



LEIGHTON-LINSLADE CROQUET CLUB

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Founded 2000

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“HOORAY! - Three Lawns - Roll on Spring”

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2010. Last season was special inasmuch as it included our 10th Anniversary celebrations. Our only disappointment was that we did not have our promised third lawn ready for the start of the 2009 season. However it looks like this year will be as momentous in the club's history because, as was reported at the AGM (see below) our third lawn will be available from the start of the season!



Tom Miller presented the 2009 Club Champions trophies; Tony Wells and Len Buckingham for 'Mix 'n' Match' Doubles; John Cundell and Irene Davis runners up in same event; Judith and Una Pengelly runners up in Doubles; David and Jean Ball, Doubles winners.

seconds later. Secretary Roger Stroud then gave 15 apologies for absence including a number of members who were poorly and whom he wished well.

We had circulated the Officer's Reports together with the last 2009 newsletter before the AGM therefore they were not repeated at the meeting, but updates since those reports were covered.

Accordingly Chairman Tom gave the good news that the third lawn had progressed rapidly in the last few weeks of October and that ground preparation was well under way and the fence was completed. Tom has also recently received confirmation that we would again this year be making an annual payment to the Council up front, rather than booking the lawns on an hourly basis and that we could play flexible hours, as long as there was due consideration given to avoid hindering the work of the Groundstaff. There would be an increased payment for 2010 to pay for the third lawn but this was considered to be very fair. Negotiations with the Council about a long term written agreement are ongoing. He emphasised that strict adherence to allowing the Groundstaff immediate access was essential and that play should cease immediately and not continue until any work was completely finished. He stated that we also have to provide a Health and Safety Risk Assessment. The committee is investigating this but would be really pleased if any member or friend could supply any knowledge or expertise concerning this matter as soon as possible.

Tom then turned his attention to team selection for the League and Friendlies. There had been some comment

Taking club happenings since the last newsletter in October 2009 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

The 10th Annual General Meeting was held at Northall Village Hall on Friday 13th November 2009, and the meeting started promptly at 7.30pm as our Chairman Tom welcomed some 34 members and two friends, adding that two honoured guests would be coming along later - namely Nigel and Julie Clark - Nigel had kindly supplied the superb scoring stands that have been the envy of visiting clubs. He also stated that we were hoping that Margaret Brown would be attending a few days after coming out of hospital - and as if on cue, Margaret arrived literally a few



John Cundell won the Handicap Singles; Tony Wells was runner up; John Thorp took the Singles Trophy; Judith Pengelly was the runner up.

concerning the method of selection and our poor performance in the League, particularly in 2009. The committee has decided to apply to the League to enter two teams in 2010, an 'A' team consisting of five or six regular players (as many other teams do), with the intention of accommodating all others who wish to play in the League in the 'B' team - as per 2009. This will allow more chance of playing and hopefully improve our performance. To facilitate this we wish to form a selection committee for the League and Inter-Club competitions - it is envisaged this will consist of John Cundell and Len Buckingham together with three others. Volunteers were called for. As regards Friendlies it was decided that the same system used for 2009 by John would be continued for 2010.

Tom outlined the club's policy towards protection of children and vulnerable adults. He firstly stated that as far as the law is concerned children are those under the age of 18. In future children and vulnerable adults will only be allowed to play if one of the club's CRB checked volunteers is present or the child's parent or responsible adult. Please do not put yourself or the club at risk or in a vulnerable position by allowing someone up to the age of 18 to play unless the criteria are fulfilled. We are reluctant to end up at this point but there is little alternative. In due course the names of the specific CRB registered volunteers will be posted in the clubroom.

Finally Tom outlined the benefits of belonging to The Croquet Association as mentioned initially by The Croquet Association Chairman Patricia Duke-Cox during her visit at our Anniversary Celebrations in 2009. Ordinary individual membership costs £26, which can be reduced to £21 by direct debit. You get six copies of the Croquet Gazette plus discount from the CA shop and can enter one CA tournament in your lifetime as an initial taster. Should you wish to take part in other tournaments then the fee for a Tournament member is £40, or £35 by direct debit. Two members of the same household can join for £60 (£55 by dd). It is possible that the number of individual CA members we have could be taken into account when and if we apply for any CA grants. If you would like further information then contact either John Cundell or Richard Keighley who are both tournament members.

Finally Tom mentioned John Thorp's idea of a 'Competition Ladder'. The committee has agreed that John can run such a competition in 2010 so please contact him on 01525 850993 or email carolethorp2@tiscali.co.uk for more information.

Secretary Roger Stroud stated he was pleased to be back in harness after his illness and echoed his thanks to Jean Ball and Margaret Brown for stepping in during his

illness. He then thanked Tom Miller and Richard Keighley for the work they had carried out negotiating with the Council and that there is a lot to look forward to for 2010. He wondered what the reaction might be if our League 'B' team beats the 'A' team!

Treasurer Len Buckingham presented audited accounts for the period to 31st October 2009. The closing balance was satisfactory. He explained the insurance situation, which is now covered by the club's membership of The Croquet Association. Our first year's membership in 2007 cost us £50 as against our previous private insurance charge of £330. In 2008 we paid £75 and for 2010 we will pay £100. However in 2011 we will have to pay the normal fee for established clubs which is £7 per member and for that season we will most likely have to increase the club membership fee. The insurance also covers corporate and other events.

Tom then asked for proposers and seconders to adopt the three reports that were adopted with no dissent.

Len then stated that he saw no reason for increasing the Annual Subscription above the present £55 and that was agreed unanimously by the meeting.

Our auditor Marjorie Cliffe was unable to be present due to a previous long-standing commitment, however Len stated that she was happy to stand again for 2010. Tom Miller proposed the appointment that was duly seconded and agreed.

Officers, Committee and Specific Duty Appointments

Officers

Chairman	Tom Miller
Secretary	Roger Stroud
Treasurer	Len Buckingham

Committee

Ex officio members

Vice Chairman	John Cundell
Fixture Secretary	Tony Wells

Members

Val Jeffers	Tony Stammers
David Ball	Margaret Lawson
Eve Buckingham	

Specific Duties & Non-Executive

Membership Sec.	Judith Cundell
Welfare Secretary	Judith Cundell
Competition Organisers & Managers	Len Buckingham, John Cundell and Tony Wells
Handicapper	John Cundell
Lawn Layout & Maintenance	Len Buckingham, John Cundell, David Ball, Tony Wells, John Thorp

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	Margaret Lawson & Tony Wells
Publicity/Press	David Ball
Child Protection	Richard Keighley
Coaching	Richard Keighley, David Ball, Eve Buckingham & John Cundell
Schools Liaison	Tony Wells

Presentation of Awards

We were hoping that Marjorie Cliffe would present the trophies, however as she couldn't be with us, Chairman Tom Miller stepped up to perform this pleasant duty. Before the presentation started, Tom mentioned that the committee had purchased on behalf of the club a horticultural gift for Marjorie Cliffe for acting as our auditor, and to Diana Phelps for graciously allowing us to invade her house and garden for the Annual Garden Party.

Hunstanton v

Leighton-Linslade

Challenge Cup

Mix 'n Match Doubles

Runners up

Handicap Singles

Runner up

Doubles

Runners up

Singles

Runner up

Leighton-Linslade

Len Buckingham and

Tony Wells

John Cundell and Irene Davis

John Cundell

Tony Wells

David and Jean Ball

Judith and Una Pengelly

John Thorp

Judith Pengelly

Tom then showed one of the trophies donated by Erica Fogg for two new competitions to be held from 2010 - a Ladies Doubles and a Mens Doubles, the latter in memory of her husband and our former Membership Secretary John. Both events will be non-handicap and 'Mix 'n' Match' format. Finally Tom congratulated John Cundell for obtaining his club coach's badge.

Tom went on to say that Margaret Brown has just about exhausted ways of recognising the excellent contribution made by so many of you to facilitate smooth running of the club so the view was taken by the committee not to try to beat what had gone before. However Tom felt personally that he would like to thank two people for their input and help which he had found immensely valuable - Len Buckingham and John Cundell. He presented two gifts that he hoped would be appreciated not only by the recipients but also by their better halves!

In 'Any Other Business' Tony Wells explained that following on from the success of the Hunstanton visit that a similar exercise would take place in 2010 with Littlehampton CC.

Margaret Brown and John Cundell thanked Tom for his first excellent year as Chairman and John in particular thanked him and Richard Keighley for their fine efforts in

negotiation with the Council that has resulted in our third lawn that is going to make such a difference to our fine club. Len Buckingham firmly endorsed the comments.

Tom concluded by saying that when he took over as Chairman his theme for 2008 was to be leisure and pleasure. This year he felt it should be what a fortunate and lucky club he inherited and we have going forward. On a couple of occasions this year people from outside the club have said we have fine facilities compared to many clubs and a remark was made by the Chairman of a not too distant club at a recent competition that our club was something of a beacon in the area in terms of the support that the members give. Again Len endorsed Tom's comment with further examples of how we all work together and support the activities.

Thanks to Peter Davis

Since the AGM, where Peter Davis was re-elected as a Committee member, Peter has been asked to form a drama group for the May Day Trust - a funded trust to provide accommodation and aid to 'Street people.' In Bassett Road there are a number of flats to house these young people and facilities to train and aid them. It is thought that drama may help to build their self confidence so to this end they have recruited Peter.

Unfortunately the only time spot available is Wednesday afternoon when we have our Committee meetings. Peter feels that his time will be better spent in this new role so therefore regretfully tendered his resignation from the committee. As Peter stated, "This does not mean that I am withdrawing any help that I am able to give, as you know I have the gift and pleasure of making things so that is available to the club and also my time."

On behalf of the Committee and club our Chairman Tom stated his disappointment that Peter felt the need to resign from the Committee, but appreciated the value of his new role, and has thanked Peter for his help and support to date and felt sure we will be calling upon his construction skills, yet again, in the future.

2009 Dates for your Diary

March

- 3 Committee Meeting
- 13/14 Soham Indoor Croquet (Contact Tony Wells on 379107 (email: anthonywells11@btinternet.com.)
- 17 Club Dinner - (see below)
- 20 EACF AGM - Bury St. Edmunds
- 20 **LAWNS OPEN AT PAGE'S PARK**
- 28 **Officially open season - Town Mayor (t.b.c.)**

April

- 9 Coaching at Page's Park - (see below)
- 18 Coaching Course at Watford. (Contact Richard Keighley on 01296 681235 or by e-mail to: the_keighleys@btopenworld.com.

May

- 15/16 Club 'Mix 'n' Match' Doubles

June

- 12/13 Club Ladies Doubles 'Mix 'n' Match'
- 16 Committee Meeting

July

- 10/11 Club Handicap Singles
- 18 Club Fun Day
- 28 Committee Meeting



Congratulations

On December 21st, Joy Bown and Roy Liggett were married at Trinity Methodist Church, Leighton Buzzard.

Your intrepid reporter, Judith Cundell, slipped and slithered over icy pavements, clutching her camera in order to get a photo for the newsletter. Really Joy and Roy, did you have to choose the Monday before Christmas for your wedding? and whose idea was the snow?

Seriously, the ceremony which took place in front of a group of family and friends was beautiful, and Joy looked stunning in a dark green dress (Roy looked o.k. too). We wish them both much happiness in their future life together.

Is this the first time that two club members have married?

August

- 7 Club Garden Party
- 14/15 Club Mens Doubles 'Mix 'n' Match' 'Foggy Trophy'

September

- 25/26 Club Doubles
- 29 Committee Meeting

October

- 2/3 Club Singles

November

- 12 AGM & Party

The dates for other events such as League Matches, Challenge Matches (Hunstanton/Littlehampton), Friendlies, will be published in the next newsletter in early March.

Club Handicap Events

Please note that it was agreed at the September 2009 committee meeting that all members who wish to take part in club handicap competitions **must play at least 10 handicap games, preferably against a variety of players, in the available sessions** in that season prior to the competitions.

Selection Committee

Following the AGM report four members put themselves forward to serve on the Selection Committee - therefore it was agreed at the main Committee meeting that the Selection Committee will consist of Len Buckingham, John Cundell, Eve Buckingham, George Lawson, John Thorp and Tony Wells. We wish them luck!

'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.

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.

Welcome Grants

Your Treasurer, assisted by one or two other members, has applied for a grant from the Leighton Linslade Sports Council, and we have once again been very fortunate to receive £250 allowing us to further improve our facilities and playing equipment. This grant was recently accepted by Tom Miller on behalf of the club. We thank them very much for their continuing support. The grant will be used to purchase two more gazebos.

Soham Indoor Croquet - November 15

At the end of 2008 a number of members expressed an interest in being given an earlier opportunity to put their names down for the 2009 November weekend. Accordingly Tony Wells displayed an entry sheet back in May and had made arrangements with the organisers for us to have entries for both the Saturday (14th November) and the Sunday. It was somewhat disappointing therefore when all those who had expressed an interest declined to take part just a few weeks before the competition. Tony, and later John Cundell, made a determined effort to find

replacements but to no avail. It was necessary to cancel our reservation for the 14th, however John C and John Thorp decided to take part on the Sunday. John T had not played at Soham before and so the pair departed LB at an earlier enough time to reach Soham by 8.30am in order that a few minutes practise on the carpet surface, which provides quite a unique challenge, could be undertaken.

Chris Howell, Soham organiser, welcomed us and as usual she and her colleague had organised a fine day's competition. Seven teams from around the Anglia region competed against each other, Bury St. Edmunds, Newport 1 and 2, Norwich, Colchester, Letchworth and Leighton-Linslade. Each team played all the others, so enjoyed six 40 minute long, closely contested games. The two Johns managed a draw in their first match against Norwich - just missing out on winning the game when the time expired a fraction of a second before the ball passed through hoop 5. In their next game they beat Colchester 5-2 including a spectacular jump shot by John Thorp - very difficult to achieve on carpet - and which gained a round of applause. The third match was drawn against Newport 1 by 4-4, followed by a convincing win of 6-2 against Bury St. Edmunds. It was fairly obvious at this stage that the other team doing well was Letchworth, our old adversaries, and we played them next. This was not our best match, we didn't play to our previous standard and Letchworth turned on their best display, winning 6-2 - this score being reflected in LL's last match against Newport 2 where we won 6-2. So after a super day's play third place went to Colchester, we were a good second and Letchworth took the win.

John Thorp commented that he really enjoyed the day and what a pleasure it was to play without the wind whistling around your head. We will return!

If you want to take part on 13/14 March then contact Tony Wells immediately on 01525 379107 (email: anthonywells11@btinternet.com.)

Golf Croquet Coaching - Watford

On Sunday 18th April, Richard Keighley is organising a coaching day at Watford. There will be a charge for this event. More details are available from Richard either on 01296 681235 or email: the_keighleys@btopenworld.com.

Club Coaches and Golf Croquet Coaching - Page's Park

We are pleased to announce that David Ball and Eve Buckingham have now received their Club Coach badges - so congratulations to them. In our last 2009 newsletter we asked if any members would like a coaching day at Page's Park for Beginners and Improvers early this season. A number expressed interest so accordingly we have

allocated Friday 9th April for this. Richard Keighley will lead the course, assisted by David Ball, Eve Buckingham and John Cundell. If you are interested then please let John Cundell know and also advise whether you consider yourself a Beginner or an Improver!

Annual Dinner

This year's dinner will be at 'The Chef in Waiting', Milton Keynes College Training Restaurant, Bletchley Campus, Sherwood Drive, MK3 6DR (near Bletchley Station) on Wednesday 17th March 7.30 for 8.00pm.

Members will be pleased to learn that the price this year is only £16.00 for a three course meal - plus selection of canapes on arrival, sorbet between starter and main course, and tea and coffee. This price also includes gratuities. Enclosed with the newsletter you will find the menu and booking form. The latter should be completed and returned to David Ball at Florindell, The Dell, off Reach Lane, Heath & Reach, Leighton Buzzard, Beds. LU7 0AL. Please make sure you fill in your requirements by putting the appropriate letter choice (A, B, C, D or E) against each course category - and don't forget to enclose a cheque made payable to Leighton-Linslade Croquet Club. **Early booking is advisable as places are limited to 40 total. Also please note that refunds will not be given for cancellations, for whatever reason, later than 8 days before the original date of the event.**

Playing Sessions

The Committee agreed that 'official' playing sessions for 2010 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

As per 2009 we have renegotiated our Lawn Rent arrangements for 2010, therefore playing sessions can 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 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.



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 2010 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.