



# RUNNING HOOPS

The Newsletter of Kenilworth Croquet Club

September 2014

## Kenilworth v Northampton AC friendly Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> August

Clouds gathered; but, in obedience to the Met Office, withheld their contents, granting us a rainless day.

This was a twice postponed match, but at last it was a pleasure to welcome friends from Northampton – but sadly without Owen Bryce, who was ill.

Bill was in the unusual position of receiving bisques. Peter Stansfield has a handicap of 2½, and fully merits it; but Bill pulled off a win by +2.

Alan wasn't yet firing on all cylinders, and lost to Richard Cain -8.

Ray criticised himself severely, but still managed to beat Les Carrick +4.

While Frank, giving Mel Christie 8 bisques, surrendered -7.

In the afternoon Bill won again, beating Richard +2.

Alan had eased himself into form, and had a very narrow but worthy win over Peter +1.

Ray succumbed to the multi-bisqued Mel, losing -7.

Les was not at his best, Frank was able to clinch an overall victory by beating him +5.

Post-match the feeling in the Kenilworth team was that, as in league matches, the maximum handicap allowed should be 18, at least for experienced players.

The players were: Bill Sidebottom, Alan Richardson, Ray Clipson and Frank Hibberd.

Kenilworth 5, Northampton 3

## Offchurch away, 23<sup>rd</sup> August

Having been originally planned for 2<sup>nd</sup> August when the match was rained off. We were relieved to find the weather reasonable and all enjoyed a good game.

The home players were Sandy, Stephen, John, Andy, Lyn & their captain, Mike.

Our team was Frank, Peter K. Diane, John F., Derek, plus Geof & Jean playing alternately. I believe a lot of work has been done on their lawns recently, and it showed; much smoother than I remember – but we still had to get the measure of their slope.

The first round was very even – one win each plus a draw.

In the second round, Kenilworth edged ahead with 2 wins to 1.

The third and final round was also even at 1-1 and a draw, which meant that Kenilworth narrowly won 5-4.

This was followed by the usual lovely tea in the village hall, prepared by Helen and her team.



## LEAGUE MATCH V CHURCH STRETTON (a) 27 AUGUST

Kenilworth set off for Church Stretton, hoping for a win that would probably enable us to retain the League Champions Title.

However it was not to be! We played nice people, in nice weather, but sadly on lawns that were very poor indeed! Many hoops were unbelievably loose, not so surprising when you realise that the holes used are those used at the beginning of the season! The lawns were not level, had tricky parts near hoops and various boundaries and were in need of cutting!

In the morning Ray & Cliff played the doubles match and helped by some attacking play towards the end almost overhauled a large deficit but lost by 3 hoops on time.

Peter Moody battled hard with the score always close but lost by the same margin.

Frank fought valiantly to beat his opponent by 4 hoops, securing our only win of the morning.

So for the afternoon singles games we needed to win 3 of the 4 games - a tall order indeed!

Cliff rallied again towards the end of his game, but local knowledge of his opponent proved decisive and he lost by 13 hoops.

Peter was always struggling in his game and quite frustrated to see his opponent score a roquet when wired thanks to an amazing 'banana' shot round a hoop!

Frank declared his opponent to be 'Merciless Thelma' as he lost by 15 hoops.

Ray kept focused in his close game, scoring a decisive break as time was running out, to win by 3 hoops.

So the final score was a defeat 2-5 but, as the photo shows we all enjoyed the sumptuous home-made cakes provided!



### Observations from a new member.

As a recent member playing a first season at the club I just wanted to make some observations:

This has been my first playing season with the club. I have been encouraged and impressed with the friendliness of the members I've encountered; everyone's patience seems limitless. The level of competitive banter has been pitched on the gentle side of rivalry and the Tuesday evening roll-ups and their briskly timed changeovers have given good opportunities to meet many members in singles and pairs. One thing I didn't expect was the duration of league matches. Up to three hours for a match (maybe my aim and technique needs to go up a gear) with the full-on concentration and little or no breaks was a complete surprise. The whole enterprise has been just such good fun and particularly after one friendly competitive match sitting around the pavilion on a warm sunny day having a cup of tea and biscuits, has been the icing on the cake.

Ian Robertson

## Sapcote away, 26<sup>th</sup> August

Hooray! A match that wasn't cancelled due to weather! In fact it was meant to be sunny, the sun was there, but stayed behind a black cloud for most of the afternoon, but it was dry, if fresh, and we have a very enjoyable match.

David, Christine, Joyce, John and their captain, Pat, made up the Sapcote team (100% turnout – all 5 of their players!). To make a better game, Stella was loaned me to Sapcote, giving teams of 6.

The Kenilworth side comprised Anne L., Bob M., Pauline H, Peter K., Cliff & Mervyn.

Four rounds were played, all doubles. In the first, Kenilworth started well with 2 wins to 1 – but Sapcote reversed this in the second round and at half-time we were 3-3. Again, Kenilworth took the lead with 2 wins in round three, but then zoomed to victory with a 3-0 win in the last round.

Final result: 8-4 to Kenilworth. Most matches were hard-fought, and not as easy victory as it appeared

Once again, we repaired to the village hall for another sumptuous tea enjoyed by all.

## Kenilworth v Broadwas 28th August

This, our and their last league match, was to decide the winner of the League this year.

Broadwas needed to win by 12-7 or better.

The matches are played level; however our handicaps (2, 2, 4, 6) did indicate that we faced a challenge, their handicaps being 1, 2, 2, 4.

In the first round of singles we went down 1-3. In the second round we shared the points, and likewise in the next 2 rounds, reaching a score of 7-9.

So in the doubles we only needed to win one of the games. Both doubles went to the final hoop, but sadly we lost both, and Broadwas won the match 12-7 (one of the doubles games counting for 2 points).

Broadwas had brought the trophy which they already held from last season, and captain Philip Wood duly re-presented it to their captain after the match.

Philip won 3 singles games, Adrian Morris 2, and Robin Moore and Peter Kristunas one each.

Sic transit gloria mundi.

*(Prize for the first correct translation to the Editor)*

### Did you Know.....

The oldest document to bear the word croquet with a description of the modern game is the set of rules registered by Isaac Spratt in November 1856 with the Stationers' Company in London.



## GC Friendly against Sapcote at home, 2<sup>nd</sup> September

Well, what a match! From Saturday morning to close of play, we had 17 different people involved. Two of our original team had unfortunately to drop out, but luckily we had a reserve (and one had been sharing a place). Sapcote are usually able to field their full membership of five players, so we were planning to lend them one. Two of their members had to drop out at the last minute, so our visitors arrived with three players! Their captain & I were hurriedly rejigging the teams so that Kenilworth could lend Sapcote two players for a 5-a-side game, when Frank came down to watch, and then John Leader arrived. Great! We could now go back to six per side.

Eventually, the teams were, for Kenilworth: Diane & John F, Bob M., Ian, Robin & Frank; for Sapcote: John H. David and Christine, with Stella, Jean E. & John L. on loan. Later Dave G. was able to come down, so replaced me for the second half – this was very useful, as by that time the order-of-play sheet was so scribbled-over that I was losing track of which side scored what, & so was glad of a chance to re-write it! The 17<sup>th</sup> was Adrian, who kindly took some photos.

In play, the first round was drawn at 1½ games each. Sapcote edged ahead in round 2 with 2 wins, and round 3 was again a draw, leaving the score at 4 - 5 to Sapcote – all to play for. However, the final round saw the visitors (and their friends) achieve a 2½ - ½ win to run away with the match 7½ - 4½, though I'm not sure if Kenilworth consider it a blemish on their previous tally of 4 wins, no losses!).



Many thanks to everyone who played – on whatever side, for however long – and I hope you all enjoyed it, even if it was rather chaotic!

Stella

## Ladies Trophy – Sunday 7 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.



In the first round, Stella and Tina fought out a ding-dong battle which they both had chances to win, but Tina just squeezed through 7-6. In the other match, Pauline needed all her experience to overcome Irene 7-6, in Irene's first ever handicap match.

Word clearly got round about the excellent play in the first round, as the three spectators (two men and a dog) were joined by two more – to create something of a record in recent years. Tina's steady play enabled her to win her match with

Irene with a little in reserve, while Pauline looked well placed to beat Stella at the 12<sup>th</sup> hoop. However, Stella produced two "wonder" shots to level at 6-6, and then got the better of hoop 13, to run out a 7-6 winner.

The third round .....↓

## Ladies Trophy – Sunday 7 September - continued

The third round turned out to involve the two higher handicap players on one lawn and (not surprisingly) the two lower handicap players on the other. In the former, experience once again came to the fore, with Stella beating Irene 7-5. The other match was very close-fought, and until the final hoop there was the distinct possibility of the three more experienced players each winning one match 7-6 and losing the other 7-6. However, Tina put the result beyond doubt by beating Pauline 7-6.

So, an excellent afternoon all round, with Tina no longer being the only player in the family without her name on a trophy! Congratulations Tina. The other victor was the handicap system, with four of the six matches going to the thirteenth hoop.

Mervyn Harvey

## The 2014 Taylor Cup

We were very lucky that following a period of mixed weather the Sunday of the Taylor Cup final dawned bright and sunny.

In fact a marvellous early autumn day which did mean swishing the lawn before play to get rid of the heavy dew. But from then on the day continued with the temperature getting warmer & warmer.

All four finalists started slowly and with quite a lot of mistakes which all gradually got rid off. But Frank Hibberd, Philip Wood and Ray Clipson continued to blob a few hoops and miss long shots. Nigel Haslam on the other hand soon found his form and showed how easy this game is.

The Taylor Cup is played on a half lawn and it really is recommended as a pleasant day for the higher handicap Association players and those just beginning to play this type of Croquet.

Next year come and join us !

### Round 1

Nigel Haslam beat Philip Wood 13 – 7 (T)

Ray Clipson beat Frank Hibberd 14 – 7 (T)

### Round 2

Nigel Haslam beat Ray Clipson 14 – 2

Frank Hibberd beat Philip Wood 7 – 2 (T)

### Round 3

Nigel Haslam beat Frank Hibberd 14 – 6

Philip Wood beat Ray Clipson 14 – 8

Nigel Haslam 3 wins

Frank Hibberd , Philip Wood, Ray Clipson 1 win each



## Nigel Haslam wins the 2014 Taylor Cup

## **Marj –gives simple answers to GC questions**

Dear Marj

I have to admit that I find your column mildly amusing, and applaud your attempt to get the rules better understood. It never occurred that I would end up writing to you, as there is not much I don't know. However, let me try this one on you.

Rule 10(b) gives four "exempt" situations where you are not offside even if your ball is beyond the half-way line. The third of these is where your ball reached its position as a result of contact with an opponent's ball, but it goes on to say "**however this exemption does not result from a ball played away from an opponent's ball with which it was in contact, unless it moves that ball in the stroke**". Explain to me, if you can, how you can (legally) move a ball while playing away from. Aha!

General Lee Wright

*Dear General*

*The first thing I have to say is that I didn't write the rules, and my job will be done when all players understand the rules, even those that cover seemingly impossible situations.*

*However, my friend Ada tells me that she recently came across a similar situation in AC. If you are playing away from an opponent's ball, it can sometimes move if it is leaning against your ball because of some slope or deficiency of the lawn. So, could this be what this rule is driving at? Probably not, unless you are of the opinion that Del Boy (Only Fools and Horses) fell through the bar because someone had opened the flip-top. He didn't; he fell through because he went to lean on something that wasn't there. The ball moved because it tried to lean on something that was no longer there, which is not the same as saying that your ball moved it. Offside!*

*So, the search for an explanation goes on. Maybe another reader can suggest a better answer?*

*Marj (If you are able to add anything to Marj's answer to the General, please let me know - Editor)*

Dear hmm!

I refuse to call you Marj as I don't believe you exist. The names at the bottom of the letters seem to me to be made up, and so I don't think the writers exist either. Come to think of it, I'm not sure that even I exist.

Yours

R. Descartes

*Dear R*

*This column is syndicated, and letters come from all over the world. My family name is Orbitter, and my parents found it amusing to call me Marj. My friends would pass me some bread and say "Marg or butter, Marj?". Then I met and married Dec, or Declan to give him his full name, and became Marj Oram, but even I don't get as much ribbing as Dec Oram!*

*But, what's in a name? – as Willy Shakespeare once wrote – or did he? The important thing is that everything said in this column is accurate, and hopefully is getting the rules of croquet better understood.*

*Marj*

The following letter got to me through a circuitous route.

Dearest Marj (!)

When playing league and competition matches I ask my opponents what their handicap is and do I get any free hits. The replies I get are varied; some say 'we don't play handicaps in the leagues' and others offer some free hits. The replies for cup competitions seem to be fairly consistent I and get some free hits; but not always. Not too sure on the overall free hits situation. Can you please clarify.

Many thanks

Beatrix (Bea) Mused

*Dear Bea*

*It's time for me to come clean. This letters column is syndicated (or, as I live in New South Wales), maybe I should say "Sydneycated"). I can see from your address that you probably belong to a club in Kenilworth, a small town in England. I therefore contacted the Competitions Manager there, who tells me that "league" games (denoted by different colours) are played level (no extra shots) but all other GC competitions this season are played "handicap", where the weaker player gets extra shots equal to the difference in handicaps.*

*On a general point, even when you agree at the start that your opponent gets extra shots, they can forget to use them. When I'm playing such a person, I am reluctant to point out during the game that they have extra shots, because it could sound like I think that here is a situation where they should use one. I was therefore slightly surprised to see that while the rules on "Etiquette" say that you should not give tactical advice to your opponent, a CA ruling says that you may ask a player whether they are intending to take an extra turn. It will be interesting to see how that apparent slight contradiction works out.*

*Marj*

*( Before you all ask; No, our Competitions Manager, and I do not know the real identity of Marj. I will, however, continue to publish the column as I think the advice is helpful - Editor)*

**Please continue to send me lots of exciting articles, photographs, opinions and comments on anything remotely related to croquet and our club.  
I can be contacted on 01926 855376 or hendygj@yahoo.co.uk.  
Gordon Henderson. Editor.**