

LADY CAPTAIN'S REPORT 2023

Good evening, Ladies and welcome to our End of Season meeting 2023. Another six months of outdoor bowls gone in a flash, but I do hope that you have enjoyed your bowling.

Record breaking rainfall in March delayed our start by a week, but we were soon back in the swing of roll-ups, ballots, Bank Holiday drives, matches and competitions.

A new season brought us a new shirt. The Bowls Club provided Ladies and Gents with similar shirts so that we look united when playing in mixed matches. We have received many favourable comments from opposition clubs. A note of thanks here to Kara who co-designed the shirt and was responsible for order, delivery, and distribution. She is now pushing for us to adopt black trousers.

Later in the season brought us the introduction of JHOB a now familiar addition on the Purley Ladies WhatsApp group. Jane Harding has reported (in her witty but accurate style) providing great entertainment to those unable to attend matches, particularly our working ladies and those taking holidays – thank you Jane.

We dispensed with our usual Tea Rota this season and the new system adopted appears to have worked well. The introduction of a dishwasher has much assisted the clearing away process. A thank you to Ursula for kindly replacing our tablecloths that disappeared mysteriously during the closed season. The new brightly checked clothes have been admired with envy by many of our visitors. New flooring in the Ladies and Gents changing rooms, together with the outside painting smartened up the premises. The geraniums have looked glorious again this season – particular thanks to Anne Jameson for the maintenance of the floral displays.

Following our Open Weekend, at the end of April we welcomed Jane Casey, Mandy, and Susanne. Along with Amanda, who joined us in March, thank you for playing in matches and competitions and for supporting our various functions. We also welcomed back Fran and June who had been unable to bowl last year. Sadly, Maureen Marsden and Elizabeth Bennitt decided it was time to retire from outdoor bowling; they are however both continuing with Short Mat. Many thanks to our coaches Elaine, Elizabeth, and Jane Seymour, who give freely of their time – always available to assist with coaching matters.

We have enjoyed our usual selection of competitions and inter-club friendlies. Unfortunately, four friendlies were cancelled by our opponents due to lack of players: no problem like that here! We have had good results in all areas: we retained the CDL Cup; maintained our 4th position in the Cristal league; and a record number of ladies entered TLC Competitions. Also, we had successes in the Surreys – more on these from our representatives later. We participated in the Top Club, the Past Times, and the Carol Shannon Triples Competitions.

Our finals weekend was a great success and brought us some exciting matches played in glorious sunshine and well supported by members, friends, and family.

We hosted a Surrey Gents game and a Surrey Ladies Quarter-Final at which two of our ladies Jane Sanders and Liz Fry played. Many thanks to my team of helpers at these events. The Surrey Gentleman's Secretary has already requested June's notorious bread pudding for their 2024 visit.

This season saw the introduction of a new competition: the Pat Teasdale Trophy: a match played between Purley Men and Purley Women in memory of Pat. This year the Ladies were triumphant (by one point) - an appropriate start to the competition. Pat's son was in attendance at the match; he and his sister, Jo, are delighted that we are honouring their mother in this way.

It seems an appropriate time to mention our dear bowler Sheila Dodd who sadly passed away in September just short of her 97th birthday. Sheila loved the club: at her happiest when she was either “on the jack” or sipping a glass of sherry. Her popularity was on show at her funeral last week; the large contingent of Purley Ladies’ clearly visible in their Pink Fleeces. Many of you, I know, would like a permanent reminder and her family have kindly offered to donate a trophy in her honour.

After many years and hundreds of hours spent on taking minutes and producing documents, letters and organising events, Miki is stepping back from her position as Ladies’ Secretary and more latterly joint Secretary – a huge thank you to Miki for all that you have done for us.

My thanks also to our other Lady Committee members, Jane Seymour, my Vice-Captain, Kara, our Ladies Representative, and Linda Gallagher, who in addition to her Match Secretary duties has maintained the White Board. It has been a privilege to have served as your Captain for the past 3 years. I would now like to wish every success to our new Captain and Committee.

A very happy closed season to you all.

Sue Souppouris
Ladies’ Captain