



Wrest Park Silsoe Bedfordshire

# newsletter

## Wrest Park retain their Beds & Herts League title

Wrest Park won the year's Beds & Herts League for the second year in succession by beating Enfield in the last match to finish on eight points, one ahead of Watford and Enfield. Watford's chances were dashed when they lost their last match to bottom club Colworth. Wrest Park now goes through to the EACF Leagues playoff at Hunstanton on 26<sup>th</sup> September, with the chance of qualifying for next year's Secretary's Shield competition. Congratulations to all who played, with special thanks once again to organiser and team captain Bryan Harral.

### Beds & Herts League v Watford (away) 16 July Lost 1-5

Wrest Park	Watford	WP score
Bryan Harral (1)	Ian Parkinson (0)	+6T
David Morris (18)	Janet Lewis (10)	
Geoff Strutt (6)	Arthur Reed (1½)	-10T
Elaine Newman (12)	John Smallbone (6)	
Bryan Harral (1)	Ian Parkinson (0)	-6T
Geoff Strutt (6)	Arthur Reed (1½)	-13
Elaine Newman (12)	John Smallbone (6)	-2T
David Morris (18)	Janet Lewis (10)	-17

Report by Bryan Harral

Not a good result. I shall dwell on this match only long enough to make some excuses. The lawns at Watford were a patchwork of live grass (slow) and dead grass (very fast) so we had great difficulty judging our shots. This, coupled with schoolkids heckling from the sidelines, caused an Australian-style collapse.

### Beds & Herts League v Enfield (away) 27 August Won 4-2

Wrest Park	Enfield	WP score
Bryan Harral (1)	Ken Pickett (3)	-5T
Cliff Hayes (20)	John Street (16)	
Tim Brewer (4½)	Alan Foott (16)	+7T
Elaine Newman (12)	Wendy Spencer-Smith (16)	
Bryan Harral (1)	Ken Pickett (3)	-18
Tim Brewer (4½)	John Street (16)	+2T
Elaine Newman (12)	Wendy Spencer-Smith (16)	+12T
Cliff Hayes (20)	Alan Foott (16)	+4T

Report by Bryan Harral

We went into this match lying third behind Enfield and Watford but with the possibility of snatching the title if we won. No pressure! Tim and Elaine won their doubles match while Bryan and Cliff lost, Bryan throwing away several golden opportunities. In fact, the captain's main contribution was to drive the car to and from Enfield. But it's now lunch-time and we are level, we must win three of the singles. Bryan is promptly beaten by Ken Pickett,

despite Ken wasting a bisque running a hoop twice with the same ball. Luckily we have three players who know how to play croquet properly. Elaine and Cliff edge ahead and win on time, Elaine doing so despite giving away four bisques. The match now hangs on Tim's game, time has been called and he is behind. He has a twenty yard shot and, would you believe it, by cunning use of the ground contours he hits! Tim then plays an immaculate break and wins the game. I'm sorry if I have forgotten the details in the euphoria of the moment, but there's no doubt about the result. Wrest Park win the match and snatch the title. Ken Pickett generously presented the Hector Shield to Bryan, who reflected it could so easily have been the other way around.

### EACF Beds & Herts League player records

	Doubles			Singles		
	P	W	L	P	W	L
Bryan Harral	7	5	2	5	2	3
Elaine Newman	5	3	2	5	2	3
Geoff Strutt	3	2	1	3	2	1
David Morris	3	2	1	3	0	3
Ray Pearcy	2	1	1	2	2	0
Tim Brewer	2	2	0	2	1	1
Cliff Hayes	2	1	1	2	1	1

In the Western area division of the EACF golf croquet league Wrest Park finished with a home win against Watford (the eventual area winners) on 20 July. We finished fifth out of six with two wins, the other being against local rivals Leighton-Linslade. The top four teams had three wins each, and Wrest Park's total number of game wins was only one fewer than second-placed Letchworth, which shows how close the competition was. Many thanks to Judi Priestley for organising the matches.



The Wrest Park and Watford teams. Standing L-R: Ronnie Richardson, Roger Nicholls (Watford), Helen Walker (W), Linda Potton, Vera Pearson. Kneeling: Ron Drew (W), John Walker (W), Peggy Kenny.

## Other match results

### Longman Cup v Northampton (away)

10 August

Lost 2-5

Wrest Park	Northampton	WP score
Steve Jones (10)	Mike Hills (5)	+8T
David Morris (18)	Tim Bunn (10)	
Elaine Newman (12)	Owen Bryce (10)	-8
Ray Percy (14)	Mike Bowser (6)	+6
Steve Jones (10)	Mike Hills (5)	-13
Elaine Newman (12)	Mike Bowser (6)	-19
Ray Percy (14)	Owen Bryce (10)	-12
David Morris (18)	Tim Bunn (10)	-11

On a grey and drizzly day we were 2-1 up at lunch but were unable to press home the advantage and lost all the afternoon singles. Ray reported that no blame could be attached to the sloping lawns – the team were simply outplayed on the day. He also added that he won't play Owen Bryce again next year, as he couldn't face the prospect of being beaten by a 90 year old!

## Advanced tournament

### 8-9 August

The tournament was won by Phil Cordingley, who began with a triple against Peter Thompson and continued with five more wins (including a win against Mike Porter recorded on the sheet as +17NZTP, whatever that might be). Phil wore his mallet on his sleeve and cries of anguish would ring out as balls failed to reach their intended positions on what were relatively slow lawns, due to heavy rain two days earlier.



Winner Phil Cordingley, and Richard Stevens with his new braces

Phil was brought up short in his last game against Jonathan Lamb, over from Uruguay, who won +16 and took second place with five wins out of 6. Jonathan's only loss was to Tom Anderson in the first round and this may have spurred him on. Jonathan's penultimate game against John Bevington was slightly unusual:

- 1 Pink just short of E boundary north of hoop 4
- 2 Green lays short tice
- 3 White hits tice and goes to 4-back leaving diagonal spread with green near hoop 2
- 4 Brown misses from B baulk to just outside corner 4

- 5 Pink goes to peg on 3 ball break using green and white, leaving rush to 4-back south of hoop 2
- 6 Green hits lift from A-baulk and goes to 3-back on 3 ball break using pink and white, sticks in hoop
- 7 Opponent hits green in hoop and lays up for 4-back
- 8 Green shoots at brown and misses
- 9 White makes 4-back and penult but fails to get rush to rover. Takes off to corner 4, roquets brown, gets rush on green to rover and finishes.

If White had got the rush to rover after penult, the game could have been completed with brown remaining untouched since it was played onto the lawn in turn 4.

Third place went to David Tutt, who in his modest and unassuming way quietly collected five wins in his seven games, including one against his club colleague Nick Mounfield. Nick is definitely one to watch. Until relatively recently he had only played golf croquet and indeed this may even have been his first Association tournament. Playing off 8 he quickly had opponents reaching for calculators to work out the number of index points they might lose. He won four of his seven games, dabbled with a triple peel and might have done even better but for some forgivable errors such as laying up in baulk having forgotten that there was a lift due. Needless to say his handicap has now been halved. It was convenient that David is his club handicapper and that Ian Parkinson, chair of the Handicapping Committee, happened to be playing in the tournament as well.

With Nick on four wins were Mike Porter, John Male and Richard Smith. Richard had a slow start but finished strongly, hitting in at the death to win the last game to finish, against manager Rod Ashwell, +2 on time.

The weather was good, the catering (with thanks to Linda, Vera, Peggy and Margaret) splendid. And we had our fashion moment: Richard Stevens' wife returned from Bedford on Saturday afternoon with a pair of red braces, which brightened up the lawns no end.

## All England Handicap area final

### 5-6 September



Standing L-R: Peter Hanley (Letchworth), Geoffrey Elliot (Ashby), Alan Brown (Colchester), Adrian Kirby (Peterborough), Colin Davies (Letchworth), David Haslam (Colchester). Seated: Terry Mahoney (Wrest Park), Geoffrey Johnson (Watford), Jeane Ackermann (Nottingham), Tim Brewer (Wrest Park), John Smallbone (Watford), Keith Huggins (Peterborough)

For some of the players this was their first proper tournament (something the organisers would do well to bear in mind in future), so there were inevitably occasions when differences of opinion could have been avoided had an umpire or an independent timekeeper been called for. Played as a five round Swiss, the event was won by Geoff Johnson (20) from Watford who won all his games. The three other qualifiers for the final (eventually determined by manager Tim Brewer according to the rules laid down) were Geoff Elliott, Colin Davies and WP's own Terry Mahoney.

## Craft Fair 29-31 August

Or to give it its official title, the Wrest Park Craft and Design Festival. Club members were out on the three days giving visitors the chance to try golf croquet and find out about the Association game, although I sometimes think our greatest contribution is providing somewhere for people to sit. The weather was kind and we took £133 (plus €2.20). Many thanks to all who helped.

## Here come the girls



The first day of the All England area final on Saturday 5 September was enlivened by a large wedding party, preceded by drummers, making their way from the mansion to an imposing marquee for dinner and dancing.

## Handicap tournament

### 12-13 September

There were 12 entries, and as six were club members manager Eric Audsley decided to arrange the event as "home v away". This meant having to play three games on Sunday, which everyone did quite easily. The hoops were forgiving, the lawns fast and the weather fine, but with a chill wind on Sunday morning. Not having to double-bank was a bonus, and few games went to time.

Wrest Park	W	L	Visitors	W	L
John Bevington (1)	2	4	George Woolhouse (1½)	1	5
George Collin (2)	5	1	Ken Pickett (3)	2	4
Eric Audsley (2½)	5	1	Ian Mantle (3½)	3	3
Terry Mahoney (2½)	4	2	Peter Dennis (4)	0	6
Geoff Strutt (8)	2	4	Gina Lewis (4½)	3	3
David Marsh (16)	5	1	John Lonsdale (8)	4	2

Wrest Park had the better of things, perhaps adapting more easily to the conditions, and at the end there were three on five wins. The winner was decided on net points and the trophy went to David Marsh, playing in his first tournament, with a net gain of 103, followed by Eric (who lost to Gina) with 66 and George (who lost to Ian) with 33. David's only loss was to John Lonsdale, who took the visitor's trophy, and his handicap has now gone down to 14. Our thanks as usual to all those who helped with the catering.



John Lonsdale and David Marsh collect their glassware

## Diary

### September

26 CA golf croquet Inter Club final

26 EACF leagues playoff (Hunstanton)

### November

27 Annual Dinner at Mona Lisa, 36 Guildford Street, Luton (*details to follow*)