



BLEWBURY CROQUET CLUB

Chairman's Newsletter No 40

22 December 2004

LONGMAN CUP

You will, I trust, all be aware that Blewbury Croquet Club is now the proud holder of the Longman Cup. This is a national handicap competition for teams of four players, with a lowest permitted handicap $3\frac{1}{2}$, maximum 20, and a minimum aggregate 24.

We had a bye in the first round and thereafter beat some formidable opponents: Dyffryn (Wales) 4-3, Bristol 7-0 (those of you who are C.A. members and receive the Croquet Gazette may be interested in the article on page 14 of the latest issue 294 "All on the toss of a coin"), Sussex County (Regional Final & Quarter Final) 6-1, Colchester (Semi Final) 4-3 and Surbiton (Final) 6-1.

I am sure you will all join me in congratulating John Spiers (Captain), Nick Butler, Jolyon Kay and Stuart Parks who represented the club in the finals, not forgetting Deirdre Cochrane, Paul Heath, Neil Morrison and David Spear who played in earlier rounds contributing to our success.

2004 SEASON RESULTS

Association Croquet

National competitions:

- Longman Cup – Winners!
- All England Handicap: Nick Butler reached the National Final and Nick Balshaw reached the Regional Final.

Regional competitions:

- SCF League: We finished a disappointing joint 8th out of 11 teams.
- Friendlies: Played 5 and won them all.

Club competitions:

- Founders Cup: Won by Nick Butler.
- Prebendal Manor Cup: Won by Nick Butler. Special mention must be made of Nick Balshaw who was the only player undefeated in the group stages but was unable to participate in the finals owing to a family commitments.
- Roger Cambray Memorial Shield : Won by John Spiers.
- Autumn Doubles: Won by Deirdre Cochrane & Benson Spiers.
- Inter-Village: Won by Hagbourne village (Nick & Christopher Balshaw, Mike Duck, Stuart Parks).
- High Bisquers Tournament: Won by Christopher Balshaw.
- Low Bisquers Tournament: Won by Gerald Mitchell.

External competitions:

- Winchester One-Ball: John Spiers was runner-up.

- Hurlingham May Weekend (Plate competition): Won by John Munro (Nick Butler runner up).
- Woking Spring Tournament: Won by John Spiers.
- Cheltenham Over 50's: Won by Jolyon Kay.
- Roehampton One Ball (Handicap): Won by John Spiers (Nick Butler runner up).
- Hurlingham One Ball (Advanced, Pool 2): Won by John Spiers.

The name Nick Butler appears several times above and it's worth mentioning that his handicap was 11 at the start of the season reducing to 4½ at the end. This represents 7 steps which means that he won 35 more qualifying games than he lost over the season! This was the result of hours of practice and much dedication – an example to us all.

Golf Croquet

National competitions:

- Inter-Counties: Three Blewbury players were in the Oxford team that finished third.

Regional competitions:

- League: We never threatened the leaders and are awaiting details of the final positions. We did however give match experience to a number of members who joined in 2003 and hopefully this will stand us in good stead next season.
- Friendlies vs Phyllis Court: We lost the home match, won the away match.
- Southern Croquet Federation Solstice Cup (doubles): Won by Gerald Mitchell and John Munro, representing Harwell. (Ian and Barbara Anderson reached the semi finals).

Club competitions:

- Icknield Decanter: Won by Miren Tong.
- Golf Croquet Tournament: Won by Mike Elliott and Jim Bartlett.

COMMITTEE CHANGE

There was one change to the committee following the A.G.M. John Spiers has succeeded Jolyon Kay as Captain of Croquet. Jolyon remains Sports Development Officer so we will still be able to take advantage of his expertise!

THE COURTS

Godfrey reports favourably on the state of the lawns but moss has been a persistent problem. He has continued to mow the lawns until just a few days ago! The paving extension and the adjacent turfing will be completed before the coming season.

BUILDING EXTENSION AND IRRIGATION PROJECTS

Neil Morrison produced a design for the proposed extension to our shelter/store, which was well received by the project team. The builders' quotations for the work, however, have been significantly higher than expected and we are currently seeking further quotations. If anyone wishes to see Neil's drawings, please contact Jim Bartlett.

We have been in discussion with FlowingWater regarding the irrigation system and have now specified that there will be no pop-up sprinklers on the courts (4 had been planned in the original quotation). This means that we will need a higher grade

(and more expensive) array of sprinklers, but fewer of them and less trenching (including across the courts!). We are waiting for the revised quotation.

WINTER EVENTS

There will be a skittles evening on Saturday 22nd January 2005 - a chance to try your hand at a different sport - the previous one was good fun. You should all have received details from Brian Simpson, and if you are coming he would like to hear from you.

The usual Winter Party will be held in the Blewbury Village Hall on Friday 18th February 2005. Full details will be sent later and I hope as many of you as possible will be at this popular annual event.

Christmas Greetings and Best Wishes for 2005 to all members and their families.

John Munro
Chairman