



# RUSH



## Chairmans Message

There are 2 things that I wish to make all members aware of.

Firstly Dave Widdison, your golf croquet club handicapper and I, your association croquet club handicapper went to a handicapping meeting last month. The things you need to know from this meeting are, you must keep your handicap card up to date and have it with you at all matches and tournaments and make it available if Dave I or any CA handicapper wishes to see it. You must enter all competitive games on your card. Games that class as competitive are games that are part of a competition that could be a club competition, a ladder game or in a tournament. Games that are not part of one of the above are friendlies no matter how competitive they are and must not be entered on your handicap card.

Hugh has done an excellent job of painting our hoops, they have not looked this good in years. We have allocated a set of hoops to each court. Most clubs insist that hoops are used in such a way that the same carrot goes in the same hole every time. This has always been our practice up until the last few years and may have to be reintroduced. It almost certainly will have to be reintroduced for the set on court 4 but for the mean time will members using court 2 please always put the hoop marked with a 6 in the position of hoop 6 with the 6 towards Cemetery Road.

Roger

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## 18<sup>th</sup> Lancashire International Open

The following report is from Dr Tim King.

David Widdison (Bishop Monkton) fell just short of defending his title against Tim King (Ashby), who was playing in his sixth Lancashire Open final.

Pendle and Craven Croquet Club expertly hosted the 18th Lancashire Open on 29 and 30 April. The club took over this mantle from Bury, who had hosted the event from 2004 to 2016. The event was removed by the GC Tournament Committee from the list of Ascot Cup qualifiers for 2017 because the club had moved the date but not consulted with the committee as to potential clashes with other qualifiers. The committee were delighted though to be able to add the event to the growing A-Level Series, which Widdison had won in the inaugural 2016 season.

One of the founders of the event, Abdul Ahmad, was on hand to manage and he put together a format that consisted of two all-play-all blocks, followed by a knockout. Each block was headed by one of the two minus handicap competitors, Widdison (-2) and King (-1).

The two top seeds duly performed and both survived unbeaten. They each, however, had scares along the way, with court 1 being the scene of their almost undoing.

Widdison attracted a crowd of all the other players as Saturday lunch took longer to heat up than had been expected. He was pushed all the way by a determined Jane Pringle (Auckland) but he prevailed at hoop 13. Then, immediately after lunch, King took on Keith Terry (Pendle) on the same court on which Widdison had battled. Terry established an early lead and did not allow King to reverse the scores, eventually ending up in the jaws of 12 with a 6-5 lead. King held his nerve with a jump shot then cleared Terry's first ball up to 13 and this turned the tide.

Widdison continued his progress relatively serenely, while King had a second close shave in his final game of Saturday in which he started well against Freda Vitty (Auckland). She then found her touch and he again ended up facing an opponent with first approach to hoop 13. He was once more able to eek out a first chance

at the hoop, this time from the boundary. He achieved enough accuracy that his ball tantalisingly spun in the jaws and then rolled through.

Meanwhile, Pringle secured a comfortable second spot in her block, relegating higher seed Ray Mounfield (Ashby) to third place.

Ted Flexman (Ripon Spa) lived up to his seeding in the other block, coming second.

The quarter-finals were single, 19-point games and resulted in quick, comfortable wins for Widdison (10-3) against Maggie Cowman (Ripon Spa) and King (10-5) against Kath Wright (Long Eaton Park).

The other two matches went against the block results and took longer, with Vitty beating close friend Pringle (10-7) and Mounfield beating Flexman (10-4).

These outcomes left both semi-finals as repeats of match-ups from the blocks: Widdison versus Mounfield and King versus Vitty.

By this stage, the two top seeds had warmed to their tasks and neither looked in much danger of losing at any point, completing their victories in time for lunch.

Meanwhile, those who did not qualify for the knockout were competing in an all-play-all block. This block was won by Libby Dixon (Pendle), who benefitted from feedback from more experienced opponents on Saturday and slightly modified some of her tactics on the Sunday. She deservedly earned a handicap reduction to 3 and has the potential to progress much further. She was also not the only less experienced competitor to show great enthusiasm and a willingness to learn from playing against unfamiliar opposition.

Special mention must go to Will Drake (Pendle / Cheltenham), who took up croquet at the age of 86 and is still playing with great spirit as he nears his 94th birthday! He won one game on both Saturday and Sunday and retains an interest in getting better. He is an example to us all.

The final began soon after lunch and was a repeat of the final of the Northampton A-Level Series event in 2016, when Widdison won in two straight games.

In many ways, though, this time was a very different occasion: Widdison has gone on to establish himself as a deserved member of the minus-handicap community, King has bought himself a Trimmer mallet with which he has been gradually establishing a strong rapport and a stiff breeze (rather than warm sunshine) was the main feature of the weather.

The early phase of the match showed the contrast in styles between the two players with Widdison careful and precise, while King more often searching for the bold, aggressive option. Widdison took and held the initial lead but without getting his ball very far though most hoops and King was finding his range, looking especially secure with hoop running from two to four yards. He reversed the scores through some good long clearances and eventually secured the first game with a jump shot at hoop 12.

Widdison again started well in game 2 and appeared to take decisive control when he won seven of nine hoops from 3-4 in game 2 to 3-1 in game 3. He discovered composure in his hoop running, which previously had been somewhat suspect as he felt under pressure to try to get the ball all the way down to the next hoop. He also demonstrated the golf-style jump shot he uses for all distances to take a 2-0 lead in game 3.

King appeared to be on the brink of a major collapse, although ironically he had taken the 4-3 lead in game 2 from the boundary and had run hoop 9 from 6 yards and 30 degrees. He was able, however, to show a resilience for which he has not typically been known and, after the lull, regained his previous success on long clearances. He was patient at almost all of the critical points in the remainder of the third game and was able to disappoint the crowd by not giving them a golden hoop in the deciding game.

During the presentation ceremony, the players expressed their thanks for Ahmad's calm management and the excellent and attentive catering.

For photos check out our Facebook page.

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## Murphy Shield vs Culcheth

The 3<sup>rd</sup> May, a brilliant sunny day with winds gusting to 16 + mph, was our first match in the Murphy Shield for 2017. Our opponents in the Preliminary Round were Culcheth, and we had to play this first match before 11<sup>th</sup> May. Keith Woodward captained the Culcheth team. He had the problem that many of his regular players had holiday commitments. However, he was accompanied by Alan Wright, Bryan Clark and Kath Hough.

Roger Schofield, Libby Dixon, Keith Terry and Will Drake made up the Pendle team. This was a strong team being three on 3 handicap and one, 6 handicap. The wind played havoc at times and we had to be quick to hit a ball before it moved.

Pendle had a great result winning 7 matches to 0.

Our next opponents are Ripon Spa in the 1<sup>st</sup> Round with the match having to be played by 11<sup>th</sup> June - a very, tight time frame.

Libby

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## Calling All Members For Help

*At this time of year there is a great demand for assistance in mowing, white lining, hoop setting and catering. The existing rota of members is struggling to meet the demand of competitions and maintaining the lawns for league and Tournaments both in Association and Golf Croquet. The committee wishes to appeal to the wider membership of the club to offer their support in these activities. Tournaments bring in much needed capital for the club and if we do not do these events many of the ongoing maintenance costs could not be afforded.*

*Can members please consider how they could help the club leading up to and during competitions. Please let Roger or Libby know how you can get involved.*

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## Internal competitions

15<sup>th</sup> May One Ball

22<sup>nd</sup> May Barlow Ball ( advanced AC)

29<sup>th</sup> May Aston Trophy ( AC handicap)

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## Upcoming Events

7<sup>th</sup> May B level Adv away to Bowdon

10<sup>th</sup> May Midweek away to Southport

11<sup>th</sup> May Short home to Southport cancelled unable to raise a team

13<sup>th</sup> May Handicap away to Southport cancelled unable to raise a team

16<sup>th</sup> May GC level Play home to Bowdon Bandits Team :- Dave Widdison, Keith Terry, and Libby Dixon

20<sup>th</sup> May GC Pendle B Level

21<sup>st</sup> May B level Adv home to Fylde

28<sup>th</sup> May EPL home

31<sup>st</sup> May Midweek home Bowdon Earls

Can all team captains or tournament managers please send reports for inclusion in Rush.

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### National Club Events

**Mary Rose** Pendle vs Colchester

**Longman Cup** Pendle vs Crake Valley  
Match to take place on 25<sup>th</sup> May

**Murphy Shield** Pendle vs Ripon Spa  
Next match before 11<sup>th</sup> June

