



newsletter

Match results

Beds & Herts League v Meldreth (home)

11 May Won 3-1

Wrest Park	Meldreth	WP score
Bryan Harral (1)	Alec Osborne (10)	-7T
John Martin (20)	Janet Pope (18)	
Geoff Strutt (8)	Angus Bell (10)	+4T
John Martin (20)	Janet Pope (18)	
Bryan Harral (1)	Alec Osborne (10)	+5
Geoff Strutt (8)	Angus Bell (10)	+9T

Beds & Herts League v Enfield (away)

2 June Won 4-2

Wrest Park	Enfield	WP score
Bryan Harral (1)	Ken Pickett (2½)	-8T
Ray Percy (20)	Alan Foott (16)	
Tim Brewer (7)	Michael Ruggins (8)	+3T
Cliff Hayes (20)	Wendy Spencer-Smith (18)	
Bryan Harral (1)	Ken Pickett (2½)	+15
Tim Brewer (7)	Michael Ruggins (8)	+13
Ray Percy (20)	Alan Foott (16)	+17T
Cliff Hayes (20)	Wendy Spencer-Smith (18)	-2T

EACF golf league v Letchworth (home)

16 May Won 10-8

Wrest Park	Letchworth	WP score
Don Barrett (4)	Beryl Alabaster (3)	W 6-3
Maureen Watts (6)	David Russell (5)	
Linda Potton (5)	John Skingsley (2)	W 4-3
Peggy Kenny (6)	John Alabaster (3)	
Don Barrett (4)	John Skingsley (2)	L 6-5
	John Alabaster (3)	W 7-2
	Beryl Alabaster (3)	W 7-2
	David Russell (5)	L 3-5
Linda Potton (5)	John Skingsley (2)	L 4-7
	John Alabaster (3)	W 5-4
	Beryl Alabaster (3)	W 7-0
	David Russell (5)	W 5-4
Maureen Watts (6)	John Skingsley (2)	L 3-5
	John Alabaster (3)	L 4-5
	Beryl Alabaster (3)	L 2-7
	David Russell (5)	L 3-6
Peggy Kenny (6)	John Skingsley (2)	W 4-1
	John Alabaster (3)	W 4-2
	Beryl Alabaster (3)	L 2-5
	David Russell (5)	W 7-2

Report and photo by Ronnie Richardson

This was the first game of the season and we were very lucky to complete all games just as the rain came down. This is the second time we have played Letchworth at home so were hoping to beat them again on home

ground. By the end of playing all the single matches we were drawn at 8 games each. So everything was reliant on the doubles matches.

As the whistle blew after 30 minutes Don Barrett and Maureen Watts won their game 6-3, but Peggy and Linda were 3 hoops each against Letchworth, so an extra hoop had to be played. For those watching it was a very tense 10 minutes as each side had the chance of winning the hoop, I think we had everything crossed at this time, but due to the skill of the Wrest Park players we won the last hoop.

Our thanks to June Black for making the tea, Irene and Peter Davis for being our scorers and most of all to the team of Maureen Watts, Linda Potton, Peggy Kenny and Don Barrett.



L-R: John Alabaster, Maureen Watts, Peggy Kenny, Beryl Alabaster, Don Barrett, John Skingsley, David Russell, Linda Potton

Handicap Tournament 18-20 May

Report by John Bevington, photos by Elaine Newman

Sixteen players left us with a variety of options and we settled for two blocks of eight (Wrest Park plus Northampton and Letchworth plus the rest), with everyone from one block playing everyone in the other. George Collin suggested a scheme for dealing with time limits by checking how many points had been made per hour and imposing a limit if this number fell below a certain amount, but in the event only one game came close to having a limit applied and in fact was concluded some 20 minutes later. Players seemed to respond to the lack of time limits; play was positive and there were no awkward delays. The lawns were easy paced and the weather fine apart from some rain on Friday.

Poor Colin Hemming suffered a breakdown en route and missed out on the first day's play, which saw the away group in dominant form, Nigel Polhill, Ken Pickett and Andrew Willis all with three wins. The high (or should it be low?) point of the day was the appearance of a glider which came across the lawns at about 200 feet, heading west into a stiff breeze, and landed in the field between the park and the A6. Some time later a light plane

appeared, landed in the field and towed the glider back into the far corner pointing into the wind. A towrope was attached, the glider pilot climbed back in, his female companion held the wing steady, and the plane then moved off and got the glider up, clearing the A6 by not very much, and they disappeared, leaving the girl on her own in the field. The 51st way to leave your lover?

Saturday saw the home team on better form. Ray Percy picked up another win to go with one the previous day. Elaine Newman had two wins and George Collin three. On the other side Ken and Nigel faltered, but Andrew continued to be unstoppable, and George Woolhouse was also undefeated on the day.

On Sunday Andrew made sure of things with wins against Owen Bryce and George Collin (who held him up for some time). The nearest Andrew had come to losing a game was in his second game against Steve Jones, who was all set to win until he played the wrong ball after running rover. Steve was a candidate for the shot of the tournament when at one point he ran 4-back from corner 1 while trying to roquet a ball in the middle of the lawn.

Andrew was chased all the way by George Woolhouse, but it turned out some time later that George had been playing off the wrong handicap all weekend! (The results table does not take this into account). Our thanks to George Collin and John Wheeler for extra mowing and to everyone who turned out to help with the catering, in particular Margaret Marshall who supplemented Saturday's provisions with chicken drumsticks, pork and a large rum and pineapple cake.

Ray Percy and Geoff Strutt earned bronze awards and Ray's handicap was cut to 20 (he had been playing off 20 in the tournament but had a club handicap of 24) as a result of his three wins. Andrew's handicap was cut from 9 to 8, and on his present form it will be rather less than that by the end of the season



Andrew Willis about to do a rover peel on his way to yet another win.

	Hcp	P	W	Points	Position
John Bevington	1	7	4	-5	8
Geoff Strutt	8	8	4	+9	7
Elaine Newman	18	8	4	+23	6
George Collin	2½	7	3	+3	13
Owen Bryce	12	8	4	-5	9
Steve Jones	10	7	1	-31	14
Ray Percy	20	8	3	+13	12
Michael Clifton	12	8	4	+31	5
Nigel Polhill	1	8	5	+6	4
George Woolhouse	4	8	7	+45	2
Andrew Willis	9	8	8	+110	1
Ian Parkinson	2	8	4	-15	10
Ian Mantle	4½	8	4	-43	11
Colin Hemming	3½	5	1	-56	15
Ken Pickett	2½	8	5	+15	3
Robert Staddon	8	8	0	-111	16



Clockwise from left: Ray Percy, Ken Pickett, Colin Hemming, Owen Bryce, Michael Clifton, George Woolhouse, Tim Brewer, Ian Parkinson, George Collin, John Bevington, Andrew Willis, Robert Staddon, Geoff Strutt

Inter Counties 26-29 May

The Bedfordshire team was Jon Watson (-1), Howard Bottomley (-1), Ben Ashwell (-1), Bryan Harral (1), John Bevington (1), George Collin (2½) and Tom Anderson (2½), with John Wheeler as non-playing captain. The balance of the handicaps allowed plenty of scope with the pairings, which was just as well as Howard was only available for the first two days owing to a prior engagement at Wembley on the Monday to watch West Bromwich in the Championship play-off final. Enid Bottomley, our mascot, staunch supporter and all-round calming influence was unable to be with us this year and was much missed.

Saturday (dull) began with a 2-1 win against new county Wiltshire when Jon and Ben got home +1T. A loss to Lancashire was followed by another win against Northumberland. Sunday (cold, rain all day) saw a 2-1 victory against Sussex when, after George and Howard had gone down to a triple by Ian Vincent, Bryan Harral scrambled the vital points for another +1T win after Paul Castell had pegged himself out. Two more +1T wins saw us to a 3-0 win against Devon after lunch, thankful that we didn't have another game to play.

Monday (more rain and strong winds, even colder) began with a narrow loss to Hertfordshire. Ben completed a triple for a +25TP win against Duncan Hector and David Tutt, but Tom and George just lost out

by 1 on time. We then lost to Warwickshire when Jon and Bryan were on the receiving end of a triple. A change in pairings for the match against Middlesex saw Jon and John storm home in three turns, but Ben and Bryan lost out to another triple. George and Tom's game against Phil Cordingley and Mark Fawcett was in the balance right up to the end, the scores being level after time, but Phil eventually hit in and that was that.



Southwick on Monday, as seen from the shelter of the clubhouse.
Photo by John Wheeler.

Tuesday (at Eastbourne, warm sunshine, what a relief) saw the team back to winning ways against Kent, with Ben completing another triple. Our last match was against Hampshire. Ben and Bryan lost to some immaculate play (4-back on the third turn followed by a delayed triple) and George and Tom got home after Graham Gale was unable to capitalise on Julie Hudson's early break to 4-back. Jon and John had a shaky start when John stuck at 5. John McMordie got round, then Jon went to 4-back and eventually made the last three hoops and pegged himself out. The last few minutes saw John B achieve an unbeaten record in a less than dignified manner by dodging from corner to corner as James Tuttiett tried vainly to make up the deficit. Bathos incarnate. John's reward was a bottle of Opéra Blanc de Blancs, presented by John Wheeler who had won it in the raffle the day before.

All in all a fairly solid team performance, which left us in a comfortable mid-table position. If the matches against Hertfordshire and Middlesex had gone our way we could have been up for promotion, but that would have meant that next year we would be spending a lot of the time watching our opponents doing triple peels and being bought endless rounds of drinks. Perhaps we're better off where we are.

Division 1			Division 2				
	P	W	Games	P	W	Games	
Notts	10	9	22	Sussex (P)	10	8	19
Cheshire	10	9	19	Lancs (P)	10	7	20
Surrey	10	7	20	Middlesex (P)	10	7	20
Avon	10	7	20	Warwicks	10	7	18
Essex	10	5	17	Bedfordshire	10	6	17
Dorset	10	5	15	N'umberland	10	6	16
Yorkshire	10	4	12	Hertfordshire	10	5	16
Glamorgan	10	4	11	Hampshire	10	4	12
Suffolk (R)	10	2	10	Wiltshire	10	3	11
Channel I (R)	10	2	9	Kent	10	1	9
Gloucs (R)	10	1	10	Devon	10	1	7

1 st pair	P	W	L	TPs for	TPs against
Watson/ Ashwell	5	4	1		
Watson/Harral	2	0	2		1 (Warwicks)
Watson/Bevington	3	3	0		
2 nd pair					
Bottomley/Harral	1	0	1		
Bottomley/Collin	4	1	3		
Ashwell/Bevington	2	2	0	1 (Herts)	
Ashwell/Harral	3	1	2	1 (Kent)	2 (Middx, Hants)
3 rd pair					
Bevington/Collin	1	1	0		
Bevington/Harral	4	4	0		
Collin/Anderson	5	1	4		

The Anderson Shield 26-27 May

This tournament follows the same format as the Inter Counties (advanced play doubles with time limits), with six counties in the East Anglian Federation each represented by two pairs. Playing for Bedford were Geoff Strutt, Tim Brewer, Terry Mahoney and John Smallbone. Readers are recommended to go to the EACF website (www.angliacroquet.co.uk) to read the report, which includes a number of photos. The weather was pretty grim, so much so that with Hertfordshire too far ahead to be caught they were declared the winners and the final round was abandoned to the relief of the players and groundsman alike.

Diary of events

June 16-17	Home Internationals
June 20	EACF Golf league v Leighton-Linslade Irene Davis group (6 lawns from 6pm)
June 23	B&H League v Letchworth (home)
June 24	Golf croquet singles
June 30	B&H League v Colworth (home)
July 1	Pro-Am alternate stroke doubles
July 6-8	Advanced tournament
July 18	Irene Davis group (6 lawns from 6pm)
July 22	Golf croquet doubles
August 4-5	Advanced tournament
August 14	Amphill 41 club (6 lawns, evening)
August 25-27	Wrest Park Craft Fair
September 1	Amphill 41 club (afternoon)
September 5	Hertford U3A group (4 lawns all day)
September 7-9	Handicap tournament
September 22	EACF leagues playoff
September 23	EACF Champions Day
October 6-7	CA Club Finals weekend

■ **Anyone organising home matches (B&H league, golf croquet league, Longman Cup etc.) or any other events must let me know the dates as soon as they are confirmed.** We have to tell EH who is using the lawns and when, so please let me know before writing anything on the calendar in the pavilion.

Corporate hospitality

Four English Heritage staff, Adrian Baker among them, took part in a croquet evening on May 14. They had been attending a conference at Wrest Park and had expressed an interest in croquet, so we arranged some golf croquet games, provided a brief demonstration of Association and talked about the club and its history. Just over a week later we had a visit by a group from Vega plc. Alex Lever had approached us last year regarding the possibility of arranging an evening for

some of the staff as a team-building exercise, and by all accounts it went very well (so well that they have asked for another date!). Many thanks to all those who turned up to help.

Wrest Park Garden Show 26-28 May

No details to hand but a big thank you to all the club members who came down to give visitors to the show a chance to try their hand at croquet over the weekend. If the weather was anything like that experienced at Southwick it can't have been much fun.

Dates for internal competitions

When originally published the internal competitions had no completion dates for the various rounds. Anyone who thought they could postpone their games indefinitely is about to be disillusioned. Please make every effort to complete the various rounds by the dates shown below:

	Round 1	Round 2	Quarter	Semi	Final
Ashwell	14 June	28 June	12 July	26 July	7 Aug
Archer	28 June	26 July	9 Aug	23 Aug	13 Sept
Golf	28 June	26 July	9 Aug	23 Aug	13 Sept

	Round 1	Quarter	Semi	Final
Steel	28 June	26 July	23 Aug	13 Sept
14 point	28 June	26 July	23 Aug	13 Sept
De Grey	28 June	26 July	23 Aug	13 Sept

	Semi	Final
TPEdeG	26 July	13 Sept

The Ashwell Cup (the All England club heat) has to be completed by the first week in August, hence the earlier dates.

The Golf croquet competition is a **handicap** event. If you do not have a handicap you can establish your own by following the procedure for setting an initial handicap which can be found on the CA website (go to Golf Croquet and then click on the Handicapping link on the left of that page).

Golf croquet singles and doubles tournaments and Pro-Am

There are still vacancies for these events so if you wish to enter please add your names to the lists in the pavilion. I will not be managing the golf croquet tournaments so the players will need to elect a manager from their number who will organise the event or agree a format amongst themselves on the day. I can provide various forms for block play on request.

The entry for the Pro Am is so low that unless it increases significantly over the next two weeks the event will be cancelled

Coaching

Geoff Strutt's coaching course took place as planned, was much appreciated by all those who attended, and many thanks to him for organising it. Family circumstances have meant that I have only been down on one Thursday so far this season and so have been

unable to offer coaching as previously promised, however I hope to be down more regularly in future.

Emergency number

If an emergency situation arises when you are on the lawns and you need to contact Wrest Park Security the mobile number is **07774 679 810**.

John Bevington

12 June 2007