



LEIGHTON-LINSLADE CROQUET CLUB

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NEWSLETTER - MARCH 2013 Volume 14 Issue 2

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"Spring and Croquet Nearly Here!"

Welcome to the second newsletter of 2013. The lawns are looking reasonably good considering the soaking they have been under since last June. As we said in the last newsletter concerning our lawn maintenance, we are rapidly learning what needs to be done and have also accumulated the necessary equipment to help us carry out the work required. We managed to get in a fair amount of work before the snows set in, and have recently - end of February/early March - managed to aerate, carry out some moss treatment, mow the lawns, and re-seed some bare areas on Lawn 2.

The biggest problem we have, due of course to the excess moisture, is moss. We have done our best with this to date, however some treatment will almost certainly be necessary in the early playing season.

We will also need to aerate all lawns during the summer months to try and improve the drainage to a point where they don't flood every time we have heavy rain. For this we will try to set up a rota system and carry out the work around and/or on playing days.

We were pleased that the allocation of the Referees Room as a storage arrangement for our maintenance equipment and some playing equipment worked well last year, and we have had confirmation from LLTC that we will have this facility again for 2013 for which we are grateful. We do not have access to this facility until the football season closes, so we will have to endure a somewhat crowded clubroom for the first few weeks of the season before we can move our maintenance equipment into the Referees Room.

It is possible that there will still be a few bare areas on the right hand side of Lawn 2 when the season commences on 30th March. If this is the case the Committee has decided that NO PLAY on this lawn will be possible until further notice to give these areas a chance to mature. We will keep you informed by email and Clubroom notices.

Playing Sessions

Below is a reminder on the 'official' playing sessions for 2013 - no change from 2012:

10-12 Tuesday (Singles Handicap)
2-4 Tuesday (Singles Handicap)
10-1.00 Wednesday
10-1.00 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.

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.

2013 Dates for your Diary

As you can see it looks like another busy season. All fixture dates so far arranged are included below. EACF League dates will be posted in the Clubroom as and when these become available. Congratulations to John Thorp on achieving such a busy fixture list nice and early.

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

March

15 Annual Dinner - Leighton Buzzard Golf Club
16/17 Soham Indoor
30 **LAWNS 1 AND 3 OPEN - weather permitting**

April

6 Official Opening by Councillor Alan Brandham - (Town Mayor) - 2.00pm
10/11 Coaches Training Course - Sheffield
19 Wingrave Friendly - Home
20 EACF AGM - Bury St. Edmunds
22 High Wycombe Friendly - Home
26 Dunstable Friendly - Home

May

11/12 Club 'Mix 'n' Match' Handicap Doubles
13 CA B-Level Tournament (2-7) - Watford
23 Watford Friendly - Away

June

1/2 Club Ladies Doubles 'Mix 'n' Match'
8 East Anglian Counties Tournament - Hunstanton
11 Committee Meeting
15 Club Handicap Singles
16 Wrest Park GC Singles Tournament
21 Letchworth Friendly - Home
22 CA B-Level Tournament (3-7) - Wrest Park
23 EACF Club Champions Tournament - Newport

July

7 EACF Handicap Singles (8-12) - Bury St. Edmunds
12 High Wycombe v Wingrave - Southern Fed League
14 Club Fun Day
17 CA B-Level Tournament (4-8) - Nottingham

- 20/21 Hunstanton v Leighton-Linslade Challenge
- 21 Wrest Park GC Doubles Tournament
- 27/28 Hunstanton Invitation Weekend (see below)
- 29 U3A Dunstable Visit

August

- 5 Watford Friendly - Home
- 6 Committee Meeting
- 10/11 Club Mens Doubles 'Mix 'n' Match' John Fogg Trophy
- 15 Dunstable CC Fun Day
- 16/17 CA B-Level Tournament (4-8) – Phyllis Court
- 19 Letchworth Friendly - Away

September

- 4 Committee Meeting
- 10 CA B-Level Tournament (5-8) - Edgbaston
- 13 LJB 70+ Trophy
- 21/22 Club Doubles
- 28/29 Club Singles

November

- 8 AGM & Party

Official Opening by LL Town Mayor

All members are warmly invited to attend the official opening of the season by Town Mayor Councillor Alan Brandham at 2.00pm on Saturday 6th April. Please be in attendance by 1.30pm. It would also be nice if whites were worn.

Sports Council Grant

Our new club representative on the Leighton-Linslade Sports Council is Peter Cole, who attended his second meeting on 7th February where he received, on behalf of our club, a grant cheque to the value of £300 to assist in the purchase of our maintenance equipment.

Annual Dinner

This year's dinner will be at Leighton Buzzard Golf Club, Plantation Road on Friday 15th March. Forms were distributed at the AGM and by post thereafter. There are still a few spaces left for what has always been a very pleasant evening, good company and good food. If you would like to come then contact David Ball urgently on 01525 211988 for further details.

Coaches Training Course

This course on Wednesday and Thursday 10/11th April, to be held at Sheffield, is for relatively experienced players who wish to become Golf Croquet coaches. The Manager is Richard Keighley, assisted by John Cundell and coaches from other clubs. Further details from Richard or John.

EACF Club Champions Tournament

This, which was a new event at Newport CC last year and where each club in the region is invited to send both their level play and handicap club champions from the previous year, or suitable substitutes, will be held on 23rd June. Our representatives will be Ross Bagni in the Level Play and David Ball in the Handicap Play. We wish them both good luck and a successful day.

EACF High Handicap Tournament

This was also inaugurated last year and is aimed specifically for those players whose handicap falls between 8-12, designed to give the less experienced player a chance to play in open competition relatively locally, and hopefully

to tempt them into entering more senior Croquet Association events. John Guest was last year's winner so it would be nice if some of the 8-12 handicap members we have in the club took up this year's challenge. The date is Sunday 7th July at Bury St. Edmunds CC. Contact your Editor for an entry form.

B-Class Tournaments and The Croquet Association

B-Class tournaments are organised by clubs on behalf of The Croquet Association. To take part you have to be a CA Tournament member or have never previously played in one of these matches before - in the latter instance you are allowed one entry without being a Tournament member. Information can be obtained from John Cundell, Eve and Len Buckingham, David Ball, Roger Stroud, John Thorp or Richard Keighley - or The Croquet Association website at www.croquet.org.uk.

As from last year The Croquet Association has revised the fees for Tournament members to try and encourage more participation in CA events. There is now a Tournament Member Introductory Rate where new Tournament members pay just £12 for single and £19 for dual membership in their first year. In the second year the rate is two-thirds of the full rate prevailing at that time. The full rate applies from the third year of membership which is currently £42.

B-Class tournaments this year are at Sussex County, Watford, Hamptworth, Nottingham, Edgbaston, Letchworth, Phyllis Court, and Wrest Park.

League

Following the introduction of a Level Play League as well as the long running Handicap League in the East Anglian Croquet Federation in 2012, this will be organised again this year. We have entered both competitions with one team in the Level Play League and two in the Handicap League.

The following changes to the Handicap League were agreed at the last EACF Committee Meeting in late October:

1. The minimum aggregate handicap to be reduced from 24 to 20.
2. Substitutes to be allowed by prior agreement between the team captains (e.g. to cater for players who find a whole day's play too tiring).
3. Instead of a 'golden hoop' to determine the winner when scores are tied, drawn matches will be allowed. Matches will be scored with 2 points for a win and 1 point for a draw.
4. Start time left to agreement between the teams concerned.
5. The time limit per game to be increased from 40 to 45 minutes.

There do not appear to be any changes in the Level Play League however we await final details from the new League Organiser, Jason Carley from Watford club. The previous long-standing manager of these Leagues, Chris Howell, has stood down after four excellent years. Thanks to Chris for her enthusiasm and drive which has put these competitions into a fine position.

Selection Committee

The general consensus from members was that the

'selection committee' arrangement for last year was successful and the committee has agreed that it will continue for 2013. The committee members are Len Buckingham, John Cundell, Eve Buckingham, George Lawson and John Thorp.

Hunstanton - Leighton-Linslade Challenge

This event, on 20/21st June at Hunstanton has been running a number of years now, It was originally designated a 'Friendly', however since the very first event in 2010 which we won by one game, although it has remained a friendly and sociable day, there is now an enthusiastic competitive will to win from both teams. Accordingly the committee has decided by a large majority vote that for the future this event will be treated as a 'competition', and rather than draw our team from those who complete the entry list, our Selection Committee will choose the strongest team from that list.

The entry list will be published on the Noticeboard immediately at the start of the season in order that those chosen can make the necessary accommodation bookings as the event is in the summer holiday season.

New Trophy

A tankard donated by John Thorp is to be awarded to the most improved player at the end of each playing season. It will be engraved to read 'Leighton-Linslade Croquet Club' - 'Most Improved Player of the Season'. The winner will be decided by the Committee with the assistance of League/Friendly team captains. The trophy will be displayed in the clubroom in a small cabinet along with winners' names on a notice.

Club Clothing

Last year on behalf of the club, Judith Cundell located a supplier for club branded clothing such as polo shirts, sweat-shirts and caps - all in white - plus a fleece in navy-blue - from a local manufacturer.

Orders are to be placed through Judith and we require cash or cheque when you place an order. Cheques need to be made payable to 'Judith Cundell'. Delivery will be approximately three weeks. A number of members already have sweatshirts, caps and fleeces and are very pleased with the quality. Please contact Judith at 01525 374620 or email judith.cundell@btinternet.com for more information.

For Sale

Margaret Brown has a brand new pair of Ventilite/Teflon coated (posh) waterproof white trousers, size large, which lie unopened in her cupboard. These are available from the CA shop at £23 plus p&p so it would be a shame if anyone paid the full price when they can have Margaret's for £10 - which she will pass on to a charity of her choice. Margaret can be reached at mjbrownhome@talktalk.net or 01525 373860.

Wanted - Scorers

Thanks to Irene and Peter Stevens support we will only need four or two extra scorers depending on how many lawns are in use, so if anyone would like to help please get in touch with Irene Davis on 01525 375600. (Tea and cakes provided!)

Pavilion Shutters

You will recall that for the latter part of last season we struggled with the roller shutter door at the 'Croquet End' of the pavilion which frequently jammed shut, and even when it worked it was very heavy and difficult to open. You will be pleased to learn that in December both pavilion end doors were replaced by new shutters which operate electrically.

To facilitate this LLTC has rented us an electronic key fob to open the 'Croquet End' door. This fob will be located on the wooden key board, as was the original normal key in the past.

1. PLEASE TREAT THIS FOB AS IF IT WAS YOUR HOUSE KEY!

2. DON'T LEAVE THE KEY BOARD ON THE TABLES OUTSIDE THE CLUB HOUSE AS THE FOB WILL NOT APPRECIATE BEING WASHED IN THE RAIN!

3. AS MENTIONED ABOVE THE KEY IS RENTED FROM THE TOWN COUNCIL FOR A CONSIDERABLE SUM.

4. IT IS NOT EASILY REPLACEABLE. THERE ARE ONLY TWO IN EXISTENCE - ONE WITH THE TOWN COUNCIL AND ONE WITH US.

5. LOSING IT WILL CAUSE MAJOR PROBLEMS AND EXPENSE.

To use the fob you simply press the 'UP' arrow once and the door will open fully. To close the door you have to press and hold the 'DOWN' arrow button whilst the door closes until it stops moving. One short press will not work - the button must be held down until the door is fully closed. This is obviously a safety measure so that you or others cannot be trapped. Also, please ensure you close the small sliding cover over the buttons after use as an inadvertent press of the buttons will operate the doors from some considerable distance. See the accompanying photographs.

In view of the above it is imperative that you sign the register on EVERY visit as we need to keep track of comings and goings.

Hopefully enough said!



This is the key fob for opening the pavilion croquet end roller shutter door. It is pictured here at actual size.



In the top picture the button cover is closed. It is shown open in the lower picture. Keep the cover closed except when using the buttons.

The triangular marked buttons open and close the shutter door. The smaller buttons stop the operation.



Subscription Reminder - Club 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.

Please complete and send with the appropriate remittance to Membership Secretary, Judith Cundell, whose contact details are on the form.

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 now very expensive and as club outgoings have risen significantly now that we are doing much of our own court maintenance, then every penny we can save is important.

Also, for 2013 we will not be sending your membership cards back to you by post. 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 - 2013 SEASON

I/we wish to join / rejoin the club.

Name(s):

Address:

.....

..... Postcode:

Tel No:

Date:

Email:

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

A subscription for the full season is £70 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