at Southwick and were runners up in the doubles golf competition. Eighteen teams of 4 players took part:

- The team of Bristow, Copper, Gray and Staddon won 10 out of 12 singles games, a clear win.
- Bottomley, Davis, Farr and Hughes team won all four doubles games but were just pushed into second place by one point.

John Bristow

Association Rules Quiz – A Referee

A ball clearly rolls off the lawn but the slope of the land causes it to come to rest in the lawn. What is the ruling?

A player requests a bisque, which is removed by his opponent, can he now decide not to take the bisque?

May the player run the side of his mallet (a) along the side of a hoop (b) along the side of his foot?

A player finds one of his balls just slightly in a hoop but there is another ball immediately in front of him and easily available for him to hit. Is he entitled to a lift?

A player notices that one of the opponent's clips has been placed on the wrong hoop, is he obliged to tell

the opponent of his error?

A player indicates a line to partner by touching the ground, is there any penalty?

A player, having taken a half bisque, peels his opponent through a hoop. Is the hoop scored?

A player attempts to take croquet from a wrong, but live ball, should the opponent forestall?

Answers at the end of the newsletter.

Members News

Rex and Elizabeth Davis have down-sized from Dorking to the retirement complex of St Georges Park near Burgess Hill. However Rex is maintaining his RPCC membership at present and intends to drive the 26 miles to RPCC to play in competitions.

He says that "all is well but I do not recommend moving after 43 years in one large house!"

His new address is:

19 Mulberry Walk

St Georges Park

Ditchling Common

Burgess Hill

Sussex RH15 0SZ

Tel: 01444 230326

Golf croquet competition changes

You may have noticed that the Grass Roots and Centre Stage golf croquet events have been dropped from the calendar this year. There were only a small number of members who qualified for them and they were not brilliantly organised at the national level.

In their place, Ian and Jean Cobbold have proposed a Golf Doubles event, which they are organising on July 4th. Please support this inaugural event once more details become available.

Coaching

Our club coach, John Taylor, is always willing to help members to improve their play - especially on elements of stroke play and tactics. If you would like to benefit from his expertise, contact him in the normal way.

Bridge Evening with John & Mary Hyde on 9 Jan 2009

This excellent annual fixture was a great success with 16 worthy folks playing fun bridge and scoffing a fabulous repast dowsed with Kir Royale and a plentiful flow of red wine. The ladies produced the grub and the gentlemen delivered the wine. The star dish was a venison stew, the overall winner was Sheila Flute (wife of prospective new member David Flute), and the leading man was John Prior.

The 16 attendees included 9 well known present members and here is a New Year Puzzle for you who were not there to guess who they were. There was a Rabbit, a Spud, a Nut Tree, a Deputy Abbot, a Rozzer, a Lake District Town, a Newdigate Farmer, a Wood Pond, and a secret Bird Watching Shed. First correct answer to Geoff gets a prize.

John Timberlake

Club Phone – Geoff Gunton

I know I keep banging on about it, but the club phone is not a free service. While it costs nothing to answer a call, it does cost to make a call – just like every other mobile phone. There is a scale of charges on the wall of the clubhouse, together with instructions for its use; note that the minimum charge has gone up to 15p. I emptied the cash jar (in the cupboard over the table) after finals weekend and checked it again in February. Although calls had been made during the winter, none had been paid for. To jog memories, I am now posting details of calls that have made in the clubhouse so that, if you recognise any of them as yours, you have an opportunity to put the corresponding amount in the jar.

But its main purpose is to allow you to contact the clubhouse (I think most members have their own mobiles to make calls) and you can only do this if the phone is kept switched on and charged up. I notice that it has lately been plugged into a double socket along with the fan heater, which is often turned off by flicking the switch at the mains. But this lets the phone run down, so unplug the heater from the double socket instead. And if the phone has run down, turn the charger on at the mains and check the instruction sheet for how to turn the phone itself on. Thanks.

Quiz Answers

The ball went out of play as soon as it touched the line.

Yes. But he cannot do the opposite, leave the lawn and then decide he will take a bisque.

(a) Yes (b) No. A recent change in the rules.

Yes. Provided the opponent is responsible for the position of that ball.

Yes. The players are mutually responsible for the correct position of the clips.

No, although if the act resulted in a mark being left there would be.

No.

Yes. But not if it is a dead ball (one from which he has already taken croquet)

Editors: Neil Coote; Geoff Gunton