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PHYLLIS COURT CROQUET

News

29 June - Phyllis Court 4 - 3 Croquet Durham - **BIG WIN** in the National Federations Shield (*handicap*)

This was a big win for our team today and jolly exciting it was right down to the lasdt game!

Here is my report for the *Henley Standard*:

Phyllis Court scored a thrilling victory over long distance visitors Croquet Durham last week in the National Golf Croquet Federations Shield handicap competition.

It was thrilling not just for the margin of the victory but also for the way it played out right to the very closing stages of the last game to finish which was superbly controlled by Phyllis Court's Roger Goldring.

The hosts, who had to concede handicap extra turns in every rubber of the fixture, got off to an excellent start with a comfortable 7-4, 7-5 victory recorded by Goldring (handicap -1) and Raghu Iyer (3) in the morning doubles match. Both morning singles went to a deciding third game with Phyllis Court's Ian Norris (handicap -1) defeating Durham captain Peter Tymms (1) 7-4, 4-7, 7-5, but Robin Coates (0) eventually succumbed to the visitors' impressive Tony McCann (3) 7-5, 6-7, 3-7.

This game Phyllis Court a slim 2-1 half-time lead but with all to play for in the four afternoon head-to-head singles rubbers.

Iyer extended that lead with a 7-4, 7-5 defeat of Durham's Dave Parsons (4) with assured performance that summed up the reliability that he has added to his game in the past year.

However, Durham came quickly back into the match when Phyllis Court's Coates, the All England Handicap Champion struggled to deal the four well used extra turns of Roger Carpenter (3) and the Durham man won comfortably 4-7, 4-7.

In the number twos head-to-head match, Norris had the difficult task of trying to contain McCann who looked like Durham's best and very good for his three handicap an, although the Phyllis Court man pulled off hard won 7-6 first game score line, McCann won the next two 5-7, 3-7.

This tied the team match at 3-3 with just the Goldring versus Tymms match to complete, with Goldring having done well to recover from a 4-7 first game loss, to win the second 7-5.

There was a good contest at hoop five where Tymms eventually nestled in the hoop jaws which forced Goldring into a 'do or die' jump shot which he nailed perfectly, and by time repeated the act at the very next hoop all the other players were looking on attentively.

The next four hoops were traded evenly until, what transpired to be, the pivotal eleventh hoop, where Tymms decided to play his remaining extra turn to attempt an awkward clearance stroke.

Referee and competition director Frances Colman was called on judge the stroke which saw Tymms clip a close-by second ball with his backswing.

With that fault, the impetus of the match swung fully in Goldring's favour, he ran hoop eleven well for 6-5 and in doing so, took a commanding position at hoop twelve leaving Tymms it all to do to save the game and overall team match.

Goldring then sealed the matter 7-5 after two full stroke rotations and only then did he allow himself a controlled fist-punch skywards in celebration.

Phyllis Court moved into the quarter-finals of this national competition and will play Essex club Maldon, again home, on Tuesday 29 July.

Phyllis Court: Roger Goldring (-1), Ian Norris (-1), Robin Coates (0), Raghu Iyer (3)

25 June - Drew wins delayed final of third beginner's evening mini-tournament

The final play-off of the third evening mini-tournament for this year's beginners, which was curtailed by heavy rain on 17 June, was held this evening in very much kinder weather. Stuart Drew proved too strong for his fellow finalist, John Merkel, winning 7-2. Congratulations and a bottle of wine to Stuart.

24 June - It's the "Rumford Show" at the inaugural 10+ Evening Series tournament

The 10+ Evening Series of Competitive Events was launched today with eight members enjoying three games of level-play singles on a warm evening.

It turned into the Rumford Show, with John and Sue both winning their first two games (both winning their second at the 13th hoop), so they played-off in the final game for the evening's and domestic bragging rights, with John prevailing 7-4. Also to be congratulated for winning two games are Hugh Baylis and Sally Batty.

- Designed for members with handicaps in the 10 to 14 range, this is the first of several such evening events which will run over the coming weeks from 5 to 8 p.m., and which offer an introduction to tournament play, a chance to play in a competitive environment with players of similar standard, and an opportunity to meet other club members.

Each event will add up towards a Series competition winner, and participants should expect to play in not less than three events during the season. If you have not yet signed up for this competition and would like to do so, please contact Russell Robinson.

See the leader board here

10+ Evening Series

23 June - Hurlingham's Hewitt wins ahead of Phyllis Court trio, Colman, Coates and Iyer Day 2

Bruce Gallop, who had come into the tournament with less than 48 hours' notice as a very pleasing replacement for a late drop-out, continued his good form at the resumption of play and went on to win his suspended top of the Swiss battle with clubmate Steve Fisher, and so established a clear advantage over the field, now at Blewbury CC. Robin Coates and Raghu Iyer both got on the scoreboard with third round victories too and then faced each other in round 4, and the Phyllis court rivalry was just the spur Iyer needed to play his best game of the tournament, to win +12.

Colman also doubled her victory count with a +9 win over High Wycombe's Robin Morrison, meaning all three Phyllis Court players were in with a shout of the tournament title as last round results went their way.

At the half way stage of the last round, the Phyllis Court trio, all on two wins, all held in-game leads over player whom they trailed by one win, resulting in the eyeball rolling prospect of the Manager having to separate a potential 6-player tie!

Thank fully for him, although Colman beat Fisher, and Coates beat Gallop meaning that all four ended on three wins, Iyer couldn't match the pay of Hurlingham's Hewitt and his victory over the Phyllis Court man gave him a unique fourth win, and with it the trophy and bottle of (very) local English wine.

Second place was decided on 'quality of wins' ('who beat whom' proving indecisive) and went to Gallop, just ahead of Colman, Fisher and Coates in that order.

	GH	RC	RM	SF	JG	BG	RI	FC	Wins	inherited wins	Rank
Guy Hewitt (Hurlingham)		+24		-18		+10	+16	+15	4		1
Robin Coates (Phyllis Court)	-24		+7		+6	+9	-12		3	5	5
Robin Morrison (High Wycombe)		-7		-9	+18		-6	-9	1		7
Steve Fisher (Blewbury)	+18		+9		+21	-3		-13	3	6	4
Julian Gibson (Middlebrough)		-6	-18	-21		-15	+7		1		8
Bruce Gallop (Blewbury)	-10		-9	+3	+15			+3	3	7	2
Raghu Iyer (Phyllis Court)	-16	+12	+6		-7			-3	2		6
Frances Colman (Phyllis Court)	-15		+9	+13		-3	+3		3	6	3

22 June - Blewbury pair have slight lead in our AC 7+ Advanced tournament (jointly hosted by Blewbury CC) Day 1

Three Phyllis Court players, Frances Colman, Robin Coates and Raghu Iyer, contested this inaugural tournament AC 7+ Advanced tournament which started on our courts today and will conclude at co-hosts' Blewbury CC tomorrow.

The eight-player field included Guy Hewitt from Hurlingham and Julian Gibson who had driven all the way from Middlesbrough to take part.

Overnight, Blewbury members Bruce Gallop and Steve Fisher headed the field, undefeated in two and a half games (the third game being subject to a planned peg down at 1900).

Colman had won and lost in the first two rounds but Coates and Iyer was winless.

22 June - Phyllis Court 'D' 10 - 6 High Wycombe 'Kites' - second win for the 'D'

PCC 'D' romped to a second victory within a week with a 10 - 6 away win at High Wycombe Kites today.

This was a remarkable turn around in fortunes for the 'D' who lost their first three fixtures of the season.

In the first round, honours were shared at two wins apiece with Phyllis Court's Gillian Symons and Carol Wadsworth the first visitors to get on the scoreboard.

Patricia Mulcahy was undone by the experience of High Wycombe's Keith Toovy but after that didn't put a foot wrong and recorded a hat-trick of three victories.

She is now playing with a new found confidence and accuracy, likely resulting from her recent time on the national C-Level tournament circuit.

PCC 'D' went 5-3 up in round two, maintained that margin in the round three and then sealed the fixture with another triple win in the last round where players compete head to head with their opposite numbers.

This last round was the most telling with Phyllis Court high handicappers polishing off their hosts in quick time with the assistance of the Advantage GC handicap scoring system.

Symons and Mulcahy ended on three wins, while Wadsworth and Hugh Baylis contributed another solid two.

PCC 'D' - Hugh Baylis (11), Gillian Symons (11), Patricia Mulcahy (11), Carole Wadsworth (12)



20 June - Rainbow Playing Scheme for handicaps 11+ is launched - with its own webpage

The Rainbow Playing Scheme has been launched with its own dedicated webpage here:
- There is also a permanent link button available on the home page -

[Rainbow](#)

The Rainbow aims to provide integration for new and existing members in the 11+ handicap range and is fully explained at the foot of the new page along with details of how to register for involvement - Enjoy!

17 June - Stuart Drew & John Merkel star in third evening mini-tournament for the beginners Class of 2021

Russell Robinson reports:

Another eight of this year's newly-trained members (Trevor Day, Alice and Stuart Drew, John Merkel, Chris and Richard Prior, Deborah Sless and Peter Taylor) braved the elements in the third evening tournament for the 'Class of 21'. They formed two blocks of four with a view to playing 30-minute games against each of the other players in their block before the final round of play-offs.

There was light rain throughout, but all bore this with good humour and the odd dash to the car or pavilion for a waterproof jacket!

Unfortunately, with all the third round of games at 1-0, the rain became much heavier and common sense prevailed when all agreed to put an early end to proceedings (the comment "it's stopped being fun!" summed up the situation very well).

Stewart and John both won their first two games and were therefore emerging as the likely winners of their blocks. With both leading their final games, they were therefore declared the block winners and will play-off the tournament final on another evening in the near future. Despite the weather, it seems that everyone enjoyed the 80 minutes of play.....

16 June - Phyllis Court 'D' 11 - 5 Blewbury - A first league win for The 'D'!

PCC 'D' won at last today, and what a victory it was as they beat Blewbury 'C' 11 - 5 in their fourth SCF Advantage GC League fixture today.

Star of the day was team debutant Andy Jones who, despite only starting his croquet career in April, bravely joined the side as a late replacement, and recorded three wins in his four games.

He opened his account with an impressive 7-2 score line against former Phyllis Court member Edmund Shirley and then coped well with the pressure of three successive games going to a deciding 13th hoop.

Phyllis Court's Gillian Symonds also went to a 13th hoop three times on her way to recording three wins, a feat matched by teammate Carol Wadsworth, while the Henley club's second debutant, Phil Johnson, won twice to end with an even score.

With nine of the 16 games in the match ending 7-6 or 6-7, it is a very encouraging statistic for this new way of playing handicap croquet, currently undergoing the World Croquet Federation trial here in croquet's Southern Region.

PCC 'D' - Phil Johnson (10), Gillian Symons (11), Andy Jones (11), Carol Wadsworth (12)

16 June - Goldring lifts Open Singles Tournament 'Blue Ball' trophy for first time

In sporting terms, Roger Goldring 'came back for the dead' to win the annual Phyllis Court Open Singles day tournament for the first time last week

He took full advantage of an extended two-phase tournament format that allowed him to recover from an untypical lack-lustre start.

The six-player field for this top of the club tournament, which was only missing Charlie von Schmieder from its ranks, firstly contested an 'all play all' block which would decide which four players would qualify for semi-finals and final.

At the lunch break, Goldring, the only player to have not won a single game in the morning session (though all three had gone to the 13th hoop), felt sure that he'd have to wait another year for a chance to get his name on the Blue Ball Trophy for the first time.

But after the break, he turned in a first win when he beat Helena Fensome, who'd had a magnificent morning session knocking aside all her opponents.

Then he managed a win against top seed Chris Roberts, who started well enough but then, frankly, bombed.

This concluded the all-play-all block stage, with Roberts and Goldring tied on two games wins for the crucial fourth qualification spot, and thanks to those narrow morning defeats, Goldring went through finals on net points.

Goldring continued his change of fortunes with another win over Helena Fensome, whilst on the other court Ian Norris had beat Mike Fensome.

In the Final, Goldring got off to a quick lead, and despite a rear-guard fight and good play from Norris, Goldring got home on the 12th hoop - thereby completing a real rags-to-riches tale for the day

He was presented with the Blue Ball title for the first time.

Finishing order: (1) Roger Goldring, (2) Ian Norris, (3=) Helena Fensome & Mike Fensome, (5=) Robin Coates & Chris Roberts

Open Singles T'ment	CR	RG	IN	HF	RC	MF	net hoops	WINS	Rank
Chris Roberts		5	5	2	7	7	-1	2	5
Roger Goldring	7		6	7	6	6	+3	2	4
Ian Norris	7	7		1	7	5	-3	3	3
Helena Fensome	7	4	7		7	7		4	1
Robin Coates	3	7	5	1		3		1	6
Mike Fensome	3	7	7	3	7		-1	3	2

Semi-finals	
Helena Fensome	5
Roger Goldring	7
Ian Norris	7
Mike Fensome	5

Final	
Roger Goldring	7
Ian Norris	5

15 June - Phyllis Court AC 2 - 2 Eynsham/Harwell

Phyllis Court's Association Croquet team were back in handicap league action this week when they entertained the joint team fielded by the Eynsham and Harwell clubs and drew 2-2. Coates delivered again for the hosts and never looked in trouble against Peter Mansfield despite conceding ten bisques (extra turns), but the other match rubbers were all close affairs. Phyllis Court's Raghu Iyer held a good lead in the number three rubber, before Hugh Manson found his touch and sailed past the Henley player's score, while Frances Colman was again on the sharp end of another low scoring battle, losing to David Spicer 10-8. Last to finish was the number one rubber between Chris Roberts, who had reduced his handicap back to minus a half at Tyneside two weeks ago, and the fast-improving Peter Allan, who had had a handicap cut to two and a half with in the last month. Allan capitalised on a slack shot from Roberts that hit the centre page to lay invitingly in the centre of the court to hand the Eynsham/Harwell player a break that yielded eight hoops, after which the grateful visitor kept Roberts a bay with good use of his three bisques. Roberts came right back into it in the last half an hour and was seemingly on the way to a match winning break only to flounder at hoop two-back and, in a tense last ten minutes, fortunes switched to and fro and the disastrously for Allen when he bounced off hoop six with less than a minute to go. Roberts hit-in as time was called and then tied the game by scoring hoop six himself, and with the huge advantage of the break, cleared the court of danger before positioning with precision in front of the deciding hoop which he converted for a one hoop win which secured Phyllis Court a 2-2 draw. PCC AC: Chris Roberts (-0.5), Frances Colman (7), Raghu Iyer (12), Robin Coates (12)

10 June - Morton's 4th heads Phyllis Court's record invasion at Roehampton

Our club set a new record for the number of visiting players from one club attending a national series tournament when eight members entered the C-Level (7+) tournament at Roehampton. Steve Morton (10) fared best and was undefeated in the morning block games and continued in the same vein to beat Jeanette Burn 7-4 in the quarter finals, before losing his semi to Andrew Jackson. He eventually had to settle for fourth place when he lost a play-off to Mark Green, but a useful two points in the national series was a good result for our man. Also participating at Roehampton today were: Tony Peperell (7), Christine Searle (10), Patricia Mulcahy (11), Julia Gren (12), Liz Smith (12) and Carol Wadsworth (12)

8 June - Phyllis Court AC 1 - 3 Caversham - Coates records sole home win

Phyllis Court's Association Croquet (AC) team lost 1 - 3 -to Caversham in their Southern Croquet Federation AC Handicap League match today. Brian Jamieson was first to finish when he closed our Phyllis Court captain Raghu Iyer 26-0 but the remaining three matches all went to the full three and a quarter hours distance to hold the outcome of the fixture in the balance. At time, Caversham's Michael Kay was well ahead 23-10 of Richard Peperell who had only just enjoyed a handicap reduction to two for the first time in his career. Peter Adams had also stretched out a lead but of smaller proportion over Phyllis Court's Frances Colman in a dour low scoring match 11-3, and the hosts only bright spot was Robin Coates 21-15 win over Charles Briggs. PCC AC: Richard Peperell (2), Frances Colman (7), Raghu Iyer (12), Robin Coates (12)

8 June - Promised 'Big match spectator opportunity tomorrow is cancelled - our opponents have 'cried-off'

I am sorry to have to tell you that our opponents East Dorset CC have 'cried-off' our league match with them tomorrow (9 June) and given us a walk-over. Consequently, the advertised 'good spectator opportunity' for tomorrow is cancelled.

I feel sorry for all those of you who were planning to come along to support our team and see the top players in what promised to be a good day of action. - What a disappointment!

- Both courts now free to book tomorrow

The result of this is of course that both courts have been freed-up for anyone who is available at this short notice to please book and play. Any booking made for tomorrow will not count against the usual rationing - so please take advantage of this unexpected free space and utilise

7 June - Jeff Smith wins Black Ball Trophy with win at our 8+ Singles day-tournament (Both Jeff Smith and Allan Henderson reduce their handicap to 7)

Jeff Smith was deservedly all smiles on Monday when he won the Phyllis Court 8+ Black Ball Trophy tournament which he dominated alongside Allan Henderson. The pair were undefeated until meeting each other in the penultimate round of seven, by which stage they were the only two of the selected eight players in the running and tight contest was expected from the evenly matched pair. However, Henderson's previous good form deserted him for this crucial head to head and Smith's cool approach saw him home 7-3. Going into the last round, Smith still needed to win and had to face surprise package Rosemary Noel-Clarke who, despite being the bottom seed, had picked up three wins with a show of mature stroke selections. Henderson had to win but also hope that Smith lost in order to force the tournament management I to a net hoops calculation but, in the end, both leaders won 7-5 and Smith will be equally remembered for the most nonclient of last stroke jump shots that won him the title. Patricia Mulcahy turned in another much-improved performance with many excellent clearance strokes to pick-up three wins and a fourth-place finish on hoop count.

Smith and Henderson both improved their handicaps to 7 and they, together with third and fourth placed finishes Noel-Clarke and Mulcahy, all qualify for that National Final of the Croquet Association's Grass Roots competition which will be held at Watford CC on 5 September.

	AH	MS	JS	KW	MP	CS	PM	RNC	net hoops	WINS	Rank
Allan Henderson		7	3	7	5	7	7	7	+16	6	2
Michael Seagrief	5		4	5	6	4	4	7	-8	3	7
Jeff Smith	7	7		7	7	7	7	7	+17	7	1
Kevin Ward	1	4	3		6	7	6	4	-6	3	5
Madeleine Probert	3	5	5	4		5	5	5	-9	0	8
Christine Searle	5	7	5	4	6		1	7	-6	3	6
Patricia Mulcahy	4	7	6	4	6	7		0	-3	3	4
Rosemary Noel-Clarke	2	6	5	6	6	4	7		-1	3	3

4 June - Phyllis Court 'B' 4 - 4 High Wycombe 'B'

Phyllis Court 'C' romped to a third victory of the season with an 11 - 5 demolition of Caversham last Wednesday.

Colin Morgan was the top home man, winning all four of his games, and there were multiple wins also for team mates, Bill Pitkeathley, Allan Henderson and debutant Jeff Smith.

This victory for Phyllis Court 'C' avenged the defeat at the hands of Caversham suffered by Phyllis Court 'D' two weeks ago, and consolidated their position at the top of the SCF Advantage GC League.

PCC 'B': Raghu Iyer (3), Dianne Browne (3), Russel Robinson (5), Rick Lilley (5)

2 June - Phyllis Court 'C' 11 - 5 Caversham 'A' - Morgan in undefeated and reduces his handicap to 5

On the League front, Phyllis Court 'C' romped to a third victory of the season with an 11 - 5 demolition of Caversham last Wednesday.

Colin Morgan was the top home man, winning all four of his games, and there were multiple wins also for team mates, Bill Pitkeathley, Allan Henderson and debutant Jeff Smith.

This victory for Phyllis Court 'C' avenged the defeat at the hands of Caversham suffered by Phyllis Court 'D' two weeks ago, and consolidated their position at the top of the SCF Advantage GC League.

PCC 'C': Bill Pitkeathley (5), Colin Morgan (6), Alan Henderson (8), Jeff Smith (8)