

A HISTORY OF
REDHILL & DISTRICT
BAR BILLIARDS LEAGUE
1948 - 1998

REDHILL & DISTRICT BAR BILLIARDS LEAGUE – A HISTORY

INTRODUCTION & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ACCORDING to old letters and other material the Redhill & District Bar Billiards League started in the summer of 1948, although a national knock-out competition was launched in the 1930s in which teams from the East Surrey area played. A letter of May 1967 from the table suppliers, Bar Billiards Ltd, to League Secretary, Fred Vane, refers to the Plumbers Arms in Limpsfield who won a Surrey area competition three times in pre-war years.

Fifty years on from our first League season it is appropriate to look back as well as forwards and this history of the League, which has been written to mark our Golden Jubilee in 1998, contains a great deal of information much of which has not seen the light of day during the lifetimes of many of the people who read it.

My own memory of the Redhill League goes back to September 1971 when, still just old enough to drink under age, I first played as a spotty, callow youth for the Blue Anchor in Blindley Heath. At the time it never occurred to me that the Redhill League in particular and Bar Billiards in general would give me so many life-long personal friends and my decision to write this story has been motivated by those people. Many of you have been similarly lucky and will know how I feel.

Bar Billiards Ltd have supported the Redhill League from the outset and I am indebted to our good friend Ken Hussey who has provided many items of correspondence between his company and the League since 1948 as well as a lot of other material. In writing this account I have drawn heavily on these documents.

Inevitably, the history of our early years is rather sketchy. For example, there are no final League tables in existence, but we do have mid-season tables for some of the early years.

DC's A-Z. ALF HUNNISETT – 'Sir' Alf would be more appropriate because he was a true gentleman of Bar Billiards, one of the first to make it look like a game of skill and touch. I'd never realised the significance of side-spin in Bar Billiards until I saw Alf play. He was always willing to share his vast talent (but never his schooners of sweet sherry) – if you were willing to listen. Top Man!

Nor is there much evidence to show when knock-out competitions were introduced, although Frank Taylor recalls playing in the Singles semi-finals in the early 1950s and there is a press cutting, presumably from a local newspaper, reporting the semi-finals and final of 1955.

Some of the facts about our more recent history are engraved on the cups and shields, but the 1950s and 1960s are not nearly as accurately recorded. I have therefore drawn upon the remarkable memories of Frank Taylor, George Stevens and others who will figure in this account, who have illuminated my dull text with their anecdotes and who gave up their time to fill in numerous gaps that would otherwise certainly have remained empty. They have provided me with a treasure-house of reminiscences about the leading players and personalities in the Redhill League in the 1950s and 1960s. Even so, gaps will unavoidably remain and I apologise for any omissions.

Some of my contemporaries, for example Geoff Jukes and Terry Oakley, have contributed a lot of detail on the 1970s and 1980s and, above all, two of the life-long personal friends I referred to earlier have given this story a dash of colour with their amusing tales. Karl Tidy has recorded some special memories of Jersey and Dave Constable has put pen to paper and written his own fun-filled A-Z of memories which he has kindly allowed me to reproduce. I owe Karl, Dave and all the other contributors an unpayable debt of thanks and this brief history of the Redhill & District Bar Billiards League is theirs as much as anybody's.

Finally, I apologise in advance for mentioning myself in this history. Reporting the news when you also happen to be making a certain amount of it presents unavoidable editorial problems and I hope I may be forgiven if immodesty has from time to time intruded.

Simon Tinto
May 1998

THE EARLY YEARS – 1948-1960

THERE was a time when thousands of licensed premises had a Bar Billiards table nosing into a quiet corner. That was in the days of real pubs and clubs, of which all too few remain, and before the undiluted greed of large breweries changed the nature of the license trade forever. Bar Billiards tables are now the exception rather than the rule and while no statistics exist, it seems there are now fewer players than in the immediate post-war period.

The nature of the game has also changed. How, for example, would the best players today have coped with imparting spin on the heavy ivory balls of the past as compared to the lighter cellulites of the present? And judging from the scores that were common in the early days, it seems that Bar Billiards, even for the best players, was a game of gentle potting rather than the aggressive, modern in-off style.

This is borne out by the way the game was promoted when it was first adapted from a version played in Belgium and northern France and imported to England in the early 1930s. Area representatives from the table suppliers would visit pubs and clubs demonstrating the new game. The idea was to give new players technical help, but before long many League players were outclassing the reps!

Soon after the war, Leagues appeared in many parts of England, although the oldest, Oxford, had existed since 1934. Along with Medway, Portsmouth and others, the Redhill League was launched at a time when local services such as transport and the wider availability of petrol had improved enough to allow the unrestricted movement of people.

Presumably an Inaugural General Meeting was held, possibly at the Crown in Nutfield which seems to have been an unofficial HQ in early years. Registration fees were set at two-and-sixpence (twelve and a half pence) per team and a shilling (five pence) per player.

DC'S A-Z. BRIGHTON V REDHILL Charity Challenge. Those of us lucky enough to play in this annual event, usually at the Stadium in Hove, would not have escaped the great rivalry between the two Leagues. It was always intense, but superbly friendly and if you got out of the pub with any change in your pocket you must have been hiding in the loo. At the end of the day it was all about charity – Bill Burwood would have loved it.

The elected Officers for 1948-49 were;

Chairman	B. Eggett (Prince Albert)
Secretary	J. W. Wakeman (Greyhound)
Asst. Secretary	Stan Haybittle (Marquis)
Treasurer	Mrs Martin (Crown)
Committee	A. White (Crown)
	L. C. Vane (William IV)
	J. Gunn (Prince Albert)
	L. Holland (Station)
	J. S. Pearse (Diamond)
	G. Mitchell (Plumber's Arms)
	A. Jones (Marquis)

Two of those names will be familiar to many members over 40 years of age. The first League Secretary, J. W. Wakeman, was related to Peter Wakeman, an accomplished player now retired and living on the south coast. Peter won the Open Pairs title with a young man called Geoff Jukes in 1976. L. C. Vane was a relative of the late Fred Vane. A family butcher who played many seasons of Bar Billiards for the William IV in Bletchingley, Fred was a delightful and gentlemanly character who served the League for many years and was President from the mid-1970s until 1985. The 14 original teams (1948-49 season) were;

Crown A (Nutfield)
Crown B
Diamond A (Hurst Green)
Diamond B
Greyhound (Redhill)
Harrow (Chaldon)
Marquis A (Redhill)
Marquis B
Noah's Ark (Redhill)
Plumber's Arms A (Limpsfield)
Plumber's Arms B
Prince Albert (Bletchingley)
Prince Of Wales (Reigate)
William IV (Bletchingley)

Of the original 14 founders, none remain in the League, although there was a Greyhound team until 1995-96. The first Holland Club team moved from the Diamond after the publicans, Joe and Molly Mullen of fond memory, retired in 1988. The William IV was a Bar Billiards stronghold and had a team until 1986-87, while the Marquis, which once had a table in each bar and four teams, dropped out in the mid-1970s. The Plumber's Arms was demolished in 1970 at which point the teams moved to Limpsfield British Legion and boasted one of the fastest tables anyone had played.

The Noah's Ark deserves a special mention. The table was awful, with a paraffin heater underneath giving off such foul fumes that any break of over a couple of hundred resulted in a blinding headache. It was also the filthiest pub imaginable; 40 years of nicotine adorned the walls and scraps of carpet were nailed over holes in the lino where a thousand pairs of shoes had worn through to the floor-boards below. Even so, the Noah's Ark did have a repulsive kind of charm, but was closed in the late 1970s by public health inspectors who found a spring onion growing from a crack in the kitchen table!

League matches began on 30th October 1948 with the following results.

Marquis A 4 – Harrow 1
Crown A 3 – William IV 2
Greyhound 4 – Plumber's Arms B 1
Prince Of Wales 2 – Diamond 3
Noah's Ark 3 – Prince Albert 2
Plumber's Arms A 3 – Marquis B 2
Diamond B 3 – Crown B 2

The first whitewash was on 13th November when the Marquis A beat the Prince Albert. Meanwhile the Diamond A were winning all their 13 matches in the first half of the season, with a remarkable total of 50 points from a possible 65, opening up a 10-point gap over their nearest rivals, the Harrow. The half-way league table looked like this;

Diamond A	13	50
Prince Albert	13	31
Harrow	13	40
William IV	13	31
Greyhound	13	36
Crown A	13	30
Marquis A	13	36
Marquis B	13	29
Plumber's Arms A	13	35
Crown B	12	26
Noah's Ark	13	31
Prince Of Wales	12	23
Plumber's Arms B	13	31
Diamond B	13	21

By the end of March the Harrow had drawn closer to the Diamond A, trailing by 69 points to 63. There the records stop, but the title may not have been decided until the last match of the season when the Harrow were away to the Diamond A. However, as the Diamond had already won 3-2 at the Harrow earlier in the season, it's fair to assume that the Diamond A became our first ever League Champions.

DC's A-Z. COUNTY BAR BILLIARDS. I'll never forget the buzz when I was first picked for Surrey. The selectors were three great players – Alf Hunnisett, Alan Hall and John Peters. In those days we played County Trials on various tables around the League. Simon Tinto will recall this as he was also selected at the same time.*

**Alan Hall of Whyteleafe British Legion, not to be confused with our friend from the Royal Mail, the Greyhound and Merstham Village Club.*

In 1949-50 the Diamond B, Noah's Ark, Plumbers Arms B and Prince of Wales all dropped out of the League and were replaced by Caterham Country Club, the Red Lion and two teams from the Station (South Nutfield). The Diamond were still the class team and led the Marquis A by 4 points half way through the season, but the Harrow, runners-up in 1948-49, were miles off the pace. The half-way table was as follows.

Diamond	13	45
Marquis A	13	41
Crown A	13	37
Station A	13	36
Greyhound	13	35
Marquis B	13	33
William IV	13	33
Prince Albert	13	32
Red Lion	13	32
Plumber's Arms	13	31
Harrow	13	29
Station B	13	27
Caterham Country Club	13	22
Crown B	13	18

Again, no final table exists, but the Diamond and Marquis A probably fought it out, with the Diamond favourites to retain the title.

In 1950-51 the League expanded to 16 teams. The Harrow and the Plumber's Arms withdrew, but B teams from Caterham Country Club, the Red Lion, Diamond and Greyhound meant that the Prince Albert and William IV were the only two venues with just one team. It would be nice to believe these days that we could have two teams in each pub and club.

This time the Diamond A had a fight on their hands, trailing the Red Lion A by a point, with the Greyhound A, Station A, and Crown A all close behind. There is no record of the second half, but the title would have gone to one of the top five teams in the following half-way table.

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Harrow	13	40
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Greyhound	13	36
Crown A	13	30
Marquis A	13	36
Marquis B	13	29
Plumber's Arms A	13	35
Crown B	12	26
Noah's Ark	13	31
Prince Of Wales	12	23
Plumber's Arms B	13	31
Diamond B	13	21

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Marquis A	13	41
Crown A	13	37
Station A	13	36
Greyhound	13	35
Marquis B	13	33
William IV	13	33
Prince Albert	13	32
Red Lion	13	32
Plumber's Arms	13	31
Harrow	13	29
Station B	13	27
Caterham Country Club	13	22
Crown B	13	18

Again, no final table exists, but the Diamond and Marquis A probably fought it out, with the Diamond favourites to retain the title.

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This time the Diamond A had a fight on their hands, trailing the Red Lion A by a point, with the Greyhound A, Station A, and Crown A all close behind. There is no record of the second half, but the title would have gone to one of the top five teams in the following half-way table.

1951-52 MID-SEASON TABLE

Red Lion A	15	53
Diamond A	15	52
Station Hotel A	15	49
Crown A	15	47
Greyhound A	15	47
Marquis A	15	41
Prince Albert	15	39
William IV	15	39
Marquis B	15	38
Red Lion B	15	33
Caterham Country Club A	15	30
Station Hotel B	15	29
Crown B	15	27
Greyhound B	15	27
Diamond B	15	25
Caterham Country Club B	15	24

By the beginning of the 1951-52 season the League had grown to 20 teams with two divisions of 10. By mid-season the Station A were just ahead, while the Marquis B and Diamond B looked a good bet for promotion. The half-way League tables were as follows.

A LEAGUE

Station A	9	30
Greyhound A	9	28
Marquis A	9	27
Red Lion A	9	27
Diamond A	9	24
Prince Albert	9	24
Caterham Country Club A	9	20.5
Crown A	9	20
Marquis C	9	19.5
William IV	9	9

B LEAGUE

Marquis B	9	31
Diamond B	9	29
Crown B	9	25
Plough A	9	25
Greyhound B	9	22
Station B	9	21
Red Lion B	9	20
Plough B	9	18
Caterham Country Club B	9	17
Locomotive	9	16

DC's A-Z. DANK & DREARY. The Noah's Ark is no longer with us, but unlike the wall-paper there, my memories haven't faded. It had the lowest possible wattage bulb in the Bar Billiards light and local mice that used to feed off the home-made brawn sandwiches. All in all it was still an enjoyable evening.

1952-53 MID-SEASON TABLES

A LEAGUE		
Station	13	49
Greyhound	13	47
Marquis A	13	39
Caterham Country Club A	13	39
William IV B	13	39
Marquis Saloon Bar	13	36
Railway	13	35
Marquis B	13	30
Plumber's Arms	13	30
Crown A	13	28
Locomotive	13	24
Plough	13	22
Red Lion	13	19
William IV A	13	18

B LEAGUE

Diamond	12	47
Wheatsheaf	12	38
Prince Albert	12	38
Noah's Ark	12	33
Warwick	12	31
Blue Anchor	12	29
Crown B	12	28
Greyhound B	12	28
Caterham Country Club B	11	27
Brickmaker's Arms	12	25
White Swan	11	22
Tower	12	20
Old Oak	12	19

By 1954-55 there were 14 A League teams and 16 in the B League. The officers were;

Chairman	Stan Haybittle
Vice-Chairman	Alma Riseley
Secretary	Bill Cameron
Assistant Secretary	Fred Vane
Treasurer	Mr F. Godfrey

1954-55 A LEAGUE

Caterham CC A	Noah's Ark
Crown A	Plough A (Bletchingley)
Diamond	Plumber's Arms
Greyhound A	Prince Albert
Locomotive	Railway (S. Godstone)
Marquis A	Wheatsheaf
Marquis B	William IV B

1954-55 B LEAGUE

Blue Anchor	Red Lion A
Brickmaker's Arms	Red Lion B
Caterham CC B	Station (Nutfield)
Crown B	Southeastern
Greyhound B	Tower
Old Oak A	Warwick Hotel
Old Oak B	White Swan (Godstone)
Plough B	William IV A

1954-55 LEAGUE CHAMPIONS
Station Hotel, Nutfield

RUNNERS-UP
Greyhound

1954-55 B LEAGUE WINNERS
Diamond

RUNNERS-UP
Prince Albert

In April 1955, according to letters between certain administrators and Bar Billiards Ltd, an attempt was made to form a new League in the area. The correspondence suggests that some people wanted a restriction covering Redhill and Reigate only which might have been due to a reluctance to travel to outlying areas for matches. However, Bar Billiards Ltd decided they could not sponsor two Leagues in the same area and preferred to remain loyal to the original organisation.

It is clear that in the first 10 years existence the League continued to grow rapidly. In 1955-56 there were 30 teams – an increase of 115% against the 1948-49 season. This was probably because League Secretary Bill Cameron and Fred Vane, Bill's Assistant Secretary, were extremely active administrators who did a huge amount of work to encourage new teams. The 1955-56 League looked like this;

A LEAGUE

Caterham CC A	Noah's Ark
Crown A	Plough A
Diamond	Plumber's Arms
Greyhound A	Prince Albert
Locomotive	Railway (S. Godstone)
Marquis A	Wheatsheaf
Marquis Saloon	William IV A

B LEAGUE

Blue Anchor	Red Lion A
Brickmaker's Arms	Red Lion B
Caterham CC B	Southeastern
Crown B	Station (Nutfield)
Greyhound B	Tower (Redhill)
Old Oak A	Warwick Hotel
Old Oak B	White Swan
Plough B	William IV B

ALF HUNNISETT

THE 1955-56 SEASON may have been the most significant so far in the League's brief history with the appearance of the Commonwealth (now the Fountain) in Caterham valley. It was from this pub that the legendary Alf Hunnisett emerged, although he had previously played in Tunbridge Wells. Alf was the our first truly great player and he dominated Bar Billiards in this area for 20 years until the mid-1970s when poor eyesight caused his retirement, but he continued to support the League for some years afterwards. He died in 1990.

Those who saw Alf at his best will recall his astonishing knowledge of angles and spin as well as the priceless abilities of being able to imagine shots in his mind and produce his best form in match-play. An excellent snooker and billiards player, he revolutionised the theory and practice of Bar Billiards, showed that you don't have to hit the ball at a thousand miles an hour to impart heavy spin and, above all, worked tirelessly and selflessly to inspire the next generation of young players.

Alf was the first of only two players to win a hat-trick of Singles titles (Andy Finn, from the Ship, repeated this feat in 1989-90-91) and eventually won five in all – still a record. He was so far ahead of the rest that he would often decline to enter the competition in order to ensure a different winner (an act of typical generosity). He also formed a highly successful partnership with Alan Hall in the Pairs, which they won on half a dozen occasions, and later with Terry Allen. Alf was a cornerstone of the glittering Whyteleafe British Legion team that would dominate during the early and mid-1970s, winning six consecutive League titles.

Prior to his last triumphs in the 1970s he won the League title a dozen times and in 1973 he became the first Redhill player to score 20,000 in match-play. Cliff Wayland, Simon Tinto, Sue Mariner, Geoff Jukes, Tony Cross, Terry Oakley and Andy Relf have since joined the exclusive 20,000 club, but it is a measure of how far Alf was ahead of his time that 25 years later only seven players have followed the trail he blazed.

Alf Hunnisett was indisputably the greatest player of his generation, challenged in his day only by John Peters and Alan Hall (two teammates at Whyteleafe British Legion) Arthur Jeffrey and a very few others. The fact that those who remember him still talk about Alf over 20 years after he retired from competitive Bar Billiards is a lasting testimony to his greatness and there are perhaps only a handful of Redhill players today who could have given him a game.

DC's A-Z. E IS FOR EATS. While playing for the Queen's Head in Nutfield with Rod Smith, Shaun Potter, Laurie Roberts, Alva Gaskin, Simon Bell, Derek Holman and Ross Kenrick we were spoiled rotten. The food was absolutely brilliant and most of us had trouble eating it all. Well, nearly all of us anyway – Eh Derek! E also stands for the truly irreplaceable enjoyment that Bar Billiards people have given me over many years.

1956-57 A LEAGUE

Brickmaker's Arms	Noah's Ark A
Caterham CC A	Plough A
Diamond	Plumber's Arms
Greyhound A	Prince Albert
Locomotive	Rail way
Marquis A	Station Hotel A
Marquis B	Warwick
Marquis Saloon Bar	White Swan

1956-57 B LEAGUE

Blue Anchor	Plough B
Caterham CC B	Plough C
Commonwealth	Red Lion
Crown (Nutfield)	Southeastern
Greyhound B	Station Hotel B
Noah's Ark B	Wheatsheaf
Old Oak A	William IV
Old Oak B	

The early years of the Redhill League, from 1948 to about 1960 were the vital formative period in our history. A strong administration was in place with officers like Stan Haybittle, Bill Cameron, Fred Vane and Bill Burwood putting in a great deal of time and energy.

The speed with which the B League appeared is also a reflection of the general growth of Bar Billiards across southern England, but it wouldn't have happened at all in the Redhill League without good administrators.

It's a shame that we have so little in the way of records from the early years – in particular details about the early Singles and Pairs Champions as well as League Championship teams. Sadly many of the leading players from the 1950s are no longer alive so their memories, which could have helped enormously, have been lost forever.

The cups and shields don't help either because they mostly originated in the early 1970s. For the first 20 years or so, winners received prizes as opposed to trophies on Presentation Night; for example, George Stevens remembers winning a carving knife and some cuff-links in the early 1960s.

DC's A-Z. FIS FOR FOOT. Karl Tidy's to be precise – the one I removed a shoe from in the bar of the Egremont Hotel in Jersey one year and filled with lager. What I didn't realise was that had a hole in it the size of Pete Howes's thumb. Egg on face? No – Lager in lap! A year later that same shoe reappeared with the same hole in it, but sprayed gold, mounted on a green baize plinth and presented to me in the Egremont.

F also stands for Fifties. One of the great exponents of playing the 50 holes was Frank Taylor. Some people think it's boring and Simon Tinto doesn't have the patience for it, but it's still a style of play that takes great skill.

THE MIDDLE YEARS – 1960-1980

THE CROWN won two titles in the early 1960s and Redhill British Legion were Champions in 1963 and 1964. In 1966 and 1967 the title went to the Marquis, who also provided the runners-up. The Wheatsheaf, with Frank Taylor, Arthur Jeffrey, Terry Simmons and the Larkworthy brothers, Alan and Gordon, won a hat-trick of titles in 1969-70-71; when the publicans, Fred and Edna Rothwell, moved to the Black Horse in mid-season the team went with them and won their third Championship in 1970-71.

1967-68 MID-SEASON LEAGUE TABLE

A LEAGUE	P	PTS
Whyteleafe British Legion A	13	47
Marquis Saloon Bar A	13	41
Marquis Saloon Bar B	13	41
Marquis Public Bar A	13	40
Wheatsheaf A	13	39
Greyhound	13	34
Whyteleafe British Legion B	13	32
Station (Reigate) A	13	30.5
Plumber's Arms A	13	29
Redhill British Legion A	13	27.5
Redhill British Legion B	13	25
Wheatsheaf B	13	21
William IV A	13	27
Holmesdale A	13	21
B LEAGUE	P	PTS
Noah's Ark	15	51
Diamond	15	46.5
Marquis Public Bar B	15	46
Station (Nutfield)	14	44.5
Locomotive A	15	44
Plumber's Arms B	15	41
Lakers	15	40
Locomotive B	15	40
Station (Reigate) B	15	38.5
Plough	15	37
Old Oak	14	35
William IV B	13	30
Crown	15	28
Blue Anchor	14	26
Holmesdale B	14	23.5
The Nob	15	14

HIGHEST SCORES

11,520 – Arthur Jeffrey (Wheatsheaf B)
 10,320 – Alf Hunnisett (Whyteleafe B. L. A)
 10,090 – Alf Hunnisett (Whyteleafe B. L. A)
 9,070 – Alf Hunnisett (Whyteleafe B. L. A)
 8,690 – J. Allen (Marquis Saloon B)
 8,580 – D. Thorndale (Marquis Saloon B)
 8,230 – B. Randall (Marquis Saloon B)
 8,010 – Terry Simmons (Wheatsheaf B)

As you can see from the top scores, there was a high standard in Redhill 30 years ago. It comes as no great surprise to see Alf Hunnisett getting his name in lights, but he wasn't the only player who could do it; Arthur Jeffrey was a brilliant, but occasionally erratic player while Terry Simmons was the rock-solid performer needed in every successful team.

DC's A-Z. GETTING LOCKED IN! Reigate Rugby Club "What d'you mean you're going home? It's only 11 o'clock!?" was a hot-bed of fun and bad behaviour on Tuesday nights. Many beers and hours after what they laughingly called "closing-time" if you were still standing you'd probably be playing such childish games as spoons, nasal hair plucking, holding hot coins between two particularly tender parts of your anatomy and dropping them into a beer glass, knuckles or even Bar Billiards – often in various states of undress. Work on Wednesday morning? NAH!

For several years the season consisted of up to 30 matches, starting in September and going round to the following April, so 1968-69 saw three divisions for the first time. By the half-way stage the Rail Club led the new C League with 31 points, followed by the Flying Scud A, the Blue Anchor and the New Inn on 30, 29 and 28 points respectively. The mid-season league tables looked like this;

A LEAGUE	P	PTS
Wheatsheaf A	10	34
Whyteleafe British Legion A	10	32
Holmesdale A	10	28
Greyhound	10	26
Diamond	10	26
Marquis Saloon B	9	22
Marquis Public A	10	22
Marquis Saloon A	10	22
William IV A	10	22
Station (Reigate)	10	20
Noah's Ark	9	16
B LEAGUE	P	PTS
Redhill British Legion	9	29
Plumber's Arms A	9	28
William IV B	8	27
Wheatsheaf B	8	26
Locomotive	9	25
Whyteleafe British Legion B	9	22
Plough	9	19
Plumber's Arms B	9	18
Marquis Public B	9	16
Merstham Club	9	10

1968-69 C LEAGUE	P	Pts
Rail Club	9	31
Flying Scud A	9	30
Blue Anchor	9	29
New Inn	9	28
White Hart A	9	23
Station	9	21
Holmesdale B	9	18
Flying Scud B	9	17
Nob	9	17
White Hart B	9	11

There is a frustrating lack of final League tables and data about Singles Champions and high scores from the early and middle years. Only mid-season tables and a few press cuttings exist up to 1971-72 when the Championship cup was first engraved. However, it is a tradition that when fixtures are written the

defending Champions are given No 1 on the schedule and by studying fixtures for the 1960s it has been possible to take an educated guesstimate at Championship-winning teams.

Although a press cutting from George Stevens mentions a highest break award presented to Arthur Jeffrey in 1969, the cups for the highest home and away scores were introduced by Terry Allen in 1972-73 and for the highest away break in 1974-75. It came as no surprise that John Peters and Alf Hunnisett, who broke 20,000 in 1973, won many early awards, but they weren't the only ones at it. The free-scoring Arthur Jeffrey and a pair of young lions called Bob Toye and Geoff Jukes also got in on the act. Today Geoff is still banging in the big scores as is Bob in the Brighton League.

LEAGUE CHAMPIONS

1959	Plumber's Arms A
1960	Crown
1961	Greyhound
1962	Crown 'A'
1963	Redhill British Legion
1964	Redhill British Legion
1965	Whyteleafe B. L. A
1966	Marquis Saloon Bar A
1967	Marquis Public Bar A
1968	Whyteleafe B. L. A
1969	Wheatsheaf

LEAGUE CHAMPIONS

1970	Wheatsheaf
1971	Black Horse
1972	Whyteleafe B. L. A
1973	Whyteleafe B. L. A
1974	Whyteleafe B. L. A
1975	Whyteleafe B. L. A
1976	Whyteleafe B. L. A
1977	Whyteleafe B. L. A
1978	Ship A
1979	Bletchingley Village Club
1980	Reigate Ex-Ser. B

RUNNERS-UP

Flying Scud A
Lakers B
Flying Scud A
Flying Scud A
Whyteleafe B. L. A
Flying Scud A
Greyhound A

PROMOTED

1962	Whyteleafe B.L. A, Station, Rail Club, Queen's Head
1963	Wheatsheaf B, William IV, Marquis B
1964	Locomotive, Whyteleafe B.L. B
1965	Railway (Reigate), Wheatsheaf B
1966	Redhill B.L. B, William IV A
1967	Noah's Ark, Locomotive A, Marquis Public Bar B, Diamond

RELEGATED

Wheatsheaf B, William IV
Station, Crown, Greyhound
Wheatsheaf B
William IV A, Locomotive
Noah's Ark, Holmesdale A
Redhill B.L., Holmesdale B

HIGHEST HOME SCORE

1973	Alf Hunnisett
1974	Alf Hunnisett
1975	Alf Hunnisett
1976	
1977	John Peters
1978	Geoff Jukes
1979	
1980	

HIGHEST AWAY SCORE

1973	Alf Hunnisett
1974	Arthur Jeffrey
1975	John Peters
1976	John Peters
1977	John Peters
1978	Geoff Jukes
1979	Bob Toye
1980	Alan Parkhurst

HIGHEST AWAY BREAK

1975	Arthur Jeffrey
1976	John Peters
1977	John Peters
1978	Geoff Jukes
1979	Bob Toye
1980	Colin Norman

Whyteleafe British Legion was the first really great team in the Redhill League. Alf Hunnisett was joined by John Peters, Alan Hall, Mike Standing and the wily Cyril Webb to win six consecutive League titles from 1972 to 1977 as well as dominating the President's Cup, Pairs and Singles, although the Bill Burwood Cup always eluded them.

The old Whyteleafe table is remembered by many as the fastest they ever played and this certainly gave the team an advantage, but such was their skill that they lost few games on it. Their away form was almost as impressive and Alf, John and Alan were three of the players responsible for raising the standard in Redhill beyond where it had been in the early years.

MODERN TIMES – 1980 ONWARDS

IN 1979 GEORGE STEVENS brought down the curtain on the Middle Years and pointed towards the future when he became the first player to win all five major titles, completing his set with a victory in the Open Singles. He has since been emulated by the following five players: Simon Tinto (1982), Geoff Jukes (1985), Alva Gaskin (1990), Terry Oakley (1992) and Greg Hughan (1996).

If Whyteleafe British Legion dominated the 1970s it was the Jolly Brickmakers B who were to dominate the first half of the 1980s. The Bricks B was the team that came from nowhere. Paul Wood, Cliff Wayland, Derek Holman, Alan Dean, Dave Dean and Ray Gregory had won the B League in 1979-80 by a comfortable margin and then recruited Simon Tinto.

Ray Gregory and the Dean brothers only played one more season before dropping out of Bar Billiards, but Geoff Jukes and Paul Sharman joined in 1981. From 1981 to 1985 the Jolly Bricks B were virtually unstoppable, winning two Open Singles titles, two Open Pairs, two President's Cups, three Bill Burwood Cups and four League titles as well as numerous awards for highest scores and breaks.

The Bricks' dominance was ended by Rod Smith's team, who as Reigate Ex-Servicemen's B team won the League in 1980 before returning to the Flying Scud – their spiritual home. Rod was joined by Dave Constable, Alva Gaskin, Simon Bell, Laurie Roberts, Vernon Sparkes and, in 1985, the late Shaun Potter. With the Bricks B weakened by the departure of Derek Holman and Cliff Wayland, the title went to the Scud for the first time and the team retained it the next year, playing at the White Lion. The Ship A prevented a hat-trick in 1988, adding to their title of 10 years earlier.

Rod's team moved to the Queen's Head for the start of the 1988-89 season. Vernon Sparkes had left the area, but Derek Holman and Ross Kenrick (another ex-Bricks player) joined them and for the next five seasons nobody could stop them winning the League Championship. However, there were two close calls when the title was decided by a play-off after the Ship A (in 1990) and the Bricks B (in 1991) finished level with the Queen's Head. Mercifully the nerve-wracking business of play-offs is no longer possible under a new rule, passed at the 1991 AGM, under which away points and then average away scores break any tie.

Rod Smith's team enjoyed a remarkable period of success, winning seven League titles, three President's Cups, three Bill Burwood Cups, two Open Pairs and one Open Singles in eight years. This included the unique treble of all three team trophies in 1989 and, incidentally, helped Steve Bowes (Bricks B) to become the only player in our history with the dubious honour of collecting runners-up trophies in four of the five majors in a single season – he lost to Andy Finn (Ship) in the Open Singles Final.

In 1993-94 the Queen's Head, with Andy Relf replacing Ross Kenrick who had emigrated to Australia, could see no sign of any team to stop them emulating Whyteleafe British Legion by winning a sixth consecutive League title. They were aware that Greg Hughan had left the Ship to join the Flying Scud A, but although both Eileen Peters (Bletchingley Village Club in 1979) and Alison Norman (Ship A in 1988) had been integral players in previous Championship teams, the Flying Scud A contained two Ladies and few people believed they could succeed at the sharp end of the A League.

They were wrong. Gail Woods and Susie Banting played 40 League matches between them in 1993-94 and won no less than 32 of them. The team as a whole took an astonishing 84 points out of 100, losing just 6 games at home (giving all the breaks away) and 10 away. They also won the President's Cup and their only defeat all season was at the hands of Sheila King's Royal Earlswood Hospital Club team who won a memorable Bill Burwood final at the Old Oak. The Flying Scud lost their title in 1994-95 to the Frenches Club A, cleverly captained by Terry Oakley, but have since won it three more times.

DC's A-Z. HAROLD GREENSTED never got tired of playing Bar Billiards. Walk into the public bar of the Ship and if "H" wasn't playing you soon would be. He'd always challenge you and I'd always take him on. He was a fine player, representing Surrey in the 1970s, and was followed into the county team by both his sons, Ian and Jimmy. Happy Days!

Since 1970 the League Championship has been dominated by four teams – Whyteleafe British Legion A, the Jolly Bricks B, Queen's Head B and the Scud A. Just for a moment, imagine you could dispense with the inconvenience of time and bring them together for a competition to decide which was the best.

This would of course be speculative because Geoff Jukes, Simon Tinto and Derek Holman all played in two of these teams. What is certain is that Derek believes his old Bricks B was better than the Queen's Head, while Simon reckons that the Bricks B wouldn't have lived with the Flying Scud A. It's also true that, even at full strength, the Queen's Head were quite unable to handle the Scud, losing five matches out of five and 19 games out of 25 in 1993-94. In the end it probably comes down to a close call between Whyteleafe and the Scud who both played with a greater sense of freedom than any other team.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

THE IDENTITY of the Player Of The Year was traditionally a closely guarded secret until Presentation Night when all was revealed. When the award was instituted in the early 1970s there was just one winner, decided by performances in League matches across all the divisions. Ian Greensted (Greyhound) was an early Player Of The Year; Frank Taylor won in 1980 and Geoff Jukes (Jolly Bricks B) lost only two matches in 1981-82, to take the trophy.

Terry Oakley won it for the first time when he returned to the A League in 1986 with Monson Road Club. Player Of The Year records are incomplete, although John Peters and Alf Hunnisett would certainly have been winners during their prime in the 1970s.

When Hall & Co began their sponsorship of the League in 1988-89, former Chairman Bill Nash suggested that Hall & Co Player Of The Year awards should be given for each division. Laurie Roberts (Queen's Head B), Andy Watts (Blacksmith's Arms B) and Alison Norman (Ship) were the first three winners; there was no C League again until 1990-91, when Simon Bell won easily.

A number of players have won the title with just a single defeat and in 1992-93 each of the four winners lost only one game. But in 1994-95 Terry Oakley brilliantly anchored his Frenches Club A team to the League Championship by winning all his games – the only A League player on record ever to go through the card.

LEAGUE CHAMPIONS & RUNNERS-UP; 1981-98

CHAMPIONS	RUNNERS-UP	CHAMPIONS	RUNNERS-UP
1981 Greyhound A	Bletchingley V C	1990 Queen's Head B	Ship A
1982 Jolly Bricks B	Greyhound A	1991 Queen's Head B	Jolly Bricks B
1983 Jolly Bricks B	Old Oak A	1992 Queen's Head B	Frenches Club A
1984 Jolly Bricks B	Flying Scud C	1993 Queen's Head B	Flying Scud A
1985 Jolly Bricks B	Railway B	1994 Flying Scud A	Queen's Head B
1986 Flying Scud C	Railway B	1995 Frenches Club A	Flying Scud A
1987 White Lion C	Jolly Bricks B	1996 Flying Scud A	Nutfield C.C. A
1988 Ship A	Monotype C	1997 Flying Scud A	Old Oak A
1989 Queen's Head B	Jolly Bricks B	1998 Flying Scud A	Frenches Club A

PLAYER-OF-THE-YEAR	HIGHEST HOME SCORE	HIGHEST AWAY SCORE	HIGHEST AWAY BREAK
1980 Frank Taylor	1981 Simon Tinto	1981 John Peters	1981 Bob Toye
1982 Geoff Jukes	1982 Cliff Wayland	1982 Simon Tinto	1982 Paul Wood
	1983 Derek Holman	1983 Simon Tinto	1983 Geoff Jukes
	1984	1984 Cliff Wayland	1984 John Peters
	1985 Simon Tinto	1985 Shaun Potter	1985 Shaun Potter
1986 Terry Oakley	1986	1986 Simon Tinto	1986 Simon Tinto
	1987 Simon Tinto	1987 Jim Green	1987 Jim Green
	1988	1988 Laurie Roberts	1988 Cliff Wayland
1989 Laurie Roberts	1989 Simon Tinto	1989 Simon Tinto	1989 Simon Tinto
1990 Simon Tinto	1990 Paul Wood	1990 Karl Tidy	1990 Simon Tinto
1991 Colin Norman	1991	1991 Terry Oakley	1991 Terry Oakley
1992 Geoff Jukes	1992	1992 Geoff Jukes	1992 Geoff Jukes
1993 Simon Tinto	1993 Simon Tinto	1993 Simon Tinto	1993 Colin Norman
1994 Geoff Jukes	1994 Geoff Jukes	1994 Simon Tinto	1994 Simon Tinto
1995 Terry Oakley	1995 Simon Tinto	1995 Steve Mariner	1995 Steve Mariner
1996 Andy Lobley	1996 Tony Walsh	1996 Tony Walsh	1996 Tony Walsh
1997 Geoff Jukes	1997 Simon Tinto	1997 Andy Relf	1997 Geoff Jukes
1998 Simon Tinto	1998 Simon Tinto	1998 Tony Cross	1998 Tony Cross

THE B LEAGUE

THE B LEAGUE is the confusing division. Firstly it loses about half its teams each year to promotion and relegation. Secondly every new season sees a change in personnel – some players move to new teams and, through no fault of their own, play in a lower division than they might want to. For example, Bob Tate and Andy Lobley, currently with the Frenches Club B, are not B League players by any set of standards and yet the need to formulate divisions of roughly the same number of teams has placed them below where they should be.

There are also anomalies in the records. How, for example, did the Black Horse become the only team to retain the B League title (1988) and how come the Blacksmith's Arms were joint runners-up in 1988, only to win it the next year? In both cases there was probably a movement of players with the result that a weakened team felt unable to take on the challenge of A League Bar Billiards.

However, the knowledge that they would be out of their depth didn't stop Whyteleafe British Legion – Team Hewitt (Bill, Brenda and daughters, Sue, Jane and Chris) – from making a nuisance of themselves in 1991-92 by pinching points to which many of their A League opponents seemed to think they had some kind of a divine right. As it turned out, Whyteleafe returned to the B League the following season, but at least they had the guts to have a go at the so-called A League stars.

Automatic promotion guarantees that there's no such thing as a great B League team, but this division has produced some outstanding talents who went on to star for many seasons in the A League and are familiar names today.

For example, in the mid-1970s the Flying Scud B were promoted with Geoff Jukes and Dave Constable; the Diamond gave us Bob Toye, Karl Tidy and, later, Tony Cross; Simon Tinto came from the Blue Anchor; Terry Oakley and Alan Parkhurst, came from the Greyhound; the Jolly Bricks gave us Paul Wood, Derek Holman, Cliff Wayland, Ross Kenrick and Andy Relf; the Ship produced Greg Hughan; Gail Woods and Sue Banting came from Royal Earlswood and the Flying Scud respectively; Andy Lobley and Bob Tate emerged from the Gatton Club; Nutfield CC gave us Dave Gray and Mark Fraser; and today a number of Emma Hamilton players are making waves.

The B League has by definition always been a division in a state of flux. Older players, with less acute eyesight than before and more trophies than they probably want, tend to drop down from the A League, play purely for fun with and against old friends and pass their knowledge on to others. Meanwhile newer members of the League, often ambitious and loaded with talent, but inexperienced, find the B League a proving ground in which to hone their skills before taking on the heavyweights scattered about the A League.

DC's A-Z. INFLUENCE. Alf Hunnisett comes to the fore again, along with Rod Smith, John Peters and John Samels. Alf – because he could do things on a Bar Billiards table I didn't think were possible at the time (so could you, Dave: remember the Black Horse, or would you prefer it if I didn't go into that? – Simon). Rod because he was always there for me as a steadying influence. And John because of his calm and accurate approach to the game.

B LEAGUE CHAMPIONS & RUNNERS-UP

CHAMPIONS

1969 Wheatsheaf B
1974 Whyteleafe B
1975 Blue Anchor
1976 Old Oak A
1977 Greyhound A
1978 Black Horse A
1979 William IV A
1980 Jolly Bricks B
1981 Jolly Bricks A
1982 Flying Scud B
1983 Ship B
1984 Lakers
1985 Monson Road Club

RUNNERS-UP

Redhill B.L.
Flying Scud B
William IV A
Nob B
Locomotive A
Diamond A
Flying Scud B
Greyhound B
Yew Tree A
Diamond A
Old Chestnut
Midday Sun
Diamond A

CHAMPIONS

1986 Blacksmith's Arms
1987 Black Horse B
1988 Black Horse
1989 Blacksmith's Arms
1990 Jolly Bricks A
1991 Greyhound
1992 Ship B
1993 Holland Club
1994 Black Horse A
1995 Midday Sun B
1996 Emma Hamilton
1997 Old Oak B
1998 Frenches Club B

RUNNERS-UP

Black Horse A
Queen's Head A
Blacksmiths A
Gatton Club
Ship B
Whyteleafe B. L. A
Flying Scud B
Midday Sun A
Emma Hamilton B
Frenches Club B
Blacksmith's Arms
Horley CC A
Royal Earlswood A

B LEAGUE HIGHEST SCORE, BREAK & PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

PLAYER-OF-THE-YEAR	HIGHEST HOME SCORE	HIGHEST AWAY SCORE	HIGHEST AWAY BREAK
	1973 Simon Tinto	1973 Roy Todd	
	1974 Simon Tinto	1974 John Garcia	
	1975 Simon Tinto	1975 T. Winterbottom	1975 Alec Holloway
		1976 Arthur Jeffrey	1976 Ken Wilkinson
	1977 Bob Toye	1977 Ian Greensted	1977 Ian Greensted
	1978 Dave Constable	1978 George Stevens	1978 George Stevens
	1979 Tim Ditzel	1979 Alan Stepney	1979 Duncan Lodge
	1980 Peter Whipp	1980 Barry Johnson	1980 Ivor Holden
	1981 Tim Bunn	1981 Dave Taylor	1981 Jimmy Considine
	1982 Keith Smith	1982 Dave Sharp	1982 John Bennett
	1983 Frank Taylor		
	1984 Dave Burton		
	1985 Terry Oakley	1985 Terry Oakley	
	1986 John Buttner		
	1987 Tim Oomen		
	1988 Karl Tidy		
1989 Andy Watts			1989 Dave Eustace
1990 Ian Greensted			1990 Pete Forrest
1991 Ray George			1991 Ray George
1992 Gary Atkins			1992 Peter Whipp
1993 Dave Timlin			1993 Pete Kenvin
1994 Peter David			1994 Peter David
1995 Neil Byles			1995 Peter David
1996 Martin Pellett	1996 Ian Holman	1996 Dave Eustace	1996 Graham Holman
1997 Hilton Dorman	1997 Hilton Dorman	1997 Tony Plaw	1997 Tony Plaw
1998 Andy Lobley	1998 Andy Lobley	1998 Mark Fraser	1998 Mark Fraser

THE C LEAGUE

THE C LEAGUE, which when you think about it, is by some distance the most important of the three Tuesday divisions, has had a patchy history. First introduced in 1968-69, it lasted no more than a couple of seasons (when I first played in 1971-72 there were two divisions of 16 teams) before reappearing in 1973-74 for quite a few seasons until 1982.

When the C League folded in the disastrous decline of the 1980s we also lost the cups and shields and so the divisional records are sadly incomplete. What we do know is that the Rail Club won the C League in 1969, that Alan Parkhurst from the Greyhound B was the first C League player to represent Surrey, that he was then, and still is, a hard-hitting player, although his current Frenches Club team-mates reckon he's trying to become a touch-player (fat chance). Parky was quickly promoted to the fine Greyhound A team with whom he won a League Championship trophy in 1981.

The C League was briefly reintroduced in the late 1980s, with the feisty Blacksmith's Arms B winning in 1988 from John Keen's Jolly Bricks A team. In 1987-88 there was also a C League Cup which was designed to make up for a very

short season of just 14 League matches. Again, the Blacksmith's B headed off the Bricks A, winning the final 4-1, but the C League Cup was only played for one season.

There was no C League again until 1990-91. More recently Royal Earlswood B won in 1995 and were followed in 1996 by their A team and the Holland Club in 1997. the Midday Sun B came through with a late charge to win in 1998.

DC's A-Z. JOLLY BRICKMAKERS TRIPLES. The Bricks Triples is a special occasion on the Bar Billiards calendar - always well organised and attended. Most players are aware of the peril of making a break of over 2,000, which results in having to wear a ghastly red baseball cap with "I Am A Donkey" emblazoned on it.

To my dying day I'll never forget the look on Nigel Bisson's face (a Bar Billiards player from Jersey) as he looked up while playing only to see his female partner peeling off - she was actually a stripagram girl. Let's just say she was in a state of undress - stockings, suspenders, high heels etc. Nigel's jaw hit the deck and the pub exploded. Pay-back time Nige!

CLEAGUE RECORDS

PLAYER-OF-THE-YEAR	HIGHEST HOME SCORE	HIGHEST AWAY SCORE	HIGHEST AWAY BREAK
	1974 Dave Malcomber	1974 Ian Greensted	
	1975 Jack Tagg	1975 Jack Tagg	1975 Jack Tagg
	1976 Alma Risely	1976 Alma Risely	
	1977 Andy Corbett	1977 V. Fernandez	1977 V. Fernandez
	1978 Colin Robbins	1978 Alan Stepney	1978 Tony Greig
	1979 Tim Hunt	1979 Ross Kenrick	1979 Ivan Hockley
	1980 Roy Vaughan	1980 Colin Robbins	1980 Wendy Lowe
	1981 Duncan Lodge	1981 Nick Greenard	1981 Nick Greenard
	1982 Barry Lugton	1982 George Charman	1982 Bob Drew
1991 Simon Bell	1991 Dave Timlin		1991 Dave Timlin
1992 John Timlin	1992 Dave Timlin		1992 Dave Timlin
1993 Alec Hastings	1993 Alec Hastings		
1994 Trevor Stevens	1994 Trevor Stevens		
1995 Martin Pellett	1995 Mark Faragher		
1996 Paul Wilkinson	1996 Hilton Dorman	1996 Paul Wilkinson	1996 Paul Wilkinson
1997 Jeff Webb	1997 Gill Mackie	1997 Dave Timlin	1997 Gill Mackie
1998 Alec Hastings	1998 Alec Hastings	1998 Alec Hastings	1998 Alec Hastings

THE LADIES LEAGUE

IN 1977 THE Ladies League was launched. This was the brainchild of Eileen Peters (Whyteleafe British Legion) who realised there were enough Ladies in the Redhill League to form a new division, playing on Wednesday evenings. Teams of four players from the Flying Scud, Whyteleafe British Legion, the Diamond, the Black Horse and Limpsfield British Legion joined for the inaugural season.

Originally the Ladies League was a totally separate organisation from the Redhill & District Bar Billiards League, but it was incorporated into the RDBBL in 1980. It is also a matter of great pride that ours is the only Ladies League anywhere in the country.

Eileen herself was elected Ladies Secretary, but in those days the job didn't just involve running the Ladies League. Eileen also took over the Ladies Singles and chaired the Ladies County selection committee. The Ladies Secretary continued with all those duties (and the Ladies Pairs when the competition was launched in 1985). Today those duties are divided among three Secretaries.

The original Ladies League format was over five games, with one player being drawn at random to play the last game. This system continued for two or three seasons, but quite a few pubs and clubs had difficulty raising four players and teams were therefore reduced to three players, each playing two games. This system was adapted in 1990 to ensure that nobody played the same opponent twice.

Whyteleafe British Legion won the first two titles with Eileen Peters, Ethel Killick and Brenda Hewitt who was to win three more in 1986-87-91. Eileen also won with the Railway (South Godstone) in 1984. The team that moved from Reigate Rugby Club to Redhill Golf Club and the Black Horse included Margaret Skinner, Wendy Lowe and Carol Banting who all won the Ladies Singles in the 1970s; they won the Ladies League in 1979-81-82.

Pauline Tully and Anne Boyce, both county players, were the leading Ladies at Limpsfield British Legion, helping the club to titles in 1980 and 1983. Sue Barnard was another star in the making, but she moved from the area at a time when her game was just starting to take off. The family team at the Ship (Lyn Green and her daughters Alison Norman and Stephanie Cole) were Champions in 1988 and 1990.

In 1989 Alison began a run of four consecutive Ladies League Player-of-the-Year awards; she has so far won 18 Player-of-the-Year, Highest Score and Highest Break awards.

Since 1992 the Ladies League has been dominated by the Flying Scud. Linda Tidy moved her team from the Jolly Brickmakers for the 1991-92 season and with Sheila King and Sue Banting created a formidable team. Linda returned to the Jolly Brickmakers to form a new team and Gail Woods joined the Flying Scud, alternating each week with Sue. Even the loss of Gail and Sue hardly caused a ripple, because they were replaced by two rising stars by the

names of Dani Voelke and Denise Hoadley and Janet Taylor was also making progress. They continue today at the Ship, where they moved for the start of the 1996-97 season.

The standard of play in Ladies Bar Billiards in the Redhill League has risen dramatically during the 1990s. Alison Norman, Gail Woods and Sue Banting continued to dominate as individuals, but a new generation of talented players emerged, led by Dani Voelke, Denise Hoadley and Josie Hogan – three players who weren't afraid to challenge the England stars.

There was a time when the highest score and break awards were won with no more than a few thousand. Times have changed, however. At the start of the 1995-96 season, Dani Voelke (Flying Scud A) made a break of over 10,000 in a match at the Frenches Club and in the 1997-98 season there were three five-figure scores.

DC's A-Z. KARMA. Something I think only the great Geoff Jukes has.

LADIES LEAGUE CHAMPIONS

1977	Whyteleafe B.L	1983	Limpsfield B.L.	1989	Queen's Head	1995	Flying Scud
1978	Whyteleafe B.L	1984	Railway	1990	Ship	1996	Flying Scud A
1979	Reigate RFC	1985	Flying Scud A	1991	Whyteleafe B.L	1997	Ship
1980	Limpsfield B.L.	1986	Whyteleafe B.L	1992	Flying Scud	1998	Ship
1981	Redhill Golf Club	1987	Whyteleafe B.L	1993	Flying Scud		
1982	Black Horse	1988	Ship	1994	Flying Scud		
PLAYER-OF-THE-YEAR		HIGHEST HOME SCORE		HIGHEST AWAY SCORE		HIGHEST AWAY BREAK	
		1984	Sue Banting				
		1985	Brenda Hewitt				
		1986	Chris Constable				
		1987	Sue Banting	1987	Sue Banting	1987	Sue Banting
		1988	Alison Norman	1988	Alison Norman	1988	Sue Banting
1989	Alison Norman	1989	Alison Norman	1989	Alison Norman	1989	Sue Banting
1990	Alison Norman	1990	Linda Bowen	1990	Alison Norman	1990	Alison Norman
1991	Alison Norman	1991	Stephanie Cole	1991	Alison Norman	1991	Alison Norman
1992	Alison Norman	1992	Alison Norman	1992	Chris Constable	1992	Chris Constable
1993	Linda Bowen	1993	Gail Woods	1993	Sue Banting	1993	Sue Banting
1994	Linda Tidy	1994	Alison Norman	1994	Sheila King	1994	Sheila King
1995	Gill Mackie	1995	Sheila King	1995	Sally Mortimer	1995	Sally Mortimer
1996	Dani Voelke	1996	Denise Hoadley	1996	Dani Voelke	1996	Dani Voelke
1997	Alison Norman	1997	Denise Hoadley	1997	Alison Norman	1997	Alison Norman
1998	Denise Hoadley	1998	Josie Hogan	1998	Gill Mackie	1998	Alison Norman

HOPEFULLY, this account has given you a feel for the League since the early years. Inevitably, most people mentioned so far were Champions of the distant and recent past, but there were other great players who never won major titles.

Frank Taylor believes Gordon Owen was an even more gifted player than Alf Hunnisett, but whereas Alf won the titles that matter, Gordon didn't and his name does not appear on the cups and shields. Even so, he was amazingly talented. He picked up a cue one evening in about 1972, never having played before, and was winning County games a few months later. Had he stayed in the area, instead of going back to Wales, he would have won many titles.

Brian Coomber emerged from Royal Earlswood around the same time, where his brother, Mick, coached him. Brian also quickly claimed a place
REDHILL & DISTRICT BAR BILLIARDS LEAGUE – A HISTORY

in the County team, but he only played a few seasons before dropping out of Bar Billiards altogether. Had they carried on, Gordon Owen and Brian Coomber might have been the finest of their generation, but they were outnumbered by a far larger group who had no pretensions to stardom and instead played for fun.

The wonderful, hairy and much-missed Wally Wallace, who set unassailable standards of friendliness in 25 years playing for the Ship, was the best example. It wouldn't be an overstatement to suggest that Wally liked a drink, in fact I can think of very few people who could sink as much draught Guinness as he did, but it could sometimes get the better of him.

One Presentation Night at the Post Office Club he had a few too many, missed his lift home and was found by the Surrey Constabulary on

all fours in the middle of the A23 following the double white lines in the vague direction of Woodhatch. Poor old Wally was in such a state that he couldn't tell them who he was or where he lived, so they kept him in overnight. Reigate Magistrate's Court took a dim view, bound him over and fined him £25, but a collection raised in the Ship by the publicans Terry and Lil Frost for the Save Wally Campaign almost filled a two-gallon bucket. It easily paid Wally's fine and, with typical generosity, he then bought the world a round of drinks.

Those who recall the Locomotive and the Noah's Ark will also remember Stan Attridge who played for both pubs. Blind in one eye (although we never worked out which one), Stan would address the ball a dozen times before playing a shot, always wore a pork-pie hat and the only time you saw him without a pipe sticking out of his mouth was when he took a swig from his pint of mild.

In about 1980 Stan became the proud owner of a Jack Russell puppy that wasn't fully house-trained. I played for the Lakers in the B League that season and while Stan was playing his game during our match at the Loco he tied the puppy to the foot-rail round the bar whereupon the dog watered the carpet. Landlord Dave MacGuire barred the puppy so Stan took it outside and tied it to a lamp-post for the rest of the evening. It was pouring with rain, but Stan wasn't concerned and neither was the dog!

One of Stan's team-mates at the Noah's Ark was Ernie Puttock. Ernie was the Stanley Unwin of the Redhill League, having developed his own brand of gobbledegook with which he would amuse us for hours. He tried outrageous and usually impossible shots which often led to a black peg, but he didn't seem to mind and nor did his team-mates. Happiness for Ernie was about getting a ball in the 200-hole, but he was disappointed if it wasn't the red. He died one evening in the Noah's Ark; after winning his game he collapsed without warning, which is how he would have chosen to depart.

Another great character was one of my original team-mates at the Blue Anchor, Stan Masters. Apart from playing bowls at county level, Stan was keen on Bar Billiards and he gave me the single most valuable piece of advice one player can give another – always try to get the balls moving diagonally at the top of the table.

Stan absolutely loathed the split-shot, mainly because of the risk. I remember in about 1973 being electrified at seeing Alf Hunnisett play

the 100-split and spent hours trying to perfect it. Stan heard about this and he delivered a strict lecture to the effect that I should never, ever play it in a match. But the temptation was too great so I had a go one Tuesday night and, even though both balls dropped, Stan ranted away to nobody in particular, the smoke billowing from a pipe clenched tightly between his teeth and muttering darkly; "who does he think he is? Alf bleedin' Hunnisett?"

DC's A-Z. THE LOCOMOTIVE. Another pub that's no longer with us, the Loco was situated where the car park entrance to Sainsbury's is now. The Loco was a real pub – not for the faint-hearted and full of Irish navvies. The Locomotive was where I met the two Jimmys (Messrs Shannon and Considine) Jack Tagg, Duncan Tidy, Ken Wilkinson Senior and the great Terry Oakley.

The Diamond gave us Ron Skinner. Dear old Ron was short-sighted – so short, in fact, that when he was on the break he would take the red ball and roll it towards the referee who then spotted it for him. Most people wouldn't bother at all with such a disadvantage, but Ron was no mean performer and he surprised many opponents with the quality of his game. And in common with the vast majority of Diamond regulars, he knew how to drink.

So did Lionel Peters. Titch played at the Rail Club and in his later years could be found drinking beer with whisky chasers and taking snuff in Bob's Bar at the Lakers. I will never forget turning purple with embarrassment at a committee meeting at the Lakers back in about 1980 when toothless Titch shuffled in holding a brown paper parcel. I think Ralph Johnson was in the Chair in those days; Titch saluted and said, "Just delivering Simon's horseradish root, Mr Chairman." Ken Wilkinson had hysterics.

Whyteleafe also produced some characters, two of which are of fond memory – Eddie Garwood and Pop Allen. Pop was Terry's father, was a fine Bar Billiards player in his day and still played a good game well into his 70s, as did Eddie, although shaky hands didn't help. Old codgers in the best sense (Eddie used the expression to describe himself), Eddie and Pop endlessly encouraged many young players and you always included them in your round of drinks when you played Whyteleafe.

We have been blessed with many characters who have enriched the Redhill League just as much as the great players and we should be thankful for them all.

COMPETITIONS

THE OPEN SINGLES

THERE IS little doubt that if every player was given the option of only ever winning one title, the majority would choose the Open Singles. The Champion usually receives the loudest and longest applause on Presentation Night and it's also the toughest event to win.

Nobody quite knows when the Singles started, but Frank Taylor recalls losing a semi-final at the Warwick Hotel in the early 1950s to a Mr Edwards from the Prince Albert. In those days each team held its own singles competition (best of three legs); the winners went on to the later stages, played over two legs, aggregate score deciding the result. In the same year Frank reached the semi-finals a Mr Ball (Marquis) beat Alma Riseley and went on to win the final.

A local paper covered the 1955 Singles semi-finals and final at the Warwick. History does not record the name of the reporter, probably out of kindness more than anything else, but it certainly wasn't Ian Wooldridge. As you will see the style may have changed, but the quality of local press journalism has improved not a jot in the last 40 years or so.

"Each semi-final consisted of two games and in the first, between D. Wakeman (Greyhound) and G. Larkworthy (Wheatsheaf), Wakeman finished with 2,090 against his opponent's 1,720. In the second game it was Larkworthy who had the big breaks and he ran up 3,030 while Wakeman made 940. Larkworthy entered the final on a total of 4,750.

"The other semi-finalists were F. Brand (Diamond) and J. Mayell (White Swan) and their first game produced from Brand the best break of the evening, 1,990, Mayell's best being 950. Brand finished 780 ahead, the scores being 2,890 to 2,110 and this lead he increased in the second game with breaks of 1,510 and 910, while Mayell replied with one of 1,230. This set added 3,280 to Brand's score against 2,370 by Mayell, making the total scores semi-final: Brand 6,170; Mayell 4,480.

"The final was marked by some skilful play, with moments of bad luck, as when Brand, having reached 550, failed to hit a ball. His best break was 1,230 and Larkworthy's 920. Larkworthy was 1,340 points behind at the end of the first set, but in the second he scored 3,620 against Brand's 2,940, the final result being a win for Brand by 5,950 points to 5,290. Both contestants were applauded for an expert and sportsmanlike display."

Although he lost the 1955 Singles Final, Gordon Larkworthy was a leading player in his time. The scores show that Bar Billiards has come a long way since then, but people like Gordon and the other semi-finalists were path-finders for the coming generations and were self-taught players learning a relatively new game.

The 1959 semi-finalists were L. Wornham (Greyhound), T. Stevens (Station), F. Gardener (Red Lion) and L. Bellingham (Plumbers Arms). There is no record of the results.

Very few records exist for the first 20 years or so of the Singles – the Champions' Cup was introduced in 1971, but the names of previous winners were never engraved.

However, we do know that Mr Ball was one of our first Champions and that Frank Brand won in 1955. The great Alf Hunnisett won three consecutive titles in 1956-57-58, Arthur Standing, from Whyteleafe British Legion, became the second player to retain the title when he won in 1961 and 1962, beating George Stevens both times, and Peter Sharp's 1973 victory was his second – he first won in 1963.

Alf Hunnisett won again in 1972 and 1975, bringing his tally to five, but it was John Peters who dominated the Singles for about 10 years from the mid-1970s onwards. In 1974 he reached his first Final, losing to Alan Hall, but he became only the second player to win the Singles three times when he took the title in 1976-78-80. He was also runner-up in 1979 to the inspired George Stevens, whom hardly anybody, apart from George himself and his Lakers team-mates, had given a chance. John reached three semi-finals in the 1970s and two more in the 1980s.

One of John's great rivals was Norman Hosford who had the misfortune to lose three Singles Finals – but for the stars from Whyteleafe British Legion, Norman would surely have had his name on the Champions' Cup. He was a superb player, but he had to tangle with the best of John Peters, an all-time great who had a record in the Open Singles that most players would kill for.

John Samels played in the 1960s for Lowfield Heath British Legion in the Crawley League before his switch to the Plough, Earlswood, in 1969. Within two years he won the Singles and

became Chairman when Bill Burwood died at the end of 1973. John had moved to the Lakers and in 1975-76 joined the Flying Scud academy of Bar Billiards, nurturing such youthful talents as Dave Constable, Geoff Jukes and Alva Gaskin who were all to follow in his footsteps and become Singles Champions in the 1980s. In 1977 he remarried, moved to Smallfield and joined the Blue Anchor, but British Caledonian posted him to Singapore where he lived happily with his wife and baby daughter.

John was always a little defensive about his age, but he would have been nearing 50 when we heard the awful news that he had died of a heart attack while spending Christmas 1981 in Germany. He never added to his 1971 Singles title, but the Pairs came his way in 1978, when he partnered John Stenning, and he also won the first Bill Burwood Cup. The President's Cup and League Championship eluded him, but anyone who remembers John Samels would certainly include him in a 1970s all-stars team.

The 1980s produced an outstanding new generation, many of whom are today still regarded as our leading players. It was also the era of domination by players from the Jolly Bricks and the team led by Rod Smith that played at the Flying Scud, White Lion and the Monotype Club before finding a rather longer-term home in 1988 at the Queen's Head. Such was the concentration of talent in these two teams that between them they won six Open Singles Championships during the 1980s and provided the runner-up on eight occasions. The only year when neither team was represented in the final was 1980.

There were some classic finals, especially in 1984 when Bob Toye (Diamond) just got up at the end to beat Geoff Jukes (Jolly Bricks) by a few hundred in a match that grossed 30,000; and Paul Wood still finds it hard to believe that in 1987, in probably the best final ever, he led by more than 7,000 in both legs, scored over 17,000 altogether, but lost in the last few minutes by 2,000 to his Jolly Bricks team-mate, Simon Tinto, who was chasing his third title.

Apart from John Peters, who won his last Singles Championship in 1980, and the 1984 winner Bob Toye, the Jolly Bricks/Rod Smith's Wanderers Singles dominance in the 1980s was broken only by Peter Hughan (Ship) in 1983 and his team-mate Andy Finn who, like John Samels, had come from the old Crawley League and was to start his hat-trick of titles in 1989 with a comfortable win over Steve Bowes from the Jolly Brickmakers.

DC's A-Z. MOVING AROUND. I started playing (in the B League) at one of the greatest Bar Billiards pubs – the Flying Scud. From there we moved on to Reigate Ex-Servicemen's Club, back to the Scud and from there to the White Hart, the Monotype Club and on to the Queen's Head, Nutfield. I returned to the Scud yet again and finally, I hope, the Ship.

ANDY FINN'S record in the Singles was without doubt the greatest run of victories in the history of the competition – from October 1988 to April 1992 he won 22 consecutive matches. It wasn't just that he played the awkward tables so well (a legacy of many years in the Sussex Leagues); he also had to contend with a whole generation of top-class players. For example, in his golden years of 1989-90-91 he beat Alva Gaskin, Laurie Roberts and Tony Cross in the semi-finals and Steve Bowes, Geoff Jukes and Peter Hughan in the finals, as well as most of the rest of the top players in earlier rounds.

It was Alva who brought this amazing sequence to an end, in the 1992 semi-finals, but Andy's achievement surely ranks even higher than that of Alf Hunnisett over 30 years earlier at a time when Alf himself was probably the Redhill League's only truly outstanding player.

Four top class players from the 1980s have yet to figure in this account – Greg Hughan, Colin Norman, Laurie Roberts and Terry Oakley. They are recognised throughout the League as being among the best of their generation and yet the Open Singles eluded them in the 1980s, although Colin appeared in the semi-finals in 1981 and 1987 and only a fool would bet against him winning at some stage in the future.

In 1992 Terry joined the club, beating Alva Gaskin in the final. As for Laurie, he reached the last four in 1990, losing to Andy Finn, and made the 1993 final in which he watched history being made when Greg Hughan took the title his father had won ten years earlier. In 1997 Greg joined the select band of players who have won the Singles more than once.

What about Geoff Jukes? By the mid-1970s he was talked of as the rising star, the player who would inherit the mantle of John Peters and Alf Hunnisett. It was a heavy burden because Geoff badly wanted an Open Singles title. It seemed he perhaps wanted the title too much because, at the risk of devaluing the achievements of his opponents in five finals from 1983 to 1990, Geoff lost four he should have won and won one he should have lost.

Geoff was regarded as one of the all-time greats after his first title in 1985, but such was his apparently effortless ability to forget his best form in Singles finals (apart from 1984) that many people believed he would never win another title. However, in 1996 he proved the doubters wrong by winning again, beating Terry Oakley in the final.

If the 1980s were dominated by the Jolly Bricks and Rod Smith's team, the 1990s have been dominated to an even greater extent by the Ship and the Flying Scud. Of the nine finals since 1990, eight have been won by players from these two pubs, Terry Oakley's 1992 victory being the exception. In 1994 Sue Banting (Flying Scud) became the first Lady to win the title

when she beat Neil Byles at the Frenches Club and in 1998 Gail Woods emulated Susie's great achievement, beating her team-mate Greg Hughan who was going for a third Open Singles title. From 1994 to 1998 the Flying Scud A team has provided every Open Singles Champion.

A glance at the Roll of Honour shows that the Open Singles is a great competition and the list of Singles Champions reads like a Who's Who of the Redhill League. Scarcely any of the League's finest players of the last 40 years are missing from the list, even if a few of them never quite went all the way. They're all there – names whose records in the Singles will be hard for future generations to match.

THE OPEN SINGLES

CHAMPIONS	RUNNERS-UP	SEMI-FINALISTS
1955 Frank Brand	Gordon Larkworthy	J. Mayell, D. Wakeman
1956 Alf Hunnisett		
1956 Alf Hunnisett		
1957 Alf Hunnisett		
1961 Arthur Standing	George Stevens	
1962 Arthur Standing	George Stevens	
1963 Peter Sharp		
1969 Jim Gorringe	Peter Pannell	
1971 John Samels	Micky Coyne	
1972 Alf Hunnisett		
1973 Peter Sharp		
1974 Alan Hall	John Peters	
1975 Alf Hunnisett	Norman Hosford	
1976 John Peters	Norman Hosford	
1977 Terry Simmons	Frank Taylor	John Peters
1978 John Peters	Dave Richardson	Geoff Jukes
1979 George Stevens	John Peters	
1980 John Peters	Norman Hosford	
1981 Simon Tinto	Ross Kenrick	Colin Norman, Dave Sharp
1982 Dave Constable	Colin Peskett	Jimmy Greensted, John Peters
1983 Peter Hughan	Geoff Jukes	Ken Loble, Alan Sturt
1984 Bob Toye	Geoff Jukes	Derek Holman, George Stevens
1985 Geoff Jukes	Alva Gaskin	Alan Parkhurst, Vernon Sparkes
1986 Simon Tinto	Andrew Farmer-Wright	Steve Molloy, John Peters
1987 Simon Tinto	Paul Wood	Geoff Jukes, Colin Norman
1988 Alva Gaskin	Geoff Jukes	Simon Tinto, Peter Hughan
1989 Andy Finn	Steve Bowes	Alva Gaskin, Peter Hughan
1990 Andy Finn	Geoff Jukes	Laurie Roberts, Rod Smith
1991 Andy Finn	Peter Hughan	Tony Cross, Simon Tinto
1992 Terry Oakley	Alva Gaskin	Geoff Jukes, Andy Finn
1993 Greg Hughan	Laurie Roberts	Alva Gaskin, Simon Tinto
1994 Sue Banting	Neil Byles	Simon Tinto, Alec Hastings
1995 Simon Tinto	Derek Holman	Mark Fraser, Colin Robbins
1996 Geoff Jukes	Terry Oakley	Alva Gaskin, Gail Woods
1997 Greg Hughan	Terry Oakley	Simon Tinto, Geoff Jukes
1998 Gail Woods	Greg Hughan	Dave Constable, Martin Pellett,

THE LADIES SINGLES

THE RECORD of finals from the first in 1973 is almost complete, with only the initial runner-up missing. A little clarification is needed because some finalists have married – Alison Norman and Stephanie Cole are Jim Green's daughters and Sue Banting is now Sue Mariner.

The first 10 years were dominated by Pauline Tully (Limpsfield British Legion) who won four titles and now plays in Lewes, and Eileen Peters (Whyteleafe British Legion) who won twice. They reached ten finals between 1973 and 1983, although they only once faced each other – in 1978 when Pauline won for the fourth time. Along with Margaret Skinner they were our leading Ladies of the time and all played regularly for the county. In 1983 Eileen became the first Surrey Lady to represent England.

The ten years following Eileen's second title saw the almost complete dominance of the first truly great Lady players in the Redhill League. From 1983 to 1992 England Internationals Alison Norman and Sue Banting won nine out of ten titles and twice faced each other in the final. They were so good that few Ladies in the Redhill League could live with them in those days, although Chris Constable beat Sue to win

in 1987 and Stephanie Cole gave her sister the fright of her life in a memorable 1988 final.

The 1982 Ladies Final had a significance that didn't become clear for ten years or so. Gail Woods (Royal Earlswood) reached the final, but moved away for several years and hardly played Bar Billiards at all. In the early 1990s she returned to the area and the "Big Two" of Alison and Sue became the "Big Three". Gail's first Championship came in 1993 at the Gatton Club when she beat Alison Norman in the final, but Alison had her revenge in an early round the next season. In 1994 Sue equalled Alison's record of five titles, followed by two more for Gail.

Although Sue Mariner now lives and plays in Brighton and represents Sussex, the Ladies Singles is every bit as competitive as before with the reputations of Alison and Gail taking a battering from the latest potentially great player – Josie Hogan, who beat them both on the way to her first, but probably not her last title in 1997. As with the Open Singles, the Roll of Honour includes virtually all the finest Lady players in our history; the only absentees are Dani Relf and Denise Hoadley.

THE LADIES SINGLES

CHAMPIONS	RUNNERS-UP	CHAMPIONS	RUNNERS-UP
1973 Pauline Tully		1986 Alison Green	Kim Wright
1974 Margaret Skinner	Dilys Wakeman	1987 Christine Constable	Sue Banting
1975 Pauline Tully	Margaret Skinner	1988 Alison Norman	Stephanie Cole
1976 Pauline Tully	Eileen Peters	1989 Alison Norman	Sue Banting
1977 Wendy Lowe	Margaret Skinner	1990 Sue Banting	Stephanie Cole
1978 Pauline Tully	Eileen Peters	1991 Sue Banting	Brenda Hewitt
1979 Carol Banting	Brenda Hewitt	1992 Alison Norman	Sue Banting
1980 Carol Nash	Pauline Tully	1993 Gail Woods	Alison Norman
1981 Eileen Peters	Brenda Hewitt	1994 Sue Banting	Alison Norman
1982 Eileen Peters	Gail Woods	1995 Gail Woods	Sue Mariner
1983 Sue Banting	Eileen Peters	1996 Gail Woods	Gill Mackie
1984 Sue Banting	Pat Smith	1997 Josie Hogan	Janet Taylor
1985 Alison Green	Carol Nash	1998 Sally Mortimer	Brenda Hewitt

THE REG STONE SINGLES

REG STONE was a great character who played most of his Bar Billiards for the Whyteleafe British Legion B team until the mid-1970s when he joined the Blue Anchor at Blindley Heath. A keen footballer and cricketer in younger days, Reg was often barracked by his team-mates, but this had no effect because he would always switch his hearing-aid off before a game and was quite deaf to his friends' jibes. Reg died in 1981, but his memory is preserved by the annual competition that bears his name.

The Reg Stone Singles began in 1981 for players who had lost their first Open Singles match. This appeared, on the surface anyway, to be a good idea, but it all went wrong when the defending Open Singles Champion lost to Jack Ditzel in the first round, entered the Reg Stone event automatically and beat one of his Surrey county team-mates in the final. The 1982 Annual General Meeting therefore voted to make the Reg Stone Singles a separate event from which A League players are barred.

Even this wasn't ideal because a number of fine players were in the B League. In 1983 Frank Taylor, a 1977 Open Singles finalist, won the Reg Stone Singles; 1986 Reg Stone Champion Alan Parkhurst was an Open Singles semi-finalist the previous year; and in 1988 Ross Kenrick, who had more natural ability in his little finger than most of the rest of the League put together and was Open Singles runner-up in 1981, won the Reg Stone Singles in a canter. Thereafter, county players were barred.

In 1989, Neil Byles became the only player ever to win the Reg Stone Singles twice and in 1992 Sue Banting was the only lady winner, although Denise Hoadley reached the 1997 final as did Sally Mortimer in 1998. In recent years the Reg Stone Singles has been Wilkinson territory, Keith winning in 1994, followed by his brothers Paul in 1996 and Kenny in 1997. Their old man, Ken Snr, would have been proud of them and so would Reg Stone.

REG STONE SINGLES CHAMPIONS

CHAMPIONS	RUNNERS-UP	CHAMPIONS	RUNNERS-UP
1982 Simon Tinto	Derek Holman	1991 Dave Eustace	
1983 Frank Taylor	Wally Wallace	1992 Susie Banting	John Palmer
1984 Jeff Webb		1993 Alec Hastings	
1985 Neil Byles		1994 Keith Wilkinson	Chris Gibbs
1986 Alan Parkhurst		1995 Wally Wallace	Martin Pellett
1987 Jim Herbert		1996 Paul Wilkinson	Colin Frost
1988 Ross Kenrick		1997 Kenny Wilkinson	Denise Hoadley
1989 Neil Byles		1998 Martin Pellett	Sally Mortimer
1990 Ray George			

THE OVER 50S SINGLES

THE OVER 50S SINGLES began as an Over 60s competition and was designed to recognise the loyalty of some of our older members who were perhaps no longer realistic contenders for the Open Singles. The competition was changed in the early 1990s because we had few players who met the age qualification.

From 1980 to 1982, Harold Greensted (Ship) won the Cup donated by Arthur Standing. Harold's hat-trick of titles was emulated in 1984-85-86 by Peter Wakeman, a stalwart of the Marquis and the Flying Scud for many years. Jim Green first won in 1987 and the next year it was the turn of Sid Horwell, who still pinches points for the Black Horse in the A League. Jim Green took the next two titles.

George Stevens' excellent run in the competition was interrupted only in 1992 by John Peters, who had been persuaded out of retirement to take part. John was a little rusty, but class is permanent and he showed many of the qualities that made him such a great player.

Colin Norman once suggested that by about 2005 the Over 50s would probably become as hard to win as the Open Singles. He does have a point because the leading players now in their 40s show few signs of decline and I suspect Colin may have his eye on the trophy himself. So far four Open Singles Champions have won the Over 50s and they will surely soon be joined by some of the next generation.

DC's A-Z. NORTHAMPTON. In 1976 the Flying Scud teams merged to play in the All England Team Championship. We beat the Blue Anchor 5-0 to win the Surrey final and, under the captaincy of Geoff Jukes, travelled to Billing Aquadrome in Northants for the Finals. What a day! It started with the discovery that a pint cost only 20 pence. This wasn't red rag to a bull - more a case of Redhill to the bar. A few beers wouldn't hurt.

We began against the Duke Of York (Watford) and won 4-1, but not without controversy. Rod Smith called a foul on Viv Shepherd when she moved the ball off the 'D' as she was addressing it. As it happens Rod was right, but we only needed three games so we made the semi-finals easily.

Our opponents were the Eagle (Berkshire) but we were 2-0 down after Pete Jeffrey and John Samels lost. Geoff stopped the rot, winning by 2,000, and I also won leaving John Stenning to play the decider. It was a close game and with the bar due it could have gone either way when John's opponent hit a ball off the top cushion and back into the black peg.

Pete had a bad case of nerves, so Dave Richardson played the final against the White Hart (Sussex). John Samels got us off to a great start, but I pegged a winning break in the second leg. Geoff then put us ahead and John Stenning, hero of the day, won easily and the celebrations began. As well as the Champions' Shield and individual cups we were given two cases of beer and two bottles of champers. A bottle of scotch from landlord Ken Howland was the icing on the cake. Some journey home!

OVER 50s SINGLES CHAMPIONS

1980	Harold Greensted	1985	Peter Wakeman	1990	Jim Green	1995	Ralph Johnson
1981	Harold Greensted	1986	Peter Wakeman	1991	George Stevens	1996	Peter Hughan
1982	Harold Greensted	1987	Jim Green	1992	John Peters	1997	Andy Finn
1983	Norman Bastin	1988	Sid Horwell	1993	George Stevens	1998	Andy Finn
1984	Peter Wakeman	1989	Jim Green	1994	George Stevens		

THE UNDER 28s SINGLES

THE UNDER 28s Singles was launched in 1994 in memory of Ken Wilkinson Snr, a marvellous man who died in 1982 at the tragically early age of 47. He became our first ever Competition Secretary in 1981, when Terry Allen was finally persuaded to take on a lighter work-load, and it says much about the efficiency with which Ken went about the job that I found it a far easier task than I'd expected when I succeeded him 1982.

Nobody ever led Ken Wilkinson anywhere – he was the kind of man you always followed. For example, he tracked me down one evening in the late 1970s at Bob's Bar in the Lakers. Bob's Bar, by the way, wasn't the kind of place you'd take your mum for a quiet lunch on Mothering Sunday, but it was a haven for those of us who appreciated Bob's superbly kept IPA bitter and neither minded nor noticed very much when the air turned deep blue to the sound of Pip Sadler, George The Fish, Les Copas, Norman Bastin, Titch Peters, George Stevens and various other characters mercilessly winding each other up.

On this particular occasion Ken placed a pint of IPA in front of me and, in that booming voice of his, commanded me to appear at the Locomotive at midday the following Sunday. Dave The Canadian (Dave MacGuire, landlord at the Loco who, in his youth had played top-grade professional ice-hockey in the brutal North American League and therefore didn't need bouncers in his pub) was hosting a charity fund-raising event.

This involved Duncan Tidy, a large and jovial Bar Billiards player who raised a lot of money for various good causes and on this occasion was going to eat pickled eggs (provided by Dave) for an hour – without a drink!

Ken was the referee / organiser and he gleefully counted the eggs as they disappeared down Duncan's throat. 37 (thirty-seven!) pickled eggs vanished between noon and one o'clock as Ken ordered us to pay 10 pence per egg, after which Duncan happily washed them down with a dozen or so pints of Guinness. If there was any air-conditioning at the Locomotive, which I very much doubt, it must have taken a fearsome pounding, but this was a classic Ken Wilkinson event and over £200 was raised for charity.

Ken's six children have all played in the Redhill League and Karen, Kenny, Keith and Paul are still members. Remarkably, the Under 28s Singles has only ever been won by Ladies, which would have amused Ken Wilkinson hugely. Susie Banting set the trend in her great year of 1994 when she also won the Ladies and Open Singles. Since then Denise Hoadley, Dani Voelke, Anita Coppard and Josie Hogan have continued the tradition.

DC's A-Z. OPEN SINGLES. Together with my All England trophy the Open Singles is my prized possession. The final wasn't one of the greatest games I've played, but I did enough to beat Colin Peskett, a fellow Scud player. So next to the names of Alf Hunnisett, John Peters, Simon Tinto and Geoff Jukes you can read "Dave Constable".

UNDER 28s CHAMPIONS	RUNNERS-UP
1994 Sue Banting	James Hemsworth
1995 Denise Hoadley	Andy Hoadley
1996 Dani Voelke	Josie Hogan

UNDER 28s CHAMPIONS	RUNNERS-UP
1997 Anita Coppard	Dani Relf
1998 Josie Hogan	Darren Tickner

THE OPEN PAIRS

THE RECORD of Pairs Champions is incomplete; the trophy was presented in the 1960s, but was not engraved with winners' names until 1971. Alf Hunnisett kept a record going back to the late 1950s, but this has been lost. However, we do know that Alf won a total of nine Pairs

titles, including three in the 1970s with Terry Allen. This is a fine record, but quite tame by comparison with Alf Hunnisett and Alan Hall (Whyteleafe) who were unbeatable for years and won an incredible six consecutive Pairs Championships from 1965 to 1970.

DC's A-Z. PRESENTATION NIGHT. Need I say more?

Arthur Jeffrey was an outstanding player, but he occasionally got carried away and this cost him a title or two, most memorably when he had Alf Hunnisett on the rack and only had to keep his break to win. But Arthur liked to rub it in sometimes so he kept going and he lost a winning break. He is remembered as a fine player who won the Pairs in 1971 and 1974.

In 1976 Geoff Jukes won his first Pairs, with Peter Wakeman. Next year they were bidding to retain the title, but John and Eileen Peters beat them in the final. Anyone who assumes John did all the work would be wrong; Eileen was a good player and in quite a few matches played the leading role – particularly in the 1980 final when John had a rare off-day.

The Pairs is so competitive that since Alan Hall and Alf Hunnisett came to the end of their run in 1970 nobody has retained the title, although a

few have defended it up to the final. Geoff Jukes has taken a further five titles with Simon Tinto who first won the Open Pairs in 1981 with Andy Dungate, while George Stevens has had five wins, the last three with Terry Oakley.

John and Eileen Peters are not the only winners to keep it in the family; in 1987 Ian and Jimmy Greensted became the only brothers to win and in 1991 Peter and Greg Hughan were father and son winners.

DC's A-Z. Q IS FOR QUAYER – not the crisps, but quaver as in shake and tremble, something I've suffered in small doses over the years especially in my early days. I remember the marvellous late Wally Wallace's nerves jangling so badly that he had to have the cue-ball placed on the 'D' for him. And at the 1997 British Open in Jersey Tony Plaw was so shaky he resorted to dropping the cue-ball on the 'D'! Tony's brother Richard and I weren't really enjoying watching you, Tony. Honest!

OPEN PAIRS CHAMPIONS

1965 Alf Hunnisett & Alan Hall
 1966 Alf Hunnisett & Alan Hall
 1967 Alf Hunnisett & Alan Hall
 1968 Alf Hunnisett & Alan Hall
 1969 Alf Hunnisett & Alan Hall
 1970 Alf Hunnisett & Alan Hall
 1971 Arthur Jeffrey & Peter Sharp
 1972 Alan Hall & Cyril Webb
 1973 Alf Hunnisett & Terry Allen
 1974 Arthur Jeffrey & Paul Brake
 1975 Alf Hunnisett & Terry Allen
 1976 Geoff Jukes & Peter Wakeman
 1977 John Peters & Eileen Peters
 1978 John Samels & John Stenning
 1979 Alf Hunnisett & Terry Allen
 1980 John Peters & Eileen Peters
 1981 Simon Tinto & Andy Dungate
 1982 George Stevens & Ralph Johnson
 1983 Simon Tinto & Geoff Jukes
 1984 Terry Oakley & George Stevens
 1985 Alan Parkhurst & Dave Burton
 1986 Simon Tinto & Geoff Jukes
 1987 Ian Greensted & Jimmy Greensted
 1988 Derek Holman & Cliff Wayland
 1989 Simon Tinto & Geoff Jukes
 1990 Alva Gaskin & Laurie Roberts
 1991 Greg Hughan & Peter Hughan
 1992 Terry Oakley & George Stevens
 1993 Simon Tinto & Geoff Jukes
 1994 Terry Oakley & George Stevens
 1995 Karl Tidy & Tony Cross
 1996 Simon Tinto & Geoff Jukes
 1997 Vernon Sparkes & Laurie Roberts
 1998 Alva Gaskin & Neil Byles

RUNNERS-UP

Frank Taylor & Gordon Larkworthy

Mike Standing & Alan Donnelly

Geoff Jukes & Peter Wakeman

Dave Constable & Rod Smith
 Terry Oakley & Alan Parkhurst
 Alan Hall & Alan Sturt
 Bill Nash & Mike Morley
 Derek Holman & Cliff Wayland
 Alva Gaskin & Laurie Roberts
 Dave Snashfold & Graham Knowles
 Vernon Sparkes & Simon Bell
 Shaun Potter & Simon Bell
 Ross Kenrick & Tim Oomen
 Simon Tinto & Geoff Jukes
 Colin Norman & Bud Abbott
 Ross Kenrick & Derek Holman
 Greg Hughan & Peter Hughan
 Simon Tinto & Geoff Jukes
 Greg Hughan & Derek Holman
 Greg Hughan & Derek Holman
 Greg Hughan & Andy Relf
 Vernon Sparkes & Laurie Roberts

THE LADIES PAIRS

GIVEN THAT the Ladies Singles had been going since 1973 and the Open Pairs since at least the late 1950s, it seemed entirely logical to launch a Ladies Pairs Championship. The first title was won by Dilys Wakeman and Carol Nash in 1985, followed by Alison Green (Norman) and her sister Stephanie Cole.

The formidable partnership of Sue Banting and Christine Constable won five titles in six years from 1987 to 1992, although they were given an

exceptionally hard time in the 1989 final by Alison and Stephanie, who won their second title in 1990.

Gail Woods and Linda Tidy won three Ladies Pairs Championships in four years starting in 1993, Alison won a third title in 1997 with Sarah Batty and in 1998 equalled Sue Banting's record of six appearances in the final. Linda won the title for a fourth time in 1998 and now needs one more to equal Sue's all-time record.

LADIES PAIRS CHAMPIONS

1985	Dilys Wakeman & Carol Nash
1986	Alison Green & Stephanie Cole
1987	Christine Constable & Sue Banting
1988	Christine Constable & Sue Banting
1989	Christine Constable & Sue Banting
1990	Alison Norman & Stephanie Cole
1991	Christine Constable & Sue Banting
1992	Christine Constable & Sue Banting
1993	Gail Woods & Linda Bowen
1994	Gail Woods & Linda Tidy
1995	Denise Hoadley & Jan Taylor
1996	Gail Woods & Linda Tidy
1997	Alison Norman & Sarah Batty
1998	Linda Tidy & Karen Bacchus

RUNNERS-UP

Alison Norman & Stephanie Cole
Tracy Guy & Sheila Parlour
Christine Hewitt & Jane Redford
Sheila Parlour & Sharon Balcombe
Sue Banting & Tracy Bird
Alison Norman & Stephanie Cole
Sheila King & Dani Voelke
Denise Hoadley & Jan Taylor
Denise Hoadley & Jan Taylor
Alison Norman & Sarah Batty

THE TERRY ALLEN PAIRS

TERRY ALLEN became League Secretary in the early 1970s. It's a sobering thought that in those days the job included running the entire League programme, organising all competitions, the Inter-League (played then on a home-and-away basis), Presentation Night, the Christmas Draw, the AGM, County trials and selection, liaison with the table suppliers and anything else that happened to be thrown his way. Today those duties are carried out by about ten people, which makes it all the more astonishing that Terry was Secretary for 10 years.

The Terry Allen Pairs was designed as a plate competition for those who had lost their first Open Pairs tie. Cliff Wayland and Derek Holman were the first winners in 1981, just before becoming County players, so the AGM decided that A League players were barred.

When two more County stars, Ian Greensted and Alan Parkhurst, won in 1989 as B League players County players were also barred.

The record of Champions from the mid-1980s disappeared when the original trophy was replaced, but we know that Pete Kenvin and Martin Pellett have both won twice; that Neil Byles is the only player with three wins; and that in 1998 Denise Hoadley and Sheila King became the first ever Ladies pair to win.

DC'S A-Z. REACHING my first Cup final. In 1976, the Scud B reached the Bill Burwood Final against the Old Oak at Whyteleafe B.L. Our non-playing captain, Tony Davidson, was the most nervous person there. I can't recall the final score, but I do know we won the Bill Burwood Cup.

TERRY ALLEN PAIRS CHAMPIONS

1981	Derek Holman & Cliff Wayland	1994	Neil Byles & Pete Kenvin
1982	George Stevens & Ralph Johnson	1995	Neil Byles & Peter David
1989	Ian Greensted & Alan Parkhurst	1996	Bill Nash & Hilton Dorman
1991	Dave Eustace & Jan Allmark	1997	Ian & Graham Holman
1992	Neil Byles & Pete Kenvin	1998	Denise Hoadley & Sheila King
1993	John Palmer & Martin Pellett		

THE PRESIDENT'S CUP

PRESIDENT'S CUP records go back to 1971-72. The early years were dominated by Whyteleafe British Legion A and the Scud A, including landlord Jack Howes, who between them won the first five President's Cups. Matches are played on neutral tables, but the A League didn't have it all their own way because the 1977 final was contested by two B League teams, the William IV and the Yew Tree, won on the last leg by the William.

They were followed by Reigate Rugby Club who boasted such fine players as Norman Hosford, Mike Banting, Terry Simmons and Dave Lewis. By 1980, the old Whyteleafe team had moved to Bletchingley Village Club; Alf Hunnisett and Cyril Webb had retired from Bar Billiards and John Peters and Alan Hall joined forces with Eileen Peters, Bob Toye and Alan Sturt to win the League title in 1979 and the President's Cup in 1980.

In 1982 the Jolly Brickmakers B won the first of five President's Cups in nine years, while Rod Smith's excellent team, first as the Flying Scud and later as the Queen's Head B won three times between 1986 and 1991.

Since 1993 the Final has been a particularly happy hunting-ground for Terry Oakley's Frenches Club A. Terry was a central figure in the 1979 Greyhound team who were the first ever to win the Bill Burwood and President's Cups in the same year. In 1998 the Frenches Club emulated the Greyhound and the Jolly Bricks B, who won Cup doubles in 1988 and 1990, and surpassed the record of the Jolly Bricks B by appearing in six consecutive finals, winning three times. Over the same period the Scud A have also won three President's Cups, beating the Frenches Club in the final on each occasion. Probably the best final was at Royal Earlswood Hospital Club in 1994 when the Scud eventually won a high-scoring match in the last couple of minutes of the final game.

There are quite a few multiple individual President's Cup winners; Geoff Jukes, Simon Tinto and Paul Wood lead the way with 8 wins, followed by Greg Hughan, Terry Oakley, Alan Parkhurst and Derek Holman with five and John Peters and Alan Hall, with four.

DC's A-Z. SECURING my first League title. Being part of the League's top team is a great feeling.

THE PRESIDENT'S CUP

WINNERS

1972 Flying Scud A
1973 Whyteleafe B. L. A
1974 Flying Scud A
1975 Whyteleafe B. L. A
1976 Whyteleafe B. L. A
1977 William IV A
1978 Reigate R.F.C A
1979 Greyhound A
1980 Bletchingley V.C.
1981 Ship A
1982 Jolly Bricks B
1983 Old Oak A
1984 Jolly Bricks B
1985 Ship A

RUNNERS-UP

Flying Scud A
Ship A
Yew Tree A
Flying Scud A
Black Horse A
Redhill Golf Club
Black Horse A
Bletchingley V.C.
Ship B
Flying Scud
Railway B

WINNERS

1986 Flying Scud C
1987 Jolly Bricks B
1988 Jolly Bricks B
1989 Queen's Head B
1990 Jolly Bricks B
1991 Queen's Head B
1992 Ship A
1993 Flying Scud A
1994 Flying Scud A
1995 Frenches Club A
1996 Frenches Club A
1997 Flying Scud A
1998 Frenches Club A

RUNNERS-UP

Jolly Bricks B
Ship A
Ship A
Jolly Bricks B
Black Horse B
Ship A
Flying Scud A
Frenches Club A
Frenches Club A
Holland Club
Flying Scud B
Frenches Club A
Holland Club

THE BILL BURWOOD CUP

BILL BURWOOD was one of the most energetic officers the Redhill League ever had. He won two League Championships in the 1960s with Redhill British Legion and when he died in 1973, Bill's popularity demanded a memorial competition.

The Bill Burwood Cup has been handicapped from the outset, not to make it different from the President's Cup, but in order to recognise Bill's support for the under-dog. The handicaps

worked extremely well in the early years, giving teams below the top of the A League a chance of winning what quickly became recognised as the fifth major title.

John Samels was the first captain to lift the Bill Burwood Cup and Bill himself would have been delighted when the Post Office Club, from the C League, beat the Locomotive to become the first team outside the A League to win.

In 1980 Ralph Johnson's Greyhound A were the first and, so far, only team ever to retain the Bill Burwood Cup. The Bricks B won five times from 1981 to 1990 and three times defended it to the final, but were prevented from emulating the Greyhound in 1982 by the Bricks A, in 1984 by an inspired Diamond team of Mike Snelling, Karl Tidy, Jeff Webb, Tim Martin and Bob Toye, and in 1989 by the Queen's Head B who were heading for the unique treble of League, President's Cup and Bill Burwood Cup.

From the 1980s onwards standards in the A League rose so sharply that the handicaps no longer worked; top players ignored them and just played their opponents off the table. So in 1990 they were raised by 1,000 and by another 1,000 or so in 1994. Bill would have approved.

Royal Earlswood have dominated the Bill Burwood Cup in recent years. In 1994 their B team, led by Sheila King, needed no help from the handicapper as they swept to a 3-1 lead against the Scud A who had won the League and President's Cup and were thought by many to be unstoppable. In 1995 Royal Earlswood A, led by Denise Hoadley, beat a good Holland Club team and a year later Greg Hughan finally got his hands on the trophy to complete his set of all five majors. Sheila's team won the Bill

Burwood Cup again in 1997, beating Caterham Club in the first ever home-and-away Final. For all their class, Whyteleafe British Legion never won the Bill Burwood Cup. Even with their galaxy of County stars it seemed that the handicaps worked against them and they never progressed further than the quarter-finals. It would have amused Bill Burwood enormously that C League teams always seemed to give Whyteleafe a particularly hard time.

DC'S A-Z. TRYING to leave 'one-up' at Whyteleafe! This was the shrine in those days and the table was lightning-fast. I'd watched two games and decided to play my one-up on the third break-shot, just to be safe. Wrong! I ended up leaving both balls on the table with my fourth shot. The white finished just short of the right-hand white peg and the red short and left of the left 50. How Alf and the others played it so well is still a mystery.

There are many multiple individual winners of the Bill Burwood. Simon Tinto won five times with the Bricks B and twice with the Flying Scud A; Geoff Jukes and Paul Wood have six winner's trophies; Derek Holman has five; Terry Oakley, Alan Parkhurst, Dave Constable and Rod Smith have four; and Alva Gaskin and Laurie Roberts have both won three times.

THE BILL BURWOOD CUP

WINNERS

1975 Lakers B
1976 Flying Scud B
1977 Post Office Club A
1978 Reigate RFC A
1979 Greyhound A
1980 Greyhound A
1981 Jolly Bricks B
1982 Jolly Bricks A
1983 Jolly Bricks B
1984 Diamond
1985 Jolly Bricks B
1986 Admiral

RUNNERS-UP

Locomotive
Greyhound A
Locomotive

Flying Scud B
Jolly Bricks B
Old Chestnut
Jolly Bricks B
Greyhound

WINNERS

1987 Queen's Head B
1988 Jolly Bricks B
1989 Queen's Head B
1990 Jolly Bricks B
1991 Frenches Club A
1992 Flying Scud A
1993 Queen's Head B
1994 REHC B
1995 REHC A
1996 Flying Scud A
1997 REHC
1998 Frenches Club A

RUNNERS-UP

Queen's Head A
Ship A
Jolly Bricks B
Blacksmiths A
Ship A
Blue Ball A
Emma Hamilton
Flying Scud A
Holland Club
Blacksmiths Arms
Caterham Club
REHC Z

THE LADIES LEAGUE CUP

The Ladies League Cup began in 1991. Matches are played on neutral tables with three players to a team. The Ladies play the same opponent twice with one point awarded for winning a leg and a bonus point going to the player with the best aggregate, giving nine points per match.

For three years most competition finals were played on Grand Finals Night. However, this turned out to be unworkable when the Bricks B and the Queen's Head B made an incredibly inconsiderate habit of reaching the finals of

both the Bill Burwood and President's Cups, causing all sorts of problems for the organisers. Grand Finals were discontinued after 1991.

Linda Tidy's Jolly Bricks team were the first winners of the Ladies League Cup and they retained it for the next two years after their move to the Flying Scud. The Frenches Club Ladies frustratingly lost three of the first four finals, including a 9-0 hammering at the hands of the Flying Scud in 1993, but they finally got their hands on the Cup in 1995.

THE LADIES LEAGUE CUP

WINNERS	RUNNERS-UP	WINNERS	RUNNERS-UP
1991 Jolly Brickmakers	Frenches Club	1995 Frenches Club	Black Horse
1992 Flying Scud	Whyteleafe B.L.	1996 Old Oak	Caterham Club
1993 Flying Scud	Frenches Club	1997 Flying Scud	Jolly Brickmakers
1994 Emma Hamilton	Frenches Club	1998 Ship	Caterham Club

KNOWN REDHILL LEAGUE SITES SINCE 1948

90 pubs and clubs have had teams in the Redhill League since our formation in 1948. Seven no longer exist – the Locomotive, New Inn, Noah's Ark, Plumber's Arms, Sultan, Southeastern and the Warwick. Some have changed names and a few, like International Rectifiers (Hurst Green), were only in the

League for a season, but most of the rest remained for quite a few years. I can personally remember playing Bar Billiards in 65 of these sites and former President Jim Green has probably played *for* more of them than anyone I can think of.

Admiral	Frenches Club	Midday Sun	Redhill General Hospital
Barley Mow	Fullers Earth	Monotype Club	Redhill Golf Club
Beehive	Garibaldi	Monson Road Club	Reigate Ex-Servicemen's
Black Horse	Gatton Club	New Inn	Reigate Rugby Club
Blacksmith's Arms	George	Noah's Ark	Royal Earlswood
Bletchingley V. C.	George & Dragon	Nutfield CC	Ship
Blue Anchor	Golden Lion	Old Chestnut	Southeastern
Blue Ball	Greyhound	Old Oak	Station
Bricklayer's Arms	Harrow	Panther	Station
Bull	Holland Club	Plough	Sultan
Caterham Club	Holmesdale	Plough	Tower
Caterham C. C.	Home Cottage	Plumbers Arms	Warwick
Commonwealth	Horley CC	Post Office Club	Watermill
Constitutional Club	Horley S.S.C.	Prince Albert	Wheatsheaf
Coppingham Arms	International Rectifiers	Prince of Wales	White Hart
Crown	Iron Horse	Queens Head	White Lion
Crown	Jolly Brickmakers	Rail Club	White Swan
Diamond	Lakers	Railway ("The Nob")	Whyte Harte
Dorking FC	Limpsfield B. L.	Railway	Whyteleafe B. L.
Dukes Head	Locomotive	Red Lion	William IV
Emma Hamilton	Market	Red Lion	Yew Tree
Feathers	Marquis of Granby	Redhill B. L.	
Flying Scud	Merstham V. C.	Redhill Football Club	

REDHILL/REIGATE

Admiral, Barley Mow, Black Horse, Constitutional Club, Frenches Club, Garibaldi, George & Dragon, Greyhound, Holmesdale, Home Cottage, Jolly Brickmakers, Lakers, Locomotive, Market, Marquis of Granby, Monson Road Club, New Inn, Noah's Ark, Old Oak, Panther, Prince of Wales, Rail Club, Red Lion, Redhill British Legion, Redhill FC, Redhill General Hospital Club, Redhill & Reigate Golf Club, Reigate Ex-Servicemen's Club, Reigate Rugby Club, Royal Earlswood Hospital Club, Ship, South Eastern, Station (Reigate), Sultan, Tower, Warwick, Wheatsheaf, White Lion, Yew Tree

BLETCHINGLEY/NUTFIELD/MERSTHAM

Bletchingley Village Club, Crown, Feathers, Fullers Earth, Gatton Club, Iron Horse, Merstham Village Club, Nutfield CC, Plough, Prince Albert, Queen's Head, Red Lion, Station, Whyte Harte, William IV

EARLSWOOD/MEADVALE/HORLEY/SALFORDS

Beehive, Bull, Coppingham Arms, Flying Scud, Horley CC, Horley Sports & Social Club, Monotype Club, Nob (Railway, Earlswood), Old Chestnut, Plough, Post Office Club

DORKING/WIMBLEDON

Dukes Head, Dorking FC, Emma Hamilton, Watermill, White Hart

CATERHAM/WHYTELEAFE/CHIPSTEAD

Blacksmith's Arms, Blue Ball, Caterham Club, Caterham Country Club, Commonwealth, Golden Lion, Harrow, Midday Sun, Whyteleafe British Legion

OXTED/LIMPSFIELD/HURST GREEN/GODSTONE /TANDRIDGE/BLINDLEY HEATH

Blue Anchor, Bricklayer's Arms, Crown (Oxted), Diamond, George, Holland Club, International Rectifiers, Limpsfield British Legion, Plumber's Arms, Railway (South Godstone), White Swan

N.B. The Nob became the Railway (Earlswood) in 1964; it is now the Albatross. The Old Chestnut (Earlswood) was the Station Hotel until the early 1980s.

TOURNAMENTS

THE INTER-LEAGUE

APART from county events, tournaments for Redhill players started in 1981. This was the first year the Inter-League was played as a one-day event – it had been played since 1975 on consecutive Wednesday evenings at the end of the season. Carol Nash suggested the change and the first Inter-League tournament took place at Royal Earlswood in the spring of 1981.

Various handicapping systems have been used at the Inter-League. There was a time when the A League played off scratch, with the B League team getting 1,250 each and the C League and Ladies Leagues 2,250. This system threw up numerous anomalies, for example when Sue Banting, an England Lady International, got 1,250 and the break from Pete Forrest who then watched her kick off with over 9,000.

From 1990 everybody played off their Bill Burwood handicaps, regardless of which Inter-League team they were in. This was mainly done to accommodate the President's team which is traditionally drawn from across the divisions. In more recent years handicaps have been calculated against individual League averages, a system that produces far fewer anomalies than any other.

None of this has stopped the A League winning 12 of the 18 Inter-League tournaments so far. The Ladies League team has won three times and the B League, C League and President's Team once each.

DC's A-Z. UNDERDOGS would certainly have been the word to describe me and Geoff Jukes going to the Rail Club for a Pairs match back in the 1970s. Our opponents were two top players from the Flying Scud A – Brian "Ginger" Potts and Mike Arnold. Geoff and I also played for the Scud, but in the B League. For those of you who've never seen Geoff getting over-excited, you should have seen him that night – we'd beaten two of the best players in the League. We promptly lost in the next round!

THE SUMMER PAIRS

The Summer Pairs tournament started in 1983 as the Flying Scud Open Pairs Championship. Landlord John Coglin had seen Dave Constable playing at Redhill General Hospital Club in the Southern Counties Singles and decided to have a tournament in his pub.

Bar Billiards unfortunately disappeared from the Flying Scud for some years and the Summer Pairs lapsed until 1989 when it was resurrected as the Ship Open Pairs. Publicans Geoff and Lorna Best allowed us to take over their pub for a day and the tournament has been there ever since, apart from 1994 and 1995 when it was played at the Frenches Club. From 1998 onwards the Summer Pairs will be named in memory of the unforgettable Wally Wallace, who died in November 1997.

THE SUMMER PAIRS

CHAMPIONS

1983 Ray Newman & Simon Tinto
1984 Peter Whipp & Gary Somai
1985 Geoff Jukes & Simon Tinto
1989 Ian Greensted & Alan Parkhurst
1990 Tony Cross & Karl Tidy
1991 Geoff Jukes & Simon Tinto
1992 Dave Constable & Rod Smith
1993 Terry Oakley & George Stevens
1994 Mark Fraser & Simon Tinto
1995 John Slee & Gareth Lloyd (Horsham)
1996 Mark Fraser & Greg Hughan
1997 Dave Constable & Vernon Sparkes

RUNNERS-UP

Derek Holman & Bob Tove
Geoff Jukes & Simon Tinto
Terry Oakley & Alan Parkhurst

Dave Constable & Rod Smith

Geoff Jukes & Simon Tinto
Greg & Peter Hughan
Peter Hughan & Andy Finn
Steve Mariner & Chris Tupper (Brighton)
Alva Gaskin & Andy Relf
Laurie Roberts & Denise Hoadley

THE MIXED PAIRS

AT THE 1989 Annual General Meeting Paul Wood proposed that we launch a Mixed Pairs Championship. The following January the first tournament took place at the Frenches Club, which has been the home of the Mixed Pairs ever since. The highest permissible break has always been 3,000 for all players and Ladies take the opening breaks in all games. Sue and Terry Oakley donated the Champions' Shield.

The Mixed Pairs has grown in popularity over the years; the first event attracted just 13 entries, but in 1996 Sheila King rounded up a record 29 pairs.

The Mixed Pairs tournaments of 1990 to 1994 were dominated by two partnerships; Sue Banting and Simon Tinto won the first three titles (with plenty of help from their opponents in 1990 and 1992) while Gail Woods and Pete Forrest (an obvious partnership when you think about it – Mrs Woods and Mr Forrest. Geddit?) appeared in four consecutive finals from 1991 to 1994, winning the last two.

Linda Tidy and Tony Cross won in 1995 and Sue and Simon won a fourth title the following year, but again with help from their opponents, this time towards the end of the final. Having reached 3,000, which would easily have won the match, Sue's husband, Steve, was back on the break after the bar had dropped and tried to stitch Simon up by rolling his cue-ball very gently straight at the red, but played the shot too softly and missed!

Alison and Colin Norman at last won in 1997 after two near misses and in 1998 Josie Hogan and Dave Bewey won their first Mixed Pairs.

DC's A-Z. V IS FOR VIRIDIAN, a yellowish green sort of colour. I remember when I saw the Whyteleafe British Legion table for the first time, remarking "Oooh! What a lovely shade of viridian." This feeble attempt to impress my team-mates with my command of the English language fell on distinctly stony ground. Nobody seems to take me seriously.

THE MIXED PAIRS

CHAMPIONS

1990 Sue Banting & Simon Tinto
1991 Sue Banting & Simon Tinto
1992 Sue Banting & Simon Tinto
1993 Gail Woods & Pete Forrest
1994 Gail Woods & Pete Forrest
1995 Linda Tidy & Tony Cross
1996 Sue Mariner & Simon Tinto
1997 Colin & Alison Norman
1998 Josie Hogan & Dave Bewey

RUNNERS-UP

Colin & Alison Norman
Gail Woods & Pete Forrest
Gail Woods & Pete Forrest
Colin & Alison Norman
Sharon Balcombe & Ian Greensted
Sheila King & Greg Hughan
Tracy Bird & Steve Mariner
Denise Hoadley & Laurie Roberts
Sally Mortimer & Geoff Jukes

THE DUTCH OPEN

"THE DUTCH OPEN" is not its proper title – this event is really called The Holland Club Singles. However, the plodding joke was totally lost on Pete Howes one year when Karl Tidy managed to convince him that the tournament took place in Holland! Keen to visit one of Europe's most famous red-light districts, Pete contacted the staff travel office at Gatwick, where he worked, and asked about cheap flights to Amsterdam. I'm not sure if he booked anything, but with tears of laughter streaming down his face, Karl finally took pity on Pete in the Frenches Club one evening a few weeks afterwards; the penny eventually dropped about an hour later.

Played on the first Saturday in September, the Dutch Open was the brainchild of Tony Cross who does a quite staggering amount of work organising and running the event on the day.

The first half consists of qualifying groups with unlucky losers going into the Plate and most players are given handicaps. In 1996 these were so effective that the Open final was between Michael Tyler (Holland Club) and Tom Pidgeon (Emma Hamilton) – two players who didn't make their League debuts until the next season.

In 1992 invitations were issued to friends from other Leagues and Paul Sainsbury (Reading) became the first guest player to win when he beat Alva Gaskin in the final. The 1994 final was the greatest match ever in the Dutch Open. Paul Sainsbury, bidding for a second title, ran the table out with 20,150. Undaunted, Steve Mariner ran it out in the second leg with 21,150 to take the title: two games of Bar Billiards; two breaks; 41,300 scored. And Steve was recovering from major back surgery!

THE DUTCH OPEN

CHAMPIONS

1990	Simon Tinto
1991	Dave Constable
1992	Paul Sainsbury (Reading)
1993	Simon Tinto
1994	Steve Mariner (Brighton)
1995	Tony Walsh (Reading)
1996	Michael Tyler
1997	Not held

RUNNERS-UP

Christine Constable
Simon Tinto
Alva Gaskin
Dave Bewey
Paul Sainsbury
Dave Gray
Tom Pidgeon

THE REDHILL INVITATION

GREG HUGHAN was County Secretary for five years from the late 1980s onwards and with match tables already at the Frenches Club for the Mixed Pairs he decided to use them the following day for a new event – the Redhill Invitation. For the first tournament teams of eight were invited from Tunbridge Wells, Portsmouth and Wokingham to take on A and B teams from Redhill.

Redhill A won the event comfortably as they did the following year. In 1994 Tunbridge Wells were replaced by a very powerful team from Brighton, who won the tournament and Wokingham were winners in 1996 and 1998.

In 1996 Mark Turner, from Wokingham, had an absolutely incredible tournament, knocking in scores of 20,120, 18,330, 13,320 and 21,100 (all made in just a single visit to the table) for an astonishing average of 18,220.

DC's A-Z. WEAKNESS – as in alcohol. I personally believe that the Men's County team wouldn't just have been labelled "Good Old Surrey" if the beer hadn't flowed so easily. We're good and we're Surrey, but we're not old. We just played as if we were, thanks to the pints!

REDHILL INVITATION WINNERS

1992	Redhill A	1996	Wokingham
1993	Redhill A	1997	Redhill A
1994	Brighton	1998	Wokingham
1995	Redhill A		

THE REDHILL LADIES INVITATION

The first Redhill Ladies Invitation tournament took place at the Frenches Club in 1995 with teams from Redhill, Dover, Horsham, Brighton, Reading and Medway. This event has played an important part in developing the Ladies

County team and the strength of Ladies Bar Billiards in Redhill is now such that the Ladies Invitation has been dominated by our teams who have won all four tournaments so far. Only Brighton have pushed them.

REDHILL LADIES INVITATION

WINNERS

1995	Redhill Molls
1996	Redhill A
1997	Redhill A
1998	Redhill Dolls

RUNNERS-UP

Horsham
Brighton
Medway
Brighton

COUNTY BAR BILLIARDS

THE SOUTHERN COUNTIES and All England Associations were formed in the late 1960s, with Surrey a founder member of both. With only one League in the County, it has never been necessary to form a Surrey Bar Billiards Association. This has always been a matter of great relief to County Secretaries who know of the internal politics that afflict other counties. To give just one example, Kent County 7-a-side teams are selected by a committee of no less than 10 people – two from each League – but these horrors have never been visited on Surrey.

Fred Vane and Peter Pannell, both founder members of the League, organised friendly matches against Sussex and Hampshire which started during the early 1960s. The results are unavailable, but Surrey probably fielded teams including Arthur Standing, Peter Pannell, Frank Taylor, Peter Sharp, Jim Gorringe, Alan Hall and Alf Hunnisett.

The Southern Counties Championship began in 1969 as a triangular competition between three counties – Surrey, Sussex and Hampshire. In the first two years Surrey won nothing more than the wooden spoon, but things changed in 1971 when a team consisting of the captain Arthur Jeffrey, Alf Hunnisett, Alan Hall, John Peters, Jim Gorringe, Peter Sharp and Gordon Larkworthy won the title for the first time. The match results were as follows

Surrey 6 - Hampshire 1
Sussex 5 - Surrey 2
Hampshire 7 - Sussex 0
Hampshire 2 - Surrey 5
Surrey 5 - Sussex 2
Sussex 2 - Hampshire 5

Kent joined the Southern Counties in 1972 and for the next three years the competition was played on a home-and-away basis. The Surrey team had changed to accommodate some rising young stars, but the old guard were still as good as ever – I remember going to Winchester to support them in about 1973 and being astonished when Arthur Jeffrey recovered from a deficit of over 6,000 to win his game.

In 1974 Surrey won the Southern Counties title again. This was the year in which Geoff Jukes made his county debut in a team that included Alf Hunnisett, John Peters and Alan Hall from Whyteleafe British Legion, Arthur Jeffrey and Gordon Owen from the Scud and Peter Sharp and Brain Coomber from Royal Earlswood.

In 1975 the Southern Counties format changed to a one-day tournament played at a large pub in Southampton with John Milne and Simon Tinto both making quiet debuts.

DC's A-Z. XMAS Charity Draw. Over the years the League has raised thousands of pounds for mainly local charities and much of it has been generated by the Christmas Draw. The social part of the evening is pretty special as well. Let's keep it up.

Until the early 1980s most players' route to the team was via County trials, although there were various regulars – a Surrey team without Alf Hunnisett and John Peters was unthinkable in those days. The selectors would pick three teams of seven who played a series of trails from which a team would emerge. With only a couple of chances to impress, this was a fairly brutal method of selection, but it did have the virtue of making both aspiring and established players perform when it really mattered.

For most of 1980s the trials were discontinued and County selection was based on known form. Then, in 1988, Greg Hughon formed a permanent County squad with a built-in playing structure that allowed new squad members the chance to become County players.

The system involved a Singles League with the top five players all gaining automatic places; the selectors then picked the remaining players and reserves. The value of Greg's concept of a permanent County squad became clear when Tony Cross saw his opportunity and took on and beat most of the rest of the squad, thereby booting the door down to get into the team.

Being a County player has been a frustrating experience over the last 20 years or so. The team has always had gifted players, but has hardly ever fired on all seven cylinders. There has been the occasional burst of sunlight on an otherwise gloomy scene – in 1982, for example, when Surrey were runners-up at the Southern Counties Championships in Worthing and the team did finish third at the 1988 All England Finals. But Surrey have regularly lost to teams they could have beaten with more consistent performances.

Over the past 30 years or so 73 players are known to have represented Surrey, although the following list is probably incomplete – very few Surrey teams from the 1960s are recorded.

SURREY COUNTY PLAYERS

Terry Allen	Alva Gaskin	John Keen	Andy Relf	George Stevens
Dave Bewey	Dave Gray	John Kemp	Dave Richardson	Alan Sturt
Paul Brake	Jim Gorringe	Ross Kenrick	Laurie Roberts	Bob Tate
Neil Byles	Harold Greensted	Gordon Larkworthy	R. Robinson	Frank Taylor
Dave Constable†	Ian Greensted	Dave Lewis	John Samels	Karl Tidy
Brian Coomber	Jimmy Greensted	Andy Lobley	Dave Sharp	Dave Timlin
Micky Coyne	Alan Hall	John Milne	Peter Sharp	Simon Tinto*†
Ian Crayford	Alec Hastings	Colin Norman	Terry Simmons	Karl Tidy
Tony Cross	Derek Holman	Terry Oakley*†	Rod Smith	Bob Toye*
Alan Dean	Norman Hosford	Gordon Owen	Dave Snashfold	Paul Trotman
Tim Ditzel	Greg Hughan	Peter Pannell	Vernon Sparkes	Cliff Wayland
Mark Faragher	Alf Hunnisett	Alan Parkhurst	Arthur Standing	Peter Whipp
Andy Finn	Arthur Jeffrey	John Peters*	Mike Standing	Paul Wood
Pete Forrest	Pete Jeffrey	Shaun Potter	John Stenning	Gail Woods
Mark Fraser	Geoff Juke†	Brian Potts		

* = England International: † = England 'B'

THE SURREY LADIES

LIKE THE Men's County team, the Surrey Ladies suffered regular defeats for many years. They had some good players, but as with the men, selecting from one League imposed limitations on choice, whereas Sussex had the pick of ten leagues, Kent drew their team from six leagues and Berkshire had four to choose from. The Surrey Ladies won the Southern Counties title in 1989 in the absence of the strong Kent team, but that was their only success for six years.

In 1983 a Ladies coaching programme was introduced. Our three England Internationals needed precious little in the way of help, but the coaching programme did have the effect of bringing on a new generation of players who caused shock-waves in 1995.

By this time the Ladies County Championship had been restructured so that the seven teams all played each other, but were segregated for the purposes of the 1st and 2nd Division titles. Surrey had been relegated on a desperately disappointing day in 1994, but a year later they went to the Royal Berkshire Hospital Club in

Reading, thrashed the rest of England, won the tournament outright, but only came away with the Division 2 trophy.

Sussex, the defending Champions, never recovered from a 6-1 hiding and were relegated, while Kent are still trying to work out how they lost 7-0, when a 4-3 win over Surrey would have given them the All England title. In 1996 the Surrey Ladies returned to Reading as the team promoted from Division 2 and made no mistake in winning their first All England Championship, although they just lost out to Sussex in 1997. The Surrey Ladies also won the Southern Counties title in 1997 and 1998.

Thirty-five Ladies have played for Surrey since County matches were first introduced in the early 1970s. Alison Norman, an outstanding captain, has appeared more times than any other Lady and was the third Surrey player to represent England (1987); Eileen Peters (1983), Gail Woods (1984), Sue Banting (1988) and Dani Voelke (1996) complete Surrey's quintette of Lady Internationals.

SURREY LADY COUNTY PLAYERS

Carol Banting	Christine Constable†	Christine Horwood	Carol Nash	Margaret Skinner
Sue Barnard	Margaret Crawley	Ethel Killick	Alison Norman*	Sue Stevens
Pauline Batt	June Davies	Sheila King	Sue Oakley	Jan Taylor
Sarah Batty	Lyn Green	Wendy Lowe	Sheila Parlour	Linda Tidy
Tracy Bird	Brenda Hewitt	Gill Mackie	Eileen Peters*	Pauline Tully
Anne Boyce	Denise Hoadley	Sue Mariner*	Jane Redford	Dilys Wakeman
Stephanie Cole	Josie Hogan	Sally Mortimer	Dani Relf*	Gail Woods*†

* = England International: † = England 'B'

THE COUNTY SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS

IN 1992 TONY CROSS introduced the County Singles Championship tournament for the County Squads and selected invitees. Tony's idea was to stage an event in early September (the day after the Dutch Open) in order to sharpen up the County teams on match tables prior to the All England Championships in the autumn. The tournament also gives the selectors an accurate form-guide.

With all matches played over two legs in qualifying groups followed by the knock-out stage and against consistently tough opposition the County Singles is an exhausting tournament. Simon Tinto has been very greedy in the Open event, winning five of the six Championships so far; he has been particularly unkind to his Open Pairs partner and Flying Scud team-mate Geoff Jukes, whom he has beaten in four finals. Tony Cross is the only other winner, beating Terry Oakley in the 1994 final.

DC's A-Z. YOUR LEAGUE. Take care of it, support it and ensure it doesn't fold like others have recently.

The Ladies event was dominated in the early years by Gail Woods, who won three times in 1992-93-94, beating Sue Banting twice and Alison Norman once in the finals. Alison has appeared in the last three finals, beating Josie Hogan in 1996 and 1997.

But the greatest upset came in 1995 when Dani Voelke swept into the final against Alison and started the match by running the table out with a brilliant break of over 10,000. Alison replied with some determined Bar Billiards, but Dani's lead was more than enough and we had a new and potentially great Champion to celebrate.

DC's A-Z. Z IS FOR ZEST - something I've always had for Bar Billiards. It's been there from the start, especially in my early years. The team I played with and those I played against had the gift of playing to win, but more importantly they had the ability to enjoy themselves at the same time. It rubbed off.

Thanks for all the memories and here's to the future. DC.

OPEN COUNTY SINGLES

CHAMPIONS	RUNNERS-UP
1992 Simon Tinto	Geoff Jukes
1993 Simon Tinto	Geoff Jukes
1994 Tony Cross	Terry Oakley
1995 Simon Tinto	Geoff Jukes
1996 Simon Tinto	Tony Cross
1997 Simon Tinto	Geoff Jukes

LADIES COUNTY SINGLES

CHAMPIONS	RUNNERS-UP
1992 Gail Woods	Sue Banting
1993 Gail Woods	Alison Norman
1994 Gail Woods	Sue Banting
1995 Dani Voelke	Alison Norman
1996 Alison Norman	Josie Hogan
1997 Alison Norman	Josie Hogan

REDHILL PLAYERS AT OPEN & NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

FROM THE earliest days of County matches against Sussex, Redhill players have never been frightened to go beyond their own area and take on the rest of the country, even though victories have been few and far between. Dave Constable gave us a ring-side seat at the 1976 All England Team Finals when the Flying Scud took the title and in 1993 a newer version of the Scud reached the Final. But what of individual and pairs Championships?

Alf Hunnisett had more or less retired by the time national individual and pairs events were introduced, so we start with John Peters whose Open Singles titles of 1976-78-80 automatically qualified him for the All England Finals. At his very best John was as good as anybody and the Indoor League Championship came his way (in 1976, I believe). This was a national pub games competition broadcast by Yorkshire TV and

hosted by that modest, self-effacing man, Fred Trueman. County Billiards champions played each other in a tough competition with a time-limit of 45 seconds per visit which meant that speed and accuracy were at a premium. The All England Singles title always eluded John Peters, but he came close on a couple of occasions, missing the final by the narrowest of margins.

The same fate befell Simon Tinto in 1982 at the All England Finals, but he made up for it by winning his group in 1987 and beating John Burrows (Bucks) in the semi-final before losing in the final to Kent's Mick Lingham. Later that year he made it to the quarter-finals of the British Open and in 1991 was one of three Redhill players to reach the last eight. The others were Susie Banting, only the third Lady ever to get that far, and first-timer Terry Oakley, of whom you will read more later.

Simon lost the 1991 British Open Final to Jersey's Steve Ahier. He also twice reached the semi-finals of the British Open Pairs with Greg Hughan, but he had to wait another four years for his only title outside Surrey – the 1995 Southern Counties Singles Championship.

GEOFF JUKES & THE CHARITY SINGLES

In 1994 GEOFF JUKES became the first male Surrey player to win a major individual title. He first came close in 1986 when he reached the final of the National "Off-the-Spot" Singles, but lost to an inspired John Burrows (Bucks). Geoff's major title was the Charity Singles in Bracknell – the oldest "Open" on the English Bar Billiards calendar.

Geoff gave an astonishing performance; in seven matches, all over two legs, he made ten five-figure scores (including nine breaks of over 10,000), ran the table out three times (including a break of 20,260 which gave him automatic entry to the exclusive 20K club) and averaged 12,740 per leg. His opponent in the Final was All England Chairman Keith Lewendon, a former International and captain of the powerhouse Berkshire County team, but he was no match for Geoff, who won a major event against the Who's Who of Bar Billiards.

THE LADIES ALL ENGLAND SINGLES

The All England Singles title has eluded our Ladies, just as it has the men. Alison Norman, Sue Banting and Gail Woods have all reached the Final, but fell at the last hurdle, although it was a close run thing on each occasion.

THE LADIES BRITISH OPEN SINGLES

The Ladies British Open began in 1992 when Berkshire Chairman Phil Hawkins staged the first event at the Lion in Reading. The great Viv Wright (Kent) had already won no less than 10 Ladies All England Singles titles and it came as no surprise when she won the inaugural Ladies British Open, beating Gail Woods in the final.

A year later the tournament went to the Miller's Arms in Reading and the Surrey Ladies turned out in force, but only Sue Banting survived the

first round. She then treated us to a series of heart-stopping matches, most of which went to the wire, but made mincemeat of Viv Wright in the final. On the way to victory she beat four fellow Internationals who between them have won no less than 17 All England Singles titles.

In 1994 it was the turn of Alison Norman to lead Surrey's charge. Alison was in the form of her life at the time, having just reached both the Ladies Singles and Ladies Pairs finals, and she sailed through to the tournament, beating a number of England colleagues along the way. She should have beaten Jan Taylor (Kent) in the final after building a 9,000 lead with her break to come, but an early mistake let Jan in and Alison was left with the runners-up trophy.

The following year Susie regained the title with another outstanding performance in which she again took on her International team-mates. This was the tournament at which Dani Voelke first gave notice of her rising talent when she beat Viv Wright in an early round, but Sue was the class player in the field and she beat Myra Hawkins (Berkshire) in the final to become the only player so far to win twice.

In 1996 she came close to retaining the title, but Gail Woods was in brilliant form and cruised past everyone with a string of high scores. The only opponent to give her any real trouble was the England Ladies Captain Pauline Withey (Oxford) who opened the final with a 6,000 break, but by the time she returned to the table about half-way through the second leg, Gail was 10,000 in the lead and couldn't be denied the title of British Open Champion.

The Ladies British Open Championship did not take place in 1997 due to a lack of entries and the 1998 event is still in some doubt, but whether it continues or not the Surrey Ladies have dominated like nobody else, appearing in all five finals and winning the title on three occasions. Only the Kent Ladies get anywhere near Gail, Susie and Alison, with two winners and a runner-up.

THE LADIES BRITISH OPEN

CHAMPIONS

1992 Vivien Wright (Kent)
1993 Sue Banting (Surrey)
1994 Jan Taylor (Kent)
1995 Sue Mariner (Surrey)
1996 Gail Woods (Surrey)

RUNNERS-UP

Gail Woods (Surrey)
Vivien Wright (Kent)
Alison Norman (Surrey)
Myra Hawkins (Berkshire)
Pauline Withey (Oxford)

THE LADIES NATIONAL OPEN PAIRS

A year after the Ladies British Open was first played, the Ladies National Open Pairs Championship was launched at the Frenches Club, where it has remained ever since. A very strong field from all the major counties entered and Kent, who were the all England County Champions at the time, provided all four finalists. Over two legs Viv Wright and Sylvia Vaughan comfortably out-scored Jan Taylor and Jill O'Brien and won the Champions' Shield presented by Jim Green.

Since 1994 the final has been played over four legs, giving all the players an opening break and the chance to make a telling contribution to the result. Jan Taylor and Jill O'Brien were there again, but this time they faced Gail Woods and Sue Banting. Gail was absolutely flying by the time the final started and, although Jan and Jill won the second leg, Gail and Susie had scored so heavily in the first three legs that Jill needed to run the table with a massive 29,510 to win. Wisely she and her partner conceded.

Gail and Susie reached the final again in 1995, losing to England Internationals Jill Josey and Myra Hawkins (Berkshire), but they made no mistake in 1996, despite a very tough draw, winning through to the final where they easily beat Ann Keen and Janie Macoy (Kent).

In 1997 they looked to be heading for a fourth consecutive appearance in the final when they ran into Sally Mortimer and Josie Hogan in the semi-finals. It wasn't a particularly high-scoring match, but Sally and Jo showed the stubborn determination that's become a hall-mark of the Surrey Ladies.

In the final, against England Internationals Alison Norman and Jan Taylor (Kent) Josie and especially Sally pounced on their opponents' mistakes to go into an unassailable 3-0 lead and land a third Ladies National Open Pairs Championship for Surrey. I very much doubt it will be the last.

THE LADIES NATIONAL OPEN PAIRS

CHAMPIONS

1993 Vivien Wright & Sylvia Vaughan (Kent)
1994 Gail Woods & Sue Banting (Surrey)
1995 Jill Josey & Myra Hawkins (Berkshire)
1996 Gail Woods (Surrey) & Sue Mariner (Sussex)
1997 Sally Mortimer & Josie Hogan (Surrey)

RUNNERS-UP

Jan Taylor & Jill O'Brien (Kent)
Jan Taylor & Jill O'Brien (Kent)
Gail Woods & Sue Mariner (Surrey)
Ann Keen & Janie Macoy (Kent)
Jan Taylor (Kent) & Alison Norman (Surrey)

THE BRITISH ISLES OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP

THE BRITISH ISLES OPEN takes place in Jersey every November; the first event was in 1981. Jersey has become something of a pilgrimage for many players from all over the country and at its peak in 1987 attracted nearly 520 entries. Karl Tidy has only ever missed one Jersey trip and he has recorded some of his memories for your entertainment.

The British Open presents a special challenge because all shots are played "off-the-spot"; you are not allowed to move around on the "D" at any time. Bar Billiards in Jersey therefore tends to be played down the sides of the table to avoid troublesome shots off the cushion for balls in the middle, although most of the top English players have been bold enough to play their natural splitting game.

KARL'S JERSEY DIARY. Dave Constable's annual visit nearly always starts at the joke shop. We've had exploding cigarettes (one of which went off with such a bang that Brian Woods, who was smoking it at the time, jumped higher than anyone), stink bombs under your brake-pedals etc. One year he bought a whistle and was walking around St Helier blowing it when a policeman told him to behave himself properly because "you're not on the mainland now." He asked for Dave's name - and the reply? "Constable, constable."

KARL'S JERSEY DIARY. In the early years there was a darts festival a few days before the Bar Billiards and a crowd of us would go along to watch the finals. One year during the final I went to the bar and was on my way back with a tray of drinks when my jeans started to fall down. I had a choice between losing the drinks or losing my jeans - no contest and, as the jeans slid to the floor, the place exploded. During Presentation after the Bar Billiards Final, my name was called out and I was presented with a pair of braces.

Jersey isn't only about Bar Billiards; the social side is just as important. For example, in 1997 all eight members of the Old Oak B went over on a team bender and ended up having a pool match (arrgh!) against the locals at The Don in St Helier. Others have visited Jersey Zoo where we found Colin Frost – the man who claimed he could read and write with both hands.

KARL'S JERSEY DIARY. One of DC's best gags was when he bought a pair of joke plastic glasses about an inch thick. He could actually see out of them through a clear bit in the middle of each lens, but you wouldn't know it. He stopped a police car and asked them to take him back to the hotel because he thought it was a taxi. Another time Dave put his gogs on when he and Pete Howes, who was on crutches at the time, were coming out of Fort Regent Leisure Centre – the blind leading the lame!

Redhill players have had periodic successes in Jersey, but only Terry Oakley has gone all the way and won the British Open – on November 10th 1996. The main aim is to get safely past the first two rounds on the Saturday, which Terry did easily. In Round 3 he faced Jersey's Nigel Ryall, one of the local favourites, but Terry beat him by 4,500 to move to the last 32 at which point all matches are played over two legs instead of one. Dave Mitchell (Wokingham) was dispatched by 16,340 to 8,040 after Terry's first break of 12,100.

Terry faced a tough draw in the last 16, starting with Ernie Jordan (Bucks), but he eased into the quarter-finals by 11,730 to 6,310. Next came Mick Lingham (Medway), the 1987 All England Singles Champion, but he lost his opening break to let Terry in and half an hour later our man had won 14,560-7,660 to reach the last four.

KARL'S JERSEY DIARY. Until 1995 we always stayed at the Egremont Hotel in St Helier. One evening in the bar Linda told me not to sit on the table, so I did. You guessed it – the table collapsed, although I can't imagine why, but I owned up. Carlos, the manager was great – all he said was "Tables are for glasses, not arses."

Terry's semi-final opponent was Kevin Tunstall (Wallingford), winner of numerous titles, All England Singles Champion of 1980-94-96 and British Open Champion in 1993 and 1994. Kevin lost the toss and made an early mistake, leaving the table with only 1,100. Terry stepped in with 7,000 and although Kevin ran the rest of the first leg out with 3,500 he was 2,500 adrift with Terry's break to come. It only produced 600, but Kevin failed to take advantage and when Terry got the break back he made no mistake, chalking up 6,000 which left his opponent 9,000 adrift with 5 minutes to play.

Terry's opponent in the final, Jersey's Don Cadec, reached the final back in 1984 so he was in familiar territory, but in 1996 he made little of his opening break and was drawn into one of those frustrating games with balls all over the table. It was hardly Terry's problem, with his break to come in the second leg and trailing by only 1,200, but as in the semi-finals, he unaccountably opened with only 600.

Once again, the balls were all over the place with Terry still behind, but Don attacked, sinking three balls twice in a row to leave two whites behind the 10-hole. This wouldn't be a problem playing English rules, but off-the-spot it's a different proposition requiring a spinner outside the 50-hole and off the side and top cushions just to make contact. Don played the shot of his life, sinking all three balls to get the break back and he seemed to be heading for the title when a ball whipped out of the 50-hole. Terry cleared the balls and made a break of nearly 6,000, leaving the table when he knew he'd done enough. The final score over two legs was 6,850 to 4,770.

TERRY OAKLEY's magnificent victory at the 1996 British Isles Open was without doubt the finest individual achievement by any Redhill League player. It paved the way for a brilliant party afterwards and opened the door for Terry to join the 1997 England team in which he made a winning debut. It was a privilege to witness Terry's finest hour, a pleasure to report it and it seems to be a fitting way to end this history of the Redhill League.

