



# LEIGHTON-LINSLADE CROQUET CLUB

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Founded 2000

## NEWSLETTER - October 2007 Volume 8 Issue 1

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### "Soham success....by the skin of their teeth!"



This is not a competition where we ask members to suggest what gem John C is coming out with! It's the moment when John and Richard were presented with their trophies following their win at the Indoor Croquet Tournament at Soham in early January. See report elsewhere in this newsletter. Photo by Diana Phelps.

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2007 under the joint Editorship of John Cundell and Richard Keighley.

### A Club with a "friendly and welcoming spirit"

The Club is looking forward to its 8th season at Pages Park with the prospect of safer and extended lawns as soon as the weather permits the work to be done. Chair Margaret Brown told the AGM that she hopes that members will continue to cherish the friendly and welcoming spirit that exists within our Club. So, on these positive notes, let us all look forward to playing croquet again very soon.

#### Officers

Chair	Margaret Brown
Vice Chairman	John Cundell
Secretary	Richard Keighley
Treasurer	Len Buckingham
Fixture Secretary	Tony Wells

#### Committee members

Sue Cross	Val Jeffers
Diana Phelps	Tony Stammers

#### Non-Executive

Membership Secretary	John Fogg
Minute Secretary	Ann Smith

### Annual General Meeting.....and follow up!

Margaret Brown welcomed 26 members and their guests to our 7th AGM at Northall Village Hall on 10th November. She was particularly pleased that Peter and Elaine Newman were coming to the party, as they had helped to establish the Club in its early years. (Very sadly, the party proved to be Peter's last public appearance as he passed away in early January, and on behalf of all members, we offer our condolences to Elaine in respect of her recent bereavement.)

Margaret also welcomed Linda Carter, the Deputy Town Clerk, and she was handed the Club's cheque for £1800 as a contribution towards the cost of the lawn extension project. (As at 19th January, the contractor was waiting for a clear spell of weather to be able to start work, but the Park is at present waterlogged.)

The three officers were re-elected, with the welcome appointment of John Cundell as Vice Chairman. John Fogg had kindly agreed to continue as Membership Secretary and Tony Wells stepped up to become Fixture Secretary. Sally Clay, Erica Fogg and Edna Hickman were warmly thanked for their service as Committee members and Sue Cross and Tony Stammers were installed as new members.

After obtaining approval of the audited Club accounts, Treasurer Len Buckingham obtained support for the opening of a Social Club. (The Club opened on 3rd January and meets every Wednesday in the Park Pavilion from 10am-12 noon. Everyone welcome - £2 per session). If the Club proves successful, it may be necessary to amend the Constitution.

The Committee was asked to explore the cost of acquiring an indoor carpet for croquet and, if appropriate, to apply for a grant.

Linda Carter kindly presented the Club Singles Handicap Trophy to Judith Pengelly, the Club Doubles Trophy to John Cundell and Richard Keighley, and the Club Singles Trophy to Richard Keighley. She also presented Runners Up Shields, kindly donated by the Chair, to Una & Judith Pengelly and John Cundell respectively.

As a memento for being the first Club member to win a national competition, Richard Keighley was presented with a framed photo of the Cup ceremony at the Centre Stage Final.

### 2007 Dates for your Diary

#### February

9 Club Supper

#### March

15 Committee Meeting

17/18 Golf croquet training course for coaches - Cheltenham

24 EACF AGM - Bury St Edmunds



This shot gives some idea of the indoor facilities at Soham. Here Diana Phelps watches Irene Davis attempting a long clearance shot. At right, Richard Keighley assists organiser Tony Sparks with Linda and Martin Ambrose from Downham Market who were Richard and John's opponents in the Final.



### April

- 14 Official Opening of Club Season
- 23 Referees Course at Henley
- 28/29 Coaches training course at Newport
- 30 Last day for entries to NT tournaments

### May

- 6 Come & Try Day
- 31 Committee meeting
- 31 Last day for entries to Centre Stage (& Grass Roots)

TBA Club Grass Roots

### June

- 16 Club Centre stage
- 20 B class tournament - Cheltenham
- 25 Wrest Park Singles - offer to organise?

### July

- 7 NT Golf Doubles at Ickworth
- 8 Club Fun Tournament - Organiser wanted.
- 21 Club Handicap Singles
- 22 B class tournament at Newport
- 29 Wrest Park Doubles - offer to organise?

### August

- 2 Committee Meeting
- 4? All England Area Final at Newport
- 18 B class tournament at Newport
- 25 Club Garden Party
- 25/26 B class tournament at Surbiton

### September

- 8 Centre Stage Final at Edgbaston (NB Grass Roots at Northampton on same day)
- 9 NT Singles at Ickworth
- 18 B class tournament at Edgbaston
- 23/24? EACF League Finals
- 23/24 All England Handicap Final at Ramsgate
- 27 Committee meeting
- 29/(30) Club Doubles

### October

- 6/(7) Club Singles

### November

- 9 AGM & Party

### Prospects for the season

Weather permitting, it is hoped to make the lawns available for play by members from Sunday 1st April but the Official Opening will not take place until 14th April.

The Committee hopes that some members may like to become coaches or referees. Weekend courses for prospective coaches are to take place at Cheltenham on 17th/18th March and at Newport (Essex) on 28th/29th April, each at a modest fee of £10. There is a one day course for referees at Phyllis Court, Henley on 23rd April with a fee of £8. Further information available from the Secretary.

Last season, there was little take up of places for the National Trust tournaments at Ickworth. In the circumstances, the Committee only proposes to apply for places for 2007 if members indicate they would like to take part by 27th April latest. Entry Fee is £5 per pair and £3 per person for the singles. Please see calendar for dates.

It is proposed to invite players from other local clubs to join in a tournament organized on "Grass Roots" lines for beginners and high handicappers. No date yet fixed.

Details of EACF League fixtures are awaited. The Committee proposes to adopt a policy of selecting the strongest available team, by reference to handicap and perhaps form, for each match. Members who wish to be considered for selection by John, Len & Tony will be invited to enroll at the beginning of the season.

Various B Class tournaments (players of say 4-1 handicaps) are being organised for good Club players by the Croquet Association or local Federations. If you are interested, please notify the Secretary.

The Committee agreed that in addition to the usual playing sessions of Tuesday afternoon (Singles Handicap), Wednesday and Thursday mornings, Saturday and Sunday afternoons - that we will try an evening session during the high summer months of June, July and August - from say 6.00pm onwards. First suggestion is for Wednesday evenings, however more on this after the March committee meeting.



A look back to the lovely June summer day we enjoyed in 2006 for the Club's Centre Stage event - and of course Richard Keighley went on to win the National Final at Northampton in September. Roll on the 2007 season.

### Match Reports

#### **Soham Indoor - November - reported by Margaret Brown**

What a strange experience it was, playing on this vast piece of green baize at the sports centre in Soham, near Newmarket. We all began by over-hitting even though we had been warned that one has to be very gentle.

Play was ragged to begin with but it was fascinating to feel and observe how, over the day, players began to adapt and play more accurately. A couple of people seemed to become frustrated by the combination of inhibiting their mallets and watching well-struck balls go in semi-circles on what appeared to be a completely flat surface - except of course for the squares of carpet into which the hoops are inserted (but that's another story!) Their frustration was expressed by hitting hard so that the balls hit the surrounding plastic edging strips with a loud, echoing crash, sometimes breaking bits off it and then crashing into the walls or other barriers.

We six from LLCC played on Saturday 25th November against three other clubs - Wrest Park, Newport (Essex), Bury St Edmunds (Suffolk), and Downham Market (Norfolk). On Sunday 26th, Hunstanton, Wells, Sudbury and Letchworth clubs would be joining in.

There were continuous 30 minute matches with eight people and eight balls in play. This all worked remarkably well by means of choosing a different route when necessary, to avoid having to wait about whilst the others cleared a hoop. People were friendly, refreshments a bit problematical, organisation good, Sports Centre amazing for such a small town, distance rather long, the experience very unusual and enjoyable.

Results - not really important but Peggy and Don from

Wrest Park were runners up to Newport players, David and Helen Manley. LL came second in both divisions, i.e., Eve Buckingham and Sheila Beal, Una and Judith Pengelly - whilst our third team Tony Stammers and myself came 4th out of 5.

It will be great if we get indoor carpet for our Club. We would be able to have occasional friendly matches, introduction to croquet sessions and sociable croquet events in the area during the 'off-season'.

I hope that you had a good Christmas break and that the New Year proves a good one for you.

#### **Soham success....by the skin of their teeth!**

Enthusiastic croquet players from clubs throughout East Anglia gathered at Soham on 13th January for the third Indoor Golf Croquet Pairs Tournament of the close season. We were represented this time by two pairs - Irene Davis and Diana Phelps / John Cundell and Richard Keighley. Irene, our most sprightly octogenarian, and Diana played well to finish in joint third place in their strong group. They were particularly pleased to have defeated the eventual runners up in a hard-fought match - and Irene remarked that she really enjoyed her first indoor games.

John and Richard qualified for the Final by the skin of their teeth. Having played their four group matches and accumulated 10 points, they had an anxious wait for the outcome of the last group match between two of their closest rival pairs. A draw left a team from Bury St Edmunds with the same number of points and hoops scored.

A one-hoop play-off was decreed which John & Richard won to face strong opponents from Downham Market in the timed Final. Facing an early setback, Richard succeeded in 'clearing out' an opposition ball from the jaws of the hoop from the most distant corner of the court. This inspired him and John to take a two hoop lead. John's reliable hoop running and accurate positional play and clearing by both players enabled them to control the match and eventually win by three hoops to one. Winners' shields were presented to them both.

#### **Club Badges**

Club Badges are always available. 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. If you want one or more, just contact John Cundell on 756971.

#### **Welfare Officers**

Members are asked to note that Judith Cundell and Diana Phelps are operating as the club's Welfare Officers. So if you are aware of any member who may benefit from a card and some kind thoughts, please contact Judith on 756971 or Diana on 379482.



### **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 2007 season. Please complete this and send with the appropriate remittance to the Membership Secretary, John Fogg, whose contact details are on the form.**

**Where else can you get up to 12 hours of recreation with such lovely company and coffee/tea for under £2 per week?**