

Review of our 2019 season

There are 76 members of the Croquet Group, playing at Polesden Lacey from Monday to Wednesday. Thursday afternoons are now reserved for any croquet member to use the lawns for play or practice. This year we have two Golf and five Association groups. The Beginners' group has dwindled to two members, mainly because people had other commitments although two did join a Golf group during the season.

The Golf Singles tournament took place on 11th June. Twelve members battled it out over three rounds, resulting in a tie between Chris Pullan and David Snow who both had won all their three games. Chris was declared the winner as he had conceded slightly fewer hoops.

Our annual picnic with croquet day at Polesden Lacey on July 7th dawned wet after a long spell of dry and sunny weather, not a good start to what is a lovely social day in our calendar. The rain stopped by lunchtime and seven of us enjoyed a picnic and chat before playing in what turned out to be beautiful afternoon sunshine. Another member turned up so we played separate games of men's and ladies' Golf Croquet then winners played winners. It was all good fun, suffice only to say Angie and I did - ahem - rather well. There were plenty of non-croquet high fives, maybe we'd been watching too much Wimbledon (or maybe that little glass of wine with lunch...) A pity there were so few, it was a fun afternoon in the sun, and we were all delighted when we had a visit from Val and Leslie Shelton who stayed to watch.

Also in July Martin organised the much contested Inter U3A Golf Croquet Tournament and this year's winner was Horsley U3A, followed by Bookham, Leatherhead, Fetcham and Epsom. Always good to socialise with other U3As on the lawns.

The Doubles tournament took place on 12th September, sixteen members entered so every lawn was played on throughout the day with short breaks and a picnic lunch. Two brave beginners, Liz and Carol, took part and enjoyed it, hopefully we'll have even more entrants from groups next year, it really is just fun. Frank Cross with Jenny Jenkins played Nigel Ames and myself in the final which was won by Frank and Jenny, worthy winners!

As ever, thanks must go to Polesden Lacey and the gardening team, to the rota of players who turn out early each week to trundle the white lining machine and to those who help set up the lawns and dismantle at the end of the season. Not only do players enjoy the lawns, visitors to Polesden are sometimes surprised and pleased to see croquet being played - we answer many questions, the main one being "what are the rules?" Not an easy one to answer between turns! I also sometimes wonder what they do with all the photos taken, often with very professional looking equipment. Finally, thanks and appreciation to Martin for keeping our happy band in check with such aplomb. Roll on 2020!

Val Cross

(From Senior Moments November 2019)