

# **LONDON CIVIL SERVICE BOWLING CLUB**

Green: CSSC Chiswick Sports Ground

## **History**

The Club is descended from the London Civil Service Bowling Association which was founded in 1925 - when the Chiswick green was laid - as the governing body for about 8 London Departmental Clubs. These clubs played bowls (level green) at various venues at the time. By 1929 the number of departmental clubs affiliated to the Association had increased to 18, which competed against one another in Leagues consisting of 2 Divisions. However from this 'high' the support for bowls at Chiswick declined in the 1960s and the 1970s as staff numbers reduced as a result of office dispersals out of London, and, technical efficiencies in the PO Telegraphy Services. Only the HQs Club remained by the early 1980s and this became known as the London Civil Service Bowling Club as we know it today - currently composed of just over 50 CSSC members from both retired and current staff of a number of Departments.

## **Current Aims of the Club**

We are interested in satisfying the needs of both the competitively minded male and female bowler living in the London area as well as those recreationally minded. We aim to maintain bowls as an extremely social and informal sport for all who join us.

## **Playing facilities**

Unfortunately the Civil Service/CSSC bowling green, which was situated on the CSSC Chiswick Sports Ground, Dukes Meadow, Riverside Drive, Chiswick, was closed during September 2009 in order to reduce the cost of maintaining the sporting facilities at Chiswick. As a result, the Civil Service Bowling Club will in the future play their home matches at various private Bowls Clubs situated in South and West London (For example at Croydon BC., Imber Court BC., Molesley, and West Ealing BC) where the majority of current members are domiciled.

## **Competitions**

We organise the London CSSC Bowling Championships in the singles, pairs, triples, and fours events for men only at present. - These Championships are a qualifying event for the English Civil Service Bowling Association National Championships at which our Champions participate usually at Leamington Spa during August Bank Holiday week each year. The English Champions proceed to compete in the International (UK) Championships in various locations in the UK the following year. The Club is pleased to be associated with the organisation of the Women's Regional/National Singles Championships inaugurated by the CSSC at Chiswick in 2001. The London Women's Singles Championships have been held during most seasons since then. If interest grows we hope to introduce a Regional/National women's pairs and mixed pairs competition. There has been little interest in support of National events so far.

## **'Friendly' matches**

For the recreationally minded bowler we organise about 20 friendly matches – these are open to both men and women bowlers. Most of our fixtures are with Clubs and Bowling Associations

located in the fringes of South and West London. We would like to play more matches against departmental teams and bowling associations. Most of our members belong to other bowling clubs closer to their homes so we do not expect our members to support our matches other than on a casual basis, but obviously the more you play the better it is for the future of Civil Service bowling. For news on London bowls matches and competitions, it is often worthwhile to contact the London Region CSSC website:- [www.cssc-london.co.uk](http://www.cssc-london.co.uk)

## **Subscriptions**

Our annual subscription of £8 is set at a comparatively low rate to cater for the policy of casual play, and payment of our club expenses largely depends on receiving income from charging a minimal player's match fee, and raffles held during the after-match meal. All members should also, of course, be current or past employees in Government Departments and agencies, the Post Office, BT., the Prison Service and many other public bodies and companies carrying out ex-Civil Service work, **and, be members of 'CSSC Sports and Leisure'** (CSSC) costing just over £3.00 per month in 2009. Members of their families are encouraged to join as Associates.

## **Civil Service Bowling Nationally**

Membership of the club enables both men and women bowlers to make themselves available to play in about 20 other representative matches for the English Civil Service Bowling Association (ECSBA) and Civil Service Bowling Association (CSBA) to which the Club is affiliated. Members are encouraged to participate in short tours to the North of England and to attend the International Tournaments of National Champions of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland which are held in each country in rotation. Tourists can participate in a 'Pairs' Championship and matches against local clubs organised in conjunction with the Tournament.

## **What do you have to do to join in?**

We always welcome newcomers, whether they are expert bowlers or complete beginners. You do not need to be particularly athletic. Our mixed membership has a wide range of ages, abilities and interests- All you need to do is to contact the Secretary of the Club - Colin Kiddy – on the telephone: 020 8668 0153 - preferably in the mornings, or, better still on his Email address: [cokiddy@btinternet.com](mailto:cokiddy@btinternet.com) - He will send you more information, and arrange coaching if you have not played the sport before.

The only things newcomers need to provide are personal clothing and bowls. It is usually possible to loan new bowlers a set of bowls during the coaching stage. After 2-3 hours coaching and some practice with other bowlers you should be able to fully participate in the sport. In casual play (eg roll-ups) it is customary to wear grey trousers/skirts and white shirts/blouses and flat-soled shoes on the green. In matches we wear white team shirts and white trousers/skirts. Colin Kiddy is also a contact for the London CSSC Indoor 4s Bowling Championships, and the London Civil Service Indoor Bowling Club, which has about 40 fixtures with Indoor Clubs in the South-east of England from October to April.