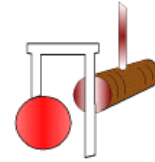


CORNWALL CROQUET CLUB

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Newsletter No. 66 November 2012

CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

Once again, rather a gap since the last newsletter – as before, things seem to have been rather busy. Sorry.

Finals weekend saw the end of what has been a generally successful if distinctly damp season. The forecast for the weekend had been dire, but thankfully was wrong, and the Saturday was one of the very best we have had for some time – people were even seeking out shade! However, Sunday, although largely dry, was very different, with the heater working overtime, and players back in full Arctic gear.

The Club competitions have been generally well supported, and it was particularly pleasing to have a good entry of higher handicap players in the President's level play Golf Croquet tournament, giving good accounts of themselves. The hardest match I had was against a high handicap player – well done Joyce - who was unlucky not to win on golden hoop. It was a shame that the Association Novices could not be played – there was enough interest to make a worthwhile competition, but unfortunately we couldn't get everyone together on the same day. Congratulations to all the season's winners, runners up, and to all the other players.

Membership Our Open Days were successful, as were the various days or evenings when we entertained groups from various organisations. In all, our membership is now at its highest ever. All of these events are demanding of members' time, so many thanks to those who have helped in any way. We intend to run similar events in 2013, and all help will be welcome.

League and external competitions As most of you will now know, the B League team retained the South West Federation title with a 4:3 win, played in appalling conditions at Taunton – see Ron's cartoon on the website. The Intermediates narrowly lost 3:4 in their final played at Nailsea, having won all of their group matches. The Federation team finished in a respectable middle-of-the-table position. Both Golf Croquet teams are definitely going to do better in 2013! Particularly in GC, the issue of handicaps will not go away, and

debate as to whether it is wise to field lower handicap players continues.

Several members played at away tournaments, including four of us who played on the hallowed – and of course very good - lawns of Hurlingham, thoroughly enjoying ourselves. We have wagtails, they have parakeets!

The weather sadly forced the cancellation of the annual friendly against Nailsea, as their lawns were advised as too saturated to be playable.

Lawns Lawn 3 has been earning its keep. 2 continues to be our truest court, and some of us think that 1 has suffered a degree of settlement.

Lawns have been regularly fertilised during the season, and weed-treated where necessary. Having seen the report in the CA magazine on Letchworth's lawn improvement scheme using surface dressing and ladder dragging to try to produce a flat surface, we decided to attempt to improve lawn 3 by a similar method, albeit using less surface dressing. This work took place on October 23rd & 24th, later than we had hoped, but weather had not been in our favour. Having done lawn 3, we decided to extend the work to lawn 1.

Thanks to the help and advice of the greenkeepers from the Golf Club, and Howard's permission to use the Golf Club's light tractor and hopper, we didn't have to wheelbarrow the filler from the pile near the main gate – what a huge difference that made! Everything was damper than we would have wished, making it more difficult to spread the filler evenly. We pre-seeded, and then identified the deeper hollows using the ladder, so that we could try to bring these up to level. A few days later, after rain, it is amazing how so much filler has worked into the surface.

We are crossing our fingers that the grass seed germinates, and that we have indeed improved the levels. I suppose that at worst, we will have moved the bumps and hollows around, so that those who thought they knew the tricks of the lawns will be just as baffled as everyone else!

We were delighted and relieved that despite the very late notice of the work party, the usual “lawn gang” had much appreciated additional help – very many thanks to all involved.



Ladder dragging on lawn 1



Our driver for today's outing was

The diesel mower has continued to be total success. When purchased, it came with a set of three scarifier units in excellent order. These were fitted by Stephen & Des, in lieu of the cutting cylinders, in October, and used on all three lawns. They removed a surprisingly large amount of thatch, and improved the run of the lawns significantly. We will need to use them rather more often during the main season, but the switches between cutters and scarifiers is made slower and more awkward by having to also switch the lifting yokes. It would make life easier if a duplicate set could be permanently fitted to the scarifiers. New, they are expensive, but at the time of writing, we think that we may be able to get a set at a better price. Cash Cash Cash!!

Winter play Until further notice, only lawn 2 will be in use. Boundaries will have to be set using string lines, as the white-liner needs repair to the base of its tank, which has corroded through. Tony J has dismantled it, and overhauled it as far as possible. He has also done a magnificent clean out of the machinery shed.

Do be careful of the string lines.

Social Our thanks to Joyce for liaising with the Kingswood Restaurant, fixing a date (December 5th, 12.30 for 1.00) and circulating the menu. Please send Joyce your menu choices, and your cheque, in good time.

We are planning a walking Treasure Hunt, similar to that at Fowey and Charlestown, on November 6th. There's a list on the Club board – please sign up or let us know ASAP (01726 832526) if you would like to join in. The plan is to follow with lunch, probably at the Polgooth Inn. The suggested time to allow is about 1.5 hours. There are some climbs, including one which involves steps - although there is an alternative route up the main hill – or just leave this bit out! Start time will be 10.30 in the Town square, opposite the Ship Inn.

The mulled wine & mince pies lunchtime gathering seems to be popular, so we will repeat this on Wednesday December 12th, starting at about midday. As before, contributions of mince pies or other tempting morsels will be welcomed, and we suggest a donation of 50p per glass to cover costs. If conditions are suitable, we will hope to play croquet in the afternoon.

The photo competition, and the invitations for captions, to be judged on finals weekend, produced some entertaining entries.



Rhona's winning caption for this was: "If you're going to go off in a strop, take your ball with you!"

Any other ideas for winter social events will be very welcome.

Finally Don't forget the website – for news, results, photos, and links to other sites. Thank you Ian.

Best wishes to all,

David