



BOWLING YOU OVER

The Newsletter of the Royal Leamington Spa Bowling Club

October 2021

Dates for your diary - so far!

October

Sunday 10 th	Short mat coaching session in clubhouse – 2pm
Tuesday 12 th	Tuesday evening weekly short mat bowling starts - 7pm
Thursday 14 th	Thursday afternoon weekly short mat bowling starts – 1:30pm
Thursday 14 th	Stratford League short mat league AGM and fun time with supper – 7pm
Saturday 30 th	Club awards dinner and dance! – 6:30pm
Sunday 31 st	WWBA - Annual presentation lunch at Tally Ho Birmingham – 12:30pm

November

Saturday 6 th	Closing date for WCBA competition entries for 2022
Sunday 14 th	RLSBC –v- Avon Valley IDBC – 2pm at Avon Valley
Friday 19 th	Quiz Night in the clubhouse - 7pm
Saturday 20 th	WCBA – AGM in the clubhouse – 2pm
Saturday 27 th	WVPBA – AGM in the clubhouse – 10am
Sunday 28 th	WCBA – Annual presentation lunch at Tally Ho Birmingham – 12:30pm

December

Sunday 12 th	Carols, mulled wine and mince pies in the clubhouse - 3pm
Friday 31 st	Cut-off date for AGM – Nominations of Officers
Friday 31 st	Cut-off date for AGM – AOB items
Friday 31 st	New Years Eve Party in the clubhouse – 7pm

January 2022

Saturday 22 nd	Avon Valley IDBC –v- RLSBC – 2pm at Avon Valley
Wednesday 26 th	Club AGM in the clubhouse – 7pm

February 2022

Saturday 2 nd	Captains –v- President/Chairman – 2pm at Avon Valley
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Later in 2022

Tuesday 12 th April	- Greens open for the 2022 season
Friday 29 th July to Saturday 6 th August	- Commonwealth Games at RLSBC
Saturday & Sunday 20 th & 21 st August	- Club Finals weekend
Thursday 25 th August to Sunday 11 th September	- National Championships at RLSBC

*** Other playing and social events will be added to the diary list later so please keep an eye on the club website for up to date details

From your President

Having had most of the 2020 season wiped out because of COVID-related restrictions, the vaccine roll-out has certainly helped to give us all much better opportunities to get back out on the greens again this year. However, government restrictions were still in place in the early part of the season and led to some matches having to be cancelled and others played in a reduced format, with no opportunities for socialising at the end of games, whilst County competitions were reduced in length to enable matches to fit the format of a shortened National Championships. As a club, we also had to become much more familiar with E and D greens because of COVID-related over-running work on A, B and C greens being carried out in preparation for the 2022 Commonwealth Games. Anyway, despite the long list of things that made 2021 far from "back to normal", I sincerely hope that you have all been able to have a really enjoyable and successful season.

As a club, this year, we have been able to introduce a great many people to the sport and to subsequently welcome them into the club as members. In a few years' time, I hope to be able to see some of you representing the club in senior teams, entering County competitions, etc. The comprehensive and structured coaching courses that have been developed and implemented by Jerry Horne and the other qualified club coaches that we are fortunate to have, will certainly give you all the best possible chances in that respect.

The penultimate weekend of the season saw some pleasant early autumn sunshine for our club finals. Over the course of the two days, it was lovely to see 25 different club members participating in at least one of the finals. Congratulations to all of our finalists, and especially Graham White who retained his position as men's club champion and Dawn Horne, who regained the ladies' championship trophy she last held in 2018.

In County and National competitions, it was another successful season for some of our members and again, I congratulate you all.

- Dawn Horne, Anita Cowdrill, Jenny Wickens and Janice White were crowned Warwickshire Ladies County Fours champions, the first time that members from our club have won this competition. As Warwickshire's representatives at the National Championships, the four were beaten by just a single shot in their opening match against a team that included an England international and past National Champions.
- Sandra Payne was runner-up in the Ladies County Unbadged Singles competition.
- One of our Ladies "Top Club" teams finished as runners-up in the County competition.
- Caroline and Michael Edwards were semi-finalists in the County Mixed Pairs competition.
- Ray and Graham White were runners-up in the South Warwickshire Pairs competition.
- Neil Weston and Dave Wigman reached the semi-final of the Warwickshire Section of the National Senior Pairs competition.
- Dawn Horne, Janice White, Graham White and Ray White were finalists in the Warwickshire Section of the National Mixed Fours competition.

In Inter-Club National competitions, I must highlight the exceptional performances this year by the club's ladies "Top Club" team. After beating Welford to win the Warwickshire Area of the competition (revenge for the defeat Welford inflicted on the club in the final of the County competition!) they beat Worcestershire champions, Broadway, in the last 32 and then Wiltshire champions, Box, in the last 16, to reach the last eight in the country and play at the National finals held at Leamington in September. This is the first time in the club's history that we have progressed this far. Unfortunately, we were beaten in that quarter-final by Kings BC from Torquay in Devon, an extremely experienced team consisting of international players, Commonwealth Games gold medallists and national championship winners (and who duly went on to win the title for the third consecutive time). However, the team did the club proud and in an exciting game, were so close to taking points in both the singles and pairs games. I was particularly pleased to see so many club members providing very strong support to the team and especially to see our past President Richard Ashley who came along to cheer on the ladies despite only recently being allowed home from hospital following surgery. In recent years this team has gradually progressed a little further in the competition year on year, so who knows what they might achieve in a few years more!

In triples leagues, the club had success in the ladies' Friday evening Stratford Herald League, where the RLS "B" team finished as champions of Division 1 for the third consecutive time whilst the RLS1 men's team finished as runners-up in Division 1 of the Wednesday afternoon Courier League.

On behalf of all members, I sincerely thank everyone who has contributed to the running of the club during the year, including our Club Chairman and his Management Committee and all of our other Club Officers, who all put in many hours of work over the course of the season to keep the various different aspects of the club running in a smooth and efficient manner. I thank too, all those members who helped in the bar or kitchen during the National Championships, which provide a significant source of income for the club, without which we would not be able to operate as we currently do.

If you are going to be playing indoors regularly during our closed season, I wish you every success and shall look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at different events over the course of the winter, or if not, next Spring when the greens reopen for 2022, a year that will see the Commonwealth Games bowls competitions taking place at Victoria Park from 29th July to 6th August.

Malcolm

From your Chairman

Having just come to the end of the 2021 outdoor season and following the refurbishment of the clubhouse we are planning to increase the club's social and playing activities during the winter. Some dates for your diary are shown at the beginning of this newsletter but many others will be added over the coming months so do please regularly check for details on the club website.

Since the start of COVID we are very pleased to have welcomed many new and enthusiastic members to the club and we hope that our numbers will further increase during 2022. To ensure that as a club we can help to enable people to achieve their potential we have increased the number of qualified coaches and as we move forward into 2022, it is intended to offer structured coaching to help and encourage members of all abilities to reach their personal goal. Much of the planning of our coaching has been undertaken by Jerry Horne and I would particularly like to thank him for his hard work in planning coaching activities and for the support he gives to the other coaches. Coach Bowls run courses leading to the only nationally recognised accredited qualifications across the various bowls formats and they have now established a number of 'Flagship Centres of 'Coaching Excellence' one of which is our club.

Hosting the Commonwealth Games bowls and para-bowls competitions is a great honour for the district, town and our club. The preparatory work coupled with COVID restrictions have been disruptive for the club and our members but the improvements to the whole site will offer significant benefits as we move forward. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members for their understanding throughout 2020 and 2021, particularly with regard to having to play at various times on all five greens with little opportunity to use our nominated home green. As we move closer to the games we will again need to accept a level of disruption whilst the work on and around the greens continues. There will be a period of time before, during and after the games when our use of the clubhouse and greens will be limited or non-existent. Once the dates are finalised and can be made public I will update all members with definitive information. The management committee and club officers will be working hard to ensure that we have a full fixture list for the season which takes account of the availability of greens. We will also make arrangements for the use of an alternative green at another 'friendly' club where necessary, which is particularly important for members who wish to be able to play in competitions.

As Malcolm has already stated in his message, the club and it's members had a successful 2021 in terms of area, county and national competitions. I personally enjoyed playing in a number of outside competitions and would encourage all members to consider entry into relevant ones and particularly into our club competitions. In view of the Commonwealth Games there will be some changes to the timings of some of our club competitions to enable a full set to take place. Our club finals weekend is scheduled for 20th and 21st August and further details of the competitions will be issued in the near future.

The National championships in 2021 were very different from what we were used to in the past. We experienced the change in match formats, less qualifying players and shorter matches. There was a grandstand constructed around A green and part of B green which did away with the hospitality tent, the need to pay for entry (except for our members), less opportunity to make purchases in the tent, a fans' zone and revised catering and bar facilities! The club was asked to provide a number of VIP days in the clubhouse and was not allowed to provide hospitality, catering or bar facilities to the general public on those days. This was not popular with visiting bowlers who have previously enjoyed our hospitality. The management committee have requested a meeting with Bowls England to review the event and to try to improve things for 2022 so that club members and **all** those visiting the club have a good experience, not just the VIP's. I very much appreciate all the hard work undertaken by those members who came forward to help and particularly to those who worked exceptionally hard in the kitchen during the VIP days. It is always difficult to name individuals as I know everybody who came forward to help did a brilliant job but the efforts put in by Janice and Ray White do deserve a special mention – very many thanks for leading the way!

In closing I would like to encourage all members to talk to family and friends about playing a great sport at our great club. Our facilities are excellent, it's a very cheap sport to play and our membership fees are amongst the lowest in the country. I am sure that you will all know somebody who would enjoy playing the game and playing short mat over the winter is a wonderful way of introducing new people to the club.

David

From your Men's Captain

After a very disrupted season last year, it was good to start this season on time, and enjoy our bowling again, albeit with a number of restrictions in place. My thanks go to all the members who played in the men's and mixed games throughout the season. We have won 21 games and lost 5 which is a very good achievement. We have been fortunate to welcome several new members in matches this season, and hopefully they will continue to enjoy the bowling and the facilities of our friendly club. Please feel that you may contact me if you have any questions, or anything that you are not sure of.

As far as competitive bowling is concerned the men's teams progressed well in the Two Fours, Tony Allcock and Top Club, before narrowly losing to Welford in all three.

In Individual Competitions:

Neil Weston and David Wigman lost in the Senior Pairs semi final to the pair that qualified for the National Championships. In the National Mixed Fours, Dawn Horne, Janice White, Graham White and Ray White reached the area final. In the County Mixed Pairs Caroline and Michael Edwards reached the semi final. Malcolm Wickens, Jerry Horne, Graham White and Ray White made it all the way to the South Warwickshire Fours semi final and finally Ray White and Graham White went one better losing in the South Warwickshire Pairs Final. Very well done to all of the above.

Coaching

We are very lucky to have a first class coaching set up headed by Jerry Horne, who has worked very hard and along with the other coaches David and Jane Wigman, Caroline and Michael Edwards and Anita Cowdrill have organised sessions during the season covering different aspects of improving bowling skills.

I would certainly encourage all bowlers to attend these sessions to give a good foundation to enable progression and hence achieve full potential.

Just a reminder - we have three mixed matches at Avon Valley during the winter. If you would like to be considered for selection please sign up on the website as usual.

Finally many thanks to Malcolm Wickens as Vice Captain for all his support throughout the season also to Jerry Horne and Dick Williams who kindly gave their time for selection meetings.

It has been a privilege to be your Men's Captain for the season, now I need to go and have a lie down until next April!!

Regards

Bill

Short Mat Bowling

The winter season of Short Mat bowling in the clubhouse will start on Sunday 10th at 2pm with a coaching session for new short mat bowlers. Usual sessions start on Tuesday 12th October at 7pm and then on Thursday 14th October at 1.30pm. In 2019 we had three teams in the Stratford Short Mat League and we have four for the coming season. If you have not played in a team previously and would like to join one for a bit of social competitive fun during the winter please let Jane Wigman know. If you have never tried short mat, do come along and 'have a go'. It is a lot of fun. Just wear something casual and comfortable and bring along your bowls and bowling shoes.

New Age Kurling

We obtained some New Age Kurling equipment in 2019 and had a number of fun sessions. We will be organising some regular sessions again during this winter and will let you know when they will be starting.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday 26th January 2022 at 7pm in the clubhouse. There is no provision within our rules for Any Other Business (AOB) to be raised on the night of the AGM. If you have any items that you would like to be included under AOB please notify the Secretary in writing or by email, by 31st December 2021. The nomination forms for officers of the Club and members of committees are now up in the clubhouse. The closing date for all nominations is 31st December 2021. The nominee must agree to the nomination and the names of the proposer and seconder must be clearly shown. The clubhouse is open from October onwards when the Short Mat sessions are taking place. (If you have a problem with access, or any other queries please contact Jane Wigman).