

# NEWS FROM SWANAGE CC

## SWANAGE CROQUET CLUB IS ENJOYING A BUMPER 2024 SEASON

by Nick O'Connor

This year the club has gone from strength to strength. The club has welcomed new members who have picked up the skills and rules of the game very well and are enjoying playing croquet at the club regularly on a social basis. The club is now almost at full capacity. Lawn preparation and maintenance have been carried out superbly by a group of club members who have worked tirelessly to convert the playing field (formerly a football pitch) in the grounds of Swanage Primary School into what are now two competition standard courts. Last season, when work on the lawns was at an early stage, all the club league competition matches had to be played on away grounds. This year the playing surface has been greatly improved and home league matches have resumed. Swanage plays in the South West Federation League and has two competitive teams. Results have been fantastic!

The High Handicap Second Team has won all of its first three matches, beating Winterborne Valley at home 13-7, local rivals East Dorset (Poole) 12-8 at home and Winterborne away 11-9. Most recently was a narrow loss to East Dorset 8-12, but the league had already been won! The semi-final SW region match is against the winners of the match between St Agnes, Cornwall and Dowlish Wake, Somerset.

What a great season so far and excellent for this team to reach the semi-final stage for 2 years running. Last season they made it to the final, only to be beaten by Llandaff, Cardiff, and so we were 2023 runners up.

The All Handicap First Team have also had a fantastic season so far and have made it to the semi-final of their league where they will play Bude, Cornwall at home on September 12th and were also the 2022 champions. The team made the semi-final with

two matches to spare having beaten Budleigh Salterton, Devon at home 19-1 and 11-9 away, Exeter away 11-9 and 14-2 at home and Taunton Deane at home 16-4. In their most recent match away against a very good Taunton team the match was lost by the narrowest of margins 9.5-10.5, but again the league had already been won!

Good luck to both teams in their semi-final matches, flying the flag for Swanage.

Within the club social play happens throughout the week, as do internal club competitions, which give all players the chance to play competitive croquet if they want to. Social events also happen throughout the season.

In August each year the club holds the highly successful and popular internal Bob Oliver Competition Day. There are four separate competitions during the day that are designed to combine the

best of social and competitive play. For the club it is a great way to bring everyone together and, most importantly, it is a really good opportunity to introduce club members who have not played competitive croquet before to the exciting dimensions of tactical play, improved accuracy and winning hoops to secure match wins. We love the day and are very confident that this event has been a key player in the development of our very successful league teams. If anyone wants to know more about our Bob Oliver Competition Day then please contact us via our website, <https://www.swanagecroquetclub.com/>



The All Handicap team have just convincingly won their regional semi-final match against Bude and will now go on to play in the South West final! Congratulations to both teams for a great day of croquet.