



newsletter

Advanced tournament 2-3 July

The 18 players were divided into three blocks in handicap order. Although most games were within the block, circumstances led to more mingling as the tournament progressed.

In the top block five of the six were minus players, including Ian Lines, Lionel Tibble and Debbie Cornelius. Ian won the block with four wins out of five including two TPs against Rod Ashwell and Richard Smith, losing only to Debbie. Richard Smith also had four wins, ahead of Lionel and Debbie with three.

The second block had a spread of 1 to 2½, with James Skelton infiltrating a Wrest Park/Letchworth club. It was evenly contested, with Eric Audsley, George Collin and Nick Mounfield all picking up three wins from five. Ian Mantle might have joined them but his game against George Woolhouse has no score recorded, instead an A is inscribed (Abandoned?) against it. As Nick beat both Eric and George it must be assumed he won.

The third block had handicaps ranging from 2½ (Philip Windred) to 7 (Geoff Strutt), and was won by Philip who squeezed in six games, winning four of them, ahead of Mike Hills with three from five and Geoff, John Bee and Gordon Weir with two apiece.

Advanced tournament 6-7 August



Robert Wilkinson receiving his prize from manager Rod Ashwell.

This tournament was the first to be held since the re-opening of Wrest Park following the completion of the first stages of the garden restoration and the opening of the new visitor centre. There had been plentiful publicity on TV and in the press, and the crowds flocked in. Players sitting near the noticeboard found themselves answering the usual questions ("Is he practising?"), explaining the rules and handing out leaflets.

The 18 players were made up of quartets from Wrest Park, Letchworth and Parsons Green and a mixture of old friends and new faces. After two rounds without

dropping a point, with a TP against Christian Carter, Robert Wilkinson looked like the man in form, but at this stage Nick Mounfield, Nick Parish and Rob Minshall were also undefeated. After two further rounds Robert and Rob both had four wins, and Robert finally got his hands on the prize by beating Rob +4. Rob also received a prize for the best performance by a higher handicapper. Several players stayed on for a last round. Robert was playing George Collin, who embarked on a triple and required a straight double peel to finish. This is what happened next:



1. The initial positioning



2. The final alignment



3. The address



4. The peel and hoop approach

The penult peel left blue near the peg and black in an ideal hoop running position. But then



5. The deleted expletives
Photos by Rod Ashwell

In spite of this unforced error, George won shortly afterwards.

Handicap tournament 10-11 September

Report by manager Geoff Strutt

The weather was kinder than promised; but the entry was sparse – Deidre Duggan, Gina Lewis, Mel Christie, Geoff Johnson and George Woolhouse being the outsiders in a field of 11.

The format was a Hands ladder (an Egyptian) with a knock-out embedded within it. This was not to the liking of some who preferred for there to be just one winner and therefore just one prize. In the end, the winner of the Egyptian was indeed the winner of the knock out; but hindsight can be a very useful guide to planning.

Experience applied next year will dictate a straightforward Hands ladder with no embedding!



Man of action: George Woolhouse

The no time limit/shortened games principle met with almost universal approval. This allowed 5 games for 5 players; 6 games for 6 players and one player achieving 7 games over the weekend - a total of 62 games being played altogether. Wharrad turns were applied to one game where one of the players had to get away on time; but even this expedient proved unnecessary as the game was completed on the 12th Wharrad turn! Double banking was applied on one occasion, for less than one game, to facilitate the mowing of lawns 3 and 4 on Saturday evening.

The winner of the ladder was Geoff Johnson who won 5 out of 5 games with all of his opponents making at least 2 hoops. George Woolhouse was runner up in the knock-out and took the prize for the supplementary event.



Geoff Johnson collects the prize from manager Geoff Strutt

Editor's note: Quite apart from the play, the tournament was also noteworthy for the club's further attempts to come to grips with the new mower. This resulted in mowing lawns 3 and 4 at a new low of 6mm on Saturday night, and lawns 1 and 2 at 7mm the following morning. Vast quantities of grass were removed, but further adjustments are needed to ensure the action of the grooming reel does not get out of step during use.



Ladies of leisure: Deirdre Duggan and Gina Lewis

Match results

Beds & Herts League v Enfield (away) 14 June

Drawn 3-3

Wrest Park	Enfield	WP score
Bryan Harral (1)	Ken Pickett (3.5)	-2T
Cliff Hayes (20)	Brian Havill (20)	
David Marsh (6)	John Street (16)	-1T
David Morris (18)	Wendy Spencer-Smith (16)	
Bryan Harral (1)	Ken Pickett (3.5)	+17
David Marsh (6)	John Street (16)	+9
David Morris (18)	Wendy Spencer-Smith (16)	+9
Cliff Hayes (20)	Brian Havill (20)	-14T

Report by Bryan Harral

Wrest Park left their late surges in the doubles until it was too late! Having said that the Davids were level when time was called only to be pipped at the post by Wendy running the golden hoop! 2 -0 to Enfield at lunch. After an energy boost the afternoon's singles turned the match around. The outcome now depended on Cliff's game. Without bisques both players struggled to wrest(!) control and make progress. Despite holding out to the bitter end Cliff lost and the match was drawn. I should point out that Cliff's moment of glory was in our previous match when he saved us from a whitewash.

Mary Rose v Aldermaston (home) 9 July

Won 6-1

Wrest Park	Aldermaston	WP score
Bryan Harral (1)	Steve Woolnough (0)	+8
George Collin (1)	John McMordie (0)	
Terry Mahoney (1)	Bob Harris (1½)	+3
John Bevington (1)	Tim Masterton (2½)	+20
Bryan Harral	Steve Woolnough	-6
George Collin	John McMordie	+16
Terry Mahoney	Tim Masterton	+10
John Bevington	Bob Harris	+17

Both teams just fulfilled the condition for a minimum combined team handicap of four, but in our case George had had to investigate the deeper recesses of the ranking system in order to establish our batting order. We got under way just before 10.30 on a fine day marred by a single short sharp shower. John got to 4-back on the fourth turn and took advantage of some failed hoops by Tim to finish at around noon, and we went in to lunch 3-0 up.

Lunch was provided by Bryan and Sharman Harral, who to our surprise and delight served up chili and rice, with strawberries, pineapple and cream to follow and wine to wash it down. In the afternoon singles John was the first to finish to give us the match, and although Bryan lost to Steve, George and Terry both won for a convincing overall win. The next match will be away to local rivals Letchworth.

Beds & Herts League v Letchworth (home) **4 August** **Won 4-2**

Wrest Park	Letchworth	WP score
Bryan Harral (1)	David Tutt (0)	-2T
Geoff Strutt (7)	Keith Rhodes (6)	
David Marsh (4)	Ian Mantle (1.5)	-2T
David Morris (18)	Martin King (14)	
Bryan Harral (1)	David Tutt (0)	+12
David Marsh (4)	Ian Mantle (1.5)	+23
Geoff Strutt (7)	Keith Rhodes (6)	+4
David Morris (18)	Martin King (14)	+5T

Report by Bryan Harral

Last year we played Letchworth in glorious sunshine, this year it was continuous rain and the team that got in an early break had the advantage. By lunch time there was standing water and we were 2 – 0 down. I don't know whether it was something in the lunch boxes or more mistakes by the opposition but the afternoon singles session saw a complete reversal of fortune with a clean sweep by Wrest Park. Our first win this year!

Mary Rose v Letchworth (away) **14 August** **won 5-2**

Wrest Park	Letchworth	WP score
Bryan Harral (1)	David Tutt (0)	+16
George Collin (1)	Ian Mantle (1½)	
John Bevington (1)	Jeremy Scott (4½)	+17
Terry Mahoney (1½)	George Woolhouse (2½)	+22
Bryan Harral	David Tutt (0)	-9
George Collin	Ian Mantle (1½)	+11
John Bevington	George Woolhouse (2½)	+10
Terry Mahoney	Jeremy Scott (4½)	-1

In the morning singles Terry didn't put a foot wrong and Jeremy repeatedly stuck in the first hoop, but the class play was in the doubles where George, fired by his efforts in the August tournament (see the previous page), embarked on another triple attempt. This time he completed the peels but was left without an escape ball to assist with the pegout, so the gold award remains tantalisingly out of reach. Jeremy recovered his form against Terry and pegged him out before winning +1, but John then beat George to clinch the win before the other two singles were divided.



The Letchworth clubhouse and equipment sheds.

We now travel to Chester, George's old stamping ground. Will this inspire him to complete that elusive triple?

No report of a visit to Letchworth should fail to mention their wonderful lawns. If our new ones end up anything like as good we will be well pleased.

Mary Rose v Chester (away) **21 August** **won 4-3**

Wrest Park	Chester	WP score
Bryan Harral (1)	Jerry Guest (½)	+5
George Collin (1)	James Hawkins (½)	
John Bevington (1)	Dennis Graham (3½)	+12
Terry Mahoney (1½)	Mark Lloyd (1)	-19
Bryan Harral	Jerry Guest	-11
George Collin	James Hawkins	-26TP
John Bevington	Mark Lloyd	+8
Terry Mahoney	Dennis Graham	+11

Dennis and Jerry kindly offered to put us up on Saturday night, so we travelled up in the afternoon and arrived in Chester to what can only be described as a Roodee awakening –the eponymous racecourse is a furlong or so from the city centre and there was a meeting that day, so the streets were full of teetering totty in short skirts and fake tan and it was hard to choose where to look next. After booking in at Lower Bridge Street we managed to get a table at Francs for dinner, after which George took us on the guided tour. Terry then set off to Jerry's and the rest of us settled down for the night.



The Chester clubhouse, showing the heavy steel covers for the doors and windows.

Chester's four lawns are in the grounds of Westminster Park, and they have a new clubhouse which is shared with the adjoining bowls club. The clubhouse was supplied by Cleveland SiteSafe (see their advertisement in the last issue of the CA Gazette). It is well appointed and impressively secure, and a good example of the sort of thing we might consider for the future.

The lawns have a fall from north to south of about four feet and took a little getting used to. In the morning singles Mark was the first to finish, but John then beat Dennis and we watched the conclusion of the doubles. George resumed his peeling and managed two, getting into a tangle after the rover peel, but he and Bryan extricated themselves to get home +5.

After a splendid lunch George found himself on the receiving end as James completed a triple. Terry beat Dennis, but Bryan then lost to Jerry so it was down to the last game. John had got one ball round, but Mark repeatedly hit in when he had set up for the first hoop. Both players made stuttering progress and nerves began to show as short shots were missed. Mark was in play with one ball on rover against peg and penult when John took a natural break, returning to find that Mark had failed 2-back, and this opportunity was duly grasped to give us the game and the match. Terry then drove us back in air-conditioned comfort as the sun set.

We are now through to the final at Surbiton on 1 October, which will be our eighth final appearance since 1989:

1989	lost to Bristol 2-5
1995	beat Nottingham 4-3
1998	lost to Nottingham 3-4
1999	beat Sussex County 4-3
2001	lost to Bowdon 3-4
2002	beat Medway 4-3
2004	beat Surbiton 5-2

Beds & Herts League v St Aldreth (home) 25 August Won 4-2

Wrest Park	St Aldreth	WP score
Bryan Harral (1)	David Kitson (6)	+2T
Cliff Hayes (20)	Heather Bennett (20)	
Geoff Strutt (7)	Robert Skeen (8)	-4T
David Morris (18)	Keith Holgate (14)	
Bryan Harral (1)	David Kitson (6)	+1T
Geoff Strutt (7)	Robert Skeen (8)	-7
David Morris (18)	Keith Holgate (14)	+13T
Cliff Hayes (20)	Heather Bennett (20)	+9T

Report by Bryan Harral

Continuous drizzle accompanied the morning doubles, but once there was standing water we were immune to it and our play actually improved. Sorry, got carried away there, but 1-1 at lunch time. But then (shock, horror) the weather cleared up, how would we cope? Luckily, enough of us found our form to win three out of the four singles, and the rest is history as they say. This is the second time we have won in the rain – it must be something in the water - but the late season charge moved us up from fifth to third in the final league table. Finally, thank you to everyone in the club for their support this year.

Low flyer



The Saturday and Sunday of the Craft Fair were marked by heavy showers and a distinct lack of passing trade, but the swallows, both parents and children, were having a great time swooping at hoop height across the lawns to grab whatever food was going in order to fatten themselves up before heading off for Africa.

Monday showed a slight improvement, but we only raised £62 in total. Given that six members put in about 40 hours between them this represents a return of £1.55 per hour.

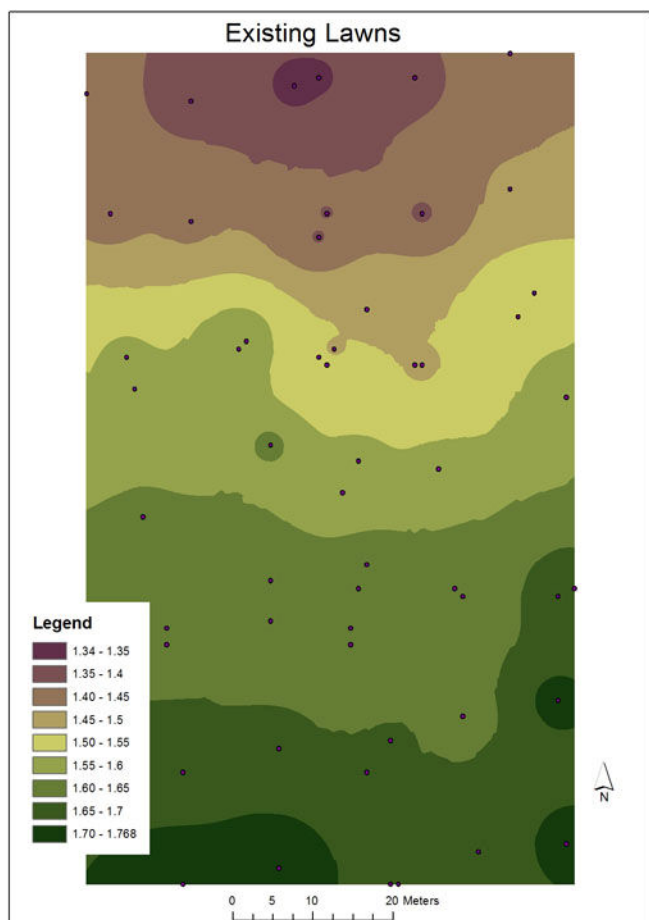
Here comes the bride



Putting the cars before the horses: forms of transport seen at the wedding on Sunday 11 September.

The flat of the land

When Tim and Richard Brewer surveyed the alternative sites to assess the amount of levelling required someone ventured to ask how they compared with our present site. Tim and Richard came down on 9th June to take the measurements, and the results show a slight fall from north to south.



Dates for 2011

October

- 1 Mary Rose final at Surbiton
- 6 ATC group from 10am (2)

John Bevington

13 September 2011