



# LEIGHTON-LINSLADE CROQUET CLUB

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Founded 2000

## NEWSLETTER - March 2006 Volume 7 Issue 2

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### OPENING OF A NEW ERA?

Welcome to the second newsletter of 2006 under the joint Editorship of Richard Keighley and John Cundell. This newsletter is short and sweet as time is of the essence - our pre-season Committee meeting was Thursday 23 March and we are obviously keen to get this to members before the Opening Weekend. So, no pics and social news this time - just what's required to kick the season off and allow you to complete your diaries!

#### Opening Day

Preparations are well in hand for the opening of the 2006 season on Saturday 1 April at 2pm when Town Mayor Mark Freeman has kindly agreed to strike the first ball in accordance with a well-established and much appreciated tradition. Members are requested to turn up in great numbers to celebrate the occasion.

#### More Lawn Space

A surefire talking point is the prospect of more lawn space this season. At the Committee meeting on 23 March, Chairman Margaret Brown excitedly announced that the Club had been offered the use of the cricket square for croquet this season as Leighton Foresters had unexpectedly folded after 50 years of playing club cricket. Their misfortune may be our good luck but there is still some negotiation to be done as to our actual basis of occupation. However we are pleased to report that following a brief meeting with John Connew on Saturday 25th March, when Len Buckingham, Martin Field and John Cundell met at Pages Park to mark out the lawns, we were informed by John that a full-size lawn will be marked out on the cricket pitch on Monday 27 and should be available from the start of the season. Furthermore an inspection on the 25 revealed a superb level surface.

The availability of a third lawn gives fresh impetus to the need to recruit new members. At present, we expect to number between 35 and 40 but we will now be in a position to increase membership to nearer 60.

#### Playing sessions

Just a reminder that the lawns have been booked for the following times:-

Tuesdays:	2 - 4.30pm
Wednesdays and Thursdays:	10 - 12 noon
Saturdays and Sundays:	2 - 5pm

#### Come and Try Day - Sunday 30 April 2 - 5pm

Your Committee has decided to make a big effort to publicise this regular event in the Club calendar. Erica Fogg and Diana Phelps are in charge of promotional activities and they would appreciate any ideas you may have for getting the message across to potential new members. Do you belong to a group which may be interested? Could you display a poster? Have you a friend

or friends you would like to bring along?

A new initiative for this season is that those who turn up to try croquet will be offered two to three follow up coaching sessions lasting an hour each at times to suit their convenience and without charge. Any member prepared to assist with this is asked to offer their services to one of the Committee members after the season gets under way. It can be very rewarding to explain the game to newcomers and encourage their participation and even more so if they then join us. New members are the lifeblood of any club and it is hoped that all existing members will do their utmost to help this recruitment initiative. Your Committee cannot do everything and we really do need assistance from all to help build our numbers.

#### Being coached and becoming a coach, rather than a coach potato!

Unfortunately, both the coaching courses at Watford on 21 May and at Wrest Park on 18 June are full, with reserve lists in operation.

Would you like to become a Club Coach of Golf Croquet? If so, courses are being held at Phyllis Court (Henley) over the weekend of 29-30 April and at Edgbaston on 8-9 July. For further information, please contact the Secretary Richard Keighley who is proposing to attend at Edgbaston and who would be pleased to offer lifts.

#### 2006 Diary

##### April

1 Opening of season  
24 Friendly v Watford (A)  
29/30 Coaches Qualification course at Henley  
30 Come and Try Day

##### May

9 League Match v Watford (H)  
12 Pairs Tournament at Watford  
21 Coaching Course at Watford  
25 Friendly v Winslow (H)

##### June

7 Singles Handicap Tournament at Cheltenham  
10 Club Grass Roots Day  
16 Friendly v Watford (H)  
18 Coaching Course at Wrest Park  
26 Wrest Park Singles (Provisional)  
30 Friendly v Winslow (A)

##### July

4 League Match v Wrest Park (A)  
8 National Trust Doubles at Ickworth  
8/9 Coaches Qualification Course at Edgbaston  
9 Club Fun Day  
14 Friendly v Stony Stratford (H)  
22 Club Handicap Singles  
30 Wrest Park Doubles

##### August

4 League Match v Letchworth (H)

- 5 All England Handicap Area Final at Newport
- 12 Grass Roots Regional Final at Northampton
- 15 Friendly v Stony Stratford (A)

#### September

- 2 National Trust Singles at Ickworth
- 10 Grass Roots Final at Northampton
- 23 EACF League Semi Final at Newport
- 24 EACF League Final at Newport
- 30 Club Doubles

#### October

- 1 Club Singles

#### November

- 10 AGM & Party

### Playing in League and Friendly Matches

On the Club notice board there is a form giving you the opportunity to sign up as member of our League team. Nine members did so last season and all were selected for at least one match. This season we are in a smaller group of four clubs, hence three matches to be played, and our only away match is against Wrest Park, unless we emulate our success of 2005 and proceed to the Final stages at Newport.

Please remember that our selection policy means that if you sign up for the League Team, then selection priority for our Friendlies with Watford, Winslow and Stony Stratford will be given to those members who are NOT in the League Team.

To date, six Friendlies have been arranged and it is hoped that as many members as possible will wish to take part. As last year and as mentioned above, selection priority will be given to those members who are NOT in the League team but who would like to play competitively in a very friendly atmosphere.

### Tournaments - National Trust

Please check the Diary for Tournaments which may interest you. Both the National Trust events are being held at Ickworth again, and the Club has applied to take part. It would be very nice if players who have not been before were to represent the Club.

### Grass Roots and Centre Stage

Both the Regional and National Finals of the Grass Roots competition are being held at Northampton. It is open to anyone with a handicap of **6 or no handicap at all**. Our Club Grass Roots day is on Saturday 10 June, but we will need to know how many of our higher handicappers would be interested in a possible trip to Northampton by the middle of May. A notice will be displayed for this and also for the Centre Stage tournament for those with handicaps of between 1 and 5.

### All England Handicap and Cheltenham Handicap Tournament

The Secretary would be glad to provide further details of the All England Handicap on 5 August and also on a new

Singles Handicap Tournament at Cheltenham on 7 June.

### EACF Annual General Meeting

The usual response to telling someone that you are going to Bury St Edmunds is, "I didn't know that he had died." Well, on 25 March, Richard Keighley represented our Club at the AGM of the East Anglian Croquet Federation. He was snoozing quietly through the reports, having enjoyed lunch in the newly opened West Wing restaurant at Ickworth House, and wondering whether Len would allow his expenses claim, when a dig in the ribs by his neighbour alerted Richard that the Chairman had announced the presentation of a trophy to the winners of the Golf Croquet League in 2005, which was of course our Club.

Art is in the eye of the beholder but Richard was surprised to be presented with a block of wood engraved with our Club's name, on top of which were Lowry type figures playing croquet with hoops, coloured balls and clips, giving the appearance of an elaborate cake decoration! It is a unique object which must have taken hours to create. It will be treasured as the first trophy won by the Club, even if it has to be given back at the end of the season.

It will be on display at the Opening day next Saturday.

### Club Supper

Sincere thanks to Committee members Sally Clay, Erica Fogg and Tony Wells, who organised the very first Supper at the Hunt Hotel on 3 February. Some 30 members and guests enjoyed a very successful evening, the first of many, we have no doubt.

### Social Club

An average of 16 people attended the first four sessions. Present trends are very encouraging.

### 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.

### Missing Balls!

We have still not located our spare set of balls which have gone missing. Now we have a third lawn it would be excellent if whoever borrowed them arranged for their return. No inquisition - just our balls back please! Contact Len Buckingham or John Cundell.

### Private Sales

If any member has a croquet-associated item they wish to sell, please send details to John Cundell for inclusion in the next newsletter.

In this issue Diana Phelps and Sally Clay have mallets for sale which are in excellent condition. The price is £45 ovno. You can ring Diana on 01525 379482 or Sally on 01525 377599.



## Reminder to a few! Membership Fee Due!!!

If you haven't yet paid your membership fee this will be the last newsletter you receive. A membership application form is included with this newsletter for those members who had not paid as at 23rd March. Please complete this and send with the appropriate remittance to the new 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?