



Bakewell Croquet Club Newsletter October 2010

We have almost come to the end of our season and there can only be a few more weeks of play left before we have to abandon the lawns until next spring. Overall, I believe that 2010 has been one of our more successful years with the club moving forward both in stature and playing skill. We have run two club tournaments, a croquet break in Ripon, two coaching sessions and more. For this my thanks goes to all of you for participating so enthusiastically and with such good nature.

Club Tournaments

As you know we ran the first of these on 22 May with Bob Furniss winning, and the second on 28 August when tradition was broken by Peter Blackburn taking the top prize. Congratulations to both of them.

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, despite some issues, was at least as successful as the previous year. The issues were to do with school discipline and not our club. Lesley Alexander has very kindly agreed to continue in the role of schools programme organiser for the 2011 season and we hope that the programme may expand. She will need volunteers and I encourage you to have a go, you do not have to feel that you are good at croquet in order to demonstrate the necessary skills to junior age children.

Lesley will be actively pursuing volunteers early next year, but she will not refuse anyone who wishes to put their name forward now!

The Leagues

The performance of our league teams has been a bit mixed this year with both of them ending up towards the bottom of their respective leagues. Nevertheless, we have been able to compete and win some matches and look forward to next year.

Friendlies

Two friendly matches were arranged this year, both with the U3A in Sheffield. The first was at Sheffield and the second at Bakewell. The U3A play on what is half a bowling green and have three half size lawns which are very smooth and well maintained. The bowls club has placed restrictions on them such as, no jump shots and the stationing of a ball stopper at one end so that croquet balls don't interfere with the bowls. We fielded a team of eight and they, plus the non playing hangers on enjoyed both the play and the tea which followed. For the return at Bakewell we put forward a different eight for our team and the U3A changed several of their players thus giving the widest opportunity to participate. Again the play and the tea were enjoyable and a good afternoon had by all.

We hope to repeat the whole thing next year and so, if you are interested, please put your name forward. Preference will be given to those who previously have not played in these friendlies.

Club Barbeque

The club barbecue duly took place on 17 July starting 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.

We will be holding a club barbecue at Oak Edge House next year on the 16th of July 2011 and I ask you to put the date in your diary so that you can come along.

Coaching

Eventually we did manage to arrange some coaching during the year, thanks to a tip off from the U3A club in Sheffield, with John and Maggie Crossland coming across from Sheffield for two separate full day sessions. Both these days were extremely successful and I believe that those who attended gained from the experience. If any of you were unhappy with the coaching please let me know and I will try to arrange an alternative approach.

John and Maggie usually like to run their coaching course of five sessions of about two hours each (which includes a game) and over five weeks and we will be trying this for the A and B team squads early next season. In addition I intend to arrange for one or two club coaching sessions later during next summer.

On a slightly different tack, but still associated with coaching, David Barrett visited Bakewell and spent a day with us demonstrating his mallets as well as doing some coaching. He and John Crossland then played a demonstration game with Bob Furniss and Judith Clay as their partners. I think that all who attended the day benefited and listening to the rationale behind the strokes played in the demo game was enlightening. Whether we ask David back next year will depend on how many people express an interest in buying his mallets.

Coaches

The difficulties which we faced earlier this year, in trying to find someone to coach us, led us to consider sending one or two of our better players on the coaching course so that we would have an in house capability. This would, of course, only be at level one (there are three) but would help for people new to the game and who have just joined the club.

The Croquet Association run the courses and it seems a bit random as to when, where and even if they occur, I will chase the man responsible next April.

Club Sessions

At the beginning of the season we started the Monday afternoon session in order to give members greater flexibility in arranging their diaries and also to cater for a growing membership. We were unsure just how the Monday session would be received but our fears were groundless and it has proved very popular.

Club website

As most of you know, the club has had a website for a couple of years or so. Already the site been instrumental in potential members making contact with Alan Reeves, as membership secretary, and is clearly of value.

Anyone who has taken time to visit the website, however, will have noticed that our problem is one of maintaining its currency. While a good website can be an effective marketing tool, an out of date one will certainly have a negative effect. Luckily for us, Dorothy Evans has volunteered to manage and control the information to be placed on our website and I ask you to both keep her informed of events and respond to her requests for information/reports.

Your co-operation will help to promote us as an active, progressive and growing club.

Membership

As the season finishes we end with a membership of 35 with most of these playing regularly.

Records

David Mackenzie tells me that last Monday (4th October) he and Dorothy took 2 hours 20 minutes to win a 13 hoop game 7-6. I think that this maybe a record but would like to know if anyone is able to challenge it.

Advance Notice

There will be a club walk in January 2011 and as usual this will be organised by Alan Reeves. I do not yet have a date, time or place but will let you know as soon as they are decided.

The Club AGM will be on 16 March 2011 at 7.30pm in the Medway Centre as usual. Please make a note of this in your diary and come along.

David Peters
6 October 2010

David Peters
Chairman