

RUNNING HOOPS

The Newsletter of Kenilworth Croquet

October 2015

Winter Lawn Opening Reminder

The committee has agreed that, following advice, after the lawn closure on October 17th we will have a TRIAL with the lawns partially open during the winter.

Please follow these conditions:

- Play on afternoons only after 12 noon
- Only one lawn will be available at any time. Starting with Lawn 1 when our season closes till the end of the month. Lawn 2 open for November and Lawn 1 again in December.
- The lawns will be for Golf Croquet on Mondays and Wednesdays, Association on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Closed for maintenance on Fridays. Available for either code on Saturdays and Sundays on a first come first served basis.
- Lawn 3 will be open every afternoon.
- Continue the use of separate hoop holes for Golf & Association. No jump shots please. If you are in a restricted position near hoop use sideways shot instead.
- We may have to close the lawns because of weather etc. but we hope these occasions will be minimal. We will TRY to email everyone and put a notice up at the club.
- Please sign the sheet in the pavilion each time you play so that we can see how much use the lawns get and evaluate the trial.
- Please clear leaves and worm casts using either swish cane or wide brush when necessary.

Ray Clipson

Kenilworth v Northampton AC friendly, 13th August 2015

The Players were:

Kenilworth: Alan Richardson (9), Ray Clipson (10), Frank Hibberd (16), Mervyn Harvey (18)

Northampton: Lionel Tibble (-11/2), Nick Evans (2), Richard Cain (9), Mel Christie (20)

In the morning doubles, Alan and Ray played Lionel and Nick. In spite of their ten bisques, Alan and Ray could do little but sit back and admire the elegant, deceptively simple exhibition of croquet by Lionel, ably backed up by Nick. 14 – 26 to Northampton.



Mervyn and Frank gained and lost the advantage several times against Richard and Mel. Near closing time the score was 10 – 10. Then, as time was called, Mervyn hit a long roquet, and used the other balls to set up a successful, winning, hoop. 11 – 10 to Kenilworth. This was a win for Mervyn in his first game in his first AC match. Other GC players please note! Why not follow Mervyn's example?

In the afternoon singles, Alan had another chance to enjoy Lionel's skills, and lost 15 – 26. Ray used his bisques well against Nick to take a big lead. As closing time approached, his clips were on peg and penult, while Nick was on peg and hoop 2. With Ray's balls tucked away in corners, Nick started a remarkable two-ball break. However, just as Ray was beginning to look worried, he broke down. Win for Ray 22-17.

Mervyn was in the unusual position for an AC novice of having no bisques. This didn't prevent him from scoring an early five-hoop break. Then Mel's many years of experience, plus his two bisques, gained him the advantage. Win for Mel 11 – 15.

Frank endured a croquet player's bad dream against Richard, including twice playing his opponent's ball, running a hoop in the wrong direction, and missing a roquet from three feet. Richard blithely ran a number of awkward hoops, and won 7 – 26.

Always a pleasure to welcome Northampton players here, win or lose.

Kenilworth 2, Northampton 4

Frank Hibberd

Kenilworth Festival GC Tournament

It all went well, including the weather. With 6 pairs it was only possible to play doubles, all play all, one game to 13 points each round.

Northampton A won all 5 games, Edgbaston won 4, Ashby and Kenilworth 2 each, Albrighton and Northampton B 1 each.

A final game was played between the 2 top pairs. This was very close, with Northampton A eventually winning 7-5.

Mervyn and Philip were the Kenilworth pair and were not consistent enough to make a real challenge.

The winning pair from Northampton were Lionel Tibble and Caroline Burr who will hold the trophy for a year.

Our visitors seemed well pleased with the event and 4 of them stayed on to play another game.

Thanks to Pauline Harvey for looking after all pavilion matters and the recording of results etc. and for baking a chocolate cake especially for the day.

Philip Wood

GC League Broadwas v Kenilworth

Their lawns were as sloping as ever but at least they were nice and green, smoother than last time over there. Their handicaps were 2,2,3,3 whilst ours were 2,3,5,7 so we did not expect too much of ourselves. Nevertheless, we scored at least 4 hoops in every singles game bar one - we were very competitive.

Mervyn Harvey in his second league match won 3 games and Pauline Harvey, in her first league match won one game.

Philip Wood also won 3 games, and Peter Kristunas also featured - but in one game he was twice the victim of a shot which ran 2 hoops at once, and he still only lost the game 7-5.

This left us 9-7 down, needing wins in both the doubles games, played for 2 and 1 point. The first game to finish went to Kenilworth. In the last game to finish, Peter and Philip were 4-0 down, but recovered to 5-4 down, and dramatically won on the last hoop. So we won the match 10-9.

Their hospitality was excellent and we look forward to our next visit.

Philip Wood

KENILWORTH BECOME CHAMPIONS OF WEST MIDLANDS AC LEAGUE IN 2015

In 2015 there was a change in the rules for West Midlands AC League in that all matches were to be contested by 'teams of three' which did not really favour Kenilworth since we have a large number of AC players who have experience of 'league play'.

Also I do not feel that we have any players that could be seriously accused of being 'bandits', thereby gaining a grossly unfair advantage through the handicap system.

With there being 5 teams in the league each club has to play 4 matches, 2 home and 2 away from home.

All four of Kenilworth's matches had been played by mid July, three of which had been won very decisively, 5-0 v Church Stretton (h), 5-0 v Edgbaston (h) and 4-1 v Shrewsbury (a).

However the fourth was lost 1-4 but there were mitigating circumstances! The lawns at Himley were quite poor, making it difficult to 'hit in' and the opponents, armed with a large number of bisques, generally played rather negatively often taking very few risks and leaving Kenilworth's balls well separated and also a distance from the 'joined up' Himley balls!

So, Kenilworth had an anxious long wait for the other matches to be played but early in September the final league table was published with a scoring system that is far from clear(!) and Kenilworth were declared Champions!

Thanks are due to the players Cliff Daniel (C), Philip Wood, Alan Richardson, Bill Sidebottom, Ray Clipson Nigel Haslam and Peter Dennis and, of course to the support of the other members of the squad who, for various reasons, did not play in any of the matches.

West Midlands Federation Association Croquet League 2015

Match Results as at 24th August 2015

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Club</u> | <u>Match Points</u> | <u>League Points</u> | <u>Club</u> | <u>Match Points</u> | <u>League Points</u> |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| 21 st June | Kenilworth | 4 | 2 | Church Stretton | 1 | 0 |
| 26 th June | Kenilworth | 5 | 2 | Edgbaston | 0 | 0 |
| 4 th July | Himley | 4 | 2 | Kenilworth | 1 | 0 |
| 11 th July | Church Stretton | 2 | 0 | Shrewsbury | 3 | 2 |
| 19 th July | Shrewsbury | 1 | 0 | Kenilworth | 4 | 2 |
| 26 th July | Edgbaston | 3 | 2 | Shrewsbury | 2 | 0 |
| 15 th Aug | Himley | 2 | 0 | Church Stretton | 3 | 2 |
| 23 rd Aug | Edgbaston | 1 | 0 | Himley | 4 | 2 |
| 11 th Sept | Church Stretton | 2 | 0 | Edgbaston | 3 | 2 |
| 12 th Sept | Shrewsbury | 3 | 2 | Himley | 2 | 0 |

League Table as at 24th August 2015

| <u>Club</u> | <u>Matches</u> | | | <u>Match Points</u> | | | <u>League Points</u> | <u>League Position</u> |
|-----------------|----------------|------------|-------------|---------------------|----------------|------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| | <u>Played</u> | <u>Won</u> | <u>Lost</u> | <u>For</u> | <u>Against</u> | <u>Net</u> | | |
| Church Stretton | 4 | 1 | 3 | 8 | 12 | -4 | 2 | 5th |
| Edgbaston | 4 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 13 | -6 | 4 | 4th |
| Himley | 4 | 2 | 2 | 12 | 8 | +4 | 4 | 3rd |
| Kenilworth | 4 | 3 | 1 | 14 | 6 | +8 | 6 | 1st |
| Shrewsbury | 4 | 2 | 2 | 9 | 11 | -2 | 4 | 2nd |

Ladies Trophy – Sunday 6 September

“On a glorious late-summer day, Stella Gill, Pauline Harvey, Tina Haslam and Irene Rogers played a round-robin competition to decide who should take home the trophy. Once again, it was played on a handicap basis.” – is how last year’s report started, and it applies, word for word, this year. Indeed, apart from changing the order of play and the eventual outcome, the rest of that report would apply too.

In the first round, Stella found that using extra turns against a steady opponent does not necessarily mean that you will win the hoop, and went down 7-4 to Pauline, in the only match decided by more than a single hoop.

Meanwhile, Tina and Irene keenly contested every hoop, and when time was called, signalling two more shots with each ball, Tina just managed to hang on to the 5-4 lead she had built up.

In the second round, trouser pockets bulged a little less, when Tina just had three extra turns against Pauline, and Irene one against Stella. In that game, Stella’s experience just told, and she won 7-6.

For Irene, it was “drama at hoop 13 part 1. Tina and Pauline had their own version, which started when Tina hit a very good red and improved its position with her last extra turn. Pauline’s black ended up 8’ short of its target, but when Tina’s red got stuck in the hoop, Pauline cleared it through the hoop, and finished perfectly in front of it proved to be the crucial shot.

Irene’s “drama at hoop 13 part 2 followed a brilliant shot through hoop 12 to keep the match alive, but the ball was then wired from the golden hoop, and Irene’s last three extra turns weren’t enough to stop Pauline winning the hoop.

Meanwhile, it was Stella’s turn for some drama on hoop 13. An audible shriek ran out as she tried a precision shot across the hoop, and just over-ran it. Both ladies then had chances to win, and Tina prevailed.

Once again, the competition was played in a great spirit, with Pauline regaining the trophy she last won in 2013.

Mervyn Harvey

Ian Robertson at the Centre Stage 2015 tournament at Ashby-de-la-Zouch CC

Ashby Croquet Club held their annual "Centre Stage" tournament on 13th September for golf croquet in the handicap range 5 to 8. I was the club's representative player and the only one there at 8. There were 12 players from all points of the compass such as Marlow, Ashby, Henley-on-Thames, Letchworth, Reigate and Bury. The twelve were in two blocks of six so five games per player then the top two of each into the semis.

I was pleased with my game with surprisingly few errors of line or tactics and thankfully you'll have to take my word for that. Where I was beaten it was by the better player so absolutely no grumbles at all on my part. I was happy with my short game and placing close to the hoops but I was vulnerable to those several good players competent at clearing away from distance but I usually managed to get back "in play".

In the first game I was rapidly 0-3 down but I think complacency may have played a part in my opponent's game and I ended up winning 7-3 much to my surprise. The second game was a learning experience. I felt truly well beaten by a better class of player but it was numerically close at 7-5 but the learning curve came when the umpire was called to watch my touching ball shot near the hoops in an awkward situation. I was judged to have played away but using the bevelled mallet edge, so a foul shot which I couldn't complain about. The third game seemed an easy canter to victory by 7-3 to my opponent but I did manage two jump shots successfully. Surprisingly I didn't actually see any other jump shots attempted.

Having lost two from three matches I must have been relaxed and resigned to coming last but managed to win both the last two games. All matches were timed for 50 minutes but this barely came into play in any match in the tournament.

Coming third in my group with three wins from five matches and missed a place in the semi-finals by dint of losing to the other player on three wins who had beaten me. In the "play-off" for 5th-6th place overall (it kept us busy while the semis were played) I lost 7-5 so ended up at 6th from 12 players so I felt that was fairly creditable. Interestingly no player lost all their matches and only one won all their matches and that was the ultimate winner.



As far as I'm concerned it was a great experience to play in that kind of tournament. I think my antidote to any nerves was to assume from the outset I was going to be well beaten and happily that didn't happen. It did expose the shortcomings in my game technique and knowledge of the rules but I didn't feel that was a major element in the outcomes.

I thoroughly enjoyed it so I want to thank the club for putting me forward. I would encourage anyone new to the game, like me, who is proposed, to definitely take part for the range of experience. I was particularly pleased that the all the players and organisers were completely friendly and sporting the whole day through.

Ian Robertson

Finals Week End 26 / 27 September

The matches played over the weekend were:

Kenilworth Cup. (GC) Mervyn Harvey. Runner-up Gordon Henderson.

Kenilworth Plate. (GC) Ian Robertson. Runner-up Stella Gill.

Pindi Cup. (GC) Amanda Evans (nee Haslam). Runner-up Mike Cheeseman.

Secunderabad. (AC) Alan Richardson. Runner-up Philip Wood.

Taylor Cup. (AC) Nigel Haslam. Runner-up Philip Wood.

Bill Browne Trophy. (AC) Ray Clipson. Runner-up Alan Richardson.

St George's Cup (AC) Adrian Morris. Runner-up Cliff Daniel

St Georges Plate. (AC) Nigel Haslam. Runner-up John Copping.

Castle Cup. (AC) – Adrian Morris. Runner-up Cliff Daniel

Douglas Trophy. (Invitational for those new to AC this season). Mike Cox. Runner-up Irene Rogers



Taylor Cup Players

Reports:

Secunderabad

The final of the Secunderabad was played on the Saturday morning of finals weekend between Philip Wood (6) and Alan Richardson (9). After a cagey start from both players, Alan used two of his bisques and went into the lead. Philip then played some steady croquet to get fairly well ahead. Alan was then fortunate when Philip missed a series of longish roquets, allowing Alan to reduce his lead. Well after the four-hour mark, Alan managed to string a few shots together, and using his last bisque, won 26-20.



The Bill Browne Final

Because Ray Clipson is out of the country for Finals Weekend the final of this competition had to be played in early September. Luckily the weather had changed from the previous week's heavy rains and the Monday morning was an absolutely ideal autumn day for playing croquet.

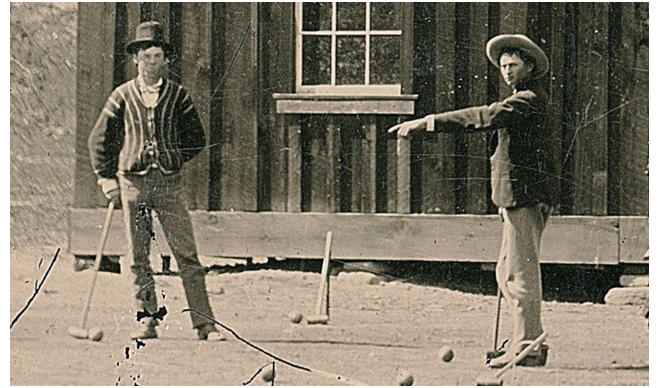
The lawn was playing well which cannot be said for Ray and his opponent Alan Richardson. Ray, in particular in the opening period missed many shots which he would expect to get and Alan got well ahead. In fact Alan's black clip was on Rover whilst Ray's yellow was still on hoop 1. But gradually the tables turned and Ray managed a few long distance hits.

The last half hour was very tense and exciting with both players mixing great shots with mistakes. It got to three clips on peg and one on Rover, and Ray pegged out his yellow leaving Alan to get his final hoop using the three balls. He did this and pegged out one of his balls. Ray hit one of Alan's balls from distance which allowed him to peg out and win 14 -13.

Altogether, an enjoyable game for both and the one spectator who came to watch.



Did you Know..... Billy the Kid played Croquet



The image above, unearthed in Fresno California, is only the second confirmed picture of the outlaw.

Henry McCarty, known in Wild West lore as Billy the Kid, lived a brief and violent life, stealing and killing before his death in a gunfight aged just 21. He lived with a gun in his hand and sometimes, it seems, a croquet mallet.

In a surprising historical twist, the second photo of McCarty ever to be authenticated shows him and his posse, the Regulators, playing the sport in New Mexico in 1878.

The first croquet club in England was founded in 1865, the same year the game was immortalised in Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*.

Croquet became popular in the 1860s because it was the first sport that women could play on the same terms as men, and men and women could play each other. It had a huge boost in its popularity. In the UK, however, it was still not a game for the masses: You needed a lawn, and a fairly large one.

Things were, however, slightly different in the US, where companies making croquet equipment created a smaller-scale version of the sport, which could be played on rougher turf, using cheaper, lightweight equipment.

During the 19th century, the game in America had a somewhat different image to the genteel, cucumber-sandwich stereotype of Britain, according to a history by the United States Croquet Association: "Croquet as a public sport suffered a setback in the 1890s when the Boston clergy spoke out against the drinking, gambling and licentious behaviour associated with it."

The game of Backyard Croquet has, however, maintained its popularity in America for more than a century as the ideal complement of garden parties, family gatherings, outdoor fund-raisers, and social events both raucous and elegant.

The sport resurfaced in the 20's, 30's, and 40's as a favourite pastime; the more sophisticated sport of 6-wicket croquet, requiring heavier equipment, good lawns, and a more intense sporting attitude, though widely played in England and most Commonwealth countries, was rarely seen by Americans until the late 1970's.

A much-publicized challenge match between the Westhampton Mallet Club on Long Island and London's Hurlingham Club in 1960 is credited with sparking the resurgence of the sport of croquet in America.

Read more: http://gu.com/p/4d927?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other &

<http://www.croquetamerica.com/croquet/history>

(both worth a read)

Please continue to send me lots of exciting articles, photographs, opinions and comments on anything remotely related to croquet and our club.

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