

Lloyd-Pratt Mallet match v High Wycombe at Ealing on 9th April

This is an annual "early season" fixture between the Clubs, ever since HW were moving locations, temporarily without a home base, so shared ours in Lammas Park. Both AC and GC, all played handicap doubles.

Our AC pairs (Tony and Margaret, Sean and John H) started the day well, with two wins in the morning. Sean and John played steadily to win 13-7 on time. The exciting finish was in Tony and Margaret's game, which went to a deciding "golden hoop" (20-19), with Tony succeeding in running two unpleasantly angled hoops (OK, that's because his approach shots weren't good enough!) in his last break, and then to claim the winning hoop. But shot of the match was Margaret's 3-ball cannon from Corner 4; having never played one before, she sent both "pilot" and "pioneer" to absolutely perfect positions!

In the GC, Pairs AB for Ealing (Bridget & Gwyneth) 1st match as per Advantage criteria, had to win 2 hoops more than our opponents. By mid-morning we were 1 game apiece but couldn't quite do it again.

A reviving lunch was needed!

Pairs CD for Ealing (Ron & Fred) similarly needed 2 additional hoops and weren't able to quite get there so didn't win the first two games. They got a slightly longer lunch!

The afternoon AC matches both resulted in slightly more comfortable wins: 18-12 for Margaret and Tony, and 16-9 for Sean and John.

In the GC, swapping opponents in the afternoon Fred and Ron continued to play catch up, but were outplayed after 2 games.

Bridget and Gwyneth started slowly and then got into their stride, winning their second game convincingly. Game 3 was a game of cat and mouse, Ealing just staying one hoop ahead of the opposition throughout which was all that was needed. However at 7-6 to the home side (needing 8 to win) a hoop running miss let the opponents in to take the match (watched by all the players! Doh!)

So overall, the scores were level at 4 matches each, necessitating a shoot-out at the peg to decide the winning team. No problem, when Fred is on your side. As also happened two years ago, thank heavens for Super Fred and his peg shooting skills. So we retained the Lloyd-Pratt Mallet, taking pride of place in our pavilion, for another year.

Report by Tony Elliott