

History of Oakley Bowling Club

Part 4

In 1981 Spencer Kerley was both President and General Secretary and to ease his workload the decision was taken to establish a Match Secretary post – Bill Hudson was the first incumbent.

Discussions with the Malshanger Club about the development of a bowling green were underway and in May the President met with Sir Michael Colman to confirm he was indeed prepared to give the MSSC a 15 year licence so that development could take place. Intermittent discussions continued with the Council about the Andover Road site but finally at an EGM in October it was agreed unanimously that the efforts of the Club should be devoted to establishing a bowling green, pavilion and car parking at Malshanger. The Secretary then entered formal negotiations with the MSSC and at the AGM in November was able to announce that full agreement had been reached. The cost of the project was at that time estimated at £30K which was to be funded by brewery and Sports Council loans, and by the Bowls Club itself raising some £10K. It was assumed that the increased trade would lead to a break even for the MSSC by year 5. The MSSC would have the responsibility for maintenance of the green. In the event this agreement was changed significantly both in 1983 and 1987. Fund raising was now of great importance and at the AGM Treasurer Harold Line was able to report a balance of some £4K. Fund raising events included Christmas Bazaar £216, Jumble Sale £160, Cheese and Wine £63, Sale of Waste Paper £31. By far the biggest contribution was six shot bandit tickets where largely through sterling efforts at the AA, Harry Rutherford sold, in 1981 alone, some £1,100, giving us a profit of nearly £600.

There was also some bowling in 1981. Harry Rutherford finished runner up in the BDBA Singles but the real successes were the ladies. The North Hants finals were played at Smiths Industries with Ruth (Bown) Paice attempting to emulate her mother's success the previous year in the Singles. In the event she lost 22-14 to Allyson Flint of Cove. She was no more fortunate in the



Triples where with Peggy Rutherford at 2 and Kay Kerley at skip they lost on the last end to the 1980 National Triples winners skipped by Doreen (Knopp) Fletcher. The Fours Final was a different matter. After a shaky start the same triple, who had linked up with Vi Hatch, stormed to a 26-13 win. Within an hour of the finish three of the team were back in action at the Oakley finals. Ruth

Paice hit top form to overwhelm the 1980 Champion Vi Hatch by 21-7. The 1980 men's champion Jim Barnett was also beaten 21-11 by the 1980 Novice Champion Basil Grey. John Reed beat Peter Bown 21-7 in the Men's Novice Singles and in the closest game of the afternoon in the Ladies Novice Irene Worsfold beat Sheila Spencer 21-17. In driving rain (it certainly rained on that President) both pairs finals had to be abandoned but eventually (after 2 more attempts

Spencer and Kay Kerley triumphed in the Open Pairs with Betty Hodgkinson and Basil Gray winning the other title.

Other points of interest in 1981 were that new members (but eventually to become prominent ones) Eric Rodgers and Ron and Sylvia Brannam joined the Club. The BDBA entered for the first time the Gwyn Guy competition and won it – a feat yet to be repeated. Arrangements were begun for the Clubs first tour and the Club had its first President's Day as a result of which 8 jacks were purchased for the "new green". Subscriptions were increased to £12. At the AGM an amendment was proposed to the rules to exclude Ladies from being President. The amendment was defeated by 48 votes to 2. The two gentlemen concerned did not remain long with the Club!