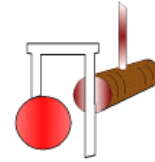


CORNWALL CROQUET CLUB

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Newsletter No. 72, May 2014

CHAIRMAN'S SCRIBE'S CORNER

I'll start with the same sentence as I did last time! Apologies – is it really so long since I concocted the last newsletter? On checking, it seems it really is. Des has asked me to carry on writing the newsletters, so the usual pattern of nagging and dubious information will no doubt continue, enlivened by photos when we have some.

The main season is now well and truly started, after a winter in which the weather again severely curtailed play. As in 2012/2013 insufficient games were played in either of the competitions to warrant awarding the trophies. However, despite the conditions, the lawns emerged in surprisingly good condition. The lawn gang had applied various potions to deal with moss, and to fertilise etc. Thanks to a full day's work by Andy the Golf Club's greenkeeper, and with Howard's permission for the use of the Golf Club's machinery, all lawns were vertidraind in March. This involved a most unkindly very early start, with Des nobly attending. We also did some local ladder checks and surface dressing on 3, to try to reduce twists and turns on hoop approaches. This seems to have made some improvement, but lawn 3 is still a "work in progress" area.

Unfortunately, the surface dressing has not fully infilled the vertidraind holes, particularly on 3. The intention is to apply another load of surface dressing, but our suppliers are having problems with their machinery, and don't expect to be able to supply material for at least another three weeks or so. Adding to this setback, rabbits have recently caused quite significant damage particularly to 3. Searches round the perimeter initially failed to find any clear signs of entry, but it did seem as if in some places, the rabbits were scraping to try to get *out!* Extra work on fencing is in hand, but thanks to Paul Schofield, newly elected as Rabbit Consultant

(honorary), useful new leads have emerged, and it has also become clear that rabbits are active in the clay sand heap.

We have been kindly treated by the weather both in March and in the early weeks of the season – many thanks to those members who ensured that most of the March work list was completed. Despite reports of heavy showers nearby, we enjoyed a dry and successful Open Day, with all lawns in use, and a good number of enthusiastic visitors. As a result, we hope to be able to welcome some further new members in addition to those who have already recently joined us. A second Open Day is scheduled for May 24th

Club competitions The regular Thursday and Wednesday morning competitions are up and running, and have been well supported. Don't forget, these are "roll-up" events, no pre-entry or entry fees required. But please, arrive in time to help with setting out the lawns etc, and to give the organiser adequate time to organise.

The draw sheets for the AC level play, Golf KO, Dowding & Plymouth Cups are now, or very shortly will be, available in the Clubhouse. The main change is that due to the good number of entries, the Level Play will this year be run in two blocks. Last year, towards the end of the season, players, mainly AC, with backlogs of games, were tending to play these on Club days. Ideally, this is best avoided, as this isn't what Club days are really for. So get playing!

Finally, and this plea has been made before, if you have entered a Club competition, but find that for some reason you will be unable to play, please let the organiser know as soon as possible. Considerable work is involved in setting up particularly the well supported

events, and last minute re-shuffling is an unwelcome complication.

Looking forward a little, the One Ball competition will be held on June 20th. This is an AC format event, but involves a large element of GC skills, so if you are usually a GC player, try it – its good fun.

External competitions Firstly, congratulations to Ron George, who won the Budleigh Salterton High Bisquers event in April. What's more, his opponent in the final was Reg Wapling, who has played with the Fowey club for several years, and has recently joined Cornwall. Well done both of you, also our other members who ensured that once again, Cornwall were well represented at Budleigh.

Both Cornwall and Fowey sent teams to the Nailsea Short Croquet team competition also in April, both in division 1, (at least at the start of the event!) Cornwall's team were Des Honey, Ron George, Ian Wilson, and Jenny Burrows. Fowey's were Rosemary Bradshaw, David Edwards, Stephen Read, and Tony Jennings – all of whom are also Cornwall members. I will now offer our excuse for not doing too well – our lawns had been rather slow, as the mower had not yet been set to its summer height. Nailsea's were fast, and took some getting used to. That will do for the first game, but as an excuse, gets a bit weak subsequently. So, at the end of the final round, Cornwall & Fowey were tied at the bottom of division 1 with 6 wins each. This was resolved by a shootout at the peg from the long boundary, players from each team playing alternately. The first 7 attempts all missed albeit sometime by a whisker, until Stephen hit in with the last shot before "sudden death", thus ensuring that Cornwall will play in division 2 next year (*Stephen – see me – Chairman*).

SWF Leagues The first match took place in excellent conditions on April 29th, when two full teams from Rosevear & Porthpean competed in a most enjoyable match. Rosevear got revenge for last year's defeat, by a margin of 12-8. It was good to see some new faces in the teams. Porthpean as the "home" side provided the usual excellent tea.

Rosevear play Exeter away on May 6th, and Cornwall's level play team take on Swanage and East Dorset on successive days at the end of the same week. Perhaps this year we could manage an infinite increase in the number of wins we got in 2013, which was zero!

Coaching There was an encouraging response to Des's coaching questionnaire, and more info on coaching sessions will follow. There were 28 replies, with the favourite times for coaching sessions being Monday & Tuesday afternoons, and Wednesday & Thursday lunchtimes.

The GC improvers day held on April 8th, organised by Ron with assistance from the Club coaches, was well supported. Ron ran through the changes in the GC rules for 2014, also on the CA alterations to lower handicaps. Some of us claimed to fully understand both the new rules and the handicap changes, but time will tell! Seriously, many thanks as ever to Ron.

Nags & reminders We have had to sort out a mix of Barlow & Dawson balls in the ball carriers. Please ensure that you use and replace the correct balls in the correct carriers, Barlows are generally recognised as the balls for GC, Dawson for AC.

Please make sure you put the right hoops in the right holes if you are setting out the lawns – carrots are used for full lawns and "A" halves, cruciform for "B" halves. If in doubt, there's a diagram in the equipment hut.

Finally, we have all managed to play shots which put a dig into the lawn – if this happens, please repair ASAP!

Thanks.

Photo & caption competition As before, so get snapping – anything croquet related, at Porthpean or elsewhere. Judging on Finals weekend.

Best wishes for an enjoyable season,

David & Des