

SIRMOOR CROQUET 2024

Cool and rather inclement weather prevailed for our second appearance on the croquet courts of Hurlingham in August. Entry to this most exclusive of clubs (Hurlingham's Membership List is closed!) seemed a formality, as we were all waved in without so much as an examination of our credentials. Indeed the Chaukidar on the main gate was so much in awe of PRD's commanding presence that he even waived the parking fee! Our elite and happy band was made up of Peter and Annie, Mark Pettigrew, (the only genuine Club Member) David and Jo Santa-Ollala and Christopher and Griselda Lavender (Christopher is a humble Reciprocal Member via the Hong Kong Club).



Our Happy Band

After lunch inside the Club we embarked for Court 6 – where ‘Whites’ were not required. This allowed us to be reasonably warm and colourful -with Peter wearing his World Elephant Polo blazer buttons. These

buttons must now be a collector's item as riding on elephants, let alone elephant polo, is banned in most countries!



A Military Appreciation in progress.....

Annie and Mark then teamed up to take on Peter and Griselda while David and Christopher joined 'singles' combat on the practise court next door (only two other players had ventured outside – so there was plentiful space on the lawns). Both games were as closely contested as they could be - with Annie and Mark, and Christopher winning by 7-6. The 'Ultra' Veterans – Peter and Mark then took on the 'Mere' Veterans – Christopher and David, with Christopher and David coming from a deficit of 6-3 to win by one point yet again. This game was distinguished by Christopher attempting and failing with three jump shots – and Mark showing how it should be done with a nimble surmounting of the blue ball on the fourth hoop!



That was an amazing shot!



The Feminine touch !

Meanwhile Annie was in Olympic form on the next door court. Having negotiated the 7th hoop she then ran the eighth from a full 20 yards with unerring accuracy clinching victor over Griselda by a margin of 7-3.

Without the sun – and having all had fun – we decided to take early tea before setting off on our various return journeys. Probably one of few times in the year that we all indulge in scones, jam and Devon clotted cream. And the debate in The Times about which you put on first – the cream or the jam - still remains unresolved!

And so the Sirmoor croquet season came to an elegant close.