



BLEWBURY CROQUET CLUB

Newsletter

2012/1

DIAMOND JUBILEE EDITION!

►► Fast-forward

It's been a long time since a newsletter was circulated – far too long. Let's defer detailed reports of past competitions, results and landmarks for the moment, and concentrate on what's coming up.

Explanations: AC = association croquet, GC = golf croquet, and full names in the newsletter on first mention, on the basis that this is a journal of record!

Coaching

The coaching programme for 2012 began in April with weekly Thursday evening AC coaching sessions run by Nick Butler assisted by Deirdre Cochrane, finishing on 3rd May. The GC coaching day to be given by Brian Fisk on 26th April was deferred because of the weather until 29th May, except that Brian was unwell, so it was postponed again, to a projected date of 28th June. There were some vacancies on that date in the two two-and-a-half-hour sessions, starting at 9.30 and at noon, so do let Susan Tilbrook know if you haven't reserved your place yet.

The GC coaching will run on until 3pm, so the AC club afternoon will be late starting.

To give GC players something to work on meanwhile, Alan Cottle kindly came along to give us coaching on 4th May, and is coming back on 5th June – after lunch – to put us right on the use of extra turns in GC handicap games. We're very grateful to Alan for his help. And getting the hang of handicap play leads us nicely into the . . .

All England Handicap competitions

There are two of these individual, national, handicap competitions, overseen by the Croquet Association. One is for GC, and one for AC. Blewbury is running local rounds of each; the GC event is currently in progress, and the AC event is due to start soon. They each allow one or more club players to go on and play representatives of other clubs in an area final, from which national finalists emerge. We hosted one of the GC area finals last summer, and both that and the AC finals always seem very friendly and fun, though there has to be a competitive edge, and you get to play in different conditions, and meet and talk with croquet players from other clubs.

This year we have thirteen entrants in the GC competition, and seven in the AC version.

Frivolous Corner

Something went to our heads and a few weeks ago we found ourselves in discussion with Thames TV on the subject of MyTeam, a projected sports entertainment show. They wanted a 90-second "croquet extravaganza" (their words!) to be aired on prime-time television this summer. All the disciplines of the sport, put together with the assistance of a renowned choreographer, to entertain the nation and maybe, just maybe, win us some part of a really rather large cash prize.

We didn't get very far, which was probably a good thing, as it saved us from having to run auditions to select our team. Those of you who watch Britain's Got Talent, also from Thames, will know what we – or you – have missed.

Tournaments (1) - Armada Trophy



This AC doubles tournament, open to pairs from all Southern Croquet Federation clubs, was won in 2010 by our crack team of the two Davids Spear and Moren-Brown. We even have a photo to prove it! Last year, the trophy slipped out of their grasp, and went to Phyllis Court.

This year's competition will be held at Winchester on Saturday 23rd June. It's a handicap tournament, with no handicap restrictions.

Entries to Mrs Rita Nunn by phone at 01794 515005 or by email to ivorandritanunn@talktalk.net no later than 9th June. The entry fee of £5 per head will be collected on the day.

Tournaments (2) - Blewbury and Harwell Weekend Handicap (AC)

A new venture for us – an open tournament. The weekend of Saturday 21st July and Sunday 22nd July has been reserved at both Blewbury and Harwell. Entries are invited from all AC players in the Blewbury and Harwell clubs, and from other clubs in the SCF. Depending on the numbers, we can play on four lawns, from 9.30 each day.

Entries by email to Paul Wolff. Entry fee £10 for two days' play.

SCF Handicap Leagues

These are now running. We won our first matches in both the GC and the AC leagues, against Basingstoke and Oxford University respectively; but in the next GC match, against Phyllis Court last week, we didn't quite make the winning margin, coming out 5-7 down.

Fuller results will appear in time on the web site, and maybe also in a later Sports Report newsletter. If you want to contact the respective team managers, they are Susan (GC) and Bruce Gallop (AC) – and thanks are due to both of them for taking on these roles.

National Team Trophies - Longman Cup

We are drawn to play the winners of the preliminary round tie between Woking and Guildford and Godalming. If you're in the know, you'll be able to tell which two clubs those are. "Woking and Guildford" against "Godalming" earns you *null points*. W and G&G need to play their match by 11 June, and our first round tie must be played by 16 July.

2012 Diamond Jubilee Inter-County Championship

Three Blewbury players this year, namely Avril Rangoni-Machiavelli, Nick Butler and Robin Brown, in descending handicap order, were selected for the joint Berkshire/Oxfordshire team squad playing in the Inter-County Championships over the Diamond Jubilee bank holiday weekend. At the time of writing, after day 3 of the championship, the team has a fantastic record in Division 2 of 8 matches played, 8 matches won, and look well on course, mallets crossed, to win promotion to the 1st division.

Lawn maintenance message

Many thanks to all who are helping with the lawn maintenance this year.

As you are probably aware, the club can only continue with the present membership fees by the willingness of members to help with the lawn maintenance. Other clubs with professional groundsmen have much higher fees.

We now have a mowing rota and a white lining rota, but we could do with a few more people on each. If you could give a couple of hours a month to help it would be gratefully appreciated. Or if you could help in any other way please contact me, June Wolff, at june@wolff.co.uk.

June

Locks and Combinations

Some things change, some things stay the same...

The changes include a combination lock for the new, reinforced shed, and a key safe for the storeroom at the end of the clubhouse building. These are not only sensible precautions, but also meet the security requirements of our insurance policy. Access details aren't going to be published here, but if you need to know, ask and you will be told.

And forgive the perennial reminder, but every lock and every bolt in the clubhouse must be securely closed, latched and locked when the building is left. Again, this is sensible, because it is why we went to the trouble of fitting them in the first place, and it is also required by the insurers. Failure to close the bolts and lock the locks can invalidate our cover.

There is now a gate now between Tickers Folly Field and the car park, to stop joyriders using the field as a grass racetrack. When the installation is complete, there will be a combination lock fitted. We will have the combination, to allow vehicles to access the courts for deliveries and the like, and for disabled access.

Coming up



This year's Roger Cambray One-ball competition will be held on Sunday 17th June at Hall Barn, while Deirdre's garden is open under the National Gardens (Yellow Book) scheme. Email [David Spear](mailto:David.Spear@...) to book your place.

The Fridge

We have a new one (and thanks to my daughter Stephanie for her kind gift).

We're not geared up for sales of things that you might need a licence for, but we can accept donations to cover the cost of the cold drinks in the fridge. There's a screw-top jar in there for the purpose, with suggested amounts. The fridge isn't big enough to take a whole lot of variety, and we must leave space for temporary things like milk and sandwiches, but if you would like to see a different selection of cold drinks there, drop a note into the jar, or send me an email.

Paul Wolff, with thanks to all contributors