

LEIGHTON - LINSLADE CROQUET CLUB

Founded 2000

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September 2003

Newsletter

Vol. 4 No. 6

Here goes with the final Newsletter before the AGM and the end of our 4th season. Our membership stands at a healthy 35, including 2 temporary and 2 non-playing members. Welcome to our latest recruits - Joy Bown and Richard Graves! We shall, very sadly have to say goodbye to Dorrie Skennerton who is moving away - BUT she may join the Dunstable U3A group and play against us in the future.

The Club has flourished over its short life, thanks to splendid support from the Town Council, and the untiring work of our enthusiastic members.

If this is to continue, we shall all have to THINK CAREFULLY
ABOUT HOW EACH OF US CAN CONTRIBUTE to its running during 2004.

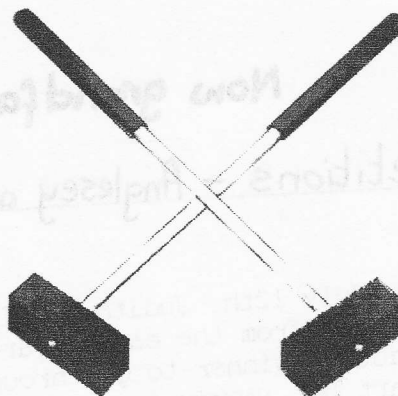
Our officers, chair/sec/treas, supported by committee members take major responsibilities and decisions. Would YOU be willing to take a turn at this level, attending the four meetings between Feb. and Sept.?

Many other people have quietly been undertaking the little jobs so that the Club has run as smoothly and developed, as it has. For Example :- Someone books the lawns/sets the hoops/arranges fixtures/organises food for events/produces the Newsletter/tidies the notice board/orders cups, tea and coffee/writes to the newspapers/takes photos/guards the archives/represents us on the Sports Council/sets the handicaps/guides us on Child Protection mattersetc.etc.

PLEASE will you consider this list and speak to George, our chairman, before the AGM, or to me, and ask which roles may be vacant, then offer to fill one or more? Our AIM has always been to run a speedy and efficient AGM; it will help us to achieve this if we have lots of willing volunteers —then we can get on with the party!!

On, or about, Oct. 25th your retiring Hon. Sec. will be posting out the official papers for the Annual General meeting and end-of-season party. These events will take place at NORTHALL VILLAGE HALL on Wednesday 19th November. Hopefully we will have volunteers for all those interesting jobs by then.

Margaret Brown-Sec.



HELP WANTED

Match Reports-July-September

GOLF CROQUET ALL ENGLAND HANDICAP AREA FINAL

Eight players assembled at Solihull Croquet Club early on 16th August to try to win through to the National Final at Colchester at the end of September. Our Club was represented by Diana Phelps and Richard Keighley.

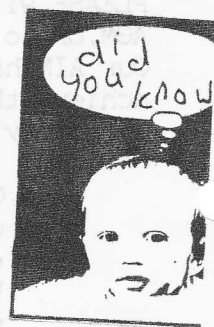
The conditions were perfect for croquet. The lawns were flat and mown closely. It was bright and sunny with a slight breeze. The players were split up into 2 groups of 4. Each player had to play the best of three 13 point games against the others in the group, with a time limit of 2 hours for the 3 games.

Handicaps varied from 0 to 6, but it was clear that most players had vast experience of tournament croquet. Two players had been allocated a handicap of 6 by their clubs without having submitted to the setting process which our club has adopted. Diana and Richard each have a handicap of 3 and were at a disadvantage when playing them.

Diana's first opponent was the top seed with the handicap of 0. She made a flying start and led 5-1 in the first game but was eventually pegged back and lost narrowly 6-7. The second game was not as close but Diana was congratulated by the organiser for her accurate striking. In her second match, the high handicapper prevailed in straight games and the youngest competitor was too strong for her in her third match.

Richard's first opponent was a former Wales Open champion with a handicap of 1. The first game took 70 minutes which Richard lost 5-7. He won the next 7-2 and the third was still in progress when time was called. He was deemed to have lost by a single hoop. His next opponent won the first game 7-4. Richard drew level by winning the next game by the same score but was pipped 5-6 in the decider. After lunch his opponent beat him in straight games 7-4, 7-6.

At the end of a day when players had played for almost 6 hours with short breaks, it was clear that both Diana and Richard had been eliminated. In her discretion, the organiser adjusted Diana's handicap to 4 but left Richard's (just!) intact. Both felt it had been valuable experience and made them think that it would be a good idea to play more handicap matches on club days.



from Richard
Keighley

Now grandfather to Martha
Grace!

National Trust Competitions - Anglesey and Ickworth

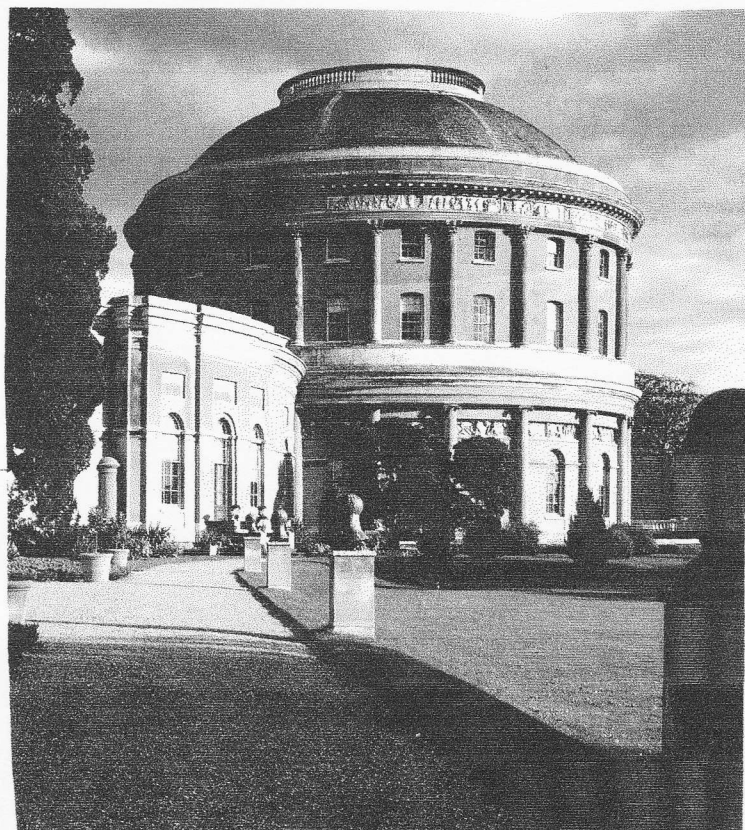
On a hot and sunny Saturday, July 12th, Judith and I went to Anglesey Abbey to represent the club. Sixteen teams from the eastern area were arranged into four groups, each of which provided a winner to go through to the semi-finals. Unfortunately we made a poor start but improved greatly to finish second in our group. We did however enjoy a lovely day at a beautiful place with friendly people.

Una and Judith Pengelly.

Our 3 stalwart competitors, Yvonne Banks, Sally Clay and Matt Housden, set off at 7.30a.m., driven by 'support group', Margaret Brown, to Ickworth House in Suffolk. They variously played members of 7 E. Anglian Clubs. Yvonne scored 14 hoops against 34, Sally 22 against 30 and Matt 30 out of 54, winning 3 of his 5 games. Although they did not qualify for the semi-final we all agreed it had been a lovely, if tiring, day. Linda Potton, one of our founder-members, playing for Waterways, won the whole competition in fine style.

Ickworth House

One of the most unusual houses in East Anglia. The huge Rotunda of this eighteenth century house dominates the landscape. Ickworth's stunning Capability Brown park is rich in plant and animal life and provides acres of space for walks and family fun.



Luton U3A v Leighton (home)

Dunstable U3A (away) - each of these matches involved 8 members from each club proved very enjoyable occasions. Dunstable provided an "interesting" lawn with view, lots of fun and a delicious tea. This was our first meeting with a full Luton team and we trust it will be repeated. The Club won both matches by 6 games to two.

Not for the faint of heart

SIR - While full of admiration for the stoicism of Beryl Fleming (letter, May 30), I feel I must correct her impression that croquet is for wimps.

There exists a popular misconception that croquet is a gentle, undemanding pastime, when, in fact, it is a sport requiring stamina (three miles may be walked in a single match lasting several hours), immense skill (only 1/18th inch clearance on either side of the ball as it runs a hoop), strength in arm and wrist, knowledge of geometry to calculate angles, and keen intelligence to devise a strategy to outwit an opponent.

Sadly, I can claim few of these qualities, but gain much enjoyment from a complicated and challenging game that even David Beckham would have difficulty in mastering.

Jean Ogden

Torquay, Devon From 'The Times' 25.7.03

Croquet is not cricket

Shame on Lord MacLaurin, the former ECB chairman, for suggesting that cricket risks becoming "a former sport of the summer ... like croquet".

If cricket had as resilient a life as croquet, it would be in a much healthier state. While the number of cricketers and spectators at cricket matches has slumped over the past 50 years, croquet has flourished. The world champion - the accountant Robert Fulford - is British, and there are now as many croquet players as there have been at any time since the sport's heyday, just before the First World War.

This success isn't surprising in such a thrilling, ruthless and adaptable sport. Croquet players have always customised the game. Golf Croquet, the quicker version, where everyone aims for the same hoop, has taken off. Crazy Croquet, with random objects for hoops, can be played anywhere: in *Alice in Wonderland*, the hoops are living playing cards, the balls hedgehogs and the mallets flamingoes. Even Lord MacLaurin might be charmed by Evelyn Waugh's Croquet-Bowls: the hoops are replaced with champagne bottles, and play proceeds only once they have been emptied into the players.

5.9.03

from 'The Telegraph'