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PHYLLIS COURT CROQUET

News

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28 October -

Winter Rules will apply
(from this Sunday, 30th)

WINTER RULES

IMPORTANT - We are all going to have to be very careful with how and when we play in order to protect the courts, otherwise the facility may be withdrawn.

- **No play if ground is frosty*** - you will have to wait for it to thaw please

** treading on frosted grass seriously damages the grass plant (so don't do it).*

- **No play if it's waterlogged or there is Standing Water on any court**

- you will have to re-book for another day please

- **No jump shots**



26 October - Mulcahy and Morton win the delayed 10+ Doubles final

The much-delayed final of the 10+ Doubles season-long competition was eventually won this morning by Patricia Mulcahy and Steve Morton.

An even first game was turned in their favour by a well-executed snooker 'plant' shot (sending one target ball on to another) by Morton at hoop 9, gaining his side that hoop and to take good position at hoop 10 too.

Opponents Andy Jones and Ruth Raunkiaer were soon trailing 6-4 and the first game win followed for Mulcahy and Morton 7-5. Some uncharacteristic missed clearances in the second game, gave Mulcahy and Morton an easier ride and they won more easily than had been expected 7-3.

This was the first edition the 10+ Doubles, introduced only this year and the support shown by members (22 pairs entered) is very appreciated.

25 October - Winter Mix-in times to come forward to 1300-1600 *(from Sunday)*

As the clocks go back on Sunday (30 October), our twice weekly Gc mix-In times will switch to 1300-1600 for the winter. As usual, you can come along for as much or little of that time as you wish (come and go as you please).

19 October - Record attendance set at last week's mix-in - *please come along and join in!*

Attendances at our Thursday GC Mix-in sessions have grown week on week recently and week saw the 30 players mark reached. This is certainly a post-Covid record and it is many years before that that such numbers can be remembered.

Attendances are still more moderate on Sundays but there too attendance numbers are creeping up slowly.

Mix-in are open to all members on a casual 'turn-up and play for as long as you like' basis and there is no need to pre-book.

All games are short 7-hoop doubles with ever changing partnerships which are sorted out as we go along.

Current times are 1400-1700 every Thursday and Sunday, but will come forward to 1300-1600 when the clocks change in just over a week's time on Sunday 30 October.

Please come along and join in.

10 October - Robinson wins the 3+ Singes 'Plate' (Season-long competition)

Russell Robinson won a hard fought victory today against Tony Peperell in the final of the 3+ Plate season-long competition.

This leaves only the final of the 10+ Doubles still to be settled.



'The Phyllis Court Seven': Rick Lilley, Patricia Mulcahy, Chris Roberts, Frances Colman, Kevin Ward, Richard Peperell, Raghu Iyer.

Also on the Corfu trip were PCC members Jill Meredith, Maureen Ward, Lynne Peperell & Joanna Iyer, and the latter trio also played with the locals on the GC day.

(photograph by Karen Quilter)

10 October - Mulcahy wins the Handicap Doubles at the Greek Open on Corfu and heads the achievements of 'The Phyllis Court Seven'

Patricia Mulcahy won the Handicap Doubles event at the annual Greek Open Association Croquet Championship, headlining a successful tournament for the seven-strong Phyllis Court playing contingent at the Croquet Club of Corfu last week.

Although being severely disrupted by rain, the doubles event culminated in a delayed final between the two undefeated pairings with Phyllis Court represented in both.

Mulcahy and clubmate Kevin Ward were partnered by world number 25 Duncan Reeve and second singles seed David Warhurst respectively, both formally High Wycombe members who independently relocated to Budleigh Salterton in Devon two years ago.

Mulcahy and Reeve were first to qualify for the final with three quick fire wins whilst the rain, that eventually cut short the doubles event, delayed Ward and Warhurst joining them until they finally got past Bowdon's Liz Taylor-Webb and another Phyllis Court member Richard Peperell.

The tournament was co-managed by Phyllis Court pair Frances Colman and Chris Roberts and their inventive re-scheduling of the main singles and consolation events eventually worked round the changing weather until the more typical of Corfu uninterrupted sunshine returned.

The doubles final was played on the penultimate day of tournament and was a very close affair indeed with Mulcahy and Reeve having only a one bisque (extra turn) handicap leveller.

Senior players Reeve and Warhurst marshalled their junior partners with expertise and the scores remained close until Reeve spotted a crucial tactical opening that allowed Mulcahy and him to establish and maintain a scorebaord advantage until 'time'.

Colman had to withdraw through injury from the main Singles event before its start, but she kept the other 22 players in management check as Roberts, Raghu Iyer and Rick Lilley all progressed to the second round with comfortable victories.

Ward did very well indeed to win through to the second round via the 'second chance' repechage route and Peperell was mightily relieved to do the same after a very close +2 win on time over Mulcahy.

The second round was a graveyard for the remaining Phyllis Court quintet however, with increasingly narrow eliminations for Peperell (by 16 to eventual Champion Reeve), Iyer and Lilley (by 4 to Sara and Ian Anderson of Woking respectively), Ward (by 3 to finalist Andrew Killick from Middlesbrough), and Roberts (by 1 to Warhurst).

All played on in the 14-point consolation event were Roberts won eight out of twelve to finish runner-up behind Fylde's Betty Bates.

It is hoped that the Croquet Club of Corfu will be visting Phyllis Court next season on a short tour, and from a base at the Henley Club hotel, would take in additional matches against High Wycombe and Blewbury.



04 October - Henderson wins the 3+ season-long competition

Russel Robinson reports:

Allan Henderson will be a new name on the Tighe Cup after his victory today in the final of our 3+ GC Singles season-long competition yesterday..

Following the surprise early elimination of all the top seeds, the final saw ninth-seed Henderson pitched against sixth-seed Bill Pitkeathley, both with handicaps of 5.

The first game was closely fought before Henderson pulled away to win 7-4.

Pitkeathley was then left to rue a number of missed clearances, upon which Henderson capitalised to secure the second game 7-1 just before the rain closed in.

Congratulations to Allan (*left in the photo*) for the distinction of winning all four of his matches without dropping a game!



04 October - The End of the Rainbow 2022

Madeleine Probert & Hilary Cowley report:

The Rainbow season closed on 30 September and we are delighted that 33 players took part during the season, and that 56 Rainbow games were played.

The Rainbow was open to players on Handicap 11+ and the participants were a mixture of established members and Beginners.

Started in 2021, the Rainbow is part of the range of playing opportunities for higher handicapped players, which includes the weekly Mix-Ins, together with (appropriately classed) Evening Series, day-tournaments and season-long competitions.

The aim is to help members to get to know each other and to find out what sort of croquet they like to play.

Prominent amongst the participants this season were:

Daphne Spiers, who is to be commended for reaching the top of the Rainbow with 7 wins, the first member to do so (*no pot of gold, though, Daphne!*), Hilary Cowley (6 wins), Aly Warren (5), Stuart Crippen (4) and Ruth Raunkiaer (4).

Well done to them and to all who participated this year, expanded their playing circle and helped with the integration of our newer members.

If you think you would like to take part next year, there is information about the scheme on the Rainbow webpage (there's a link button on the left hand side of the HomePage).

Hilary Cowley will take over as the Rainbow Manager next year, so, do let her know of your interest for 2023.

One of this year's players has already been in touch: *"I would definitely like to be part of the Rainbow next year. I think it's a great idea!"*

Photos: The two Rainbow games were played on 13 May - Lesley Warburton v Bundy Walker (top) and Cliff Hampton v Danny Hall. (*photos by Madeleine Probert*)

24 September - 'Finals Day' - Von Schmieder (singles) & Fensomes (doubles) are Club Champions - and three other competitions also settled today -

With very little time before I fly off to The Greek Championship on Corfu with several other Phyllis Court AC players, here are some photos (by Allan Henderson) of our winners and finalists.

A report of today's action is below: . . .

Congratulations today to:

Open Singles Club Championship - **Charlie von Schmieder** beat Chris Roberts

Open Doubles Club Championship - **Helena Fensome & Mike Fensome** beat Charlie von Schmieder & Colin Morgan

3+ Doubles - **Dianne Browne & Russell Robinson** beat Raghu Iyer & Hugh Crook

7+ Singles - **Jeff Smith** beat Colin Hall

10+ Singles - **Andy Jones** beat Christine Searle



Charlie von Schmieder & Chris Roberts,
- Open Singles winner and runner-up -



Andy Jones,
- 10+ Singles winner -



and all of this morning finalists (except Colim Morgan)

- photos by Allan Henderson -

PHYLLIS COURT FINALS DAY

Charlie von Schmieder regained the [Phyllis Court Club Singles Champion's](#) crown in an exciting match with **Chris Roberts** last weekend that provided a fitting end to the Henley Club's Finals Day. Von Schmieder's preparation had been very limited, having played very little croquet all year, which contrasted remarkably with that of Roberts who had his busiest season yet, competing in 230 international ranking games which was the most of any player in the world this year.

If that made Roberts the favourite, nobody told von Schmieder who's precise positioning at the first hoop in game one, allowed him to score strongly and land right in front of hoop two to establish a fast 2-0 margin, and he kept that throughout the game to win 7-5.

Game two was a reverse of the first with Roberts freezing out his opponent to win 5-7, to take the match to a third and deciding game.

There was more inter-play at the first hoop before von Schmieder eventually scored, but this time, Roberts was able to trade the first four hoops as the contest built to the two centre hoops that are so often pivotal.

Roberts made it 2-2 at hoop four giving von Schmieder first stroke to hoop 5, which a just seven yards away usually sees the second player at this level, take position with their first ball, and trust their aim with their second ball to clear the opponent's scoring opportunity.

This is the trailing player's best opportunity to take the lead and Roberts executed the chance superbly with a strong centre ball clearance sending von Schmieder to the far-off boundary.

Roberts scoring stroke for 2-3 lead ran the hoop and well enough to command hoop six as well, forcing von Schmieder to shoot from distance to with the best stroke of the match.

Not only did the stroke score, but it landed beautifully, if somewhat fortunately right in front of his other ball with both in-line for hoop seven.

At 3-3, but the advantage with Roberts' first stroke which that he positioned well, von Schmieder had to try something.

He promoted his hoop six scoring ball with a deft stroke that pushed it to an inch perfect position seven yards away, Roberts missed his clearance from 10 yards and von Schmieder scored to retake the lead with a quite brilliant passage of play.

Thereafter Roberts was chasing the game, and as the opportunities came and went he was forced into ever greater risk taking and steady von Schmieder eventually pulled away to win deservedly 7-4.

Von Schmieder has now won Phyllis Court Club Championship for a record eight times since his first in 2007, extending his all-time lead over four-time winner Roberts.

Finals Day also saw the concluding matches of five other season-long competitions including the morning [Open Doubles Championship](#) final which again featured **Charlie von Schmieder**, who along with partner **Colin Morgan**, were attempting to react their 2016 success, this time against **Helena and Mike Fensome**.

The Fensomes won a very close first game 7-6 but then were beaten rather comfortably in the second as von Schmieder and Morgan looked to have all the momentum going into the decider.

However, the Fensomes established a good lead, and despite a spirited comeback from their opponents, controlled the third game to win 7-4, giving Helena a fourth doubles title with her third different partner.

Alongside that match was the final of the [3+ Doubles](#) which brought **Dianne Browne & Russell Robinson** to face **Raghu Iyer & Hugh Crook** with the former pair as favourites, and it was a surprise therefore that Iyer and Crook took the first game 6-7, deserved victory though it was

Browne and Robinson recovered to win the second well-contested game 7-5 and then controlled the decider from the start to wrap up the match 7-2, meaning that Browne retained her doubles title from the last time the completion was played pre-covid in 2019.

Two other singles competitions also concluded on Finals Day and both saw fitting victories for players who have enjoyed much improvement this season.

In [7+ Singles](#), **Jeff Smith** had a comfortable 7-2 first game win against **Colin Hall** and, although given a stiffer challenge in the second, was always in charge and won 7-5, giving that competition its eleventh winner in as many years.

In the [10+ Singles](#), **Andy Jones** started as the hottest of favourites against **Christine Searle**, due to his remarkable rise through the handicap ranks this season, which he started as a 10 and finished as a handicap 4. Searle had shown good form of her own in qualifying for this final, with an especially impressive 7-3, 7-1 semi final win over steady John Etheridge, but she was no match for Jones in the final who won 7-3, 7-2.