



# The August Newsletter

## Autumn Lawn Maintenance

David Magee, in his capacity as Lawns Manager, provided a warning to the committee meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> August that the autumnal lawn maintenance had become a matter of considerable concern to him. The plan to extend the playing season to late November jeopardised his chances for carrying out essential work to bring the thatch back under control.

The whole playing surface has to be scarified to get rid of all the dead matter that collects at the base of the grass. The whole area is then over-seeded using a seed drill which buries the seed just below the surface (and stops the birds having a free meal) and lastly some 3 – 4 tons of top dressing are applied to each lawn to effect some degree of levelling and repair. We then allow a couple of weeks for the new grass to start growing and the existing surface to recuperate after being bashed about so much. In David's view the very latest that he could risk carrying out the work is the second half of October / early November.

In view of this Finals Day will be brought forward to the weekend of 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> October 2020, with the lawn maintenance work commencing immediately afterwards (weather permitting of course).

David advised very strongly that this work could not be postponed until 2021, it having already been postponed in 2019. The lawns are the club's main assets, and their maintenance takes up a considerable fraction of the club's budget. We cannot afford to mismanage their maintenance.

## Club Internal Competitions

It was decided by the Committee that, for the benefit of everyone, all remaining CA Fixtures Book Tournaments due to be run by the club would be cancelled and that (as stated above) the date for the Finals of the Club Competitions would be moved to the weekend of Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> October. This will mean, of course, that the dates for the completion of each of the rounds has been brought

forward. The dates have been amended on the website – so please check to see when the new end-date is for each of the remaining rounds of your competitions.

The majority of those who had originally entered competitions before the lockdown chose to re-enter and are enjoying playing competitively once more. It has been encouraging to see that so far, matches have been played in a timely fashion and at this point, everything is up to date. The change of date for the Finals has meant a revision of the time scales, but with lawns freed up by CA Tournament cancellation, there should be no problems. Even those lucky enough to have booked a break away should still have sufficient time!

As far as the playing of Finals is concerned, under our current restrictions, it will not be possible for there to be any sense of occasion. With no spectators or presentation ceremony it will feel very strange but trophies will still be awarded and the honours boards updated. A full report will be made for the Newsletter.

For the first time this year we have two Juniors playing and they are certainly holding their own against more experienced players. Similarly, there are some new faces, both new members and those who felt they had gained sufficient experience to enter. GC players have had to learn what Draw and Process means and everyone has had to master playing without touching the balls and without the usual clips/pegs/boards in what has become our “new normal”. The positive element of the new normal has been not having to double bank.

Looking ahead to the winter, once the lawns have been reduced in size there will be the Blumer AC Competition and the equivalent GC competition, both of which are open to all irrespective of handicap. One of the positive elements of this is that there is a deliberate complete mixing of members and handicaps and while it is good to win, the result is not recorded on your handicap card. Games are reduced in length to accommodate inclement weather and handicaps adjusted for smaller lawns. **Information on how to enter will be circulated at a later date.**

## Social Distancing

Just before 1pm on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> August there were at least 10 people either sitting on the clubhouse benches or gathered around the entrance to the clubhouse.

Please remember that our club regulations require us to maintain a 2m separation. Please also note that these regulations stipulate that, having arrived at the designated time, one person should go to the clubhouse to collect the balls and everyone else goes straight to the lawn.

We know that some members are taking a more relaxed attitude to physical distancing but it is surely only right that we consider the safety of **all** our members and continue to observe all current guidelines and regulations.

## Shelters

There has been a change to the permitted use of the shelters. The committee has agreed that with immediate effect, *in the event of extreme weather* (heat or rain) and provided masks are worn, members are permitted to take shelter in the pavilions (between Lawns 2 & 3 and 6 & 7) and the huts; four persons per pavilion and two persons per hut, whilst maintaining social distancing as far as is practicable.

Members should, therefore, bring masks to the Club if there is any possibility that they will wish to make use of the pavilions or the huts.

## Clarification of Playing Requirements

The use of Lawns 1, 8 and 12, double banking and back-to-back sessions was discussed by the committee, and the following clarifications have emerged.

**Lawns 1 & 8** Lawns 1 and 8 may not be used for friendly games or practice unless all other lawns are fully booked.

**Lawn 12** Practice on lawn 12, whilst not available on the Lawn Booking System, is permitted for those Members who have already booked a session on another lawn. Players can alternate between the two.

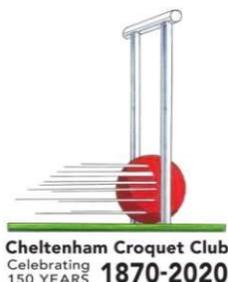
**Double Banking** Double banking of singles games continues to be disallowed, but will be re-considered at the beginning of next season.

**Back-to-Back Sessions** Where a double session, back-to-back, has been booked on the same lawn with the same players, neither a break nor an interval is a necessary requirement.

**15 Minute Interval** Members are reminded that the Requirements for Re-Opening the Club stipulates a 15 minute interval between playing sessions. This is to provide the opportunity for those leaving after a session to have vacated the club before the arrival of members due to play in the next session. Please, therefore, leave promptly and also do not arrive before your session is due to start.

**Use of Clips** It has been confirmed that the use of clips will continue to be disallowed.

## Cheltenham 150 Celebrations



The 150<sup>th</sup> Celebrations will not now take place this year as planned, but rather have been postponed to Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2021 – so will perhaps be a celebration of 151 years!

Nevertheless, the draw for the Raffle will still be taking place on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2020 at 4pm. The format for the draw is still to be decided.

Two more raffle prizes have been donated by club members, a bottle of whisky and a £40 Webb's Garden centre voucher, so there are now 13 prizes. Raffle tickets are on sale at £1 each – deposit the money for the number required in the club's bank account with the reference "Surname – Raffle" and Naomi will contact you with the details of your tickets.

With the cancellation of the Club's planned celebrations, the Committee has decided to offer each member a '150th' mug as a way of recognising this historic anniversary. The mugs will be available for collection from committee members at the Club. Members wishing to buy extra mugs can do so with a payment of £5.



A reminder that David Magee's History of the Club can be bought from him, again for £5 if he can give you a copy, but otherwise £7 to include postage – all money goes to Club funds. Contact David Magee.

## Tournaments & Matches

As already mentioned all remaining 2020 CA Fixture Book events will be cancelled. Thus the Secretary's Spoon, the Bernard Neal, the Daniel's Cup and the "B" Levels have all been cancelled. In addition, there will be no Charity One Ball Tournament.

The CA Ladies Sixes took place over the weekend of 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> August (see below). There are another two major Croquet Association Tournaments to be held at Cheltenham this year. These are:

- The GC Inter-Counties – due to be held over the weekend of 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> August
- The British Opens to be held from 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> September.

In order for them to be held safely, they will be managed entirely by the CA, who will take over the club in its entirety for the whole of each tournament – meaning that no club members will be allowed to attend the club unless taking part – and there will be no facility for coming to spectate.

**Ladies Sixes** Five Cheltenham Ladies took part, which is remarkable – Sarah Hayes, Wendy Wu, Julia Lowery, Eileen Magee and Deborah Albertson.

The Ladies Sixes is made up of two separate competitions, the Barlow Bowl and the Longman Cakestand. Each has six entrants who all play each other – 3 games on Saturday, 2 games Sunday. AC Advanced with no time limits. This year each six had to be an independent Covid bubble of its own.



In the Barlow Bowl Sarah Hayes won all of her games to emerge the winner, with Alison Maugham close on her heels with just one loss to be runner up.

The Longman Cakestand also had an unbeaten winner - a Scottish visitor (7-hour drive with no air-conditioning) Rosemary Robertson who very much enjoyed her weekend and promises to return! Heather Bennett was runner up.

Trophies were presented (socially distanced) by our Vice President, Eileen Magee.

## AC Laws Course

David Magee intends to hold an AC Laws Course over the weekend of 26/27 September. The course will take all weekend and will include instruction both indoors and out on the lawns. Though the course is aimed primarily at those who wish to become Referees, and who will therefore take the examinations after the course, the course is also open to members who just wish to gain a deeper understanding of the Laws of the game. Would you please contact David if you wish to take advantage of this offer.

## U3A

Visitors from U3A were welcomed to the club on two occasions in July to enjoy a taste of croquet. Further visits can be expected twice a month in August and September, with a final session on 14<sup>th</sup> October. It is hoped that these visits will encourage new members to join the club.

## Under 18s

Cheltenham Under 18 group will be welcoming Juniors from High Wycombe on August 29th for a day of both fun and competitive play

## Heritage Open Days

It was planned that the club should be opened to visitors on the weekend of 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> September as part of the Heritage Open Days. However, this is not to be, but hopefully this can take place next year. Meanwhile there will be a photo and short article about the club on the Cheltenham Civic Society's website at the end of August and CCC will be included in the booklet the Civic Society will be producing

## **100 Club**

The July draw for the monthly prizes of the 100 Club has resulted in the following winners:

1<sup>st</sup> Prize Maryse Roberts; 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize Naomi Whitehead; 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize Jeremy Tyndall

## **Circulation of Minutes and Newsletter**

The Agenda and Minutes of the Committee Meetings and the current Newsletter are not being displayed on the Club's noticeboards to avoid any possibility of breaking social distancing requirements.

Should any member wish to receive a copy of the Agenda, Minutes or the Newsletter, they should contact the Club Secretary, who will email them to them. For those not on email, self-addressed and stamped envelopes of suitable size should be sent to him.

[john@gilden.co.uk](mailto:john@gilden.co.uk); 01452 855140; 2 Brookfield Road, Churchdown, Gloucester GL3 2NZ

John Gilden

13<sup>th</sup> August 2020