

It is intended to publish this newsletter quarterly with your help in providing articles to try keep you all informed about pétanque in the region. Articles from clubs, notices and reports about events, coaching tips, umpiring questions will all feature at various times.

DEVON TRIPLES CHAMPIONS



On 2nd July the Devon Triples Championship was held at Chudleigh with the Championship Final being a North Devon affair with John Phipps, Ged and Ann Barton of Torrridge U3A seeing off the challenge from Mike Anderson, Ian Ash and Simon Rapsey from The Pig on the Hill 13 - 4. A great result for Mike, Ian and Simon in their first regional competition but the experience of John, Ged and Ann was too much for them on this occasion but watch out for them next year!



The plate competition was won by Peter Smith, John and Rose Thatcher of Ottery St Mary.

SINGLES CHAMPION



The Singles Championship was held at ISCA PC on 10th September with a disappointing entry of only 8 players. However, those who did enter enjoyed some tough matches with Lesley Drakatos beating John Thatcher in the final match of the day which co-incidentally decided the day. Lesley scored 13 to John's 11. Henry Pickett was the runner up because he beat John earlier in the day.

DEVON DOUBLES CHAMPIONS



The Doubles Championship took place on 13th August at Ottery St Mary and the home advantage certainly helped John and Rose Thatcher beating Chris Rendle and Rosemary Earl 13 - 3 in the Championship final while Peter and Sue Smith managed to hold off the challenge of Mike Anderson and Simon Rapsey from the Pig on the Hill by 13 - 7 in the plate final.



DEVON SHOOTING CHAMPION



The Precision Shooting Championship was held on conclusion of the Singles Championship. The most precise shooter on the day was Mike Carroll of Plymouth PC!

Precision Shooting is new to many of our members but it involves 4 shots from varying distances in 5 separate disciplines. Not an easy test!

Follow this link to see the disciplines:

www.englishpetanque.org.uk/documents/Precision%20Shooting%20Rules2014English.pdf

REGIONAL MATCHES

On 9th July we played Kernow at Vogue St Day and the very fast terrain did not suit Devon at all. The home advantage allowed Kernow to achieve one of their few victories over Devon by 22 wins to 14. This was a welcome opportunity for Devon to try out new members playing in regional matches for the first time so the experience will serve us in good stead for the future.



DEVON and KERNOW TEAMS at The Star Inn

Devon were due to play Kernow and Great Western at ISCA on 27th August but Kernow could not field a team so the 3 way became a 2 way match. This was a much closer event but it went the way of Great Western by 17 wins to our 13. The Great Western team playing in 5th place won all their games which did give them the advantage. The result all depended on the last round but Great Western held on to take the win on the day.



The teams that played in these matches for the first time will have gained from this experience and that bodes well for 2018.

INTER REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP & CHALLENGE TOURNAMENT



This year's tournament was to be difficult for our Devon Team. The other teams we were up against were very strong and our aim was to ensure that we remained in Division 1 of the Challenge Tournament. After Saturday's 7 games the runaway leaders were Chiltern region and the last region was East Midlands. However, there were only 2 points separating 2nd and 7th place. Unfortunately, Devon were in 7th place! All teams knew they had to concentrate all day on Sunday and they did, moving up to 6th place and safety! This is the toughest tournament we play in with 12 games over 2 days on very different surfaces, unlike anything we have in Devon. If we could provide another 4 teams we could compete in Division 2 of the actual championship rather than the Challenge tournament. It would be a tough event but we would all benefit from playing at a higher level.



CLUB NEWS

Pig on the Hill by Mike Anderson

We have played boules in some really nice places this summer, especially the trip to the Star Inn at St Day Cornwall where we met some real characters who gave us a real challenge on a demanding terrain.

In the Devon Doubles Championships Simon Rapsey and Mike Anderson played well and managed to get to the finals of the Plate but unfortunately lost to Peter and Sue Smith



Our team for the Doubles at Ottery St Mary on 13th August

Our triple team representing Devon against GWR consisted of John Violet, Nick Bigwood, and Mike Anderson. On a really hot day at ISCA some excellent games were played. It was a real experience to play against some top players. Sadly, Devon lost the competition 17 – 13.

But on a high note the Pig on the Hill won the Devon Petanque League. There were some really tough games and it was all so very close at the end of the season and down to the last week but we did it! We congratulate the whole team that took part in all the games. We all enjoyed a very nice celebratory lunch

On a final note we report the passing of Alan Foster. We will miss his dry sense of humour but we are pleased that his widow Pam is still very much involved with the club

OTTERY St MARY by David West

We're still making progress on the installation of lighting for the terrain but the change of season has caught up with us; as a result, the club Wednesday meetings have been changed to 2pm. So much for the light- does anyone know what to do about the rain?

Our team of grass cutters have been busy on the field all spring and summer with good results so they will be looking forward to a break during the winter months. In exchange for this voluntary service we'll enjoy free electricity from our landlords, the Town Council, for our lights. (When we do install them!)

The end of the league season saw the Otters in second position in the table yet again pipped at the post by a North Devon club! A good selection of members enjoyed the competition and for some it was a new experience of playing on different terrains. We all like to win matches, of course, but the friendly and sporting competition between members of different clubs is a definite feature of our sport.

Congratulations to those members who played at representative level this year and to those who achieved levels of success, especially when we hosted the Devon Pairs event.

We do enjoy good local press coverage, yet like other local clubs we find it hard to attract younger players; one of our two working age members is going to retire in December!

This summer we introduced local scouts to the game and although there was enthusiasm on the occasion, there was no further interest.



PLYMOUTH by Robert Preston

Although the weather recently has led to a few sessions and events being rained off, when it has been fine Plymouth Petanque has continued to flourish.

Our regular social sessions on Sundays and Wednesdays still attract an average of around 30 players. An hour's play is followed by tea and biscuits (and quite often cake) and then we hit the pistes again for up to another hour's play.

Our Devon League team put on a good show this season and were very happy to have continued their steady progress up the ladder each year.

Each summer we hold a charity event to support a local charity close to our home site in Devonport. This involves a silly theme for the afternoon which this year was hat related. See the photo for an example of how silly! Although the charity part of the event only happens during the tea break of a normal pétanque session this year we raised an amazing £900 which we have donated to the Devonport Live Cafe. This is a non-profit making establishment that concentrates on supporting local people, especially those who are homeless and/or isolated or just down on their luck at the moment.



There is a single piste built by the city council at the local Devonport Park which has lain unused for

quite a few years. One of our members who lives close by has taken it upon himself to resurrect it and keep it in good order. Many of our members have recently taken to playing up there in small groups on days other than our club sessions which, as the piste is in full view of the users of this very beautiful and popular park, is helping to popularise the game locally. Actually, the game is getting so popular up in the park now that there is a proposal to add a second piste.



PLYMOUTH TRIPLES CHAMPIONS

L-R Stuart and Brenda Rae, Mike Newberry

Our neighbours in the town of Tavistock have now, at last, got a fully up and running terrain. There is room there for four pistes. Although there is no formal pétanque club formed there yet there is plenty of enthusiasm to create one as was demonstrated by the 30 players who turned up for a tournament between the town's Rotary and Lions groups. It's great to see some pétanque activity that is situated in the space between us and the North Devon Clubs. We are looking forward to some future inter- club events.

Some of the other events that we have held over the summer include a Fun Day (where we play pétanque related games but not actually pétanque itself!) and our own club's Triples and Doubles tournaments. We have also hosted sessions for a local ramblers group and the local LibDems. Both these sessions have resulted in us recruiting new members so have been well worth putting on.



DEVON PETANQUE NEWSLETTER

September 2017

HONITON PETANQUE CLUB by Chris Bigmore

It seems like a very short time since the last newsletter! We were then looking forward to upcoming events for the Summer, and now reflect on that as we approach Autumn.

The good progress in our second Devon League season continued over the Summer and we eventually finished with five wins, including our first double, and very pleased to have surpassed the targets we set ourselves. We ended up placed sixth on points difference, having finished with the same number of league points as Chudleigh and Torridge, a total that was nearer the top than bottom. We cannot report any real success for any of our members in other regional or open events over the Summer, other than a semi-final place for Charlie O'Reilly and myself in the Devon Doubles Championship! The issue of members joining the EPA and engaging with regional and open events is something we need to encourage and aim to address within the club.

One step we are taking towards involving members in competition is to hold a club (closed) Doubles tournament which will take place in early October. This will also be an opportunity for the club to gain some experience of running an event, with a view to hosting open or regional events in the future. And we are still hoping to have one or two friendly club matches before the year's end. Our twice weekly sessions will of course continue as always, when weather allows, and attendance is still consistently good. This has been helped by the addition of five new members over the Summer, so numbers are healthy and still growing.

Finally, with John having announced retirement from his long stint in office, we would like to publicly thank him for all the support and advice he has given the club, and me personally, during the first few critical years of a new set up. I am

certain we will still seek his experienced voice in future too.

TORRIDGE U3A by Ged Barton

The season is nearly over and our congratulations to our neighbours 'The Pig on the Hill' for winning the league and our commiserations to Ottery St Mary for, yet again, being runners up.

After our team's lack of performance in the two earlier Regional challenges, winning only one game in each of the matches against Cornwall & Great Western, Ann, John and myself were relieved to be able to win a few more games at the recent EPA Inter Regional Championships. As John T said we were not far behind in the end from achieving second place

This theme continued for us last weekend when we returned to Hayling Island, together with two other teams from Torridge, to compete in the National U3A Championships. We held our new form until the last game of the event, losing in the final. So close yet so far especially as we had earlier in the day beaten our opposition. It must be said that the winners fully deserved their victory. No excuses from us. Our two other teams put in creditable performances throughout the weekend, with a minimum of 9 games being played it became a test of endurance as well as skill. As the competition indicates none of the competitors were 'spring chickens'

The week after next is the National Champion of Champions event. We will, as always, try our best, but the opposition will be the strongest we have played against for many many years.

Our club has retained its membership of around 30 people throughout the year, continuing to play 3 times a week. This season we introduced more of our members into the league team and they all performed well. It is perhaps too early to think of entering two teams into the League but that is our aim for the future.

In the winter months we are playing a winter league on one Sunday in the month, working with the Pig so as both venues are used. It is a fun event, with some rules as there is a big prize for the winners (believe the provision of a big prize and you would believe anything!!). Maximum entries are 16 teams (pairs), substitutes are allowed if you cannot make one or more of the fixed dates. If anyone is interested to play three games on each date you are welcome although we appreciate that it is a long distance to travel. Please contact me for all the details if interested, the first match day being October 18th.

ISCA by Colin Salter

When asked for ideas for our input to the Regional Newsletter my colleagues all looked at me and said, “No idea but I’m sure you’ll come up with something”.

Well the season has finished and ISCA Petanque Club finished bottom of the table. Some might say that was not good, others might say that we could have done better whilst others were probably smiling with a certain sense of satisfaction having beaten a previous person or team that beat them. My take on the season was as follows: -

1. Club players had the chance to go to some wonderful locations in Devon to play pétanque.
2. They were out in the fresh air, whether that was farm fresh air or salty sea air or whatever fresh air took their fancy on the day.
3. They were engaging in exercise.
4. They were using the grey cells in their brain, giving them a good workout deciding on tactical play or just wondering how to beat their opponent or how to play a particular terrain.
5. A competitive edge came into play (one hopes!) amongst gnashing of teeth and muttered oaths as boules decided not to play

ball or should that be boule.

6. Players had the chance to whinge and moan about conditions, weather, and anything else pétanque related whilst meeting up with their fellow players. It made a change from Brexit, Donald Trump and state of the country topics for a brief moment.
7. Hopefully Isca players also enjoyed themselves and gave some pleasure to their opponents.

So, final “Thought” for September’s Newsletter – who says you can’t make a silk purse out of a sow’s ear turning bad news into good. Just read the benefits of playing pétanque as listed above.

PICTURE GALLERY



The 2 best Stetsons of the year!



John Thatcher briefing the teams at ISCA