



# NEWSLETTER

## June 2008

### From The Chairman



The season is now well underway and already it's been the best ever, with the lawns in superb condition, an almost doubling in size of the Croquet Challenge and membership at another record high of over 60!

Just a reminder - we're not allowed to entertain people who aren't members' guests. We've acquired some Visitors Books, so please can you ensure that everyone who comes into the Club House/Pavilion or plays on the lawns is signed in. Hopefully, Mick Greagsby has been following up visitors to ensure that they actually join as members as soon as possible, so make sure you've got sufficient details written down!

### Summer BBQ

Thanks to Elaine and Mark Houslop we'll be having another Summer Barbeque on Friday 8th August at their home - Nine West, Hungershall Park, Tunbridge Wells TN4 8NE. Nibbles at 7pm - price £10 per head including wine. To reserve your place(s) contact Elaine on 01892 619192 before August 15<sup>th</sup> or fill in the sheet on the notice board.

### Club Sessions

We've been closing some lawns when the wear has been excessive, especially the 'rat runs' in the hoops. At these times we've tried to avoid closing them completely, so have allowed Association to be played (as this wears the grass out significantly less than Golf).

In practice this has meant we're mixing Association and Golf on Sundays and Wednesdays, which I think is good. However, don't forget we've got one or two lawns still available on the Bowling Green, so if you think it's getting a bit crowded please use these.

Also, don't forget we're running another session on Thursday afternoon, aimed at playing singles Golf with **handicaps**, wherever possible. We're also going to be focussing our Golf Coaching sessions at these times (see below).

Lastly on this topic, I don't know whether the Saturday afternoon Association session (10-point play mostly) has taken off, but please try and make it if you can.

Finally, I'm off for an extended holiday to Sweden, but managing to fit in playing in the German Open Croquet Championship in Hamburg. I hope to see you again at the end of July and throughout August and September.

*Jon Diamond*

### Secretary's Notes

There is nothing much to report at the moment, since everything is ticking over well.

*However, we're still looking for a volunteer to take over as Secretary at the end of this year, so if you're interested please talk to me or any other Committee members.*

*Mick Belcham*

### Lawns

As we told you previously our Drainage Project across the north of lawns 2 & 3 which should prevent water accumulation in times of heavy rain was eventually completed last week, but somewhat later than expected because of the damp conditions. Our grant applications were so successful that the cost of this has been completely covered without any club funds being involved! Thanks to the Croquet Association, Kent County Council, South East Croquet Federation and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

Our lawns are improving thanks to the regular attention provided by Norman and cutting by Tony and they are now on a par with those of the top clubs. Volunteers are still needed to assist Norman on some tasks e.g. cutting the banks, since he's spending more time than budgeted for. Please call Roger if you are able to help on an occasional basis. Also, thanks to Richard Clark for the loan of the Flymo for use on the bank.

Please can I remind you when playing double-banked games not to mark balls with coins, but to use plastic markers which are available in the club house. Our mower recently hit a hard object but luckily the damage was minimal.

*Roger Morris*

## Coaching

The six week course in Association Croquet has finished, but I will continue to be available either on Thursday afternoons, or other days if possible for taking beginners through a game, so that they get the whole idea ingrained. I can also top up any strokes or tactics that you need coaching in. There is likely to be another course later in the year and I already have one applicant for that. Let me know if you would be interested.

The golf tournament showed that our players need coaching in how to use bisques and in some of the clever plays to look out for during a game. I am coaching at Southwick on the 5th and 6th of July and will be happy either to run a half day course (or full day) for those of you interested in raising the level of your game. On Thursdays, when we play golf singles I will also be prepared to give half hour sessions on aspects of the game. Please let me know if you would be interested in a half or whole day session.

### *Handicap cards*

I hope that those of you who play friendly singles games will record the results in your cards, although not altering your handicap index. It's a useful way of seeing how you are fairing against everyone else. Obviously record and score all club matches, except the ladder.

*John Hobbs*

## Housekeeping etc

Despite the wet Summer we seem to have had many afternoons of club croquet regularly attended by at least twenty or more. My thanks to all those who have prepared tea and slaved over the open sink to make sure everything is cleared away. Many hands make light work!!

I've produced a rota, based on those who volunteered, for the cleaning of the clubhouse. Could I remind you to take a look at the notice board to check which week is your responsibility. Perhaps a tick against your name on completion of the task would be a good idea.

*Elaine Houslop*

## Opening Day

Opening Day dawned beautifully and it continued to be lovely and warm throughout. The morning event was the (traditional?) One Ball, being run for the second time with ten players and a novice turned out to be the winner again - this time Derek Heath.

The soup for lunch unfortunately turned out to be a victim of a sudden family emergency, but there was plenty of bread, cheese, tomatoes and fruit, together with some liquid refreshment to make up for that and the 25 members enjoyed it thoroughly.

The lawns were fully crowded in the afternoon, and we entertained a few people who'd come in for the Open Afternoon. Sadly in the morning we had to turn away a group of walkers who's leader wanted to have a play. We hope they come back again.

## Tournaments

### *Kent Cup*

The Kent Cup is an individual competition amongst members of all the clubs in Kent and rotates around the county each year. Last year it was at Tunbridge Wells, but this year was at Medway (near Aylesford).

Participants from Tunbridge Wells were Mick Belcham (Manager), Jon Diamond and Chris Sturdy. However, our players didn't manage to do quite well enough with Philip Mann from Medway, the highest handicap player in the tournament, ending up winner.

### *Open Golf*

A full house of 16 players took part on 14<sup>th</sup> June, up from the 10 of last year, although only three were not from Tunbridge Wells. It was a 7-round Swiss event on a slightly blustery but mostly sunny day and a pleasant, but tiring, introduction to tournament play for some of our new members this year.

The competition was intense, with many very close games, and occasionally the extra turns even being used properly! However, the Webb's from Southwick proved just too much for our local players - they've been playing against some very good players according to their handicap cards. Maggie turned out the winner at the 13th hoop in the final against Keith and came up with an unblemished record of 7 wins to take the first prize, with Keith being the runner up.

Our players obviously need some coaching in how and when to take the extra turns and also in some of the more detailed rules of the game, e.g. when to call a referee (especially when you've got a shot close to a hoop), avoidance of double taps and crush shots - you have been warned!

The Manager took a little executive action in changing Maggie Webb's handicap from 7 to 5 (the handicap card index indicated 6, but was very close to 5) and Michael Gentry from 10 to 8.

### *Future Tournaments*

All Association players are welcome to our High Bisquers (Internal on 2<sup>nd</sup> August and Open on 23<sup>rd</sup> August), our Open Handicap Association Croquet event on Saturday/Sunday 27<sup>th</sup>/28th September and our two-day Open Advanced Croquet event on Saturday/Sunday 6<sup>th</sup>/7th September.

Entry forms for our Open events are on the website and in the Club House. Please send them in, with your payment, to Mick as soon as possible. For the Internal High Bisquers please let Richard Clark know if you'd like to play.

This year we're also hosting the second 8 of the Musk Cup, an invitational competition for top Golf Croquet players organised by the Croquet Association on 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> August. Spectators are welcome.

Finally, the Kent Cup (Golf) makes a welcome return, being held at Ramsgate on 20<sup>th</sup> July – contact Ron Welch 01843 869326 if you want to play in the latter.

## **Inter-Club Matches and Friendlies**

### *SECF Leagues*

We've lost our only Golf Level League match, to Ramsgate 3:4 and are about to have our first Association match, against Ramsgate at home on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> June. Supporters welcome!

### *SECF Golf*

Due to an excess of teams applying to play in the SECF Golf event on 10<sup>th</sup> August a ballot had to take place and we've lost out – so we're only able to take one team. If you're interested please contact Derek Heath ASAP

### *Friendlies*

We've so far not managed to organise any friendly events and desperately need someone to take responsibility for this. If you're interested please contact any committee member.

## **Marketing and PR**

### *Penshurst Place*

Mick Greagsby is organising our outing there on 20<sup>th</sup> July, which is advertised in their brochure, and for which they are paying us a goodly sum. We're scheduled to be on display in front of the main house entrance from 1-4:30pm. Helpers are wanted, so please contact Mick if you would like to have a nice day out there!

### *Musk Cup*

This is a Croquet Association Selection Invitational Event for the second eight English Golf Croquet players, i.e. those not selected for the 1<sup>st</sup> Eights, and is the first CA organised event to be held in Tunbridge Wells. This clearly recognises the improvements we've made to the lawns and the facilities.

It will use all 4 lawns on the weekend of 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> August, so please be warned that there will be no club

play on these two days. On the other hand spectators are welcome!

## **Cripps, Harries, Hall**

This was another splendid corporate event organised by Mick Belcham on the 5<sup>th</sup> June. At least 32 people turned up to play, drink a little Pimms and enjoy the food provided by Elaine Houslop. They all enjoyed the croquet too, as exhibited by the teams that turned up to the Corporate Challenge.

Hopefully they'll be back next year, if not before.

## **Corporate Challenge**

The third year of this event, inaugurated as part of Royal Tunbridge Wells 400, was a great success with another doubling in the number of teams taking part to 20 on a gloomy and somewhat damp 20<sup>th</sup> June.

The previous winners (Lovat Insurance Brokers and Blockley Partnership) entered again and it's obvious that a bit of practice helps – as one of the Lovat teams won again (Chris Moon and Juliet Garret) with 4 straight wins.

New for this year was the Churchill Retirement Living Salver. This was presented to the Community team winners Charles Armstrong-Wilson and John Tysoe of the Dad Rock Disasters team (with 3 wins) by Dave Roe, Land Director of Churchill Retirement Living.

The full list of teams is: Lovat Insurance Brokers with 3 teams, Cripps Harries Hall with 3 teams, Courier Media Group with 4 teams, Churchill Retirement Living with 2 teams, Discord Distribution, Blockley Partnership, Brenchley Bruisers, Dad Rock Disasters, Duckweed (Great Culverden Park), The Civics (Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society), Four Elms Mallets and Philosophical.

Thanks to the many people who helped at this and the Cripps, Harries, Hall event, especially those who don't know how to play Golf Croquet!

## **Welcome**

Finally, welcome to our many new members this year – Maggie Fraser, Robert Greenwood, Sandra Greagsby, Wenda and Terry Hubble, Anita Hunter, Angela Milne, Kate Sander and also to Alex Jardin, who rejoins after a few years absence in France.

## Important Diary Dates

June 28	U league v Ramsgate (2 lawns in use all day)
July 2	SECF Ladies Day @ Southwick
July 5/6	Golf Coaching Course @ Southwick
July 20	Exhibition @ Penshurst Place
July 20	Kent Cup (Golf) @ Ramsgate
July 21-25	Association Summer School @ Southwick
August 2	Internal High Bisquers
August 8	Summer BBQ @ 7pm, Nine West, Hungershall Park
August 10	SECF Golf Teams @ Southwick
August 16/17	Musk Cup (CA Golf Invitational)
August 23	Open High Bisquers Tournament
Sep 6/7	Open Advanced Tournament
Sep 27/28	Open Handicap Tournament
Nov 22	AGM: 11am @ Frant Village Hall, followed by lunch at about 1pm

Don't forget the latest dates, information updates etc. are on the web-site, so if you're asked about Croquet or club details just direct them to <http://www.tunbridgewellscroquet.org.uk>