

HURLINGHAM v. WESTHAMPTON MALLET CLUB

Two years ago Hurlingham's peaceful and traditional calm was slightly shaken when a challenge was received, at very short notice, from the Westhampton Mallet Club. The initial overtures indicated that there was some difference in the game as played here and in America, but the emissary from the U.S. was not of the opinion that this would be insurmountable. As a result, within a very short time, a team arrived to play croquet under our rules, and it soon became apparent that the differences were such that a serious contest was quite impossible. The game played by our visitors was similar to that played here between 1867 and about the turn of the century. It was apparent that although the U.S. has a reputation for being considerably in advance of us in many fields, on the croquet field the reverse is the case.

The word field is used advisedly, for when Hurlingham visited Westhampton for the return match last year, of which team I was able to be a member, we found that their fields were indeed just this, not only in size but in quality. An account of this match, which was played under American rules, appeared in a supplement in last year's "Croquet," and at that time, few, if any, of us thought that Westhampton could make any serious challenge under British rules for many years to come.

In the event, it was surprising to us that they have made as much headway as they have, and although no one would contend that the match was played on anything like equal terms, Westhampton had obviously made great efforts to get to grips with our game. The results appear below, but this in no way tells the full story.

I personally played Jack Osborn and I have no doubt that he would become a first class player of Association Croquet with a first class croquet brain in a very short while. They have nothing to learn from us in the art of shooting or hoop-running. They have still a lot to learn in the art of playing the variety of croquet strokes employed in 3 and 4 ball breaks. Those of us who know our game realise how little can be done in the course of half a week's practice. Nevertheless, some of them at least have achieved a good deal as was demonstrated by the enlightened questions they frequently asked from their advisers.

I think they were most surprised to find a lady in our team, but Jocelyn Sundius-Smith by her play made them realise that she was a member strictly on the score of merit.

The match was to have been played over the weekend of Saturday and Sunday, June 8th and 9th. In fact, one game was played on the Friday and Sunday's play was cancelled because this was a day of public mourning for our visitors following the tragic death of Robert Kennedy. The weather was as unfortunate as that we had experienced in Long Island in 1967, but this did not mar the remarkable bond which has grown up between the two clubs. Walter Margulies and Henry White had visited us in 1966. Ned Prentis came in 1967 and, with his charming wife Betty, introduced us to the American game on a court set up on the cricket field. We all missed Betty on this occasion, but we were glad to be able to welcome another charmer, Margaret Bohner, the wife of Bill Bohner, who was making his first visit to this country. Bill's match was an unfortunate one as he couldn't hit in, although I know him to be one of their best shots and his knowledge of our game is as advanced as any of them, as I discovered in a few minutes' knock-up on my own lawn a few days later.

The other new faces were Jack Osborn and their captain David Seiniger. We thank them all for their visit and would like to congratulate Westhampton on the choice of their distinguished ambassadors. We entertained them to dinner on the Friday night at Hurlingham and this was followed by another dinner given by our visitors in town the following night.

I think only two things are needed for Westhampton to become a serious threat to English croquet. One is an English type lawn, and I hear that they have every intention of laying one down at the earliest opportunity. The other is the formation of an American Association for the purpose of reaching agreement between the clubs on the rules of their own game as a preliminary to scrapping them altogether in favour of our own. All this will take a little time, and meanwhile it is unthinkable that these contests should not continue. It is not easy to arrange for a team from Hurlingham to travel to America. If, however, they pay us the compliment of playing our game, we should pay them the compliment of going to America. On the last occasion our fares were paid by Pan American, but on the next we shall have to fend for ourselves. But those of us who went on the last occasion enjoyed an unforgettable trip and the word will be passed around.

Friday p.m.—Mrs. Sundius-Smith beat Walter Margulies.

Saturday a.m.—John Solomon beat Jack Osborn.

Alex Karmel beat Henry White.

Robin Godby beat Bill Bohner.

Jim Townsend beat Ned Prentis.

Saturday p.m.—John Solomon and Alex Karmel beat Jack Osborn and Henry White.

Robin Godby and Jim Townsend beat Ned Prentis and David Seiniger.

Mrs. Sundius-Smith beat Bill Bohner.

JOHN SOLOMON.

LONGMAN CUP

AREA 1

Ellesmere v. Bowden. Winner: Bowdon 4+1 on time.

SINGLES

Mrs. Wallwork (4½) beat Mrs. Tyldesley +10.

Mrs. Chaff (7½) beat Mrs. Cocker +13.

Nigel Martin (5) beat Mrs. Jackson +16.

DOUBLES

Mrs. Wallwork and Mrs. Chaff beat Mrs. Tyldesley and Mrs. Jackson +4.

Nigel Martin and Peter Gelling beat Mrs. Cocker and Mrs. N. Tyldesley +2.

Hunstanton v. Wrest Park. Wrest Park walk-over.

Parsons Green v. Woking. Woking +3 to 1 and 1 unfinished.

SINGLES

Mrs. Farlie (6) beat D. Temple Page (6½), unfinished.

Mrs. Speer (3½) beat Canon Pym (4) +6.

Mrs. Trull (7) lost to D. Moorcroft (7) -10.

SINGLES

Mrs. Speer and Mrs. Farlie lost to Mrs. Temple Page and Canon Pym -5

Mrs. Trull and Mrs. Wills lost to D. Temple Page and D. Moorcroft -3.

Woking v. Roehampton. Woking won 4 to 1.

SINGLES

Canon Pym (4) beat Ian Banks (1½) +8.

D. Temple-Page beat A. d'Antal (4½) +11.

D. Moorcraft (7) beat J. Sanders (5½) +12.

S. S. T.

DOUBLES

D. Temple-Page and D. Moorcraft lost to A. d'Antal and J. Sanders -5.

Canon Pym and Mrs. Temple-Page beat Ian Banks and Mrs. Bressey +24.

Worton Hall v. Hurlingham. Hurlingham 3 to 2.

SINGLES

A. W. Skempton (3) lost to V. J. Sexton (6) -11.

Mrs. A. W. Skempton (4) beat G. J. Reeves (8) +9.

C. B. Sanford (7) beat R. M. Ward (10) +3.

DOUBLES

C. B. Sanford and Mrs. A. W. Skempton lost to V. J. Sexton and E. J. Reeves -17.

A. W. Skempton and B. H. Bliss beat R. M. Ward and A. Eldy +7 on time.

THE LONGMAN CUP MATCH

SOUTHWICK v. COMPTON

Played at Southwick on Thursday, June 13th, 1968.
Southwick names first.

SINGLES

H. A. Sheppard (2) lost to D. A. Harris (2½) -24.

W. J. Baverstock (6½) beat Mrs. H. Hall (5½) +9.

L. E. Brookes (5) v. Mrs. E. M. Temple (3½), unfinished.

DOUBLES

H. A. Sheppard and W. J. Baverstock beat D. A. Harris and Mrs. H. Hall +10.

W. G. B. Scott and L. E. Brookes beat Mrs. E. M. Temple and Miss E. G. Clarke-Lens +5.

Southwick won -3-1 with one unfinished.