



Bakewell Croquet Club Newsletter September 2011

The nights have started to draw in and the days are cooling down so it must be nearing the end of the season. I was playing today (26th Sep.) and the worm casts were starting to assert their independence and bounce the balls around. We cannot have many weeks left but I hope that we can stretch things into the early part of October at least. I will let you all know when we decide that the time has come!

Each year since I became chairman, I claim that it has been our most successful yet, and I do so again. We have not grown in numbers or success in the East Midlands Leagues, but our level of skill continues to improve and we now have three qualified coaches within the club and two of us have been on a Golf Croquet refereeing course. The availability of local coaches is clearly a benefit to anyone who wishes to use them, but it remains to be seen whether the existence of two referees in the club is a benefit or a hindrance!

Thank you all for contributing to the club by coming to the normal club sessions (there were ten of us today) and for joining in the events organised during the year. Without your contribution they would be a waste of time.

As you know, I am stepping down as chairman at the next AGM and so this is my last newsletter, although I will continue to send out reminders of events. We still do not have a volunteer to take over the chair of the club and I urge you all to give it serious consideration. The more members who involve themselves in the running of the club, the more ideas we will have about how to develop and the more successful our club will be.

Club Tournaments

As you know we ran the first of these in May (the Spring Tournament) with Patricia Duke-Cox attending as a guest and gaining the most points. The highest scoring club player was Dorothy Evans. The second was in August (the Summer Tournament) when Steve Marsh gained the most points and took the top prize. Congratulations to both Dorothy and Steve.

As always, Peter, did a first rate job of organising the tournaments and the club members did a first rate job of joining in. This mixed with excellent weather on both days meant that we were able to enjoy two superb events.

Schools Liaison

The schools programme was completed a month or two ago and, although Lesley tells me that it was more difficult to organise this year, it was a success. Some of the 2010 schools dropped out and some new ones took their place, all in all a satisfactory result. Lesley has agreed to organise it again for 2012 and she will continue to need you to volunteer so please put your name forward and help.

Bob Furniss had made us some special mallets and hoops for the schools and so we were able to provide a much more croquet based experience than hitherto when we had to use small plastic cones. Without exception the children and the staff of the schools visited enjoyed themselves and were very complimentary about our programme.

The Leagues

The performance of our league teams has been a bit mixed again this year with The A team winning one, drawing two and losing two, The B team won three drew one and lost two. We are not yet sure what the leagues positions will be, but I will let you know as soon as I have them.

Mike White has done an interesting bit of analysis on the performance of the B team for the years that it has been playing, and it is interesting to note that there has been a general personal improvement both in the numbers of games won and the win/loss hoop difference. We are getting better and our standard is improving!!

Friendlies

We played in several friendly matches this year, one with Darley Dale, two with U3A in Sheffield (one home and one away) and, so far, one with Southwell.

The U3A has changed from playing at the bowling club and now occupies the outfield of the Parkhead Cricket Club in Sheffield. They have three full size lawns and one half size.

Those of you who have played in friendlies before will remember that we have traditionally mixed up the teams so that each couple comprises a person from Bakewell partnered by someone from the other club. For our visit to Parkhead, the arrangement was different in that each couple was from the same club. This moved the match from a competition of individuals to that of one between clubs; it is an arrangement which I think we might consider for next season.

The result for the Bakewell/U3A match at Parkhead was:

Bakewell 240 hoops in total

Sheffield 188 hoops in total

The highest scoring player on the day was Bob Furniss with 36 hoops followed in by Carol Furniss and Alan Reeves both with 32 hoops. The highest scoring Sheffield player achieved 31 hoops.

Club Barbeque

The club barbecue duly took place on 16 July at Oak Edge House and I believe that all enjoyed themselves. The weather, although not too good, was kinder than it has been in previous years and

this contributed to a good day. The croquet was as good as the lawn will allow it to be but it was fun and none of us really cared. The new gas barbecue helped as well!!

We will be holding a club barbecue at Oak Edge House next year at a date to be decided in order to avoid the Olympics if we can. We will let you know as soon as we possibly can.

Coaching

At the beginning of the season both John and Maggie Crossland held coaching sessions for the League teams, but we decided not to ask them back for general club members as we intended to send some of our members on a course to train as coaches. This we did and Peter Blackburn, Dorothy Evans and Jean Peters now hold the yellow badge as a qualified club coach. Please contact either Peter, Dorothy or Jean if you feel that your game could do with improvement as, quite often, an independent observer is able to identify traits of which you are unaware. Incidentally they also need the practice if their skills are to remain current and develop further.

Referees

The opportunity to send two members on a refereeing course arose during the year and both Jean and I went. The course was run by Bill Arliss who chairs the Golf Croquet rules committee and the day's instruction/discussion was enlightening and useful. The second day involved both practical and theoretical exams which in themselves were useful learning experiences. While neither of us belong to the Croquet Association and so cannot be officially listed as a referee, please involve us if there is anything about which you are unsure. If we don't know we now have the contacts to find out. If you think that your stroke may cause a fault, by all means call us over to observe and we will explain what we are looking for and give a judgement.

Croquet in Ripon

A small party took themselves off to Ripon again this year for two to three days croquet on the Ripon Hotel's lovely lawns. Unfortunately neither Jean nor I could attend, but I believe that a good time was had by all. Apparently the weather was kind and the croquet in need of coaching!!

There is a definite plan to go again next year at about the same time and so, if you are interested, block out the first week in September.

The Club Singles League

This was started part way through the season by Jean Peters and has proved to be a great success. The matches were played so rapidly for the first league that Jean has started a second to be played by the end of the season. The first league had two divisions and the second has three, but smaller, with new entrants now starting in the lowest of the divisions and working up as they progress. The intent is to run a promotion/demotion system which will allow all involved to find their level, enjoy competitive single play and improve their croquet.

Membership

As the season finishes we end with a membership of 33 with most of these playing regularly.

Advance Notice

Please put these dates in your diary.

There will be a club walk on 4th February 2012 and as usual this will be organised by Alan Reeves. I do not yet have a time or place but will let you know as soon as they are decided.

The Club AGM will be on Wednesday 14th March 2012 at 7.30pm at the Friends Meeting House in Bakewell. Please make a note of this in your diary and come along.

The Lincoln Castle Croquet Tournament will be held on the 12th May next year.

David Peters
26th September 2011