



LEIGHTON-LINSLADE CROQUET CLUB

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NEWSLETTER - MARCH 2017 Volume 18 Issue 2

The newsletter Editor is John Cundell. Items for the newsletter can be sent to 18 Saxons Close, Leighton Buzzard, Beds LU7 3LT; or emailed to john.cundell@btinternet.com. Tel: 01525 374620

"Almost Spring and Croquet At Last!"

Welcome to the second newsletter of 2017. Our opening paragraphs of the 2016 Issue 2 newsletter were that the lawns had once again been damaged by footballers and that remedial work was necessary before the season commenced. We also had to endure problems with the five-a-side football area adjacent to Lawn 1 for much of the season. The newsletter continued with the decision that the Town Council had decided to install a fence around the lawns which was completed shortly after the season started. The only slight difficulty was the rather steep access to lawn three. We are pleased to be able to inform you that this has now been remedied and a very professional set of steps and handrails have been installed. Thanks to Groundsman Doug Bolton and his lads who carried out the work.

Now we have the steps we hope members will make more use of Lawn 3, which is our best lawn, instead of always going to Lawn 1. We intend to let Lawn 1 rest for certain periods during this season to allow it to recover to the better standard of Lawns 2 and 3.

In addition the Town Council have also supplied one more of the excellent green benches, bringing the number up to three - and we are promised another shortly.

Some of our gazebos are nearing the end of their life and we will be looking at replacing them in due course. In the short term, John C and John T spent a 'repairs morning' recently and managed to temporarily create two reasonable units of the larger blue ones plus a similar job with the smaller green ones. This was achieved by cannibalising the remains of 'blue gazebo three' which was demoted to spare parts useage a couple of years ago. Great care will need to be taken during the erection of these repaired units.

There are other ideas in the pipeline currently under consideration to resolve the gazebo problem.

Croquet Club Licence Renewed for 15 Years

Members will recall from the January newsletter and the Annual General Meeting that your officers had a meeting with Leighton-Linslade Town Council (LLTC) on 3rd November 2016. The discussion with Town Clerk Mark Saccoccio and Head of Grounds and Environmental Services Ian Haynes was to renegotiate a new licence allowing us to continue playing at Page's Park from 1st April 2017.

The agreed major terms were that firstly our new licence will have a discount on the 2016 rate and inflate yearly by Retail Price Index + 1%. In addition the length of the new licence will be longer than the current licence - fifteen years instead of six, giving us the opportunity to discuss possible grants from The Croquet Association.

It was also agreed that the 'Indemnity Clause' will not be



The very professional steps between lawns two and three were installed by our Groundsman Doug Bolton and his staff at the beginning of February. In the distant background you can see one of the four benches. There will now be a bench by lawn three. Hopefully members will make more use of this lawn and give lawn one a deserved rest!

included within our new licence. (This clause, which is in our expiring licence, has meant that in the event of our club folding, we would still have been liable to pay the annual fee for the remaining years of the licence.)

We also discussed maintenance of the lawns and use of the pavilion.

The agreed wording of the new licence is subject to a Leighton-Linslade Town Council Grounds and Environmental Services committee meeting which took place on 6th March.

We are very pleased to inform members that the report from Ian Haynes concerning renewal of the licence was approved at the meeting, attended by John Cundell and David Ball (two of the signatories of the original licence), with no dissent, and which will commence 1st April 2017.

Season Opens

The lawns should be ready for play on Saturday 25th March - weather permitting.

The hoops will be positioned on the morning of the 14th March and at the same time the clubroom will be cleaned and tidied.

Enjoy the season and let's hope for a warm summer.

Playing Sessions

Below are the 'official' playing sessions for 2017.

- 10-12 Tuesday (Singles Handicap)
- 2-4 Tuesday (Singles Handicap)
- 10-4.00 Wednesday
- 10-4.00 Thursday
- 10-12 Saturday
- 2-5 Saturday
- 10-12 Sunday (Singles Handicap)
- 2-5 Sunday

Our Lawn Rent arrangements allow for playing sessions

to be flexible to work around the weather - either good or bad - e.g., if morning is wet we can regroup pm or even on another day; if good then stay on as required. Also, members are able to go along for practice sessions at will.

In recent years the Tuesday sessions, which were designed for those wishing to play singles rather than doubles games, have slipped into mainly doubles sessions. Please try and keep these sessions for singles play - especially important for those members who play in or who would like to play in League or other matches to have some essential singles practise.

The only provisos are that a) if the Council Groundstaff or our own members are working on the lawns, then they will have priority and players will have to wait until they are finished; and b) certain Mondays and Fridays when League and Friendly matches are scheduled when no club play will be possible. On rare occasions there may be events on other regular session play days which will be highlighted on the club noticeboards - for instance our CA B-Level tournament on 17th June is a Saturday.

2017 Dates for your Diary

Our Fixtures Secretary John Thorp and your Editor have already been busy working on this year's calendar and it looks like we will have another busy season. All fixture dates so far arranged are included below.

Remaining EACF League dates, Friendlies, etc., will be posted in the Clubroom as and when these become available.

PLEASE NOTE THERE ARE SOME DATE CHANGES FROM THOSE PUBLISHED IN OUR FIRST NEWSLETTER IN JANUARY SO PLEASE CHECK AND CHANGE YOUR DIARY ENTRIES NOW!

March

24 F Annual Lunch - Leighton Buzzard Golf Club - 13.00 hours
25 SA LAWNS OPEN - weather permitting

April

1 SA Official Opening by Town Mayor - 2.00pm
24 M 4 Club Charity Competition (5 or less) - Leighton-Linslade

May

8 M Dunstable Friendly - Home
20/21 SA/SU Club 'Mix 'n' Match' Handicap Doubles
25 TH 4 Club Charity Competition (5 or less) - Watford
27/28 SA/SU Club Ladies Doubles 'Mix 'n' Match'

June

3 SA EACF Wheeler Shield Counties Tournament - Hunstanton
10/11 SA/SU Club Handicap Singles
14 W Committee Meeting
17 SA CA B-Level Tournament (3-8) - Leighton-Linslade
24 SA EACF GC Club Champions Tournament - Wrest Park

July

10 M 4 Club Charity Competition (5 or less) - Wrest Park
14 F C-Level Tournament (8-12) - Leighton-Linslade

21 F Wingrave v Phyllis Court Southern League

August

3 TH 4 Club Charity Competition (5 or less) - Northampton
5/6 SA/SU Club Mens 'Mix 'n' Match' John Fogg Trophy

7 M U3A Dunstable Visit Fun Day
9 W Committee Meeting

September

2 SA Club Garden Party and Fun Day (10.00am - 4.00pm)
6 WE Committee Meeting
9 SA LJB 70+ Trophy
23/24 SA/SU Club Doubles
30/1st. SA/SU Club Singles

November

10 F AGM & Party

Official Opening by Leighton-Linslade Town Mayor

All members are warmly invited to attend the official opening of the season by Town Mayor Councillor Stephen Cotter at 2.00pm on Saturday 1st April. Please be in attendance by 1.30pm. Please also wear whites.

Social Club finishes 22nd March

The Social Club attendance at Page's Park on Wednesday mornings has been a little depleted this winter, mainly due to the very cold weather and poor health from a number of our regulars - however those that did come along have enjoyed a convivial chat over card games, dominoes, Rummikub, etc.

Annual Club Luncheon

The luncheon on 24th March at the Leighton Buzzard Golf Club will be attended by 34 people - members, wives and guests. Those attending need to be at the Golf Club at 12.30pm for 13.00 hours. Thanks are due to Malcolm and Diane Kirby for organising the occasion.

EACF Club Champions Tournament

Each year all clubs in the East Anglian Croquet Federation are invited to send both their level play and handicap club champions from the previous year. Three years ago David Ball won the Handicap trophy at this event and last year Judith Pengelly repeated the Handicap Trophy win. This year the venue is at Wrest Park on the 24th June and our representatives will be David Ball in Level and Jean Ball in the Handicap category.

EACF Leagues

As in previous years, the long running Handicap League and the newer Level Play League will again be a part of the East Anglian Croquet Federation 2017 season, running under similar rules. There may be one or two extra teams for this season - more details in due course.

It has been mooted that new players to the Handicap League should have at least ten games recorded on their handicap card to avoid the situation we had last year with one or two players turning up with new handicap cards and handicaps set at 14 (even 16 in one case which is outside the -6 to 14 limit.

As per last year, we will be running one Level Team and one Handicap Team. Entry forms will appear on the clubroom notice board as soon as the season commences.

Scorers

Sheila Beal will again be acting as Scoring Manager for 2017. Our scoring system has been much admired by visiting clubs and once again we will be using it for League, Murphy Shield, and our B-Level and C-Level events. As soon as we have dates available there will be a list in the clubroom for volunteer scorers to enter their names.

4 Club GC Charity Series

This is a new tournament series between Leighton-Linslade, Northampton, Watford and Wrest Park clubs. Basically the idea is to provide a competition for players with handicaps below 3 who cannot enter the National B-Level events that are restricted to players with handicaps of 3-8, or the Murphy Shield Inter-Club Tournament - and who do not particularly wish to compete in CA A-Level events.

More details will be published in due course, however basically all players must have a handicap within the range of -6 to 5. There will be three from each club. The 12 players will be drawn into two blocks of six and winners of each block to play for 1st and 2nd. Second places in each block to play for 3rd and 4th, etc., down to 11th and 12th. Points are to be allocated to each club based on the finishing order of each leg - i.e. 12 points for 1st place, 11 points for 2nd place, down to 1 point for 12th place.

Each player will pay £6 in cash on the day. The host club will retain £5 of this amount and the balance of £1 is to be placed in the charity pot. The charity pot of £12 collected on the day of the leg plus any accumulated amount is to be passed to the organiser of the next leg, culminating in a sum of £48 being awarded to the winning club at the end of the final leg at Northampton for donation to a charity of its choice.

If you are interested in taking part in this competition please contact Ross Bagni at ross.bagni@btinternet.com.

John Fogg Trophy and LJB 70+ Trophy

Members will recall that both these events were not held in 2016 due to lack of entries. Len Buckingham has come up with a couple of ideas to hopefully attract members to take part in these two competitions. More information on the notice boards as the season gets under way.

Setting Up Help

As per last season we would ask that members taking part in a particular competition should be prepared to turn up at least 45 minutes earlier than the advertised start time to assist in setting up the necessary equipment - rather than just leave it to the same few. As stated earlier, the gazebos are reaching the end of their life and it will take up to four people to erect and take them down to avoid damaging the repaired legs and links. Many hands make light work!

Subscription Reminder - Membership

In case you haven't yet paid this year's subscription and have mislaid the form sent out in January, you will find another membership application form below. If you have an email address please include this as we would like to send as many newsletters and other communications as possible by this method. Postage costs are very expensive. Also please include a mobile number if you have one. Those on email will receive acknowledgement that your subscription has been received. The small number of members who are not on email will be telephoned. The membership cards will be distributed as the season commences.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION - 2017 SEASON

I/we wish to join / rejoin the club.

Name(s):

Address:

.....

..... Postcode:

Tel No: Mobile No:

Date: Email:

I am happy to receive all communication by email, including 'return forms': YES NO

A subscription for the full season is £75 per person. Potential new members may also pay a £5 fee for two trial sessions. This fee will be deducted if full membership is subsequently taken out.

I / we enclose a cheque for £..... payable to 'Leighton Linslade Croquet Club'.

Please return this form and cheque to: Judith Cundell (Membership Secretary), 18 Saxons Close, Leighton Buzzard, Beds. LU7 3LT. Tel: 01525 374620. Email: judith.cundell@btinternet.com