



VIEW FROM THE GREEN

End of season 2026 issue



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Men's Captain Reports on a Headline-Making Season

As I said in my Captain's Day speech, it has been a great pleasure to have been Men's Captain of this wonderful bowls club. It's a memory that will stay with me forever.

And it's been a memorable season! We had a successful season in many competitions. We regained the Nethercott Cup and also the Jarvis Cup! I want to give a big thank you to Bob Maule, who captained the team to victory.

Congratulations to Paul Stevens, who triumphed as Winner in the District Singles. A special mention goes to Dave, Colin, Paul and Brian who narrowly missed out on winning the County Four Finals. They at least had the pleasure of playing at Leamington.

Hopefully we can get into more finals in 2027.

Captains Day was a huge success with a wonderful turnout, so thank you to everyone who attended and helped make it special.

Special mention must also go to our hard-working and dedicated green staff; they maintained the

green and kept it in such wonderful condition all season, despite the heat. So much so that many of the visiting bowlers from other clubs commented on how well the green was bowling.

Many thanks must also go to Penney, our Ladies' Captain, and Julie too; she stepped in when required to great effect.

It was great to see new bowlers putting their names down for games; that's another good sign for the future. Enthusiastic members are the lifeblood of our club.

A big thank you to everyone on the Committee who have helped me over the last two years. I know that you will offer the same solid support to our next Men's Captain, Alan, as he takes over next year.

Ron McCaig – Men's Captain



Visually Impaired Metro team match

We played the visually impaired team from Metro London on 25th July, and in a very tightly matched contest, three rinks of triples managed a 2-1 win to retain the Basten Trophy. A fascinating day was had by all, with great admiration for the skill and game management of the visually impaired players.



Chas Nethercott and Captain Ron McCaig

A Thrilling End to a Long Hot Season

After a long, hot summer of competitive bowling, it was pleasing to see the weather remain fair for the 17 finals to conclude our season. That many finals meant we had an earlier start time than usual; trial-ends began at 9.35 on a green in tip-top condition thanks to Keith and his team. Everything was ready for play. And everything was ready for sustenance, thanks to Susie and her catering team; tea, coffee and bacon rolls were available for finalists and their family and friends who had gathered in anticipation of some close matches. A big thank you to all who worked so hard.

There was some very good bowling and many tight finishes over both days. Saturday morning session saw wins for -

- David Arnold 21-20 over David Astley in the Hicks Cup, the first of several finals to come down to the last wood!
- Gill Marshall 16-6 versus Jean Scott in the Jubilee Trophy
- Dave Sparrow and Paul Stevens won the Lewin Shield against last year's runners-up Richard Pearce and Chris Gregory by 20-14
- Ron McCaig overcame Jim Shine 2 sets to 1 in the Partridge Cup

After President David (and Vice President Richard) presented the trophies, the winners and runners-up celebrated their success (or drowned their sorrows) with the able help of Dave and his bar team.

The lunchtime session saw wins for -

- Alan Oldham by 4 points in the Sawyer Cup against Keith Lucas
- Mary Steed by 10 points in the Theobald Cup against Penney Billington

In the afternoon we witnessed wins for -

- Colin Malone over Ray Gusman by 18-9 in the Jones Cup,
- Jenny To and Lyn Oldham 20-18 over Diane Jewell and Wendy Clark in the Hodgkinson Cup
- Peter Openshaw by 16-5 against Bob Maule in the St Albans Salver

Sunday dawned bright and clear, and again the green, catering and bar teams were hard at work before play began at 9.50. The morning session saw wins for -

- Jim Shine and Brian Hummel 16-7 against Richard Pearce and Anil Dhiri in the Collins Cup
- Dave Sparrow and Chris Gregory 20-15 over Don Hopkins and Steve Jewell in the Hayward Cup
- Penney Billington overcame Jenny To by 2 sets to 0 to retain the Wagtail Cup
- Peter Sephton and Chris Wheeler by 2 sets to 0 versus Dave 'Doc' Sparrow and Janet Tagoe in the Tansey Cup

Afternoon results saw -

- Carole Nichols beat Barbara Edlin 14-7 in the Debut Cup,
- Richard Pearce won 15-5 against Keith Lucas in the Medlock Cup
- Penney Billington, in a repeat of last year's final, won 21-16 against Gill Marshall to retain the Barker Cup
- Colin Malone became Club Champion by 21-11 against David Arnold

Congratulations to all the champions and well done to the runners-up. Many thanks to the volunteers who marked, scored and umpired and everyone who supported the finals. Lastly, and by no means least, a big thanks must go to all those who entered the competitions in the first place. Their participation makes our Club competitions the success they always are.

David Astley, Competitions Secretary.

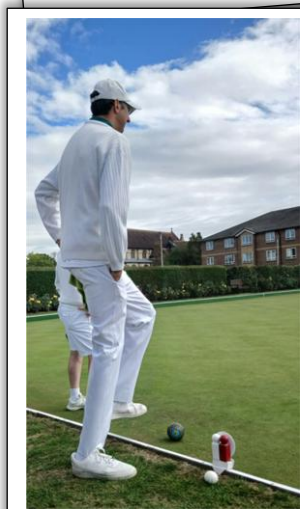
If Finals Day had taken place in 1904 the club might have made a trip to Hamley's on Regent Street to purchase this presentation set of Lawn Bowls in a strong box for the bargain prices as advertised. You got a jack in the box too!



LAWN BOWLS.—For Presentation (as illustration), price 25/- per pair.

Sets of Lawn Bowls (four pairs and Jack) in strong box, complete 15/9, 22/9, 29/3.

Finals Day in Pictures:



Serpent Trail 50 km Ultra Marathon for Parkinson's UK - How Hard Could It Be?

Mike O'Hagen reports on his fundraising epic marathon

I am pleased to report that I completed the challenge of running the Serpent Trail 50 km Ultra Marathon on Saturday, July 4th, which started from near Petworth and finished at Petersfield Rugby Club in Hampshire.

First, I'd like to thank all the PBBC Members who sponsored me. As a result of their generosity, the total raised for Parkinson's UK was £856 before Gift Aid. This does make all the effort worthwhile.

I finished the run in 7 hrs 42 mins, just 12 mins slower than my target. I was 13th out of 21 in my age group and 282nd out of a total 670 participants.

It was a tad warm, especially in the afternoon !! For the last 20 km, there was no shade at all with the sun beating down; it was quite brutal

I took a bad fall at about 7 miles. I tripped over a tree root hidden in sand. If you can imagine dipping an ice cream into sprinkles, then that was me with suntan cream and sand - it got everywhere.

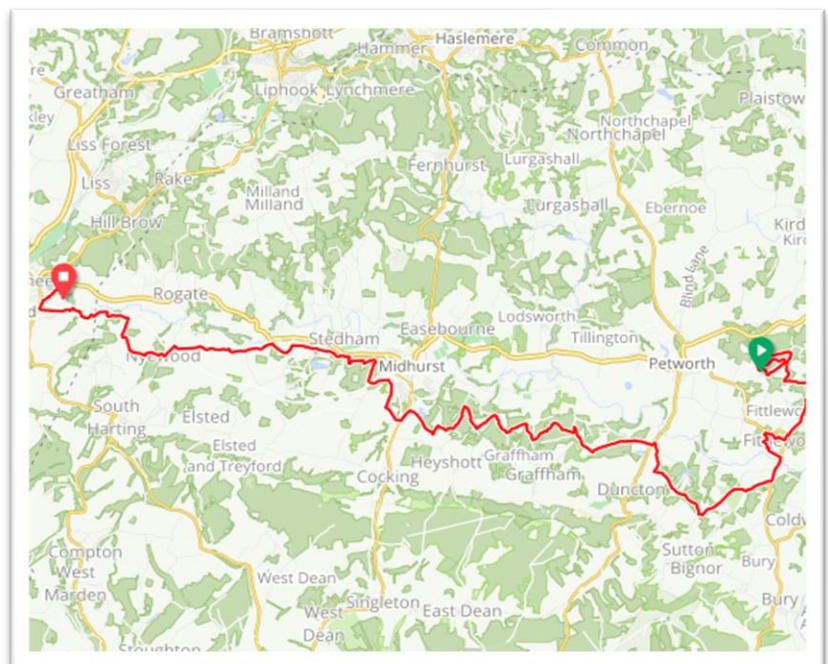
The atmosphere and camaraderie amongst the runners, spectators, and all the marshals (as well as the helpers at the six aid stations) was wonderful. It's what makes taking part in this type of running special.

I am sure we have Members who track their daily steps. By way of comparison, on that Saturday my watch recorded 69,283 steps!

The finish line was a lovely sight after a challenging but really enjoyable grand day out. So too was the pizza and beer afterwards in the event village. Funnily enough, I didn't go to the post-run disco.



Mike O'Hagen got a special mention on President's Day



Mike's arduous route

A Bit of History: A classified ad from the June 9th, 1944, issue of *Country Life* makes an obvious pun, but poignantly reflects the times:

BOWLS. A REMINDER for after the war. JACQUES LAWN BOWLS show a bias in your favour. Hand made by craftsmen.—JOHN JACQUES & SON, LTD., makers of fine Sports and Games Equipment since 1795, Thornton Heath, Surrey.

Thinking about that 'Final End'

We love the Club and the friends we've made here, but we all come to play that final end hoping for a good score as we head into the bar in the 'eternal clubhouse.' You could think about leaving a legacy in your Will as a testament to the years of enjoyment you had here. Here's a summary of why you might consider mentioning the Club in your Will.

Leaving a gift in your Will not only shows how much you've appreciated all the benefits of your membership, but it also helps the Club continue to offer those benefits to future generations. We are a vital part of the community, and we thrive on members who volunteer to keep us going.

Of course, money is key too. We rely not just on volunteers but also membership fees, fundraising, and donations. A legacy gift could make a significant difference to our future.

A legacy gift is a donation that you leave to a charity or organisation in your Will. It might be a fixed sum of money, a percentage of your estate, or even a specific asset such as shares or property. You can choose anything you like. Naturally, when you're writing a Will, you'll be thinking about your family, but leaving a small percentage of your estate to the Club will show just how much it meant to you.

Every bowls club faces ongoing costs. Greens need maintaining, clubhouses require repairs, equipment must be replaced, and facilities need updating to remain accessible and welcoming. So, a small gift can help us maintain, sustain, and improve the Club in years to come. Gifts of all sizes are appreciated and can make a real difference.

Many bowlers discovered the sport through family members, friends, or local community events. By leaving a legacy, you're helping ensure future generations will have the same opportunity. A legacy isn't simply about financial support. It's about passing on something that reflects your values and the experiences that mattered most to you. It's a lasting reminder that your contribution to the club didn't end with your final game.

Of course, if you're considering updating your Will, it may be worth speaking with a solicitor or professional Will writer. They can explain the different ways you can leave a gift while ensuring your loved ones remain your priority. It can also be made anonymously, if that's your preference. We've teamed up with a local firm of solicitors that specialises in drafting wills. Have a word with them, and they can help you. (See below)

A gift in your Will is more than a donation—it's an investment in friendship, community, and the future of a club that has given so much to so many.

Wason Male & Wagland Solicitors

Meet our Will Writer Emma Hatswell

Wason Male & Wagland Solicitors are pleased to recommend to you Emma Hatswell, our Will Writer.

Mitigating inheritance tax and ensuring your loved ones are protected when you die can be achieved through a well written Will. You can also leave a legacy that honours your lifetime's achievements or favourite pastime all the while also saving tax.

The importance of using a qualified will writer to achieve those aims should not be underestimated. Emma Hatswell specialises in Wills and LPA's and holds the STEP will writing qualification, demonstrating her passion for this specialist area of law. Her knowledge and experience set her out amongst the crowd, ensuring local expertise is at hand whether you need a home visit, meeting in hospital or care home, or just want to be able to speak face to face with someone based in your community.

If you wish to leave a legacy in your Will to the Potters Bar Bowls Club then Emma is offering **£50 off** the usual advertised rates for Wills or LPA's; please just call or email to set up an appointment.



You can contact her on:



Tel:
01707 664 888



Email:
emma@wmw-solicitors.co.uk



Address:
Lantern House,
39-41 High Street,
Potters Bar, Herts, EN6 5AJ

Ladies Captain Reflects on 2026

Before I start, I would like to remember Pam Rodgers, who contributed so much to our club as an inspirational player and coach. We were determined to strive for success in her memory, even though we miss Pam as a key member of our teams.

Our club thrives because its members volunteer, play, support from the sidelines and encourage one another. There are too many to thank you all individually, but please know that all your efforts are very much appreciated.

Having a good team of coaches means that new members are already taking part in Friendlies and Competitions in their first year. That's excellent!!

In Mixed Friendly Matches, we won many more matches than we lost and had a good season despite the extreme heat.

In fact, 2026 saw a record number of ladies taking part in external competitions and Di Jewell, Jenny To and Sue Steer won the District Triples Gala!

Di was also a finalist in the Officers Singles; Jean and Di reached the semi-final of the District Aussie Pairs, while Gill Marshall, Jean and I were in the semi-final of the County Triples.

And I managed to be a semi-finalist in the County Unbadged competition. PBBC ladies came third in the Brigg league, and we were pleased to be the only team to beat the winners. Arnos.

Two years ago we had ladies playing in the Nationals at Leamington. This year we had a men's Team at Leamington. Next year, we're determined to have both men's and ladies teams up there competing with the best.

Of course, and you'll read this a lot in this newsletter, none of this would be possible without a green to play on, and the green would not play so well without the dedicated work of the Green Team. I congratulate David Salmon on fifteen years in post as Greenkeeper. What an achievement! Thank you, David!

The invaluable support of our President, David Arnold, Ron McCaig, our Men's Captain, and Julie Lucas, who stepped up to help later in the season, enabled me to end my term of office on a high. Thank you for putting your trust in me. I wish Gill Marshall and Julie Lucas every success as they take over in 2027.

Penney Billington - Ladies' Captain 2026

Poems from the Mat: PBBC is developing a fine poetic tradition, and so we're featuring a few verses in this issue. Here's one from Doc Sparrow and Janet Tagoe musing on the great decision they made to join our club.

When Janet and I played at home in the
summer, we agreed how lucky we are
That we chose to join the Potters Bar Club,
Though for each not our nearest by far.
The state of the rinks has been a joy to see
When others were drying and wearing,
And our green-keeping staff deserve great
praise
For their tenderness and caring.
From the moment we joined, we have each
found you all
To be friendly and help how we bowl,

We worked as a team and progressed in the
Tansey
With a place in the final being our fancy!
We got through to the final; played Chris
and Pete
And they were a hell of a team to beat;
But at the end of it all, we were "All shook
up", 'cos they actually managed to win the
cup!
So thanks to you all for a season of fun,
and to all the finalists, we say, "Well
done"!

Paul Stevens Triumphs in the District Singles

I got to the District singles semi-final two years ago and got thumped 21:6, so whilst being delighted I'd got one stage further, I was very apprehensive. Only one Potters Bar player had ever won the District singles, so this was going to be tough.

My opponent, John Osborne from Harpenden, is a very good player. I have played against him many times, and those games are always hugely sociable but seriously challenging.

I won the first three ends with three singles, then dropped a four and thought "here we go, he's got the feel of the green now". But, as the game wore on, we remained nip and tuck, until I seemed to click at 14:15 down.

Even the final end wasn't straightforward, however. I was holding three, and John took out my closest bowl to hold the shot. With my last bowl in hand, I told myself to "just try and play the same shot that he just did." Unbelievably, I managed to

do it and was again holding three, only needing a two. John's final bowl only took one out. I'd won! 21:15.

How did that happen? Well, I have to say, the support I received was fantastic. At the end, the applause of the many friends and family who had turned up to watch was amazing. I am a very lucky boy!

After the victory, David Arnold said, "Please join me in congratulating Paul Stevens, our only entrant in this year's finals, in winning the "Harry Stanford" Singles Competition by beating John Osborne from Harpenden this afternoon. Well done, Paul!" He added, "The quality green and usual PB warm welcome do not just happen; they are due to much planning and work behind the scenes. So, my thanks also to everyone who played a part or came along to support our players and make all our visitors feel at home."



Triumphant Paul with grandson Teddy, who's five years old

RANDOM BOWLS QUOTE

The Psychology of Bowling

"Bowls is a science, the study of a lifetime, in which you may exhaust yourself, but never your subject. It's a contest, a duel calling for courage, skills, strategy and self-control. It is a test of temper, a trial of honour, a revealer of character. It affords the chance to play the man and act the gentleman. It means going into God's out-of-doors, getting close to nature, fresh air, exercise! A sweeping away of mental cobwebs, genuine reaction of the tired tissues.

"It is a cure for care, an antidote to worry. It includes companionship with friends, social intercourse, opportunities for courtesy, kindness and generosity to an opponent. It promotes not only physical health but moral force."

From *How To Become A Champion At Bowls*, by R.T. Harrison, published in Australia, 1939.

The Accidental "Bias" The distinct curve (bias) of a lawn bowl is said to have been discovered around 1522 by Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. After his wooden bowl broke during a game, he replaced it with a carved stair balustrade knob and noticed the ball curved as it rolled. We can speculate that he thought, 'Umm, that'll make the game more interesting.' And it did.

Keeping it Green

Worm swishing, six miles of mowing and the occasional 'sour roll' – Keith Lucas describes the essential work of the Green Team

Our Green Team, led by myself and David Salmon, is made up of a dozen members who volunteer to spend three mornings a week ensuring our green and its surrounding environment are always in tip-top condition. That's all year round and not just during the season. We do it because when the green looks the part as you step onto it to play, you're better able to enjoy the game (and maybe even win!)

It's two hours of manual labour, often together with the Maintenance Team, and there's lots of banter. There's also a good supply of tea, coffee and biscuits. In fact, being the kind of people who like a good set of facts and stats, we estimate that 800 hot beverages and over 1,000 biscuits are consumed by both selfless teams working together!

So, what precisely is the work that we do?

Each weekday, the green is swished to remove worm casts, and then the dew is brushed off. We repair the holes made by crows, which range from a few to a couple of dozen each day. We change the rink settings to match the playing schedule and its drawn rinks. These are then marked on the board for the day's play.

We do a lot of mowing! The green is mowed three times a week. Each mower walks 2.2 miles for each cut. That's 6.6 miles a week! We generally cut two to four barrow loads of grass, and that adds up to around five hundred loads each year. And we have to dispose of it too. Every fortnight we trim the 160 metres of edging around the green. (We're a team that likes statistics!)

And then there are the hedges – 600 square metres of them which need trimming once a week. There are 200 square metres of grass on the banks to be cut and strimmed – also once a week. And then there are weeds. There are *always* weeds. Getting rid of them is a constant, especially from the rose beds. We water and dead-head them each day and do the same for the four flower boxes.

To discourage the crows from pecking holes in the green to find succulent Leatherjackets - their favourite treats - we cover a rink every night in

black plastic and weigh it down to keep it in place. We use five-litre water bottles, weighted ropes, planks – anything heavy enough to resist both animals and wind. When we remove the weights in the morning and peel back the plastic, we always find (literally) thousands of leatherjackets which have come to the surface. We estimate that, each season, over 18,000 appear. (I told you we liked a good stat; don't ask us if we actually counted the creatures.) Then we repeat the whole process for the next rink. So, each rink is typically covered and de-Leather-jacketed nine or ten times a season. It's not a foolproof solution, but it does minimise crow damage.



Then there's the 'sour-roll' process. It's when we spike the green and use a flat iron (also known as 'the beast') to improve the playing surface. And that's another 2.2-mile walk! All good exercise, of course.

Naturally, the mowers need to be maintained each month, and we make rolling repairs to the banks, edges, flower beds, hedges and everything else that grows or supports the 'live' environment. As you can see, it's a varied and often challenging job.

At the end of the season we put all twenty benches, tables, coat racks and bins into storage. That is, into the gents changing room. 160 metres of ditch mats are removed, cleaned, rolled up, tagged and also put into storage. When Spring returns, we put it all back! And we get the green ready for play: we hollow tine (get rid of hard-packed soil) and scarify (ripping out moss, dead grass, and thatch), which all generates a huge amount of debris and cores

that must be disposed of before we can top dress the green with five tonnes of new soil. Then we level the flagpole corner, and along the green edges we carefully distribute another two tonnes of soil.

Our commitment is a year-round one, and our chores extend beyond it. Here are just some of the tasks:

- We mend/repair the bank edges, which most people don't realise are only supported by 2x2 timber posts and planking (which is why we get a bit fidgety when people sit on them)
- We trim the hedge that's between us and the Parkfield Surgery's car park
- We trim the hedge/trees bordering the soon-to-be transformed Canada Life car park

- Unblock the road/car park drains
- Endlessly clear leaves from the road/green and surrounding area (they get everywhere)
- Clean the ditches and re-hole the drain holes all around the green

Phew. Oh... and lastly, I nearly forgot, we WATER the green. That's a contentious issue for some, but our consultant recommends that our green gets 25 mm of water (preferably rain) each week. That's to avoid the formation of a 'Dry Spot'. So, we have the sprinklers on and hand-spot water as the weather dictates.

You're probably exhausted reading this, but our whole team is committed to ensuring that our green is always in the best playing condition. It's hard work, but we love it.



Early morning TLC – 7.30 am!

SOW NOW **Barr's Pure Lawn Grasses** **SOW NOW**
For Lawns, Tennis Courts, etc.

BARR'S STANDARD MIXTURE
Suitable for Lawns, Croquet Grounds, Bowling Greens, etc., containing neither clover nor coarse grasses. 1 lb. 1/10. 10 lbs. 17/6. 20 lbs. 34/-.

BARR'S LAWN PHYTOBROMA
The best Manure for a Grass Lawn and the most economical. Per cwt., 21/-; 56 lbs., 12/6; 28 lbs., 7/6; 14 lbs., 4/6; 7 lbs., 2/6. For Hints on Making and the Management of Lawns, and particulars of Lawn Phytobroma, see BARR'S LAWN GRASS CIRCULAR, free.

BARR & SONS,
11, 12 & 13, KING STREET, COVENT GARDEN, LONDON.

This advert from March 1914 might be relevant to today's lawn team. Perhaps?

Why is The Catchpole called the 'Catchpole'?

Jim Catchpole was one of the founding members of our club in 1929 and became 'a monumental' figure in its development, growth, and success over almost six decades. He served for more than 30 years on the Management Committee, spent 14 years as Chairman, five as President, and 19 as a Trustee. He only served one year as Men's Captain, though. He had a spell as 'Green Ranger', played a role in allowing bowlers to play on Sundays, and was a member of the Wine Committee, ensuring the Club had a well-stocked bar! In 1983, he was presented with a Silver Salver to celebrate his first quarter century as a Committee member.

The records are more opaque about the creation of the weekly competition that we all know and love, but it's a pretty good bet that The Catchpole is named in honour of Jim. He was a good player, often selected for County games.



An Alternative View of the Green

Paul and Zoe Stevens muse on the tricky territory of how partners view the Green. When does a pastime become an obsession and how does the non-bowling partner cope?

We all love bowls, of course we do! But does our partner share our passion? Maybe – and maybe not. If not, then what's it like for them as they spend evenings and afternoons and whole days alone while their partner is bowling?

It's about lonely nights and weekends congested with games, roll-ups, away matches, tournaments or even digging up leatherjackets from the Green. What do our partners think about our hobby? Hobby? It's more than that – it's a passion; an obsession!

So, we thought we'd put our heads together and describe what it all looks and feels like from the "other side".

To the sceptical partner, the first thing to note is: what's with this playing outside in the searing sunshine at High Noon wearing a *nylon* shirt that makes you overheat? Sure, sometimes, the heat means that games get curtailed, but still – it's madness! AND, we could be making the most of the late-afternoon sunshine and long Summer evenings TOGETHER. But no, all the bowls obsessive wants to do is roll these strange wooden objects along the green hoping to get close to a small white ball. And then they do it EIGHTEEN

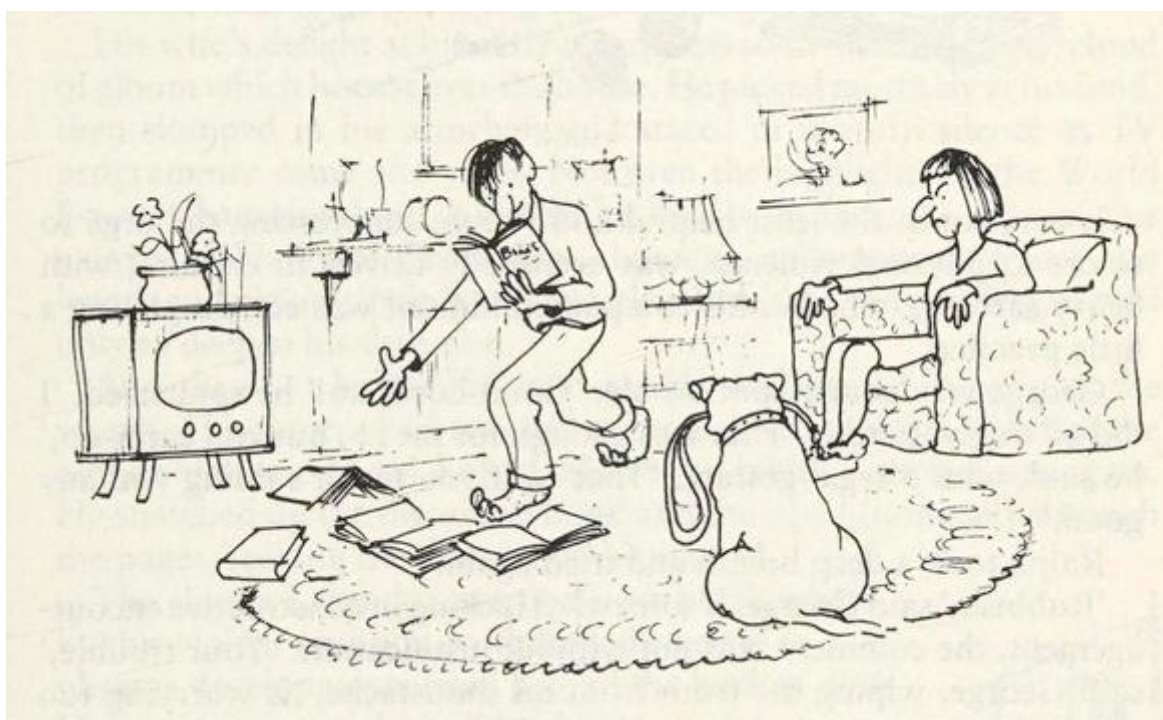
times, swapping ends, and sometimes measuring tiny differences between one bowl and another! And then even do it even when it's wet, leaving green stains on their knees!

You never know when you'll eat together (when they're playing in the evening), and when they do, it's usually white bread, plastic ham, too much butter, cheese and dubious pâté. Or worse, crisps, lots of biscuits and too much cake. (Umm, what did the doctor say about cholesterol?)

Their diary is forever in their hands, on calls as they agree to play, even though they promised not to enter so many competitions this year. *Then* they're asked to referee (or is 'mark'?) some other obsessive's games? Oh, they're probably also someone who's promised not to play at weekends!

So, it's clear that being a 'bowls partner' is not easy, and we suggest that when you're on that mat, calculating length, green and bias, spare a thought for your partner who may not (probably doesn't) understand the unique pleasure of a game of bowls.

(Actually, how about starting a 'non-bowls' club for partners? Now there's a thought. Any takers?)



This cartoon from 1966 sums up the obsessive bowler and the not-so-impressed spouse.

Sponsorship Counts

We asked the Sponsorship team to give us an overview of why it's vital to make connections within our community, not just to raise funds but to ensure PBBC can contribute to its wellbeing

Our Sponsorship team, Paul Stevens, Brian Clark, Kathy Cahill, Maria Linskey, and Mick Brennan, have been working hard all season to generate some income by making connections with local businesses and organisations. "We have a range of expensive upgrades and necessary changes we, as a club, would like to fund, so by adding the names of sponsors to our premises and other areas of our activities, we can help to fund them," says Paul Stevens.

The principle of sponsorship is simple: sponsors get name recognition and, because they're supporting the club, members are more likely to choose their services or products. It's a win-win. "So, it's great when members actually do use sponsors' services; there's a feedback loop that helps us retain specific sponsors and attract more.

So, who are we working with?

Specsavers is a great example. The August bank holiday Spoon Drive was a great success, and many of our members use them for their optical and auditory needs. That's great support for each other.

The team has been negotiating with a range of other parties across a diverse range of potential sponsors, and the aim is to prove that they can get a good return on their investment. "That's where you come in - by using those sponsors, and encouraging your friends and family to do the same as and when you need to."

Of course, brand recognition is important, so that's why we promise to make sure sponsors can be seen prominently. We're approaching our centenary in 2029, and even though that seems (quite) a long way off, the team is working on plans to boost sponsorship for that important event. The work starts now.

If we don't do it, then other clubs will. Rival clubs are finding sponsorship a hugely effective way to generate income, helping both with specific capital improvements and day-to-day running expenses. "As our costs continue to grow alongside everyone else's, we simply cannot afford to be left behind," says Paul.

Naturally, we aren't just looking for any kind of sponsor. We have principles! We will always protect our identity: Our club is unique—friendly, sociable, and known for its exemplary green and surrounds. We refuse to lose that. With this in mind, we have set firm boundaries on how we operate and who we partner with.

Keeping it Local: We are restricting sponsorship strictly to local businesses in and around Potters Bar. They must be proud to be associated with our club and hold true relevance to us and our community.

Nurturing Relationships: We are actively strengthening our ties with existing sponsors through more proactive, ongoing communication.

You can help! While our small sub-committee can't share every single idea or draft at every stage, we'll always keep you in the loop. But it's also important that you know you can contribute: if you know of any local businesses that might dovetail with our vision, please reach out to any one of the team!



A Moment in Time on the Green

On locking up one evening, Dave Sparrow snapped a gorgeously rich picture of a scene that might appear in a Hollywood movie. It's sunset, it's lonely, and there may be intrigue or romance in the air.

New Member Perspective: Peter Sephton

It's always interesting to hear from new members each season to get an insight into why they joined our club. Peter Sephton gave us a fascinating insight into his journey to our green



“Was I moving over to ‘The Dark Side’ or away from it? It depended on who I was talking to! I had, after all, just moved from a small village near Wigan to the thriving metropolis of Potters Bar, and had left behind many years of Crown Green Bowling.

I am under no illusions; I was an average player at best, but I was keen to learn a new skill. I had to get used to a flat green, bowling straight up and down and needing to use the bowl’s bias to get close to the jack. What could be easier? I quickly discovered that I needed to develop a completely different skill set.

With a choice of clubs to start my journey, I obviously chose the one less than a mile away from my new flat. My daughter had met the club’s ladies’ captain at a local church and was told that Potters Bar Bowls Club was having an open day and was eager for newcomers to try out the sport.

I came, I saw, I learnt the basics! I was warned by many before I moved that southerners were, by nature, less friendly than I’d been used to up north. So I expected the people I met to be somewhat taciturn. But, thankfully, far from being cautious and unapproachable, everyone I met was very friendly and welcoming.

My old club had eleven teams in various leagues playing many official matches and virtually no ‘friendlies’, but now I was a member of a club that played three or four friendlies every week. Here was a chance to improve my skills. My main problem was that I had to learn the names of 50 people and match each face to a name!

I was made to feel very welcome and was quickly being selected for friendly games. I took part in various club activities, and slowly I’ve been sharing my life story and gathering a new group of friends to replace those I left behind. In just a few months, my future is starting to reveal itself!

Shopping for woods in the early 1900s:

The popularity of Lawn Bowls grew in the early 1900s, and if you were on the lookout for a good set of woods, you could consult *Country Life* and find many advertisements for sporting goods. Here are a couple: it’s interesting to note that Hamley’s used to sell them (at least they did in 1904).



The Road to 2029: Centenary Plans

Time flies when you're having fun, and there are just two and a half years to our club's centenary. Mick Brennan and the Committee have begun having some ideas

The idea of forming a new bowls club in Potters Bar was discussed in February 1928, but it wasn't until the following February that a public meeting agreed to start a club. A site adjoining the Cricket Club on The Walk was identified, and negotiations began with a Mr Tilbury who owned the land. Initially, PBBC had an annual tenancy, but subsequently purchased the freehold. Work on the green itself began in November of 1929, and the first woods were bowled on June 4th, 1930, when thirty-eight founder members played their first ends.

It might seem that the Centenary is quite a long way away. Still, it always pays to be prepared for an event that will not only be enjoyable for current members, but also attract new members and new sponsorship opportunities.

The committee has been tentatively talking about a range of options:

- Ensuring that we attract representation from Bowls England, the County Association, and Finchley & District, which we used to be part of not so long ago
- We can plan events where different publicity-attracting guests can be welcomed to events at our clubhouse and

green; that might include a member of the Royal Household, Chelsea Pensioners, and even Yeoman Warders from the Tower of London who are, of course, famous for playing bowls on a green within the Queen's Garden (redesigned in 2022). They might even give us the chance to go and play within the historic walls

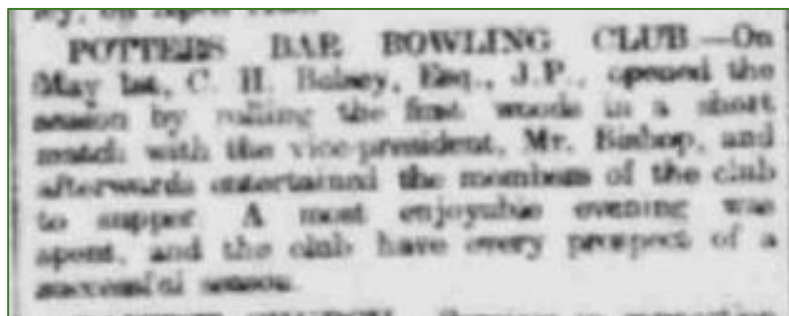
- We can arrange matches – both competitive and for show – between county teams, national teams, and specially put-together teams
- Inviting local schools and care homes to come and watch or try out the game might also be a good idea

We need to mark the centenary in more permanent ways, and it's been suggested that we create gold stickers of our badge with the year 1929 on them; they could then be attached to our woods.

Another option is to have metal lapel badges made for each member to wear proudly. That might spark other options, from ties to ladies' scarves, to... the possibilities are legion.

"The most important thing is to start thinking about what we can do to not only celebrate the Centenary, but also use the occasion to boost the club's presence in Potters Bar and attract new members, as well as have fun," stresses Mick. So, let's get our 'thinking caps' on and share new ideas. (Actually, a Centenary cap might be fun...)

The Possible Prehistory of Bowls in Potters Bar: There seems to have been a 'bowls' club in Potters Bar *before* ours was founded in 1929. Your editor found this small notice in the elaborately named *Barnet Press, Finchley & Hendon News, Southgate & Edgware Chronicle* from May 1919 – it's a bit blurry in the archive, but it can be deciphered:

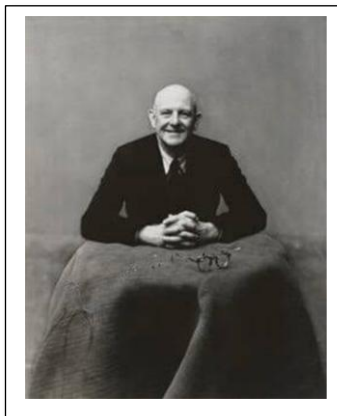


This is the text deciphered: "POTTERS BAR BOWLING CLUB – On May 1st, C.H. Belney, Esq, J.P., opened the season by rolling the first woods in a short match with the vice-president, Mr. Bishop, and afterwards entertained the members of the club to supper. A most enjoyable evening was spent, and the club has every prospect of a successful season."

It could be that the club offered 'pin-bowling', which was popular in the late 19th century in England. "It was mostly played as the traditional pub game of skittles (an early version of nine-pin or ten-pin bowling) rather than modern standardised ten-pin bowling. These games used heavy wooden balls without finger holes and were played in indoor alleys or tavern basements," says one source. What do you think?

An amusing dialogue about Lawn Bowls by P.G. Wodehouse

The Awakening of Rollo Podmarsh, written in 1926, includes a very amusing little dialogue about lawn bowls. The story starts at a venerable golf club that has recently added a bowling green, much to the annoyance of some older members. Young Podmarsh encounters the old buffer, and the following dialogue ensues -



Down on the new bowling-green behind the club-house some sort of competition was in progress. The seats about the smooth strip of turf were crowded, and the weak-minded yapping of the patients made itself plainly audible to the Oldest Member as he sat in his favourite chair in the smoking-room. He shifted restlessly, and a frown marred the placidity of his venerable brow.

To the Oldest Member a golf-club was a golf-club, and he resented the introduction of any alien element. He had opposed the institution of tennis-courts; and the suggestion of a bowling-green had stirred him to his depths.

A young man in spectacles came into the smoking-room. His high forehead was aglow, and he lapped up a ginger-ale with the air of one who considers, and he lapped up a ginger-ale with the air of one who considers that he has earned it.

"Capital exercise!" he said, beaming upon the Oldest Member.

The Oldest Member laid down his *Vardon On Casual Water*, and peered suspiciously at his companion.¹

"What did you go round in?" he asked.

"Oh, I wasn't playing golf," said the young man. "Bowls."

"A nauseous pursuit!" said the Oldest Member, coldly, and resumed his reading.

The young man seemed nettled.

"I don't know why you should say that," he retorted. "It's a splendid game."

"I rank it," said the Oldest Member, "with the juvenile pastime of marbles."

The young man pondered for some moments.

"Well, anyway," he said at length, "it was good enough for Drake."

"As I have not the pleasure of the acquaintance of your friend Drake, I am unable to estimate the value of his endorsement."

"*The Drake*. The Spanish Armada Drake. He was playing bowls on Plymouth Hoe when they told him that the Armada was in sight. 'There is time to finish the game,' he replied. That's what Drake thought of bowls."

"If he had been a golfer he would have ignored the Armada altogether."



¹ "Vardon on Casual Water" is a fictional book title invented by author P.G. Wodehouse in his golf short stories. While the legendary golfer Harry Vardon wrote real instructional books, he did not write one about casual water.

In golf rules, "casual water" (now officially called "temporary water") is standing water on the course that lets you move your ball without a penalty.

A Partial Eclipse of the Green

Eclipses, partial or otherwise, don't come around very often, so on 12th August the whole nation was excited to witness what was described as a 99% eclipse(though some said it was 97%). We were told to be ready between 6.45 pm and 7.30 pm to experience the often surreal sensations humans feel as celestial bodies dance through space above us.

Strangely, the players in the Mixed Triples on that Wednesday evening hardly paused to take a peek at the sun and the moon coming together. Their dedication to the game was stronger than their curiosity.

One shrewd bowler commented that what was happening on our green was merely being mirrored

by the transits of the sun and the moon; "If the Sun were some giant Jack, and the Moon an opponent's wood, our Earth might have been attempting to gain a better position at the interplanetary head..."

Perhaps that was taking the analogy too far, but we could see what he meant. It was, though, a unique experience for us all; playing bowls in the passing twilight of a partial eclipse, as the birds hushed suddenly and a strange breeze rustled the leaves on the trees.

There won't be another spectacular eclipse until the 23rd of September 2090, when the moon will fully cover the sun. Though if you can wait, there'll be a less partial eclipse next August, with 30% covering. The next 99% eclipse isn't until September 2081, so let's enjoy the memories of August 12th





Calling for a measure is timeless!

President's Day 2026: A Day of Celebration and Gratitude

Every President has to face the members each year on President's Day; it can be a nerve-wracking event, with the speeches beginning with the old cliché, 'unaccustomed as I am to public speaking...' and then a monologue ensues. Luckily, PBBC is blessed with articulate and gracious members who know that they can speak with ease before a receptive audience. David Arnold did just that on August 15th. He thanked all present for what had been, until he stood up to speak at least, a very 'enjoyable year.' That enjoyment was sustained as he called out the achievements of those present. The club has faced many challenges, and the collective intelligence and hard work shown by members has seen us overcome them in many positive ways.

David heaped praise on the Green Team (see Keith's article in this issue) as well as the Captains of the Sub-Sections, the Coaching Team, and the members who worked hard to organise and oversee hugely enjoyable Club tours and away days. He also spoke glowingly about the Maintenance, Social, and Kitchen teams, and, of course, the Committee. All members have shown great dedication in enabling the Club to offer a wide variety of events as well as, of course, the chance to play the sport we all love.

David called out the amazing fundraising efforts of members for the President's Charity, Parkson's UK and informed us all of the figures involved: they were spectacular. First, the President's Coffee Morning at the start of the season raised £600, not least because of the delicious cakes baked and supplied by members on the day.

Then, Jenny and Julie set up a Just Giving account to make it easier for members to make donations. You were very generous: we raised an amazing £4500.

Next, Lucy Thurlow's Bikeathon generated £1800 in donations. David and Judy joined Susie on a visit to see Lucy start her ride, and it turned out to be a memorable morning. David was greatly impressed by Lucy's enthusiasm and determination to make her Bikeathon a success. And it was.

David called out Mike O'Hagen, who had offered one of his 'Ultra Runs' for sponsorship (see Mike's article), and his gruelling 50 km Serpent Trail Ultra Marathon raised a total of £1065 – and that's before Gift Aid was applied.

David thanked his wife, Judy, for supporting him throughout his presidency, and thanked all the members for their support throughout the season.

President's Day Picture Gallery



Winners!



Wonderful catering!



Great Bar Duty



Mr & Mrs President



Ready for the Spider



Who's Holding?



Spider Winner



Diagonal rinks on President's Day! The ultimate mental conundrum

Alan Oldham celebrates a trip to Whitstable in verse

A day trip to Whitstable, a coach ride to the sea
 Seven rinks we were playing, then afterwards tea
 The journey went well with no clear sign of rain
 Carol said it was like reaching Lowestoft all over again
 We were there by eleven with three hours to spare
 Chris said it would piss down, but the weather stayed fair
 A walk to the harbour, a glimpse around town
 Some people had oysters with a pint to wash down
 Heading back to the bowls club to face all our fights
 This time it was Jenny in greys and not whites
 A photo was taken with the castle in view
 The green wasn't brilliant but what can you do
 Young Pat was there watching, her face with a glow on
 She was looking all over, but there was no sign of John
 All seven rinks were winning and then with a frown
 Our rink went from four up to finish one down
 The team we were playing couldn't hide their delight
 We were gutted to lose when a win was in sight
 There's always a bright side and then yet again
 Ron was just happy that I'd won him a pen
 A fish and chip supper with stories to tell
 Everyone was just happy that the day had gone well
 We said our goodbyes to the gathering throng
 We returned to the coach and within minutes were gone
 We were back around eight thanks to Richard and Jan
 All agreeing the day out had been a good plan
 First Worthing, then Whitstable; there's nowhere hides fear
 It's left us all wondering where we're going next year!



Alan Oldham: The Byron of the Rinks

Special Poetic Supplement Available

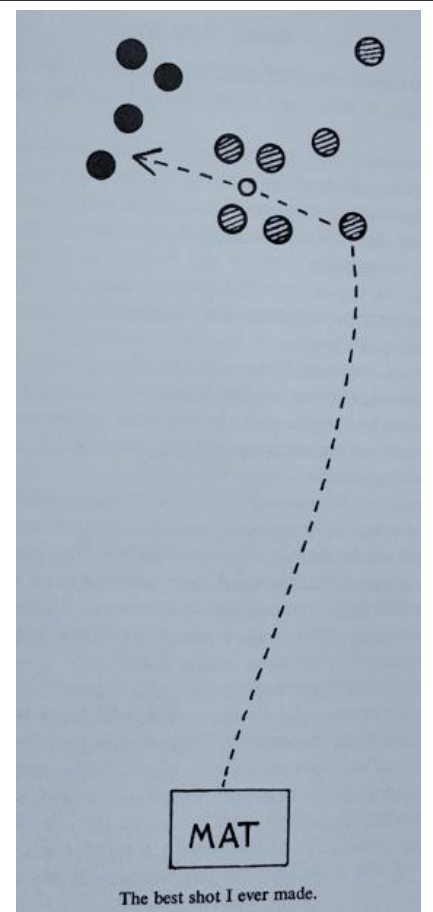
2026: A Season in Verse by Alan Oldham

A PDF with Alan's epic poems will be emailed to you on request.

Lawn Bowls

C	R	K	M	E	E	E	D	D	H	H	U	F	T
A	C	S	M	I	L	B	H	O	C	E	T	D	H
T	A	K	E	L	E	G	E	O	T	W	L	G	G
C	N	I	A	D	A	N	N	W	I	W	E	P	I
H	I	P	S	I	T	F	D	T	D	R	A	T	E
P	T	B	U	B	H	O	S	O	D	I	D	R	W
O	G	A	R	A	E	R	I	H	M	N	O	I	L
L	R	R	E	C	R	E	N	S	A	K	D	P	E
E	E	D	I	K	J	H	G	O	T	S	N	L	N
T	E	U	C	H	A	A	L	B	O	R	O	E	G
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K	E	Y	C	N	K	D	S	O	G	A	E	N	H
A	R	A	A	D	E	A	L	I	N	E	S	N	T
D	K	T	D	E	T	H	A	E	P	A	I	R	S

MAT
 BACKHAND
 FOREHAND
 ENDS
 LENGTH
 PAIRS
 BIAS
 DITCH
 LEAD
 GREEN
 LINE
 TRIPLES
 HEAD
 LEATHERJACKET
 CATCHPOLE
 MEASURE
 RINK
 SHOTWOOD
 WEIGHT
 BARDUTY
 SINGLES
 SECOND
 SKIP



A proud bowler from the 1950s shared this diagram with readers of his book

A Swift Poem About Speaking 'Bowls'



Have you ever considered,
When casting the Jack,
About some of the language,
That often comes back?

Just to centre the white ball,
A yard, foot or roll,
A mixture of words,
Before you send off your bowl.

A "taj" or a "tad"
Or a "smidge" or a "touch".
Is it all so confusing,
Do we all care so much?

A "fraction" or "tiny",
With actions by arms,
With fingers and hands
Before the bowl's in your palms.

So remember next time,
About this and that,
And your casting the small ball
When you're next on the mat.

Paul Stevens

If you have any comments, articles, poems, stories or illustrations, as well as ideas you would like to contribute to future issues of View From the Green, please send them to Jerome at:

vincentscripts@gmail.com

This issue has been published as a PDF, and print issues are available on request.

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