

LADY CAPTAINS REPORT 2024

Background - I joined Purley Bowls Club in 1999– and this has been my 25th Season. At the beginning of the Season, we welcomed both Jane Casey and Mandy Power to their first full season and haven't they done well. Despite both being injured at different times they adapted to full membership without any problems. Dorothy phoned me in the closed season and asked how she would go about rejoining Purley- within days it was like she had never been away and it was good to have another 'back end' 'I will play anywhere' bowler in the mix. I do hope that all three of you have enjoyed your season.

I think belonging to the Bowls Club is about having an enjoyable time on the green at all levels. I see my responsibility as Ladies Captain is to make sure that the Ladies have a good time at whatever level they choose to bowl at, try to iron out problems when they arise and do our best to make sure every lady is getting a fair share of the games on offer. I am under no illusion that you cannot please everyone all the time...

The weather had much to answer for this year. We opened two weeks later than intended as the green was very tender, our new Grounds man Ian suggested we let the green rest a little longer. I am so pleased we did – what a lovely green we have had to bowl on despite Summer never really arriving.

Our first Bank Holiday Drive was cancelled due to poor weather but we managed to get some other fun days in and I thank all those who supported these. Despite Captains day clashing with the TLC finals we had a good battle against the men and came second. It was disappointing that the Ladies Captain v Vice Captain and Bowls and Brunch the following day were both poorly attended but these days were tweaked and turned out to be very enjoyable for those who did turn up.

Thanks to our very hard working fixture secretary, Linda, we are now in three leagues and we managed to field teams at all times. The friendlies that were cancelled were cancelled because the opposition could not raise a side. We came third in the CDLL, second in the MSL and won the Cristal League. We came fourth in the Smiths League – This one was difficult to field as so many of our ladies hold Surrey badges and those others who were eligible to play were busy playing other competitions. Ladies I think a decision should be made do we wish to continue with this league?

It was a good move playing most of the MSL games on a Saturday morning. Our opposition seemed to like this too! It allowed workers to take part but as many of these games were at the beginning of the season some of our players were excluded because there were clashes with other Competitions. Nonetheless coming second is a good result in our first season.. Games at the end of the season proved difficult to field and the result of games did not always reflect the strength of the teams.

In the Surrey Delegates report I have mentioned with pride how successful the ladies have been this season in Surrey. We have had success in other competitions, too! I would like to Congratulate both Jane Sanders and Linda Gallagher for making good progress in the National Over 55 singles, Champion of Champions and National Mixed Fours Competitions. They reached Area finals in all these disciplines. I would also like to congratulate Jane Harding on being selected to play for Disability Bowls England South at Leamington. It was a pity that she had to cancel at the last minute through no fault of her own.

It was lovely to see the TLC competitions and the celebration Lunch in September being so well supported by Purley ladies. I congratulate Jane Gibbs and Linda Gallagher for reaching the final of the Aussie Pairs and Ursula for winning the 2-wood competition. I would like to thank Lynn Donovan for all the hard work she has put into the TLC comps since the Borough folded. Lynn told me some time ago that this would be her last season as co-ordinator.. Please think if you would like to take over this role.

I really did enjoy co-ordinating the Internal Competitions this year. Finals weekend was the icing on the cake. The weather was dry and there were some very closely contested matches. Could do better:

- Our beginning of season Bowls Bash and Big Bowls Weekend did not work for Purley 2024. Not many new bowlers joining this season. I will take responsibility for this – I thought it worth a go as both initiatives are supported by Bowls England. The Bowls Bash was particularly troublesome for Elizabeth who emailed BE tirelessly trying to get things moving. I still think the short format game is a good idea and I do believe we can keep it in reserve to use at a later date.
- Despite trying to get selections out in good time, Bowlr selection process was very time consuming and too many of us who are not taking their names out when they are no longer available. I am suggesting that we change to the Surrey system next year. This is run along the same lines as Bowls Surrey Online. John Tucker has shown some of us how this works and I think we would do well to adopt it. In the Match Availability Module there is the facility to withdraw from games. I am not sure that this will make the slightest bit of difference to selection problems but it does put the onus back on the individual. The Surrey System also keeps track of statistics negating the need to keep separate spreadsheets and it is cheaper. I would continue to use the diary in the Clubroom. Still too many who do not do Bowlr and say call me if you are short. Those ladies are not getting their fair share
- A few people have not been picked for half the games they asked for. On closer inspection this is because in some cases bowlers were putting their names down for the wrong type of game
- I am sorry I didn't play many ballots or games. At the beginning of the season I made reasonable progress in the Surrey Singles and Pairs as well as spending 5 Saturdays with the Johns.
- The Past times – It seemed like a good idea at the time to put 2 teams in but it shouldn't be allowed. Well done to Team B for winning against Epsom before being knocked out by Sutton
- Too many things are different between the Men and the women and despite my best efforts there is much which can still be improved.

So much to be grateful for

I would like to thank everyone who holds a post on our Committee for their continued hard work on your behalf. I would also like to thank those ladies who deputised for me when I could not take games. Ursula, Linda, Sue and Janet all stepped up to Captain of the day when asked to. Janet not only managed to create a mixed game between ourselves when the opposition didn't turn up but collected tea and biscuit money when Committee had decided that mixed games would not be charged.

Can I thank;

Mary Roe for being the milk monitor – wonderful job.

Pam for monitoring the ladies competitions Board

Kara for being our Ladies Committee rep.

Miki for being our Management Rep

Jane for sticking with the post of Secretary' despite the debacle at the beginning of Season when no monies could be accessed – I hope the second season is easier.

Linda Gallagher who resigns from the Committee as she and Tony will not be bowling at Purley next season. The Club will miss both Linda and Tony very much. The ladies will particularly miss Linda as for many years she has been a key member of the Ladies' section. Who will we find to do the chores; Ladies' Fixture Secretary, Bonus Ball organiser, Board writer, 'WhatsApp' Administrator & League Delegate roles? We will find others to carry out these roles eventually.

I will miss something we cannot replace. Linda - a very good Club team member. Who will play anywhere needed. She is not only a bowler with exceptional competence and individual talent but she has that rare ability to make others bowlers of lesser ability feel good about themselves and so raises their game. All I can add to that is that I am sorry Linda will no longer be a Purley Lady and I wish her and Tony every happiness in their new club.

My next thank you – is to Ursula, a Vice-Captain. You are always there to support everyone and this year has been no different from others. There have been times this season when I have been so overwhelmed and you have pulled me through. It has been a delight to work with you I do hope that your Captaincy goes well and I will try to be there should you need me.

I do have a few others to thank. All the ladies who have contributed to making Purley the lovely club it is. All those who play in the Ballots,. All those who put their names down to play for the Club, all those who turn up for fun days, all those who contribute to making match teas, sweep the floor, empty the dishwasher. Purley Ladies have much to be grateful for and Purley Captains also.

I thank you all for your support , kindness and friendship throughout the Season and look forward to playing alongside you and supporting the new Committee with you in 2025.

Jane Seymour October 2024