



Palm Reader

The newsletter of Palmerston Indoor Bowls Club

March 2007 Issue 26

Member Satisfaction

	Great	OK	Poor	Number of comments
Rink availability	27%	72%	2%	8
Rink lighting	55%	44%	2%	9
Rink surface	20%	65%	15%	19
Desk / Stewardship	54%	46%	0%	5
Changing rooms	28%	62%	10%	22
Car Parking	86%	14%	0%	3
Catering	66%	33%	1%	15
Bar service	58%	42%	0%	7
Internal Communications	15%	71%	14%	11
Seated viewing area	15%	67%	18%	20
Rollups / casual bowls	20%	74%	7%	11
Internal Leagues / Competitions	30%	67%	3%	17
Inter Club Matches / Competitions	33%	66%	1%	13
Coaching	44%	54%	2%	17
Use of Club for prestige bowling events	41%	43%	16%	22
Social events, evening and weekend	35%	60%	5%	10
Dress code	16%	73%	11%	28



The Survey

Report
by Brian Le Marquer

Financial

	Too High	OK	Too Low	
Subscription	17%	81%	2%	17
Rink fees	21%	66%	13%	20
Match fees	16%	81%	3%	9
Bar prices	4%	86%	10%	9
Catering prices	4%	94%	2%	8

Demographics

Playing member	98%	Male	75%	- 55	5%
Social member	2%	Female	25%	Over 55	95%

Activities

	Often	Sometimes	Never	
Casual bowls	20%	59%	21%	4
Organised roll ups	17%	45%	38%	7
Club leagues	86%	11%	3%	8
Friendly matches	18%	39%	43%	4
Inter-club team matches	15%	24%	61%	5
Social functions / fund raising	24%	56%	20%	5
Committee work	14%	9%	77%	8
Restaurant	44%	50%	7%	6
Bar	50%	46%	3%	6
Use for private functions	7%	49%	43%	7

Social events

	Yes	No
Coffee mornings	50%	50%
Race nights	50%	50%
Cabaret Dinners	66%	34%
Quiz / games night	52%	48%
Bridge club	5%	95%

I would like to thank once again all of you who managed to complete and return the satisfaction questionnaire. Having had a chance to review them **it shows a high level of satisfaction with the facility and activities and with the management of the club. Some areas for improvement were highlighted and your suggestions on how these could be addressed were very helpful.**

The summary is shown on this page.

The full report including all the comments are on the notice board so if you have a moment please take a look for it does give some insight into how many of us feel about the club and how it is run.

This was the first such survey at the club and 131 were returned from a total playing membership of around 800. Although this is only a relatively low percentage (16%) the quality was excellent and many good and detailed comments were given on a wide variety of issues which are very helpful. So I think this exercise has been successful and achieved the objective of

/overleaf...

/Survey Report continued...

giving the board and committee a better understanding of the level of satisfaction at the club with ideas for improvement and new membership.

As expected the comments made in the survey were very varied and some questions provoked much more comment than others. The highest numbers of comments were made regarding the **dress code** with the overwhelming feeling for a more relaxed attitude.

After dress code the highest number of comments were for **changing rooms** (concern over cramped conditions) followed by **seated area** (more comfort required), **rink surface** (too many runs and slow speed), **leagues** (widen attractiveness for the average club bowler with more roll up sessions and triples together with competitions with drawn partners), **coaching** (request for more), **subscriptions** (reduce the joining fee and increase the rink fee). Other comments ranged from **siren / hooter** (disliked), **improve communications** (notice board improvements), **restaurant** (menu could have more variety), **smoking** (disliked and should be banned), **social** (events well attended but more needed, consider whist and cribbage and more coffee mornings).

On the whole you will see that the survey indicates that things are in pretty good shape and we are quite satisfied with our facility and bowling activity. We can be grateful for all the hard work put in by the JMC and the members that make this club what it is today.

Marketing

Regarding gaining new membership, which is a clear objective over the next year, there were also a lot of helpful suggestions and ideas for attracting new members - in fact 73 of you put something in this box. The survey reinforced my view that the main actions we can take are to improve publicity and make some minor changes to our rules to make it easier for beginners to come along and try the game. For new members I also think we need a revised induction programme to gather them quickly into the clubs activities and make them feel at home.

Therefore it is my intention to publicise the club and its facilities together with the open days more aggressively next year with posters, flyers and editorial.

We will also have our own web site linked to other relevant sites.

Two organisations mentioned in the survey were HMS Collingwood and Fareham College and I am investigating ways in which we can encourage membership from these organisations.

I also hope that more friendly matches with outdoor clubs (or to host an interclub competition?) will be held. This is an excellent way to introduce existing bowlers to our facilities.

In parallel with the increased publicity I think it's very important we make it easier for beginners to come along and try the game. So there will be some proposals for changes to our rules. I believe beginners should be able to be introduced to the rudiments of the game by existing members and not only by

qualified coaches and also that they may play in smart casual clothing. Once hooked to this splendid game they can then go for the necessary coaching and instruction and purchase the requisite clothing should they progress to playing in matches and leagues. I want to encourage as much rink time by youngsters and working members so I will also be proposing that casual dress may be worn for casual bowling.

Financially I will be working closely with some key local businesses to encourage sponsorship and provide additional support to the club. In addition we will provide a financial incentive to existing members for the successful introduction of new members and for a limited period we may also provide reductions to the membership joining fee.

My special thanks to Richard Dixon for helping to transfer the data onto the computer and to Russell Gadd for creating the macro programme that collated the individual data sheets to a summary.

Club Finals

from 6:15pm

Tuesday 27 March - Friday 30 March

This year, after a lapse of 2 years, it is planned to stage the Junior Singles Final on the Friday evening as well as the Mens and Ladies Singles Finals. **For full details see the Finals Schedule on the Competition Notice Board.**

AGM

Saturday 14th April 10am

It is AGM time again and I urge YOU to give up a little time on Saturday 14th April to support the Officers and Committees of the Club. This is the forum where the decisions are made which will affect you as a member for the next twelve months and there will be some items which will need your vote.

Your attendance will show your appreciation of the members who give so much of their time to provide you with a comfortable, well run club. Remember this is a club of which we all have the right to feel proud. Please don't treat Palmerston IBC as a leisure centre run by paid staff and where decisions are made without you having the opportunity to express your opinion.

I look forward to seeing you all at the AGM.

Norman Evans-Rohrs

Chairman Palmerston Indoor Bowls Club

Ladies Captain's Report

2006-7 has been a much better season for us ladies. We have done very well in all our competitions. I have enjoyed being ladies captain so I am going to carry on and serve another year. With the help of my vice captain Janet Chinn, also Maureen Cleaver, who make up the selection team, we work very well together and sincerely hope we will serve you well next season.

This season we went 2 rounds in the

Egham Trophy losing by just one shot in the second round. The Yetton we won 1 round and lost in the second round. The Vivienne we won two rounds and lost in the round before the zone final.

In the Riversmeet we have won 3 matches and drawn one. We are second in the league with one game in hand, so keep going ladies you are doing a grand job.

Congratulations very well done to Jill Cook, Linda Abrahams-Keyford and

Pamela Lambshead who won the National Area Finals and went to the National Triples Finals at Loddon Vale and got to the quarter finals which was a great achievement.

Lastly may I say I would like to see more ladies become interested enough to come to the trials and hopefully be selected to play and represent Palmerston Indoor Bowls Club.

*Janet Livingston
Ladies Captain*

Mens Captain's Report

Some members will be discussing the season and will have come to the conclusion that this was a bad year for the Mens teams. In the final match against East Dorset, we knew that we had to beat them by seven and a half points. After 15 ends we were up on three rinks, and the home rinks were hoping for a miracle comeback on the fourth to clinch the necessary points. It was not to be and we finally succumbed losing on three rinks but still we managed to win the match and gained 5 points out of 8.

From the very first match when we had to play all four rinks away at Loddon Vale, losing heavily, it has been an uphill

struggle to survive in the Bramley league. However I was elected on the understanding that I would be playing new keen members who would not get games if I played the Denny Cup sixteen in all the Bramley matches. The majority of those attending the trials at the start of the season were given a chance to gain experience in Bramleys including playing away on other carpets. I am pleased to report that some of these rookies accepted the challenge and are now better players who can hold their own in the squad. In the final crunch game four of these rookies played on merit, two being in the winning rink.

I would have liked to see more new members in the team backed up by some regulars but to try to rescue the situation

several Top Ten players were used, but to no avail.

I would like to thank Russell and Tony who sat on the selection committee with me, for their support. Also to wish Russell every success in the National Finals in Nottingham next month. Tony deserves a special mention, as he has kept going through difficult times and has played whenever possible. I hope things are sorted out in the coming months.

I do not think it is the end of the world that we must play in the Trisham next year. The new players will be stronger and experienced next year and given the chance they will perform and help to regain our place in the Bramley league.

*Eric Brierley
Mens Captain*

Bramley relegation

I'd like to echo Eric's comments that being relegated from the Bramley Bowl division to the Trisham Trophy division is not a calamity. Some of you will remember that I nominated Eric for Captain as he stated he wanted to widen the selection policy for the Bramley side to avoid picking all the top players (i.e. those selected for the Top Ten). He invited me to be a selector and I am fully supportive of his selection policy. I only regret that he was virtually forced by the result of the January players meeting to revert to putting in top players to try to stay up. At the subsequent selection meeting we both thought that this change of tack was wrong, but we respected the democratic decision. Unfortunately I think it was unduly influenced by the understandable short term wish not to suffer relegation rather than taking the longer term view of the effect on the Club and the players in the future.

There are 4 major competitions entered by the club, plus other single rink and double rink competitions and this is far too many to expect the top players to play in, as they have all their National and Club/County competitions to play as well, (not to mention the odd league game!). There are enough Club representative matches for us to enable more people to play for Palmerston (and be proud of their achievements). If we are to satisfy all those who want to play for (and are capable of playing for) the Club we have to decide which competitions are suitable for the "up and coming" bowlers to gain real competitive experience from and it is clear to me that the Bramley / Trisham is exactly right for this.

Going down to the Trisham division allows us to keep this policy next year so that the wider squad, given more experience at this

level, can fight for promotion back to the Bramley division. Banister and Atherley dropped to the Trisham last year and are now coming back up. East Dorset, probably the strongest club in Hampshire, got promoted last year and nearly dropped back - they didn't play their stars in the last game to try to stay up. None of these clubs put their top players in this competition. It's a perfect competition for the clubs to use for their "second team". Getting experience at this level is a route into the top team for ambitious players at these clubs. Victory do it also, but they have such strength in depth that their second team can stay in the Bramley division and even challenge for the Bramley title. There are some clubs who put some but not all of their top players in the Bramley (except when it clashes with another competition) such as Rushmore and Loddon Vale. Only clubs such as Havant and Riverside have to field all their top players. However even with these, they are not strong enough to gain promotion to the Bramley. We are stronger than them with a bigger membership - remember we very nearly qualified for the finals of the Top Ten - ahead of Atherley and Arun.

Next year I'd rather see us continue to run a wide squad, hopefully with a settled Trisham side, than revert to trying to play all the top players in this team in order to climb back into the Bramley.

Until the AGM we won't be certain if Eric wishes to remain as Captain (I sincerely hope he does) or whether another, possibly with different views, might take this on. However as a member of the selection committee this year I wanted to show my unreserved support for Eric's policy and the way he has carried out his duties and explain why it is not doom and gloom as some people might think.

Russell Gadd

Letters to the Editor

Hi Russell

This may be something that has been doing the rounds for years, but it has only just reached us. May I pass it on for Palm Readers to enjoy.

(With apologies to Rudyard Kipling)

*If you can build a head, when lead or second
are playing wide, or narrow, or too short,
and third, upon whose skill you always reckoned
is doing anything but what he ought.*

*If you can win, and not be too uplifted,
or lose, and not be downcast by defeat,
remembering that the lucky or the gifted
can, on their off days both be badly beat.*

*If you can smile, and not give way to cursing,
or blame the green, or deem your luck too hard
when the position you've been grimly nursing
is shattered by a drive you could not guard.*

*If you can draw the shot right on the kitty
when half a dozen woods are in your way.*

*If you can grin and hum a cheerful ditty
when ends are burnt and jack is out of play.*

*If you can give your third the hand you favour
and see him take the other and go wide,
and then go down, and try and draw a saver
with the kitty guarded well on every side.*

*If you can drive, and miss, and not be worried
by your opponent's shout of "still we lie",
and draw again with heart and brain unflurried,
and tap the winning wood and make it fly.*

*If you can draw the shot in that last minute
when yells are called and something must be done,
yours is the game and you deserve to win it,
and what is more, you'll be a skip, my son.*

Mike Green

Giant Easter Egg

During March a 1Kg giant Easter Egg will be raffled at the club. Tickets £1 each and only 100 tickets will be sold. All the proceeds are going to the Southampton General Hospital "Gift of Sight Research Project" Please help us achieve our £2,000 target.

If you would like more information about this project or Lions Clubs in your area please contact **Marian Rose** (card lady) 01489 575270

Committee Notes

The Men's Committee discussed the proposal for having a handicap system for the Men's Leagues and agreed to give it a trial period of one season. The trial will then be reviewed. However, when reporting back to the JMC a number of members of the JMC felt that the proposal should be raised at the AGM for approval by the membership.

The proposal to move the Friday drive from 11:30am to 2pm was raised with the members who regularly attend and at least 50% wanted to stay with the 11:30 session. It was agreed that this proposal would therefore be dropped.

Tony Grant, Ron Weale and Frank McAully have decided to step down at the AGM from their positions of responsibility for the green. Andrew Miller said he would be willing to take over the responsibilities of Rink Manager. Replacements for Ron and Frank are urgently sought to take over the weekly maintenance duties.

The issue of "bouncing" of bowls on delivery was discussed and whether the Club had a policy on this. There is no current policy on this as Committee members felt that appropriate coaching would eliminate such a problem. Eric Brierley was concerned that incorrect delivery would cause damage to the carpet underlay and as this was to be replaced in August at considerable expense he felt that members who have such a delivery problem should be assisted in some way. Please contact one of the coaches if you feel you have this problem and wish to avoid undue damage to the carpet.

Tony Grant said that arrangements would be needed to dispose of the old underlay. The centre section is likely to still be in a reasonable condition for domestic use if members are interested. If so, please contact Tony Grant or Andrew Miller (you would have to make your own arrangements for removal and transport at the appropriate time).

All future Winter League seasons will start on the 3rd Monday in September.

For **2007-8** the dates are as follows:

Summer Leagues finish Sunday 16 Sept 2007

Winter Leagues

Monday 17 Sept 2007 - Sunday 23 Dec 2007

Monday 7 Jan 2008 - Sunday 6 Apr 2008

Finals week

Tuesday 8 Apr 2008 - Friday 11 Apr 2008

Spectacle Collection

Thank you everyone. The specs are collected on one day during April by Lions Clubs all over Hampshire. They are then shipped to France where they are graded before being sent to the 3rd world.

Lions Clubs throughout the world have saved the sight of **27 million people** since 1990

at an average cost of 6 US dollars (£3.00 sterling)

We have improved the eyesight of more than 100 million people.

The collecting bin will be in the club through out the summer so still put your old specs in there and they will be the start of next years collection

Situations Vacant

Your Club needs you!

Vounteers are sought for the following jobs. The person who is retiring at the end of this winter season is shown in brackets - please see them (or speak to a member of Committee) if you are at all interested - they will explain what is required. We will understand if you take it no further but you can be sure all members of the Club will be grateful if you do decide to help.

Match Secretary (Ray Rowe)

Ladies League Secretary (Maureen Cleaver)

Newsletter Editor (Russell Gadd)

Green Maintenance Assistants (Ron Weale, Frank McAully)

Eggheads Wanted

Anyone interested in making up a Palmerston team to enter the BBC2 "Eggheads" programme? Come on brainboxes! Ring 01329 221291 **Marge Ramson**

ROCKY APPEAL



for a new
UNIQUE
CANCER LABORATORY

Update

The total is now £6925, a marvellous result for Palmerston to be proud of.

Janet Mudd

Walking Sticks

Member Maurice Brown and his friend John Finegan will be offering a wide range of walking sticks in the upcoming **Easter Coffee Morning** organised by the Social Committee (**Saturday April 7th – 9.30-11.30am**). Each is individually hand crafted, some horn-handled, various lengths, decorative but functional. All proceeds will be donated to club funds.

Social and Fundraising

by Rene Bowshell - Social Secretary

SOCIAL PROGRAMME

Final report before we go into the Summer season so please make a note of future dates for your diary. A programme of the proposed events is already displayed on the Social Board but there are already two amendments. **Summer Race Night** is now likely to be on **21st July** and not 28th. We have to find an alternative date for Cabaret Dinner on Aug 18th as Richard is not available. Will confirm as soon as possible.

The **March and April events** have been arranged at very short notice and require your immediate attention.

Saturday March 17th – St Patrick's Day – 7.00-10.30pm

Cheese and Wine Evening with Games Fun Bingo and Quizzes. Tickets £4 including supper + Glass of wine. Tickets available from the Bar – booking list on Board.

Popular event enjoyed by everyone last year – also a good fundraiser!

Saturday April 7th – Easter Coffee Morning – 9.30-11.30am

There were complaints last year that members used this event to unload their rubbish so that it became more like a Jumble Sale! Social Committee (4 of us!) have been given the task of ensuring that this doesn't happen again. A list of stalls has been drawn up as follows: *Cakes and home made preserves/Books, Jigsaws, DVDs, CDs/Greetings cards/Jewellery/ Unwanted Gifts Toiletries/ Craftwork/ Woodcraft/ Fuchsias, young plants/ Bottles Draw*. ALL these stalls need a Manager and items to sell. So far the response has been very disappointing (our thanks to those who have responded and listed their names). The event has always proved a good fundraiser – even last year we raised over £300. The home made cake stall has been well supplied over the years and there are several members who sell their own greetings cards in the Club. Please offer your services and contributions so that we don't have to cancel the event. (Bruce is already preparing his Fuchsias!)

FUND RAISING

Treasure Chest - After 10 weeks the 'Treasure' was won on Friday night (9th) by regular contributor Gerry Thomas. The

accumulated fund was £180. Gerry has generously donated his winnings to the Rocky Appeal. Thank you Gerry, much appreciated. With only 3 weeks to go the Draw has closed down. We would like to resume next season but maybe with a different format to generate more enthusiasm.

If anyone has any brilliant ideas please let us know. The current formula 'Box 13' has served us well over the years and probably raised a few thousand pounds but we are open to suggestions.

'100' Club - February winners were: Mike Buck & D.Trupenny – each won £40. The March Draw (Final) will take place on March 23rd.

Thank you to all those who contributed this year. Your support is appreciated.

Bonus Ball - We are hoping that Rita will agree to continue with 'once a week' lottery draw during the Summer. The steady £38 or £19 weekly contribution to the Club mounts up over the year and is much appreciated.

Have a good Summer.

The Prospect ?

A story with a choice of endings

I was just having a quiet pint in the "Elm Tree" when who should walk in but non other than my old squash buddy Joe.

"Well well well, fancy seeing you here. It must be, what, 10 years at least. How time flies! Where was it - of course, Fareham Squash Club"

"Hello you old dog." (I was not so fond of this description, but reluctantly agree I am some years older than him) "How are you? Still keeping fit?"

"Not so fit as when I tried to match you on the squash court. Unfortunately my right knee told me it was time to give up. I get my exercise in gentler ways now. Are you still running round the court like a blue-***ed fly?"

"Wish I was. For me it was my ankle.

Turned it last September and the doc said you can have cortisone but it won't get any better and I should pack it in. Mary persuaded me to retire as she didn't want to push me around in a wheelchair when I'm 60." (He still thinks 60 is old!)

"I must admit I miss it especially in the long winter evenings - TV's no substitute. What are you doing these days?"

"Bowls"

"Pardon - you never used to swear."

"Indoor bowls - you know, rolling a bowling ball along the ground."

"Oh the old mans game? You don't mean ten-pin bowling?"

"Yes - I mean no, and no. Lawn bowls, but I play indoors in the winter at Palmerston

Bowls Club in Newgate Lane. And it's no longer an old man's game these days, all ages play. You don't have to run around, but you do need skill - remember what I used to do to compensate for your greater fitness?"

"I remember you used to lob the ball into the back corners where I had to dig it out. But really, where's the skill in bowls? Surely it's pretty easy when you get the hang of it. Sounds a bit boring to me."

"On the contrary. It's one of those things that when it gets its hooks into you, you want to play it more and more. There's a lot of different types of shot to play although the lob isn't one of them. I know you, you'd enjoy the challenge of beating an opponent. You'd get the same sort of satisfaction you got when you used to thrash me at squash. I'd look forward to getting my own back now on the bowling green."

"I suppose after 10 years practice you would win, but it wouldn't last long. Give me a few weeks, maybe a bit longer, and we'll see about it. No, seriously, I might be interested in trying it out. Must be better than the telly"

Ending 1

"Sure, great idea. Why don't you come down to the club one day and see for yourself? We can have a drink at the bar and I'll show you around. Watch a few games in progress and if you're interested you can come on the green with me and try it out. You can hire shoes and bowls, no problem."

"OK when?"

"One weekend. How about this weekend. Strike while the iron's hot."

"This weekend? OK but I'll have to check with Mary." (calls his wife on the mobile)

"Of course. Sorry I should have said. Bring Mary. It's a very sociable game, lots of couples play. She'd probably enjoy doing something she could beat you at. In fact bring the whole family. You can get the kids off the computer for a while."

"The kids have left home now. But if it's a game, Tom would be interested. Is it expensive?"

"Not at all. No more expensive than your squash really. And there are times when you can 'pay and play' at first without a big commitment. If you join, there's a great induction programme which includes tuition and joining in with other relative beginners. You can take it as slow or as fast as you want. There's a juniors club, leagues, competitions, matches against other clubs or just casual social bowls. Take your pick."

"Sounds good. OK, must dash. This Sunday is best for us. What time?"

"Great. There's always a few spare rinks after 6. Does 7.30 suit you?"

"Fine. Anything I should know first?"

"Just make sure Mary wears something she can bend down in! It's signposted off Newgate Lane just after the bridge. You can't miss it. See you there."

Ending 2

"Sure. I think you'd enjoy bowling. And the club is in need of new members. I'll have to see if I can find a time for you to come down and have a look round. Probably one weekend. I'll look at the booking sheets and give you a call."

"What about this weekend? We're not doing anything special. That is Mary and me."

"Yes I remember Mary. OK. Sure, if you want to have a go, you can hire shoes and bowls. The only thing is I'll have to see if I can arrange a coach."

"A coach? We can almost walk from our house."

"No, no. We have to have a coach present to make sure you don't learn any bad habits. I should hopefully be able to find one, if not this weekend, maybe next."

"Well, OK if you say so. I wasn't thinking of taking it up professionally."

"And we'll have to get you kitted out properly. I'm sure you've got a plain white shirt? Do you have any grey trousers?"

"I thought you said it wasn't an old man's game any longer. Grey trousers? There's an old suit which is more or less grey. Anything else? What about Mary?"

"Grey bowling skirt. I'm afraid it might be best to come on your own. She won't have anything like that in her wardrobe unless she's done it before. Or she could come just for a drink and have a look. I think we're planning an open day this year in the Summer when she could come and try it out."

"I see why you're short of members. Is there a special handshake too? Look. Let me think about it. I'll call you. Must dash. Bye."



INTRODUCING A HANDICAP SYSTEM INTO MEN'S LEAGUES

Resulting from meetings by the JMC and Men's Committee the decision was made to have a trial period of one season to the above leagues during the 2007/08 season.

This decision is the result of a number of members asking me if it has been considered, so with this in mind I set about trying to create a simple handicap system. With no yardstick as in other sports the constant within this sport was the shot difference. Looking to that I considered that the average shot difference was the possible answer. So the handicap system will be based on the shot difference of 2006/07 and an average created from those figures. The handicap will not be changed throughout the season (unless some situation totally unexpected occurs). At the end of each season a new handicap will be calculated from that season's results for use in the following season.

A positive shot difference will receive 0 as a handicap and a negative will be given a handicap, rounded as appropriate. Handicaps can come down as well as going up.

Prior to the start of the season a handicap list will be promulgated on the league notice board to allow team leaders to inform their team of the handicap to be used.

The results on the cards should reflect the inclusion of the handicap(s).

Ian Chittenden

League Secretary

A proposed Handicap System

If you look at this months "Committee Notes" you will see that the introduction of handicaps for the men's leagues was generally approved, but the Committee want the AGM to make the final decision whether to go ahead. The above note from Ian explains the handicap system he is proposing to use for next season which I believe is to introduced into some, but not necessarily all, men's leagues for the 2007/8 season. In order for this to be discussed and approved by the members at the AGM a proposal needs to be put forward to add to the rules for running the leagues. Therefore I have created the following proposal for this purpose and have added some commentary below (which are only my own views).

Proposal:-

Add to Appendix 3:

3.18 A handicap system will be introduced into the Leagues from the 2007/8 season. The leagues affected will be determined by the the Joint Management Committee on the advice of the League Secretary.

3.18.1 Each team's handicap will be added to its score at the start of every game and all scores on the scorecard will be the adjusted scores. It is the skip's responsibility to ensure that the handicaps of both teams are correctly stated. References to shots in rules 3.5 and 3.11 mean the adjusted score.

3.18.2 Handicaps will remain fixed throughout the season and will be reassessed at the start of each new season based on non-handicapped shots in the preceding season. The handicap will be zero for any new team.

3.18.3 The handicap will be set to zero for any team with more than one new

registered player at the beginning of the season. Where a team with a non-zero handicap registers any new players during the season so that it has more than one new player as compared with the previous season, the handicap will not be changed but the team will be excluded when determining the league winners at the end of the season.

3.18.4 For the 2007/8 season the handicap will be based on the previous season's average shot difference where negative, i.e. shots for less shots against divided by the number of games played. Where this gives a positive number (i.e. shots for greater than shots against) the handicap will be set to zero. Any roundings or adjustments necessary will be determined by the League Secretary in his/her sole discretion. The basis for handicaps may be changed in subsequent seasons as determined by the Joint Management Committee.

Commentary:

When you look carefully at the method of determining the handicap you will find that only roughly the bottom half of each league (as it finishes this season) will gain a handicap. This may appear strange at first, as I thought when I first came across it. But it has some advantages which I think will enable some of the doubters to accept it. In essence it allows the top half of the league to play on a level basis without handicaps, but gives handicaps to the lower half to help them compete in games they would normally have no chance in. I expect the teams near the top will still be the ones contesting the league title at the end of next season, although some will drop points against handicapped teams. And the teams near the bottom will not get the drubbings they got before (or at

least not as many).

There is one additional feature which I have put in this proposal which was not in Ian's original ideas. That is rule 3.18.3 which I have introduced to give protection against teams signing on several better bowlers and so getting an unfair handicap. If at the start of the new season you introduce more than one new bowler to a team with a handicap, the handicap is zeroed. However it is too complicated to try to change handicaps part way through the season, so I think the only thing you can do if people change their teams part way through is just to disqualify them from possibly winning the league, as I am sure the other teams will feel aggrieved if this were to happen.

Having spoken to Ian I have to tell you that he is against introducing 3.18.3 as he feels it is sufficient to know that these teams will suffer next season when the handicap is reassessed. Personally I don't think it's likely people will try to cheat by deliberately introducing better players, but where there are significant changes to a team (which mostly occur at the start of the season) I'd prefer to avoid the risk of bad feeling about a team with an unfair handicap. In a sense it's like saying this is sufficiently like a new team to say it should start again with a zero handicap. If however you feel this part is not right, please propose an amendment to remove 3.18.3 from this proposal so that the AGM can then decide which way to go. (Any amendment has to be proposed prior to the meeting).

No system is going to be perfect. Let's give it a go and be prepared to improve it if necessary in future seasons.

Russell Gadd

Editorial

I am afraid this is going to be my last editorial. Despite the fact that I have worked with computers for many years, looking at a computer screen has always been a strain and the effect on my health has lately got the point that I need to curtail this. Typing and formatting the newsletter goes with the job and this is partly responsible for the delay in publishing this edition for which I apologise. I very much regret that I have had to decide to call it a day. This is the only reason, otherwise I would love to continue.

So I am appealing for someone to come forward and take over. I can run through with them how I produce it, but whoever takes it on will be able to use their own methods. The technology is not important - it's the regular communication which is vital to keep people informed

Being editor is not an official position with the Club, you sit on no committee. However you will receive every co-operation from committee members (for which I give grateful thanks).

Apart from communicating to the membership what is going on in the Club, my main editorial theme has always been as a catalyst for change. Despite many people wishing things would stay as they are, that way leads to stagnation and decay. This is already happening. When originally we had around 1000 bowling members; the number now is approximately 800 and still dropping. Also many existing members are bowling less. We will find out in a few weeks time, but I strongly suspect we have lost money this year and face possible increases in subs.

To me the message is absolutely clear - we need to increase our membership. You might say "but this is a national trend - look at other clubs indoors and out - it is unavoidable". That is why we need to do something. Some clubs have seen the light and are doing something about it. Some will delay and hope things get better. Some will just ignore the problem or will not have the people to make it happen and so will fade away. It won't happen unless we change things, so there will need to be a preparedness to ditch some of the long established ways of doing things.

Therefore I hope you will support Brian Le Marquer in his initiatives to make things more attractive to potential new members. When something new is suggested, please don't immediately react with "we don't do things that way here". Instead think about how it could be done. Making Palmerston more attractive to outsiders doesn't mean less attractive to members. He needs your support to make it work - he can't do it alone, he can only identify the actions - he needs you to agree and implement them.

I'll finish by telling you a story of how I might have joined Banister Park - or more accurately how I never seriously entertained joining them. Long before I was a bowler, Janet and I found ourselves with time on our hands in Eastleigh and decided to walk into this bowling club to see what it might offer. We saw an afternoon league in progress - the white hair and grey attire immediately gave an old folks atmosphere. We were then greeted, no confronted, by a woman who enquired what business we had coming into a private club. When we said we might be interested in joining she said it was expensive and we would have to make a formal application to join, backed by two existing members, etc., etc.. The only thing on her mind was to get rid of us. We turned round and left, never to consider bowling for another 10 years or so.

I'm glad we eventually came to Palmerston. I've got a lot from this wonderful game and have tried to put a little back. Palmerston is my bowling home. Although I play mainly in the competitive scene, I like to see others enjoying bowling too in whatever form their bowling takes - competitions, leagues, rollups. tuition, etc. All this is Palmerston, long may it prosper.

Russell Gadd - Editor

This is the last edition until someone else takes it on, hopefully next season.

Hampshire - in the Liberty Trophy final

Hampshire men rose to the occasion when threatened with losing their semi-final against Somerset in the Liberty Trophy. All through the game Somerset had been ahead. The gap ranged from 10 shots down to 3 or 4, then increased again.

On the 17th end one Hampshire rink dropped a 5, Somerset were 13 shots up and things looked bleak. However Hampshire were not beaten. Suddenly 4 Hampshire rinks scored, egged on by some vociferous Hampshire support. The surge was on.

The deficit began to be pegged back. The drama came to a head on the 21st end of the two remaining rinks. Only the skips were to bowl, neither wanting to decide their shot without knowing the position of the other head. Graham Standley's bowl edged in for second shot. One rink remaining. Somerset

needed 3 shots to tie and take it to an extra end. The jack was in the ditch and we had shot on the edge, they had 2 seconds. Their skip had one bowl remaining and had to dislodge our bowl and stay. He was fractionally wide and a great roar went up from Hampshire players and supporters. We had won by 4 shots. What a thriller!

The final will be played at Nottingham IBC on Sunday April 22 at 2 pm, a fitting finale to the men's individual National Championships. It goes without saying that supporters are sure to be rewarded with a display of passion and commitment from the Hampshire team, where the team spirit is tremendous. We are up against the favourites Norfolk, who have won the trophy in the past 2 years and will be gunning for their hat-trick. Bring them on!