

Bear of Rodborough Croquet

Newsletter - January 2013



EDITORIAL

Happy New Year to one and all!

As our minds tentatively turn to thoughts of croquet and warm summer's days, perhaps we should reflect upon the problems which Mother Nature has thrown our way. We remember scooping, mopping and brushing the lawn after such an event last summer. This is going to take more than a dustpan and brush!



(If you are wondering, this is the Bowls Lawn in Nailsworth, taken in December 2012.)



Keith has had fun making corner flags for the new season (got to find him something to do when it's raining).

There are some interesting articles and lots of information in this month's newsletter to keep your thoughts turning towards the new season.

Look forward to seeing everyone soon.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENT

I expect that you, too, will be looking out of your window at a grey, wet scene and feeling that the glorious croquet season is still a long way off. Although I can't do much about the "grey" and "wet" bits, I hope that I can help with your eager anticipation of joyous activity on the croquet lawn.

Richard has been beavering away at arranging our fixtures by badgering the other clubs to commit to dates while hoping we won't all be drowned rats again this year. We thank him for the many hours he has spent on the telephone to achieve this and if we all now pencil these dates in our diaries, the team captains should have an easier time when raising teams. A word of caution before writing the dates in pen - when clubs have arranged fixtures between themselves, the dates have to be sent to the Federation League Secretary for ratification and checking for clashes before they are cast in stone. It is possible some dates may change though in practice, this is rare.

to be continued...

cont...

For those who want to find out more about playing the advanced rules game, Don's coaching sessions for the next two Mondays are not to be missed. There is no better coach - with the possible exception of Rover! Remember to take pencil, crayons and paper with which to record his every word of wisdom. There is also a very slim possibility that we may end up in a local tavern.

CA members will be receiving their tournament Fixtures Book any day now but if you cannot wait any longer before applying, it is already published on the CA website and applications are already being accepted. If you haven't yet joined the CA, why not make 2013 the year you do?

Thanks to Carol for organising the excellent Christmas pub night, the next one is at a new venue which is anticipated hungrily.

Keith and Kate have lifted the newsletter to new heights and Brian is spending his every spare moment banking your cheques and counting the piles of money. When you have recovered from paying your annual sub., you may like to start saving up for new club clothing. We are not far off the time when John will be organising the next order for club polo shirts and sweat shirts so that we can arrive at the first match in grand style.

Your committee is working hard on your behalf. I thank them for their effort and join you in looking forward to the new season when we will feel the sun on our backs but we will enjoy the regular social activities in the meantime.

Finally, don't forget to submit your photos before the end of this month.

Happy New Year!

Robert

HOW TO BE A CHAMPION

Reg Bamford is the world croquet champion. Recently, he gave a one hour talk at Surbiton CC about how he prepares and trains to be the best. When you are stuck at home with a foot of snow outside and dreaming of how you can become a better player, you may learn much from watching this video. You can find it on:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/duncanhector>

THE FUTURE OF CROQUET

There are two main topics of debate within the croquet world at present: the ageing membership and the sparsity of women who play at the highest level. Interestingly, some other countries do not appear to have these problems.

Currently, 50% of CA members are over the age of 68 and that figure is increasing annually, and only about 10% of female members play competitively at an advanced level. Both are issues which are causing everyone in the game great concern and the debate has started as to how things can be improved.

Within our own club the numbers are small but the percentage of women playing in tournaments is well above the national average but currently, none play in advanced tournaments (though this is expected to change soon).

An excellent, and thought-provoking, article appeared in the December Croquet Gazette highlighting this issue and asking the question of what can be done to encourage, prepare and support more people, particularly women to enter tournaments in general and advanced tournaments in particular. Suggestions include: coaching sessions on the tactics of playing when conceding bisques rather than receiving them as this could boost confidence; encouraging women to enter "away" tournaments as this is both a good way to improve and also very good fun - though some folk do not like staying away on their own so arranging a group entry could be more attractive; organising club competitions as level block play rather than handicap (*almost impossible in small clubs*) to give everyone more experience of level play (Level play = no bisques but you are placed in blocks of players with similar handicaps).

Don is organising advanced-play coaching designed for those who are either interested in finding out more about it or for those who already play advanced but want to improve. Is this something YOU would like to consider attending?

If you get it right, entering tournaments can be great fun: you meet, get to know and develop friendships as you work the circuit. Croquet clubs are inevitably in delightful parts of the country and croquet players everywhere are friendly and welcoming (when off the lawn!). For those who want it, there are many opportunities across Britain and throughout the world. Why not decide 2013 is the year you will raise your sights and improve your game?

TOURNAMENTS

Richard Danby has sent round information regarding the High Bisquers competition at Budleigh Salterton on the 20/21st April. It is open to players with handicaps 16-24 and consists of five 18 point handicap games. Fee is £25 which includes morning coffee, light lunch and afternoon tea each day. It is a great tournament to start the season.

Details from: BSCC Tournament Sec. Charles Townshend 01395 567460

Entry form attached.

PROVISIONAL TOURNAMENT DATES 2013

Thanks to Richard Way for taking the time to organise these for us.

B league (Carol)

A	Worcester Norton	Sat	11-May
H	Broadwas	Tues	14-May
H	Llandaff	Tues	04-Jun
A	Swindon	Thurs	27-Jun

Intermediate (Paul)

H	Dyffryn	Sun	12-May
A	Worcester Norton	Sun	19-May
A	Swindon	Sun	09-Jun
A	Cheltenham	Sat	22-Jun
H	Broadwas	Sun	30-Jun

Federation (Keith)

A	Kington Langley	Sun	28-Apr
H	Swindon	Sun	19-May
A	Cheltenham	Sun	02-Jun
H	Worcester Norton	Sun	23-Jun
H	Dyffryn	Sun	14-Jul
A	Nailsea North	Sun	21-Jul

Parkstone 2 (Don)

A	Bristol 2nd	Tues	14-May
H	Cheltenham 2nd	Thurs	30-May
H	Bristol 2nd	Sun	02-Jun
A	Bath	Sat	08-Jun
A	Cheltenham 2nd	Sat	22-Jun
H	Bath	Sun	11-Aug

Snooker Nights – dates for your diary!

Wed 9th Jan
Thurs 31st Jan
Wed 13th Feb
Thurs 28th Feb
Wed 13th March
Wed 27th March

Pub evenings - 2013

23 Jan - The Old Crown Uley
20 Feb
22 Mar – Annual Dinner

Thought for the Month...

You become a better Croquet player the day you have your first real laugh at your game.



Photo Competition

Reminder of the first Bear Photo Competition

(not to be confused with "the first bare photo competition"!)

Get your cameras at the ready. Snap away and collectively, we can have some fun. Serious or humorous, creative or posed - everyone can enter: anyone could win.

The rules...

- Any croquet related picture taken by a Bear in 2012
- B+W or colour **prints** admissible
- Photoshop manipulation allowed but this must be declared so the judge can make an informed opinion
- Print size 6"x 4" minimum, 10"x 8" maximum (*the larger the better as they will all be put on display*)
- Any number of entries allowed
- Name of photographer to be written on the back of the print (and Photoshop description if used)
- Entries submitted to Rosemary by **31st January 2013**

Judging by an independent chappy

Photos displayed and the winner announced at the **Annual Dinner on Friday 22nd March 2013.**

For more information:

Our Club Website- <http://www.faydon.com/Bear/Bear.html>

Archived newsletters and coaching hints - <http://www.faydon.com/Bear/News.html>

Croquet Association (of which the club is a member) -www.croquet.org.uk

South West Federation of Croquet Clubs (to which we are affiliated) – <http://www.swfcroquet.org.uk>

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The Bear of Rodborough Croquet Club.

Chairman:	Robert Moss	01453 872386
Secretary:	Richard Way	01453 833762
Treasurer:	Brian Pittaway	01453 860610
Handicapper and club competitions manager:	Don Gaunt	01453 822507
Lawn Manager and Hotel Liaison:	Nick Hurst	01453 882960
Equipment Manager:	Richard Danby	01453 872456
Webmaster:	Don Gaunt	01453 822507

BUDLEIGH SALTERTON CROQUET CLUB

Spring High Bisquers' Tournament

(Handicap Range 16 – 24)

C.A MEMBERSHIP NOT NECESSARY

APRIL 20th AND 21st 2013

Singles Games (18 point with time limit) 9.30am start.

ENTRY FEE £ 25

(which includes morning coffee, tea AND

Soup/sandwich lunch

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Please complete details below; detach and send form with payment to:

The Tournament Secretary, Mutterings, Church Rd, Colaton Raleigh,

Sidmouth, Devon EX10 0LW 01395 567460. mutterings1@btinternet.com

NAME.....

ADDRESS

.....

PHONE.....E-mail.....

CLUB..... HANDICAP.....

If postal acknowledgment is required please send SAE with form and payment