



NEWSLETTER

October 2011



It's been a good season, with much activity all over the place and many compliments from players from other clubs about our facilities and the quality of our lawns. I've been away somewhat, but have still managed to talk and play with many of you.

Welcome to all our new members this year and I hope to meet as many of you as possible at the AGM and over the winter.

The season is now essentially over, with only one of our internal competitions still incomplete. Our Finals Day was a lovely Sunday, with 6 finals actually played and congratulations to all the winners who were presented with their trophies.

I'm not going to summarise the season much, since the [News](#) section of our website provides all the details and I'm sure you've all been reading that! However, there are some points I'd like to comment on:

SECF Leagues

A not very good season this year at all for our competitive teams. The detailed results are on the website, but we had to pull out of the Association B league as we didn't have enough available players, were bottom of 5 in the A league, 14th out of 16 in the U League, bottom of 8 in the Golf Level Play League, 5th out of 7 in the Golf Level B League and 12/24 in the Golf Handicap League with 2 wins.

Must practice more and get our teams out next year...

Lawns

Throughout this year our lawns have been in very good condition and have been praised by visiting players. We are confident that they are among the best croquet lawns in the country and we can be rightfully proud of the achievement of our new groundsman this year – Ray Kemp.

We've just carried out an extensive autumn maintenance programme to prepare for the winter and ensure the lawns are in the best possible condition for next year. Once again we were very lucky with the weather. This total treatment programme is our single largest expenditure for the year costing nearly £2,000, so please keep the donations coming in. Over the winter Ray will be doing some levelling work over the winter, mainly on Lawn 1, in addition to the regular mowing etc.

Coaching

Due to Richard Clark and John Hobbs injuries we've been unable to organise much proper coaching this year, with the exception of Daphne Gaitley providing us with 3 full days of Golf and Association coaching. I hope we can do better next year!

Winter Social Activities

The winter pub lunches are starting again in November (dates are in the Diary section at the end). If you're thinking of coming please let me know by the previous Thursday, so that I can let the pub know how many people to expect.

Although a date has not yet been set, we hope to gather together for a Winter warmer like last year's at Kate and Michael Sander's house sometime in late January or February 2011. The date will be posted on

the website and sent by e-mail. Please phone me early in January if you're not on email and would like to know the date.

AGM

With the change to our financial year made at the last AGM our next AGM won't be happening until Saturday 18th February at the Frant Village Hall, starting at 11am (coffee from 10:30am) and ending at 12:30pm with lunch (cost £7.50 including wine/beer). Formal invitations will go out for this in January. Please come along for this formal AND social occasion.

Committee

We haven't lost any Committee Members this year, but Mick Belcham has said that he will be retiring as Secretary at the AGM. He's been doing the job for a very long time (more than 10 years to my certain knowledge). This leaves a significant vacancy on the Committee, so we're looking for volunteers to join.

Winter Season

We're hoping to keep using the lawns during the winter, so don't forget to **check the Notice Board** before you start playing to see which lawns are available declared OPEN. We'll normally be using Lawn 3 and if that's full then Lawn 2 if that's full. **We're resting Lawn 1 since it's been used much more than the other lawns during the season, so only use it if the other two lawns are full.**

Please note that we'll be closing them if it's very wet, to ensure that we don't damage them. However, even if a lawn is shown as OPEN please don't use it if it is very wet or frosty.

Normal club sessions, mainly Golf, will continue to take place as long as possible (there were 8 people last Sunday), but please watch the Notice Boards and our web-site for changes. Once again, we cross our (possibly frozen) fingers and hope the weather gods are with us as we head into the winter season.

One Ball Sundays

For your monthly delectation, we're repeating the Sunday morning's social Handicap One-Ball, the quick-fire version that combines some of the best features of both GC and AC. For the GC aficionado, the skills of hitting from distance and shooting hoops; for the AC player the knife-edge of trying to make breaks off the oppo's ball!

Now, before anyone leaps in and says "Yes, but it's AC – just half as complicated!", I would say that most of the time, when it becomes a chase round the hoops, the average GC player, with a few bisques, has every chance of beating an average AC player. And we'll allow advice and coaching!!

The system is that we give 1/3 the bisque difference so, by comparison with Jon D for instance, most GC players (off a 24 AC handicap) will get 7 bisques to help them run the 12 hoops – and you CAN run hoops in a bisque turn, unlike in GC. All you have to do is take on board the stop-shot croquet shot (so putting the oppo ball far away), then position to run your hoop next turn.

Each game should take about 20 minutes and it is normal to treble-bank so we should get in four games for everybody in a morning, allowing plenty of time for coffee and chat.

So please let's see everybody giving it a go on the Sunday mornings (11am till 2pm) from December to April in the Diary below. We'll try and organise Soup etc for lunch, so contact Jon D a few days in advance if you're planning to come.

If the weather is impossible, or the courts unplayable, then we will delay for a week at a time till we get a reasonable day.

Housekeeping etc

A big thank you to all who have contributed to the tea making, washing and drying up, Spring cleaning and weekly sprucing up of the clubhouse (and anything else I may have forgotten). It's very necessary and much appreciated by all.

For the Winter since there won't be as much usage as during the Summer we'll be trying a different tack for cleaning. We're asking you to look at the Cleaning Sheet on the Notice Board and if it hasn't been cleaned for a couple of weeks to do the necessary cleaning; then write your name and the date on the bottom of the list. Hopefully no-one should have to do this more than once over the Winter.

Cleaning of the Clubhouse is not the most sought after task! However, it's very necessary. With constant use it's all too easy for the Club to become grubby, so please come forward to ensure a rota can be prepared that covers each week of the playing season. Look out for the section on the membership renewal form where we ask for volunteers. Many hands make light work!

The doors on the Equipment Store are being replaced, as the old ones had rotted rather sooner than expected. The main door to the Club House has also been upgraded to take a new lock, to satisfy our insurer's requirements. We hope to avoid replacing the keys that you have, but it's still a possibility regrettably.

Finally, don't forget that we'll be draining the water system in the Club House so the Ladies toilet will be totally out of use from some time in November till April. If you need to use any water in the Clubhouse please check whether it's turned off before you use it – if it's off then ensure you turn it off again before you leave the Clubhouse. We don't want to repeat the burst pipe experience we had last year.

Winter Diary Dates

November 8	Pub Lunch, 12:30pm @ George & Dragon, Speldhurst
December 4	Winter One Ball (11am-2pm)
December 13	Pub Lunch, 12:30pm @ Foresters Arms, Fairwarp
January 8	Winter One Ball
January 10	Pub Lunch, 12:30pm @ Spread Eagle, Forest Road, Hawkenbury
February 5	Winter One Ball
February 14	Pub Lunch, 12:30pm @ Blue Anchor, Crowborough
February 18	AGM: 10:30am coffee, for 11am start @ Frant Memorial Hall, followed by lunch (£7.50 incl drinks) at about 12:30pm
March 4	Winter One Ball
March 13	Pub Lunch, 12:30pm @ location tbd
April 1	Winter One Ball

Don't forget the latest dates, information updates etc. are on the web-site, so if you're asked about Croquet or club details just direct them to <http://www.tunbridgewellscroquet.org.uk>