



Reigate Priory C C - Newsletter Summer 2013

Chairman's Notes – Laurence Hughes

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find a report on the planned Vulliamy memorial. Unfortunately, you will note that less than half of the membership responded to this opportunity to express their views. I would like to think that every member, however short or long their membership, feels free to express their opinions. Yes, we have a committee but primary responsibility of that committee is to listen to all members.

Its a pity that the Autumn maintenance has had to be repositioned and extended but the lawn is our most important asset and has suffered from an accident with weed killer and the topsy-turvy summer with constant rain then drought.

The competitions were well supported except the Rosamond, which attracted only four entries, including myself (a truly hopeless association player- I have only ever won one match and that was against a fellow incompetent) just to make up the numbers. I have asked the committee members to consider a different format, at least for the early stages of the competition and will welcome ideas.

Nothing much else to say except, enjoy the game.

Southwick 14pt Doubles tournament – Neil Coote

This event is held every year at Southwick with clubs entering teams from all over the southeast. It consists of 4 games each day, of 14pt handicap Association Croquet, with a time limit of 1hr 45 mins.

John Knight organised our entry this year and due to the good response from everyone, we had a different team for each of the three days.

I played on the Sunday with Joyce Carlisle, with Martin Holland and John Staddon making up the other pair.

We managed to win one game each over the day with a couple of close finishes, but we all had an enjoyable time, with an excellent lunch and weather as well.

The overall tournament was won by Caterham, with 19 wins, and Falcons, one of the Southwick teams, runners up. Reigate came second to last.

Christine Constable, the tournament manager, praised all the competitors for the good spirit in which the games were played, and especially those who played on the Saturday where it rained all day.

The World AC championships – Neil Coote

This was played at 4 venues, Surbiton, Roehampton, Woking, and Hurlingham.

The initial stages were organised in 8 blocks of 10 players, where everyone played everyone else. The top 4 from each block then went into a knockout, forming the main competition.

For those that were knocked out at various stages they were then entered into the Plate, Shield or Bowl competitions.

Jamie won all of his 9 games in the block, but unfortunately got knocked out in the second round by Pete Trimmer.

The Final and Semi-finals were held at Surbiton, the final was between Robert Fletcher (Aus) and Paddy Chapman (NZ), Robert winning 3 – 0.

Robert is currently ranked No1 in the world, Paddy no 5. The former World Champion, Reg Bamford, was knocked out in the semi-final.

Boules evening – Neil Coote

This event was hosted by Peter and Katherine Goldsmith at their home in Chipstead. Peter has kindly organised this event for a few years now, but this was the first time I had attended, after being told what a good time people had had before.

At the end of the garden was a large marquee, where a large amount of food & tea was waiting to be devoured.

Peter had several sets of Boules and organised us into 4 teams. After explaining the rules we started playing, with Peter offering advice as we went along. The two winning teams then played each other and the winners were given a surprise present of a fresh egg each, from Peter's hens! We all had a great time with a warm sunny day as well, so thank-you to Peter and Katherine for a pleasant way to spend an evening.



The winners receiving their eggs!

A Sojourn at Surbiton on a Sunny Summer's Day – John Bristow

Some personal impressions of a trip to the AC World Championships 2013

'Twas on a Monday morning the traffic was light from Reigate to Tolworth where it all ground to a halt because the dual-carriageway was down to single lane as they remodelled the parking bays. Surbiton croquet club is just beyond Tolworth Towers almost in their shadow. Monday was the last day of the block play.

With 80 entrants and despite Roehampton, Hurlingham and Woking lawns being used the players at Surbiton were doubled up playing primary and secondaries on each of eight lawns. It was a very impressive sight to see so many in action at the same time but it meant there was a lot of waiting around in games see Figure 1 where Jamie waits for the other game to clear.

It was interesting to see the top players in the world stopping in the middle of their breaks to allow other play, which they did with good grace. An example of such courtesy comes to mind:-

A Scottish player was attempting to hit in from corner 1 at a ball $\frac{3}{4}$ way to corner 2, a group of us were sitting a couple of yards back from corner 2 of that lawn, the player walked the full length of the lawn just to advise us that one of us may get our ankles rapped by his ball not to ask us to move out of his sight line. He then walked back and took his shot.

A lesson in demeanour that maybe all of us could reflect on.

Figure 1 also brings to mind two more impressions of the day, one, there was always a lot of tea and, cake available and, two, the guys sitting down were at other times using a couple of lap tops to give a commentary on the Championship website covering progress on all of the seven lawns. No mean feat, personally it was difficult to follow progress on one lawn when sextuplet peeling is involved with both primary and secondary games on the go. Even more so when last year's champion makes the final peel with a rushed ball....it's a different world... However he did go on to get stuck in a hoop later!

Figure 1



Figure 2

Surbiton has seven lawns; the eighth was created on an adjacent bowling green and marked out with orange string. Figure 2 shows Jamie peeling through Rover on that lawn to win all nine of the matches in his block. That particular game lasted 31 minutes, certainly a lasting impression.

For full details of the final outcome of the championship refer to the web address:-

<http://www.acwc2013.org/results>

All England Association Final (handicap singles) – John Bristow

John Bristow (8) versus Alan Slade (11)

This was played on Sunday 4th August between the BBQ finals and the main finals weekend. Jon Criddle managed to combine an impressive amount of gardening with being on call to handle refereeing issues on a couple of occasions. Early on Alan moved a long way ahead but John staged an excellent comeback to ensure a tight finish to a game that was “good in parts”.

A different start with John hitting hoop 4 putting his ball on the lawn and Alan had to use an early bisque to get through hoop 1. In a subsequent turn Alan ran hoop 1 with his other ball but clanged and wired in hoop 2. He then used a bisque to get through next turn and ran to 2-back. Alan two-balled red to 6 as John missed two long hits in. Alan had a bad approach to 2-back and had no option but to hit hard at the hoop and the ball amazingly managed to go through from a 30 degree angle. There followed various poor turns on both sides including Alan going the wrong way through 4-back.

After 1 hour and 5 minutes John got his first hoop with Alan on 3-back and penult.

In following turns John made a 5 hoop break and a 4 hoop break plus other ones so after 2 hours Alan was on peg and penult and John on 3- back and 6. With Alan set up for a rush John hit in and took Blue to 4-back. Later John took Black through 3-back and peeled Blue through 4-back but lost the turn by taking roquet instead of croquet. Alan hit in and set up a rush by hoop 2. John missed so Alan had an attempt at peg from about 10 feet but missed still leaving a rush. John hit in again and moved Black on but missed the approach to penult which allowed Alan to hit in again and peg out successfully this time winning +6.

B League Results - Peter Goldsmith

We have now played 3 out of our 4 matches, resulting in 1 won and 2 lost. Although the results were disappointing, the two lost matches were very close and could easily have gone either way. We are therefore confident of victory against Medway in September to make us even for the season and thus improve on last year’s single victory! Results were:

Monday 8th July, lost to Southwick 1-2

Tuesday 16th July, beat Woking 2-1

Saturday 3rd August, lost to Ember 1-2

Those playing in the three matches were Frank Burch, Martin Holland, Martin Peacock, David Connah, John Knight, John Staddon, Joyce Carlisle, Alan Slade, Ron Farr and John Hyde.

Vulliamy Salver Final (Advanced handicap) - Alan Slade

Neil Coote (4) versus Roger Tedstone (3.5)

In a game interrupted by rain we had an interesting start followed by a lot of cagey play and in the end a convincing win. Neil hit in with his second ball on the lawn and set up a rush. When he took his rush he ended up with a short cut to the hoop which he missed. Roger was then in and just ran the hoop but was wired from his partner ball. He then hit in at corner 4 and moved to hoop 2 but got stuck in the hoop. This was followed by a cat and mouse game

with hoops being made in ones and twos and a lot of balls in corners. After half an hour it began raining and Roger swapped his glasses for a hat but after a further half an hour it was so heavy that play was stopped for about 5 minutes. Play resumed and Roger soon had a 6 hoop run leaving Blue on 4 back and Black on 6, at this point Red was on 3 and Yellow on 4. Neil progressed by one hoop but Roger was soon back in with another 6 hoop break moving Black to Rover. Neil was then back in but got stuck in hoop 3 which allowed Roger to take Blue to Rover and to peel Black and subsequently peg out to win by +20.

Creed Final (Advanced handicap) - *Mike Bottomley/Alan Slade*

John Bristow (8) versus Geoff Gunton (5)

The game was played in intermittent rain, the cricketers left the pitch but the croquet players stoically played on. The hoops were tighter than usual at RPCC and hoop 2 was eventually reset as it was narrower than the balls! These two factors resulted in quite a lot of missed roquets, disappointing rushes and missed hoops.

Notwithstanding this there were some good breaks including a good break by John from hoop 2 (the "impossible" hoop) to 4-back with a well spread leave but with a double which Geoff hit. After considerable sparring Geoff progressing with two breaks to 4-back and a near perfect standard leave but again John hit in with his lift.

More sparring and, with John on 4 and 4-back and Geoff's yellow on rover, Geoff progressed red round to rover, set up a simple peel to finish the game, but sadly red overran and John was in command again! However this was short lived as John moved to hoop 6 but stuck in the hoop. This enabled Geoff to get back in and peg out winning by +12.

Friendly Golf Croquet match against Wimbledon, 30th July – *Ian Cobbold*

Sue Rice, Mike Bottomley, Jon Criddle and Ian Cobbold were the lucky four invited to play against Wimbledon this year. Roger Mackinnon, donning his Wimbledon sweater for the day, was our principal host. As always the team enjoyed Wimbledon's excellent hospitality including a tour of the Centre and Number One Courts and the trophy cabinets.

Unfortunately we had chosen the one really wet day of recent weeks. One round of doubles was played before we retired to the dry to have our tour and an early lunch. After lunch the rain had eased so we played another round of doubles on one of the lawns, the other being too wet. As one of the Wimbledon players was unwell, Roger played both balls and beat Ian and Jon. Overall the result was a 2 -2 draw which was very fair in the circumstances.

Handicap Golf Doubles Tournament, 13th/14th July – *Ian Cobbold*



A bumper entry of 24 this year meant that the competition had to be split into two pools of 12 players, one on the Saturday and the other on the Sunday.

Saturday was a particularly hot day and the players agreed to call a halt after each pair had played four rounds. John Dawson and Ian Cobbold were the winning pair with John Prior and Lorna Jenkins as runner-up.

It was slightly cooler on the Sunday and each pair played five rounds. The winners were Jean Cobbold and Sally Mackinlay with John Bristow and Jill Dawson as runners-up.

In the final John and Ian beat Jean and Sally 7-4, 7-4, so John has the distinction of winning a trophy in his first season.

SECF's Southern Challenge 6th/7th July – Ian Cobbold

This is the second year of this level-play Golf Croquet Teams Tournament and the first year we have entered a Team. The First Division is played at Southwick and we were in the Second Division playing at Surbiton. Our team on the Saturday of Frank Burch, Neil Coote, John Knight and Martin Holland played six rounds against the other clubs, each round consisting of a doubles and two singles. At the end of the day we had won four and lost two.

The Sunday team of John Bristow, John Staddon, Martin Peacock and Ian Cobbold played four rounds to complete the ten-round block stage, winning three and losing against Winchester. Winchester were the winners of the block stage with us as the runners up so we then played a two-round final, in each case winning one game and losing two to finish the overall runners up. Martin Peacock was rewarded for winning all his singles by having his handicap cut from 10 to 8 by the Tournament Manager, Michael Hague.

By finishing second in Division Two we will be promoted to Division One next year and will need to field our strongest team if we are to be competitive at that level.

Murphy Shield – Ian Cobbold

This is the first year we have entered this competition which is the Golf Croquet equivalent of the Longman Cup. The team has to have a minimum aggregate handicap of 12, with a single two handicap allowed to play and no zeros or ones.

We were drawn against Sussex in the first round and our team of Frank Burch, John Timberlake, Roger Mackinnon and Ian Cobbold went down 2 -5, although a number of the matches were very close.

The Vulliamy Memorial – Laurence Hughes

At the close of play 21 club members had responded to the “ballot”, of these 10 first choices were for a shed/shelter at the North border of the lawn plus 4 second choices. The only other suggestion attracting a significant number of votes was for kitchen improvements, with 5 first choices and 4 seconds. Some votes came with additional comments, which were welcome.

In particular, several people suggested a simple, open-fronted shelter (bus stop style) rather than a shed. We have been concerned of providing a facility that might attract the local youth – you only have to visit the Priory Park lawn as early as I have to see the mess – litter, food waste and lawn damage – to be wary. However, we are pretty much tucked away and we have no history of such problems and it would be significantly cheaper. One other problem would be the prevailing wind from the South-West, so the choice of such a shelter would need to take this into account. Anyone has cleared up litter will know that it congregates in the Black Corner. We will check the local garden centres for a practical but sensibly priced unit.

As regards the kitchen, Freda would very much welcome a new and larger fridge and I hope can achieve this plus some other items.

Thanks to all members that passed me their votes and comments

Club All England Golf Final – Laurence Hughes

This was contested between Roger Mackinnon and John Knight in a best of three final on BBQ day. Roger won the first hoop but he fell 3/1 behind before pulling one back at hoop 5. John further moved ahead with an excellent jump to secure hoop 7. However his 5/2 lead was steadily eroded and the pair ended up 6 all and so moved to the "golden hoop". John played off with Red and with his blue in a poor position Roger promoted his black well up the lawn. Unfortunately, his next play was not black but blue again and John followed with red to take the game. I wonder how often this happens – one remains with the promoter ball rather than move up behind the promoted ball.

The second game followed almost exactly the same pattern with Roger gaining the first hoop then falling behind then levelling the scores at 6 all but losing the last hoop to a fine angled jump by John. In fact in total there were 5 jump shots in the match, 4 to take hoops and one to leap a two ball barrier and all succeeded.

An enjoyable match. Well done to both players.

Frances Payne – Laurence Hughes

Ian Cobbold, after several valiant attempts finally laid his hands on the Frances Payne Cup, with a 7-3/7-0 win over Neil Coote. The score line belies the quality of Neil's play. Matches between two strong Golf Croquet players are largely governed by keeping ones opponent from maintaining a position with a hoop running opportunity – in USA submarine parlance (at least in movies I have watched) a "shooting solution". Thus there is very little of the Tuesday afternoon poking about around the hoop but long distance hitting to drive the opponent as far away from the hoop as the lawn allows. One miss – one hoop gone! Moreover, Neil twice managed to touch his ball as he developed his swing – not a crime in Association Croquet, that he normally plays, but a disaster in Golf.

In summary, a quality match and much closer than the score suggests – well played both.

Croquet Catering Corps - Freda Knight

I am pleased to announce that Sue Rice, Judy Perry, Pam Tillett and Jill Dawson have agreed to help with club catering. This means that as well as providing the AGM supper, organising the BBQ food, Xmas Cracker which Laurence tackles, lunches and teas for 'friendlies', we will be able to continue with Club lunches. It will be good to have some new ideas and recipes as well! In the spring we will be having a planning meeting, so if anyone would care to join in, please let me know.

Winter Walks - Freda Knight

A few years ago we used to organise a series of winter walks, during the 'non-playing season'. They were discontinued because of lack of support. Would anyone be interested in starting them up again? They used to be

held on Sundays, meeting at a pub about 10am, followed by a circular walk and arriving back at the pub about 12 noon for lunch. It was always very enjoyable; you can bring a friend etc, and was led by one of our regular ramblers each time. Let me know if anyone is up for it.

Jubilee Bowl Final – Laurence Hughes

After a promising start Roger Mackinnon failed to retain the Jubilee Bowl, losing out to Peter Goldsmith 2-7, 7-5, 7-5. In the first game Roger struggled with his hoop running, missing his first attempt at all of the first 7 hoops. Unfortunately for Peter he was unable to take advantage of these lapses and only gained his second hoop by playing his one extra shot at hoop 8, by setting himself up in a hoop-running position from a good opening approach shot. Oddly enough he played his extra shot at the same hoop with the same yellow ball in all three games, securing the hoop easily twice. The other time his positional opening shot landed just to the right in a non-runnable position almost in line with the hoop. He did the obvious with his extra turn and tried to dribble the ball into exactly in front of the hoop. I have tried this and I expect many of you have had the same experience. The ball inevitably ends up in a mirror position on the other side of the hoop. Don't try it; knock the ball back aiming for a short distance in front of the hoop.

Both players played well in an admirable spirit, and amazingly not a single wrong ball was played. Is this a record?



Golf League match at Compton on the 6th June