



Palm Reader

An unofficial newsletter of Palmerston Indoor Bowling Club

Issue 2 December 2002

Ladies Captain's report

by Jean Evans

I report with mixed feelings as to my great disappointment two ladies friendly matches had to be cancelled: East Dorset and Isle of Wight, both sadly due to lack of support. Regarding the former I can appreciate ladies not wanting to drive any distance at this time of year. Fortunately this match has been rearranged for 22nd January 2003 with coach being available so ladies I am now looking for your support. Regarding the latter match I was left a little perplexed with all travel arrangements being made and fares being subsidised by your club - it does make our club look in rather a bad light when cancellations have to be made - maybe this match too can be rearranged with Russell's help I'll try.

I know it was a great disappointment to the "Yetton" ladies losing in the first match to Victory - perhaps I can take a little responsibility for that - we live and learn.

Now on the brighter side what wonderful results we have had from the "Vivienne" ladies - be it only winning by one shot in each of the two rounds. Firstly against Havant secondly against Arun - like me I know how thrilled you all were - well done. Our next opponents are Victory - keep up the good work girls as the next step then is the Zone Final - dare I think that far ahead? One request from our President Ann is please try to do it by more than one shot as she doesn't think her heart will stand all the nervous tension again.

Lastly to both Ladies and Gentlemen please come and support the Vivienne ladies both home and away it would mean so much to them.

Events Calendar

5-19 January 2003: World Indoor Singles at Potters - tickets 01502 730345. BBC TV coverage is now to be limited to the quarter finals onward.

Sunday 2nd February 2003: England senior ladies International team practice match against the men's Hampshire team at Palmerston. Note the revised date, was Sunday 5th January.

Fund Raising

by Rene Bowshell

In the 5 years since the club opened Fund Raising activities have contributed in excess of £14,000 to club funds. These funds have been used to provide extra facilities including blinds in the restaurant, bowls rack, dance floor, electric fans and spotlights in the restaurant. The most recent addition is the electronic scoreboard which with its recent modification cost around £10,000.

The standard activities include the 'Bonus Ball' (twice weekly thanks to Rita), 'Treasure Chest' every Friday night, '100 Club' (monthly prizes), 'Xmas Draw' (prizes currently on show). In addition there are Race Nights, Coffee Mornings, Special Evening Dinners often with entertainment.

There are many more things to be done. Very soon the shutters in the bar and restaurant are to be electrified to make life easier for staff. The gardens in the front of the building have become overgrown and will be refurbished. All improvements are costly but with your help and support they will all be done!! The Social Notice Board is now situated near the coffee machine - watch out for future events - you won't be disappointed.

Social Events Calendar

Friday 13 December 7pm : Christmas Draw. Superb prizes on display - more to come. Our thanks to all those who have donated prizes. Numbers still on sale - 50p a slot - You have to be in it to win it.

Friday 13 December 7pm : "100 Club" Draw (following the Xmas draw). Section A 1st prize £100, 2nd prize £50, Section B 1st prize £100, 2nd prize £50

Saturday 14 December : Christmas Party night - tickets £10.50. Buy tickets from Rene or Bill before Thursday 12 December.

Tuesday 31 December : New Year Bowls and Buffet - details on Notice Board

Saturday 18 January 8:15pm : Winter Race meeting. Tickets £3. Watch Notice Board for List - tickets and horses for sale after Xmas.

Thursday 13 February 7pm (for 7:30) : St Valentines Evening Romantic Dinner. Menu and other details in the New Year.

Editorial

Nearly 400 copies of issue 1 were distributed, a very pleasing number, especially when you consider that there are a lot of couples who would presumably only have taken one copy. Also I think others read it and replaced it on the table, so overall I think it must have been read by maybe 2/3 of the membership. For those who missed it there are still copies around somewhere.

In the next issue I'd like to include a survey of the membership. Hopefully we will get some valuable feedback as to what members want. So what questions should be included? I have included an article in this issue outlining some ideas for different sorts of playing sessions, mostly variations on the league system. Some are more radical than others. The survey will include questions about which (if any) of these formats would you like to play in, so they have been given names to identify them. Also see the letters to the editor. I'd like more ideas from you - please say how it would work and what you think the pros and cons are. Also what other issues (like the bar, restaurant, car park, playing times, indeed anything you can think of) you would like to see in this survey. Get your thinking caps on over Christmas and please send me any suggested survey questions by January 6th. But please word your question carefully so there is no ambiguity as to what it means, otherwise the survey would be meaningless. Contributions to be submitted as normal (see below). Also I am looking for a volunteer with computer to help collate the replies.

Wishing you all a happy and healthy new year.

You can contribute either by writing an article or a letter to the editor. If you type, this would be best so I don't misread your handwriting. If you use a computer please send it by email which avoids me making mistakes retyping everything (and saves me work!) - the email address is palmed@mail.com and I'll acknowledge receipt of emails. Or put it on a floppy disc (either plain text or a .doc file). Otherwise hand items in to the office addressed to Palm Editor.

Editorial policy is to publish anything reasonable with the strict proviso that it doesn't contain criticism of anyone's character.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Palm Editor,

I think the Palm Reader, is a great idea, and well overdue, I really do hope that it helps to bridge the gap between the 'them' and 'us' groups in the club. You asked for our opinions, and I guess I am well known for having some of them! They are all 'old hat', and have been mentioned on many occasions, but if you are collating them then I may as well have my sixpennyworth!

1. SMOKING - yes, I know that everyone has a right etc etc, but don't I have a right to breathe clean air? Bowling on rinks 5 to 8 results in my having to use my asthma inhaler, and when I get home I have to throw all my clothes in the washing machine, then have a shower and wash my hair. If the majority opinion is that smoking should be allowed in defined areas within the club could we please have adequate ventilation?

2. CAR PARKING - especially on Friday evenings when there is a social function in the restaurant. The car park is not large enough to cope, resulting in many members having to park illegally on the double yellow lines alongside the club. To park legally would involve walking back to the car along unlit parts of the industrial estate, which is not pleasant. Why did I have to pay for a parking sticker to allow me to park in the club car park, when I frequently cannot, because the park is full, and many of the cars are not displaying the sticker? Incidentally, recently I could not park in the disabled bays, as they were full, and two of the cars concerned were displaying neither disabled or club stickers.

3. SOCIAL EVENTS - I know that there is a lot of criticism of the use of the club for social events, but I am in favour of them. The restaurant is a wonderful facility, which should be used to its full potential, not only do we enjoy ourselves but money is also raised for the benefit of all members.

4. SINGLES - No I don't mean a dating agency! But I know that there are many members who are on their own in bowling, for various reasons, maybe their spouse doesn't bowl, or they are widowed, whatever, does anybody think that there is a call for a 'get together', maybe it would help these members to match up with others and form a league team, or enter the competitions together?

5. SCOREBOARDS - I like them! Especially as I have now sussed how to use them without incurring an electric shock (I use my towel to protect my finger - the anti-stat pads gave me an even worse shock than the scoreboard did).

6. RESTAURANT - Good food, good ambience, good prices, another of my 'likes'.

7. BAR - Good friendly bar staff, great prices, but shouldn't it be making more of a profit, should non-members really be allowed to

benefit from these low prices?

8. LEAGUES - I like playing in the leagues which I am involved in, which have to be evenings because of work. I was sad to see that the 6.15 leagues are declining in numbers, but have heard that the traffic is the problem. I don't know the solution to this, but wondered if the timings could be juggled with a bit, and maybe the half hour 'break' at lunchtime could serve better if it were at tea time? Any chance of more mixed leagues?

9. COMPETITIONS - Well, I like to enter, but with my standard of play it is an almost foregone conclusion that I will pay my entry fee and only get one or, if I'm lucky, two games for my money! Would a 'round robin' work, or could there be something exclusively for those of us who have never won anything (except the toss, on the odd occasion).

10. CHANGING ROOMS - I think they are fine, a little cluttered from time to time, but I'm happy with them, and the toilets too.

11. ENTRY SYSTEM - I'm all in favour of security, but do we have to have 'the door is now open' continuously?

12. FINALLY A big thank you to all the members who give so much of their time to the running of the club, some of the work done is not so obvious to us all, but it is being done, on the bowling, the building and the social side. Just a hint about the request for volunteers, some of the members might be only too willing to help if they are asked, they just haven't got the confidence to offer their assistance!

Well you did ask for our opinions, I hope I don't sound like a complete moaner, after all, none of it really matters, does it?

Lynne Maule

Dear Palm Editor,

Congratulations on an excellent newsletter.

Subject: Trousers, as optional ladies wear. I would very much like to know how many ladies would like to wear trousers for roll-ups. I am sure that most of the ladies wear trousers perhaps even jeans when they are not bowling. Does any one know when the style of ladies skirts was last reviewed perhaps in the 1950,s? I am unable to wear tights because of medical reasons so should I wear stockings and suspenders instead? I brown my legs with instant tan, thank goodness we do not have to wear seamed stockings otherwise I would have to ask one of the ladies to show me how they put the line with an eyebrow pencil on the back of their legs as they did during the war. My young friends (between 50 & 60 years old) simply say to me how can you wear these 50's clothes, when they see me in my bowling gear. Are we in 2002 or am I dreaming? I wonder which will be the first club to have the guts to make some changes. I consider forbidding us ladies to wear trousers is sexist

and old fashioned! WE CAN WEAR TROUSERS FOR OUTSIDE BOWLING ,WHY NOT INDOORS ??????

Ingrid Richards .

Dear Palm Editor,

With reference to the decreased numbers in some leagues, particularly the Ladies 6.15 - 8.15pm Monday league - the notice which was published proposing an additional mixed league would not appeal to many of the established members who already play in as many leagues as they can manage and afford. Why not try to create a "Nursery League" appealing to newer members who have completed a course of tuition, maybe played in summer leagues and enjoyed a few "Club Nights" but do not have the confidence (or think they are not good enough) to enter an established league. They certainly would not know how to get a whole team together. There must be a record of these members - why not approach them individually and ask them to put their names on a list? Management could call on some willing established members to give them help and guidance or even lead the teams. As new members complete tuition they could be absorbed into this "Nursery League". The now successful League AF (Thursday morning) was started in this way. I play in the Ladies League on Monday evening and although I would not like to see it go, it isn't much fun with so few teams. A "Nursery League" could run alongside it maybe. I do feel that experienced bowlers joining Palmerston are welcomed with open arms and invited into leagues but we should be encouraging all new members to get involved and get more enjoyment from the game.

Rene Bowshell

Roll up Roll up! Drives organised for the weeks around Christmas:
The usual Monday Drives on 16th and 23rd December at 11:30am. Also a special one on Wednesday 18th December 2pm - 4pm. And don't forget the 8:15pm **Club Night** on Friday 2nd January to get you started for the new year.

Leagues: finish Friday 13th December, restart Monday 6th January

League Cup: This is a knockout competition details on the board. Starts Monday 16th December 6:15pm with a full 8 rinks Monday and Tuesday. Continues through the week with one semi-final on Friday 20th 6:15pm and the other on Saturday morning 10am. Finals in finals week in April.

The Club closes over Christmas from 2:30pm on 24th December to 9:30am on 2nd Jan. However it will open also on New Year's Eve for the Party at 7pm.

Interview with Matt Marchant

As mentioned last month, local Under 25 International Matthew Marchant from Victory IBC has hit the heights by qualifying for the last 48 of the World Indoor Championship at Potters 5 - 26 January 2003 which is to be televised by the BBC from the quarter finals on. (World exclusive interview - Bowls International eat your heart out!)

Palm Reader: Can we start with some brief personal details

Matthew Marchant: I'm 21 now. I've always lived in Portsmouth except for a year in Canada when I was 2 years old but I don't remember anything about that. I left school at 16 to be an apprentice toolmaker but left to do a labouring job. In 1998 I started a bowls shop in my uncle's Post Office. In partnership with my dad we later moved into our own shop in Copnor Road.

PR: Tell us about your shop

MM: It's called "Portsmouth Trophy Centre" since most of the business is trophies. The bowls side is quite small.

PR: Any other sports or interests?

MM: I play a bit of 5 a side football and we go sea fishing - we have recently bought 2 boats to take out on the Solent.

PR: How were you introduced to the game and at what age?

MM: I watched my dad play at the Alexandra club. My older brother started playing first and when I started he beat me so I was determined to beat him. I was 14. We were lucky to get some coaching along with some other juniors including Steve Robertson (Ed: another local junior International). Me and Steve often used to play together for hours on end which I now realise was very valuable practice.

PR: Tell us something about your bowling career and competitive highlights.

MM: I spent 3-4 years with the Alexandra then moved to Civil Service then Waverley. I've been Waverley singles champion for the last 2 years, and have won P&D and County titles including singles, pairs, triples and fours and also some open tournaments. I was in the National triples final in 2000 (outdoors) with Dorian Bishop and Charlie Bailey. Indoors I won the Victory singles title last year. I've been in the Hampshire Middleton Cup side (Ed: outdoors County first team) and the Liberty Trophy side since 96/7.

PR: How did you get into the international under 25's?

MM: I got to the Worthing singles final in 1997 and was spotted by a selector and got a junior trial indoors.

PR: What international appearances have you had?

MM: I played for England Under 25's in 1997 against Wales when we won by a record margin. Since then I've played each year against one or more of Wales Scotland and Ireland.

PR: Do you always lead or do you sometimes play "back end"?

MM: I always lead except in fun games.

PR: Do you have a preference for indoor or outdoor bowls?

MM: Definitely indoors because I'm more successful and also the greens are better.

PR: Which top bowlers do you admire most and why?

MM: When I started it was Andy Thomson who was at the top internationally. Now it would maybe be Ian Bond - he's very easy to talk to, quite level headed and I like his style of play.

PR: How did you qualify for the finals?

MM: You have to join the Professional Bowls Association which costs £100 to join and £50 each year. You can then play in the qualifying tournaments. I played at Crystal Palace and won my section.

PR: Have you collected any famous scalps along the way?

MM: I beat Wynn Richards who has been on TV. Also Ladies World Indoor champion Carol Ashby.

PR: Is there a professional bowls circuit as in golf or tennis and how does it work?

MM: Yes but there are only 3 events - the Welsh Masters, the BUPA Care Homes Open (Ed: on TV recently) and the World Championships. You earn world ranking points by getting to the later stages. The top 16 get automatic entry into each competition, but to climb into the top 16 you have to keep winning qualifying tournaments and getting to the later stages of the final. If you drop out of the top 16 it can be very tough to get back.

PR: What is the prize money and have you already qualified for some?

MM: Yes if I lose in the first round I get £1000. The winner gets £32,000.

PR: Have you got your own green and red bowls?

MM: Yes. Some Victory and Waverley members clubbed together and helped me buy them which I'm very grateful for. They are Taylor Vectors.



PR: Do the red bowls behave identically to the green ones or is this a stupid question?

MM: No the red ones have slightly more swing.

PR: Are you looking for sponsors?

MM: Yes. If any local businesses want to sponsor me I've currently got a spare advertising patch for one arm of my shirt.

PR: Have you played on the portable rink before?

MM: No.

PR: What do you think of the 2 sets with tie break format?

MM: I preferred the 7 shots best of 3 sets format. But I suppose this format is more exciting for the TV.

PR: Are you playing a famous player in the first round?

MM: The top seeds go into the second round. In the first I play a Welsh qualifier. The winner then plays (World Number 1) David Gourlay.

PR: How do you rate your chances?

MM: I've got a fair chance. I'm playing confidently at the moment.

PR: What are your ultimate bowling ambitions?

MM: To be world number 1.

PR: What's next after Potters?

MM: I'm currently looking into going to Australia to play in their premier league in Queensland in January to mid April (leaving my dad to run the shop!).

PR: What advice do you have for our local ambitious young bowlers looking to emulate your achievement?

PR: Play as much as you can.

MM: Well thanks Matt. Best of luck and hope to see you on TV.

Possible new Playing Formats ?

by Russell Gadd

We must realise that people play bowls for different reasons. For some a high level of competition is most important. Others want a relaxed game in convivial company although I believe we all try to win when we get on the mat. We need to cater for all sorts so perhaps we need a variety of different playing formats to suit the various different needs. Here are some ideas for variations on the league system or possible new playing formats. What do you think?

Drawn Teams

How it works: All players are put in a hat and randomly drawn into teams. Teams elect a leader to do any paperwork although the playing schedules could be worked out and duplicated by one volunteer so that leaders have little to do.

Pros:

- stops top players getting together (except if accidentally drawn - but would then only apply for one season)
- opportunity to get to know and play with new people
- stops teams and leagues becoming stale

Cons:

- some people might drop out if they don't like who they are drawn with

Player Auction

How it works: All eligible players form a pool indicating if they are prepared to be a team leader (encourage all to volunteer by making duties easy). Leaders drawn randomly from volunteers. At a pre season meeting, each leader chooses one player from the pool

(draw lots to determine who gets first, second, etc choice). When all have chosen one player, they then take turns again to choose a second player (reversing the order of choosing), and so on until all teams are complete. It would be possible to arrange "transfers" by mutual swap (if the relevant leaders agree).

Pros:

- evens out strong bowlers between teams (unless leader chooses otherwise!)
- team leaders and order of draw will change each year leading to different teams each year

Cons:

- need team leaders to be of similar strength to get even teams (maybe ask Club Captains to choose leaders of similar strength from volunteers?)

Individual Ladder

How it works: Teams change each week by simply drawing players at random. Players drawn in a team agree playing order (1,2,3,skip) by mutual agreement. This is a bit like an organised rollup like Club night, but the difference is that at the end of the game each players score is recorded. Scores are as for usual league scores (Shots for/against, points for win or draw) but each player gets this score not the team. At the end of the season prizes are awarded for the top scores (probably 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th). It would be possible to add a handicap system based on the previous year's performance (or as assessed by the Captain for new members).

Pros:

- some luck in the draw is required but you would expect "the cream to rise to the top".
- variety in games

- interest in progress as the season develops, but not too serious

- could allow players to join part way through the season

Cons:

- needs someone to collate scores each week, not the League Secretary as he/she has enough to do

Promotion/Relegation leagues

How it works: Need 2 league sessions where bottom and top teams are swapped for the following season - on the same night as otherwise some teams may not be able to continue if promoted or relegated. This has already been started on Wednesday evenings for mens triples. It could be extended to fours and ladies. Attempts have been made to run this for men's fours on Monday night but ladies bowling at 6:15, although sparsely attended, have been reluctant to move to another night - perhaps they need to be attracted by one of these new ideas ?

Pros:

- Provides good competitive bowling and may help to raise the standard of our better players with prospects of improved performances of our teams in the Bramley Bowl, Yetton, etc.
- Those unable to compete with the top section will have better games with those of similar ability avoiding large "drubbings" which has been a complaint of some recently

Cons:

- Needs agreement to move existing leagues
- The same teams may continue to win. We may need a rule to break up or disband overly successful teams!

Team Trials

How it works: All those in or competing for places in the club teams to play organised games to sharpen up their game and try out different players or combinations. The Captain(s) to pick teams to play against each other - perhaps splitting the (supposedly) better bowlers to provide more even competition. Need not take up a whole session, for example for the men we could fill up unused rink space on Friday at 6:15. Also could get the ladies teams to play the men if they wish to.

Pros:

- Gives more bowlers the chance to show what they can do in order to be considered for team places. Tests existing "names" and combinations of players. Allows people to be tested in different positions.

Cons:

- More work for the Captains!

End Rink (miscellaneous items)

Your club Youth Development Officer and County Coach Tony Grant needs your help. The club's youth squad membership is at an all time low. Please think if there are any youngsters 10 to 17 years old, perhaps in your family, who might be interested. After coaching they are likely to be able to represent Palmerston in the Inter-Club leagues and perhaps be considered when the County friendlies are selected. Full coaching by fully-registered coaches and instructors who are also covered under the EBCS National Youth Policy scheme.

The English Women's International Team match against the Hampshire mens team will now take place on Sunday 2 February 2003 at 2pm not 5 January as originally arranged. Hampshire Hogs have kindly stepped down from their match scheduled on 2 February which we will try to rearrange for the following year.

Congratulations to you all for raising £600 for Children in Need 2002. This brings a total of £2,654 given in the last 3 years. Many thanks go to Norman Evans-Rohrs for running this effort over the 3 years. Norman is stepping down now, so if any of you would like to take over running a charitable event next year, either Children in Need or perhaps some other cause, please contact Norman for details of what is involved.

Most of you will probably be aware that Neil O'Donovan resigned the Men's Captancy in November due to work commitments. In accordance with the Club constitution the Joint Management Committee must appoint a successor to take office up to the next AGM. Barry Grinaway was appointed Men's Captain and Ian Chittenden Men's Vice Captain.