



## NEWSLETTER

**December 2015**

This is the document that you have been waiting for – or not. You could be reading on your Club notice board. You may have received it as an email attachment from your Club SECF contact. Or you may have encountered it in some other way. In any event, the Secretary welcomes you to an update of the fascinations of croquet in the South East Federation.

Your attention is again drawn to the web site at [www.southeastcroquet.org.uk](http://www.southeastcroquet.org.uk). This contains details of many of the Federation's current activities and some of its illustrious history. A copy of the draft Calendar for 2016 will be prepared soon. If you have any Club event that you would wish to advertise as being open to non-members, please communicate with the Secretary (John Reddish) by email at [info@southeastcroquet.org.uk](mailto:info@southeastcroquet.org.uk). Events which will appear in the CA Fixtures Book are not included in the SECF Calendar.

The dates for the programme of SECF tournaments for 2016 have been fixed as follows:

**AC Teams Weekend: Sat/Sun 21/22 May at Southwick**  
**One Ball Teams Tournament: Sat 18 June at Roehampton**  
**Ladies Day: Wed 6 July at Southwick**  
**The Southern Challenge Division One: Sat/Sun 2/3 July at Southwick**  
**The Southern Challenge Division Two North: Sat/Sun 2/3 July at Surbiton**  
**The Southern Challenge Division Two South: Sat/Sun 9/10 July at Southwick**  
**Golf Croquet Day: Sun 7 Aug at Southwick**

The One-Ball Teams Tournament was reinstated this year and held successfully at Roehampton. Accordingly, it will be held there again in 2016. Entries are encouraged for all events. You will be able to register when the forms are sent out in early March 2016. Provisional entries for the Southern Challenge resulted in oversubscription and the consequent creation of two second divisions to accommodate all of the teams proposing to take part. You will be invited to confirm your provisional entry (and pay the entrance fee(s)) when the forms are sent out next year. Full details of the identities of the Managers and the cost of entries for all of the tournaments are on the web site.

Congratulations should be extended to the following winners of the 2015 Leagues:

Association A League **Sussex County**

Association U League **Caterham**

Association B League **Caterham**

Golf Level League **Sussex County**

Golf Level R League **Canterbury**

Golf Handicap League **Woking** (from the West Division who beat **Merton** from the East 5-4 in the play-off in September)

All of the Leagues were again “healthy” in 2015. Match completion was high. The mid-September deadline for the completion of matches in the GC Handicap League was maintained in 2015 (to enable the play-off to take place before the end of the season). This apparently gave rise to no difficulties

On 17 May 2015 the **Association Croquet Team Doubles Tournament** (for club teams of 4) at Southwick was won by **Purley Bury**, with **Guildford & Godalming** as runners up.

On 7 July 2015 the 26th annual **Ladies’ Day** was held at Southwick. Winners of the Shield were **Sussex Sizzlers** with last year’s winners **Woking Wenches** runners up.

On 28 June 2014 the fourth annual **Southern Challenge** Division Two was completed at Surbiton (brought forward by one week to accommodate the World Championships or some other such lesser event). The winners of this Division were **Reigate Priory**, with **Cheam** runners up. Division One was contested at Southwick on 4 and 5 July. The winners of this Division were, as usual, **Dulwich**. The complacent South London team consisted of Pierre Beaudry; Andrew Dymond; Mark Daley and John Reddish on Saturday with Paul Newton taking over from your Secretary on Sunday. Dulwich retained the Simon Carter Menswear Trophy for the third time. The contest was sustained to the last match and **Sussex County 2** were runners up.

On 1 August 2015 the winners of the **Golf Croquet Team Competitions** held at Southwick were **Angmering** (Doubles) and **Sussex County 2** (Singles).

#### Development news

All four of the new courts at **Guildford and Godalming** came into play in 2015. With the agreement of the Rugby Club, the Club constructed a 250 yard rabbit-proof fence on its open flanks. This helped to identify the club as a separate entity within the sports complex. The next project is to build a modest clubhouse on the footprint of the old bowling club pavilion for which planning permission has already been granted. The clubhouse will include a toilet and cost about £12,000, including the concrete base. It has been agreed with the Rugby Club that the site will be rent free for the next two years during which time the croquet club will increase its membership to 100 to enable it to pay rent thereafter.

After a long period of uncertainty, **Canterbury** decided to remain with its parent sports club at Polo Farm. Three new lawns are under construction, paid for by the Sports Club. The Club requested the SECF Lawns Officer, George Noble to have a look at what appeared to be a drainage problem on the site.

Courts 1, 2 and 3 at **Sussex County** were refurbished in phase 1 of the club’s three year programme, and brought into use. Courts 4, 5, 6 and 9 were re-surfaced and re-seeded in September 2015 and will be brought back into use early next season. The remaining four courts will be done in the autumn next year. The SECF provided a modest grant to help finance the work.

The two new courts at **Caterham** were brought into use in the second half of the season and one will be played on during this winter. The local Council had promised landscaping around them but procrastinated in the face of objections from local residents. The Club was not even allowed to position wooden ball stops along the boundaries of the courts as they could be trip hazards. Since the courts are encircled by a wide pathway along which pedestrians and the occasional car pass, there was concern. However, the extremely co-operative Council green keeper allowed a strip of high grass to grow on the sides of the lawns which proved to be a fairly effective ball stop.

The building company Marples recently purchased the land on which the Cobdown Sports and Social Club stands. **Medway** Croquet Club is a part of this Club. The croquet club has to negotiate with the new owners to define its future. The land is designated as a recreational area and there is thus hope that it will remain so.

A lot of work has been put in by **Preston** club members and local Council staff to refurbish the lawn adjacent to the Council-owned manor house. Three tons of top dressing were applied. The results were encouraging and the court was used for promotional events and will be played on during this winter. The last stage of the project will be finished in the spring, in time for the 2016 season with the application of a further two tons of top dressing. The SECF has promised £150 towards the cost.

After only its second season, **Lodsworth** is busy raising funds to build a well equipped pavilion adjacent to its court for the start of next season. The CA granted £1,000 and the SECF Committee agreed to contribute £250 towards the total cost of £32,000 - £35,000.

The two courts at **Worthing** have been moved within the bowls complex at Field Place to a location in this well-used recreational area which is much more conspicuous to the passing public. Funds are being raised to build a modest club house adjacent to the new courts. The SECF has agreed provide a grant of £250.

The **Crawley** Club was reduced to 16 members but recovered to 22 by the end of the 2015 season. The £4m restoration of Worth Park, in which the club is situated, is complete. There is a faint hope that there may be some funds remaining which could pay for improvements to the croquet courts. However, the Council has removed the device to prevent vandals riding motorbikes on them (for "health and safety reasons").

Having just about raised the necessary funds to add two courts in the adjacent Rugby Club (a £39,000 project), **Reigate Priory** discovered, when it came to formulating the arrangement, that the £5,000 annual rent expected by the landowner was unsustainable. The project has been shelved.

An irrigation system at **Cheam** has been installed using funds raised by the Club.

And finally – this is quite important ....

2016 AGM - Save the date (as they say)

The **Annual General Meeting** of the Federation will be held on **Sunday 28 February 2016** at **Surbiton** Croquet Club, Alexandra Drive, Surbiton, KT5 9AA. The meeting will commence at 10.45 a.m. and will be followed by lunch. You will receive an invitation to disclose how many from your Club will be attending the meeting and the lunch and a copy of the formal agenda nearer the time.

A merry Christmas and a happy New Year to you all.