



LEIGHTON-LINSLADE CROQUET CLUB

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Founded 2000

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“10th Anniversary Year Beckons”

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2009. This season at Pages Park is a special one as it is our 10th Anniversary year. Our two full-size lawns took some time to settle down last year, but were showing marked improvements by the end of the season. We trust they will continue to improve in 2009 with work from the Council Groundstaff and some of our members - and following a meeting with the Deputy Town Clerk in October 2008, we were informed that the Groundstaff have been given a target to have our promised third lawn ready for play by the start of this season.

Taking club happenings since the last



Presentations of trophies and awards at the Annual General Meeting. The details of what was won are listed in the text. Above: part of the excellent attendance. Left: Linda Carter with George Lawson; middle: David Ball and John Cundell; right: Caroline and Roger Stroud.

newsletter in October 2008 almost chronologically, we will start off with the Annual General Meeting in November.

Annual General Meeting And follow up from January's first committee meeting

Margaret Brown, acting in her role as Chairman, welcomed 39 members and their guests to our 9th AGM at Northall Village Hall on Friday 14th November, especially Linda Carter, the Deputy Town Clerk, who has been particularly helpful over the years, and also Marjorie Cliffe, our auditor.

We circulated the Officers' Reports together with the last 2008 newsletter, therefore they will not be repeated here. Margaret did add that she had served the committee for nine years, the last three as Chairman, and felt that it had been a privilege to do so.

As Acting Secretary she also reported that the officers had recently met with Linda Carter regarding several matters. Since that meeting a letter has been received informing the club that the Council has agreed to an annual payment which we will pay in advance, rather

than booking the lawns on an hourly basis. Linda Carter confirmed that the Club could play flexible hours and days, as long as there was due consideration to avoid hindering the work of the Groundstaff. This approach was acknowledged and much appreciated.

Treasurer Len Buckingham presented audited accounts for the period to 31st October 2008. The closing balance was satisfactory but Len warned that there were some large items of expenditure planned for the coming year. He showed one of the hoops which have all been sandblasted and powder coated, and which now look pristine. The cost was a modest £120 for the eighteen hoops. He stated that six sets of competition quality balls need to be purchased at a cost of about £1,260. Grants have been applied for to help with the cost. The Club has also offered to contribute to the costs of the new third lawn if necessary. He also reported that Leighton Linslade Croquet Club are now members of the Croquet Association and are covered by their insurance, which includes social or corporate events.

Richard Keighley expressed his pleasure regarding the arrangement concerning flexible playing times.

Peter Davies gave a vote of thanks to Len for his



Linda Carter with far left: Una Pengelly; left: David Ball; right: Eve Buckingham; below left: Val Jeffers; Below middle: Judith Cundell; and below right - 'The Mafia' - Tony Wells (hiding), Tony Stammers, John Cundell and Len Buckingham.



excellent report and layout of the accounts.

Finally, Len outlined his reasons for proposing that the Annual Subscription should be set at £55 for this year. The proposal was seconded by John Cundell and was adopted by the meeting with no dissent.

Officers, Committee & Specific Duty Appointments

Officers

Chairman	Tom Miller
Vice Chairman	John Cundell
Secretary	Roger Stroud (from March)
Treasurer	Len Buckingham
Fixture Secretary	Tony Wells

Committee

Val Jeffers	Tony Stammers
David Ball	Margaret Lawson
Eve Buckingham	Peter Davis

Specific Duties & Non-Executive

Membership Secretary	Judith Cundell
Welfare Secretary	Judith Cundell
Minute & Acting Secretary	Jean Ball
Competition/Handicap Organisers & Managers	Len Buckingham, John Cundell & Tony Wells
Catering Manager	Val Jeffers
assisted by	Eve Buckingham, Margaret Lawson, Jean Ball, Judith Cundell
Quartermaster	Eve Buckingham
Newsletter	John Cundell
Registers	Len Buckingham & Judith Cundell
Archivist	Tony Stammers
Scoring Manager	Irene Davis

Sports Council
Publicity/Press
Child Protection

Margaret Lawson & Tony Wells
David Ball
Richard Keighley

Presentation of Awards

As guest of honour, Linda Carter was invited to present the trophies as follows under the guidance of Margaret.

Club Handicap Singles

Runner up

Tony Stammers

George Lawson

Club Doubles Trophy

Runners up

John Cundell and David Ball

Caroline and Roger Stroud

Club Singles Trophy

Runner up

Una Pengelly

David Ball

Other presentations

Posies or buttonholes were then presented to a number of members who had given outstanding services to the Club; Eve Buckingham for her duties as quartermaster; Val Jeffers for her catering and organising abilities and to Judith Cundell for her services as both membership secretary and welfare officer; Len Buckingham and John Cundell for their continued work on the lawns, and Tony Wells and Tony Stammers for organising the fixtures and the Fun Day respectively.

Margaret remarked that most members had made valuable contributions and thanked them for all they had done. Irene Davis, scoring manager, and Ann Smith, who had minuted several meetings, were especially appreciated.

A garden token and buttonhole were presented to Linda Carter for all her help and support, following which Linda thanked the club for inviting her to the proceedings and for her gifts.



Margaret presents Linda Carter with a buttonhole and garden token, following which, after an appreciation by Irene Davis, Linda presented Margaret with a plant and card. Right: the new Chairman, Tom Miller presides over his first meeting.

New Chairman takes over

Margaret congratulated Tom Miller on his election as the Club's fifth Chairman and wished him well, following which Tom took the Chair. He then invited Irene Davis to address the meeting and she briefly described how the Club came about, starting with a conversation between herself and Margaret Brown. She thanked the committee for building up such a friendly and successful Club and thanked Margaret for her sterling work.

Margaret was then presented with a plant in recognition of her services.

Tom introduced himself and immediately thanked his predecessor for all her hard work in the successful formation and running of the Club. He went on to say that he had always seen the Croquet Club as a place for leisure and pleasure. For some members pleasure comes from a challenging League game. For others, and he would tend to put himself in this camp due to other commitments curtailing his playing sessions, pleasure comes from a hard fought but laughter punctuated club game. His intention was to maintain this healthy balance. He then closed the meeting and the party followed.

2009 Dates for your Diary

February

6 Club Dinner

March

11 Committee Meeting

14/15 Soham Indoor Croquet (Contact Tony Wells on 379107 (email: anthonywells11@btinternet.com.)

21 EACF AGM - Bury St. Edmunds

21 LAWNS OPEN AT PAGES PARK (Weather permitting)

28/29 Croquet Association Coaches Course

April

4/5? Official Opening of the Club season (date depends on availability of Town Mayor)

7 Coaching Course at Wrest Park. (Contact Richard Keighley on 01296 681235 or by e-mail to: the_keighleys@btopenworld.com.

May

16/17 Club 'Mix 'n Match' Doubles (See below)

June



- 3 Committee Meeting
- ** 100th Anniversary Pages Park (See below)
- July**
- 4 Garden Party at Waterways (Charity Event)
- 5 NT Golf Doubles at the Norwich Croquet Club (Entries by 30th April)
- 11 Club Handicap Singles
- 19 Club Fun Day
- 26 Level Singles Tournament at Ipswich (Entries by 30th June)
- 29 Committee Meeting
- August**
- 15 Club Garden Party
- September**
- 13 NT Short Croquet - Ickworth
- 13 NT Golf Singles at Ickworth (Entries by 30th April)
- 16 Committee Meeting
- 26/27 Club Doubles
- October**
- 3/4 Club Singles
- November**
- 13 AGM & Party

The dates for other Club events will be published in the March newsletter, plus League Matches, Friendlies, etc.

Anyone wishing to enter the EACF events should contact Tony Wells for entry forms before the closing dates above.

Club 'Mix 'n Match' Doubles

This is a new Club event which has been requested by a

number of members. It will follow a similar format to the existing Club Doubles at the end of the season - however partners will be chosen by a draw so you won't have a clue who you are playing with until the morning of the event! We anticipate a healthy entry, hence the two day format. At stake is a fine trophy which has been donated by George Lawson.

10th/100th Anniversary Celebrations

2009 is also the anniversary of the gift of Pages Park to the town. We understand there are likely to be celebrations some time in June, therefore if possible we could combine this with our 10th Anniversary event.

Indoor at Soham - November 2008 & March 2009

On November 15-16 2008, four members, Tony Wells, Sally Clay, David Ball and John Cundell attended in the Ross Peers Sports Centre, Soham on the Saturday; with again Tony and Sally, together with Irene and Peter Davis on the Sunday.

Chris Howell, Soham organiser, reported on the EACF website that the indoor weekend saw two days of closely contested games. The carpet surface proved a challenge for experienced players as well as newcomers. Seven teams from around the Anglia region competed against each other on Saturday. Colchester took an early lead, winning their first three games, whilst Leighton Linlade and Hunstanton 'B' struggled to gain points. The Hunstanton 'A' team of Jeff and Tim Race demonstrated tactical play and a range of spectacular shots and won more games than they lost, but their total handicaps were against them on the day as the games were timed. They had to settle for third place. Letchworth played consistently throughout the day and proved to be worthy winners, just ahead of Colchester at the close.

Again on Sunday another seven teams took part, Bury St Edmunds, Letchworth, Leighton Linlade, Newport and Norwich all showing promise by winning in the early rounds. As the day progressed the two teams from Newport out-fought and out hustled their opponents to move ahead in the points. But it was the Newport 'B' team who were not fazed under pressure, who won the final game and the tournament.

Further to the above report from Chris, your Editor would personally like to add a comment. For some reason we were only allocated one team place rather than the two we have enjoyed in previous years. This meant that our four players only had three games during the course of an 8 hour day, which was disappointing in that we never really got the feel of the surface until it was too late and also meant long sit-out periods. This has hopefully been resolved by Tony Wells and the Soham organisers before the 14/15th March 2009 meeting. Contact Tony on 379107 or email: anthonywells11@btinternet.com as at the time of writing there are a couple of places left for 15th March.

Friendly away with Hunstanton

The Club is considering a possible Away Friendly at Hunstanton. As this is some distance, Tony Wells would like some feedback from members who might be interested in a 'play and stay' event. Each team member would take

wife, husband or partner and could enjoy a short break, or go as a team, taking a day to drive there, stay overnight, play the friendly game, stay over and return home on the third day. Tony looks forward to your replies in order to ascertain interest and support.

Coaches Training Course - March 2009

As part of our 10th Anniversary celebrations the Club has invited the Croquet Association to run a training course for golf croquet coaches on Saturday and Sunday, 28/29th March 2009. The main coach will be Jennett Blake, assisted by John Munroe and David Tutt. All our usual opponent clubs have been invited to submit the names of candidates but the invitation is open to all Croquet Association Clubs via the Gazette. Numbers will be limited to about 16 and to date we have two names from Stony Stratford and four from Watford - plus eight from LL.

If you would like to take this weekend course, cost is £12 per head, leading to the award of a Club Coach Badge, please contact Margaret Brown on 01525 373860 as soon as possible in order that details can be sent to you.

Golf Croquet Coaching Day at Wrest Park

On Tuesday 7th April, Richard Keighley is organising a coaching day at Wrest Park which is aimed at Beginners or near Beginners. Numbers will be limited to 16 players and the group will be split up into fours with a qualified coach to each four. The course will last from 10am to 4pm with breaks for refreshments and it is an ideal opportunity for those new to the game to learn the rudiments before the season starts. The cost is £16 and participants will need to bring a packed lunch.

If you are interested, please contact Richard either on 01296 681235 or email: the_keighleys@btopenworld.com.

(PS If you are unable to attend, but would appreciate some early season coaching, please also contact Richard as he proposes to organise some coaching sessions for our members at Pages Park during April).

Welcome Grants

In late 2008, your Treasurer, Len Buckingham, together with assistance from one or two other committee members, applied for a grant from the Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation.

We have been granted £1000 which will allow us to upgrade our playing equipment to national standards. This, with other measures we intend to put in place this season, will go a long way towards us reaching the situation where we can host national competitions. We thank the Foundation for their very generous grant and as soon as the balls are received from The Croquet Association we will be sending some photographs of them in use to the Foundation.

This year, we have once again been very fortunate to receive a £250 grant from the Leighton Linlade Sports Council allowing us to further improve our facilities and playing equipment. This grant was accepted by John Cundell on behalf of the club. We thank them very much for their continuing support.

Deserved Award for Margaret Brown

As his first main act as Chairman, Tom Miller, having taken soundings from club members and with Richard Keighley's help, put together a nomination for Margaret as female winner of the Leighton Linslade Sport Award. We understand Tom's nomination was not the only one! At the last but one meeting of the Leighton Linslade Sports Council, Margaret Brown was declared female winner of the Leighton Linslade Sport Award, as the person who has made the most significant contribution to their club.

The presentation of £50 was made on 19th January at The White House by the Town Mayor Councillor George Rolfe, and a number of club members were present. A photograph and report also appeared in the Leighton Buzzard Observer. Well done Margaret. Another accolade for the LLCC.

Fuel Payment

The committee decided at their January meeting that fuel costs will not be paid for any events in 2009, a reversion to original practice.

Clubroom Modifications

Your intrepid DIY staff (Len and John) will be carrying out some further modifications in the Clubroom prior to the new season which they hope will improve our facilities. All will be revealed at the season opening!

Club Badges

There are still some Club Badges available. If you want one then get in quick as the supplies are running low. They are 3ins in diameter, cloth embroidered and can be ironed or sewn on to items of clothing. The cost per badge is £3.50. Contact me on 01525 400512 or email john.cundell@btinternet.com.

Leighton-Linslade Social Club

The Wednesday morning social club has been meeting regularly during the close season and on average a dozen or so members have been present. The fee is £2, and for that you get refreshments and the opportunity to play many board games, darts, table tennis, snooker, dominoes and cribbage. The activities generally finish about noon, and the hall is usually already warm on arrival, so please support this venture if you possibly can. Friends of members are welcome for the same attendance fee, refreshments included. Organiser Len Buckingham looks forward to seeing you on any Wednesday morning from 10.00am.

“Can anyone beat them?”

At the AGM our Membership Secretary, Judith Cundell, supplied an analysis of the attendances at Pages Park

during the 2008 season - as follows:

Most attendances throughout the year:

David Ball 66 appearances

Sally Clay 62 appearances

Martin Field 61 appearances

As they say on 'Eggheads' - "Can anyone beat them?"

Members' news

Roger Stroud has recently received news that his fight against cancer is progressing well and that his future prognosis is very good - although at the time of writing he is suffering with a bad cough etc., due to his low immunity. We continue to wish him well and look forward to seeing him in action this season.

Margaret Brown is due to have a replacement knee operation imminently - we wish her well and await news.

'Instant' Newsletter

Please include your email address when you complete this year's membership form. The newsletter will normally be distributed by email unless there is a need for insertions that need to be returned, for instance this current issue with membership forms. If you are happy to print out your own copies and any return forms in future, then please indicate this on the membership form.

Playing Sessions

The Committee agreed that 'official' playing sessions for 2009 will be as follows:

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

However as we have renegotiated our Lawn Rent arrangements for 2009, playing sessions can be flexible to work around the weather - either good or bad - e.g., if morning is wet we could regroup pm or even on another day; if good then stay on as required. Also, members will be able to go along for practice sessions at will.

The only provisos are that a) if the Groundstaff are working on the lawns, then they will have priority and members 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.

All these suggested new playing times will be reviewed after a couple of months, based on experience.



Membership Fee Due

It's that time of the year again - the membership fee is due. Accompanying the newsletter is a membership application form for the 2009 season.

Please complete this and send with the appropriate remittance to the Membership Secretary, Judith Cundell, whose contact details are on the form and on the masthead of this newsletter. If you have an email address please include this as we would like to send as many newsletters and other communications as possible by email to reduce postage and delivery costs.