

**Chairman
Mike Harris
(Mid Surrey BC)**



Area Two

**David Miller
Hon Secretary
(Cheam BC)**

Area Committee

Chairman, Hon Secretary, Colin Clarke (Treasurer) (Area Two Competition Secretary, SCBA) (Hook & Southborough)
Trevor Hoy (Byfleet) **Tim Orr** (Mid Surrey) **John Round** (Ember)
Area Two Councillor - Doua Smith (Imber Court)

Hon Secretary Report – 2011

My report for 2011 looks back, principally, on

- National Champions from Area Two Clubs
- three-in-a-row for the Walter Cross Memorial Trophy
- signs of optimism from the other Areas
- new County Selection Policy further raises the Area profile
- County Bowls League in the future?
- Surrey's Centenary Year
- Area Presentation Evening
- AGM

Areas' Aims are

- to be a channel of communication between the Club and the SCBA Executive
- to promote a higher standard of bowling within each Area, and
- to encourage the individual Club bowler towards a higher level of individual and team achievement through appropriate competition.

National Champions 2011

I'm sure all Area Two Clubs, Officers and players will congratulate our **2011 Worthing National Champions** – Cheam's **Mike McDonagh**, National over 55s *Singles* Champion and Supreme's **Julian Astill, Ron Brookbank, Derek Clewley** and **Ray Wrenn**. Together with Barbara Astill, Margaret Brookbank, Brenda Clewley and Pat Spencer, they became the inaugural Winners of the new **Tony Allcock Trophy** – presented to the victors in the *National Mixed Club over 60's Double Rink* competition. Wonderful!! A superb achievements - and in Surrey's Centenary Year.

Competitions

If the final inter-Area match did not *quite* live up to the drama of Dennis Hennessey's last wood victory in the 2010 competition, it was not far off it. Unfortunately, Area Four had failed to muster a team for its third match and so our earlier 9-1 points win over them was expunged from the records – as, indeed was Area Three's 7-3 victory. It made the challenge - in our final game against Area Three – much closer. A win on two rinks at Ember, nonetheless, would be enough to secure the inter-Area trophy for the third successive year (and for the twelfth time in 15 years!). But it was no walkover! As exciting as last year, this one also went to the wire, but we managed three rinks, though lost the match by a single shot. It was enough, however, to top the table again. For the three games, we selected 50 players from 18 clubs (49 from 15 clubs in 2010). There is an increasing focus on identifying *players of promise* for the County's senior squad. With just over 75% of those registered for Area Two actually playing in the series, it is a tribute in itself to the quality of players we have in Area Two. Twenty Two players played in more than one game.

Southey BC, winners of the 2010 Area Top Four competition, hosted this year's *Eric Theobald Salver* and had a comfortable 95-61 win. Brian Cave (Ewell) with Deric Homes (Weybridge), Colin Popple and Mick Gray (both Cheam) had the Area's only winning rink. Southey did great credit to the Area team by turning out its top players – and they did perform well. Ten players from Southey's four rinks have been regulars in Area teams over recent years. With Southey not in the Final of this year's Top Four, some of their players will, I hope, volunteer to help the Area out in 2012.



Mick Harris presents
Steve Wessier
with the
Eric Theobald Salver

In our first game of the season, we defeated West Wimbledon in what had become an annual event that gave the selectors an opportunity to see players new to the Area and about whom they knew little. Support for the

match had dwindled and the Area Committee agreed with the Club that 2011 would be the final game. A decision has yet to be taken as to whether or not it will be replaced.

Even more players registered to play with Area Two in 2011; 66 as against 62, and from roughly the same 19 Clubs. Cheam (16) and Southey (10) had the largest numbers registered and it was good to see an increase from some of the smaller Clubs whose players are showing a real interest in improving their game through competition at a higher level. 7/12 of our Division Three and 11/23 of our Division Four clubs have players wanting to play. That's about half of Area Two clubs. What saddens us is the lack of response or feedback to appeals to Clubs to encourage their *players of promise*. If members have "*promise*", why not develop it – if not for any reflected glory to the Club, certainly to give these players a chance to step up a level in competitive bowls. The inter-Area games start at 9.30 in the morning so that players are free for afternoon club games.

Signs of optimism

Despite Area Four's last minute withdrawal from this year's competition, there are clear signs and promises of a re-awakening particularly in Areas One and Three, with a lot of banter and enthusiasm adding to match atmosphere. The standard of play all round is improving and having an effect on the level of competition. With new and enthusiastic committees, both Areas *talk* and *show* growing confidence and, despite our own Committee's and players' commitment to win every year, the competition on-the-green is getting fiercer – and that is a good thing. The County will be the ultimate winner, and the Middleton Cup and Home Counties squads that evolve from the inter-Area "*nursery*" will be better prepared as a result. There are signs that Area Four is ready to jump on board.

County Selection Policy and Possible Bowls League

The new policy which you can find on the County website has a strong focus on the Areas and the role they can play in bringing *players of promise* to the notice of the Middleton Cup Team Manager and his Advisers. Area Two has been particularly prominent this season with 14 players in the Middleton Cup squad. Seven of these have played regularly for Area Two – a situation that caused a few selection headaches since we are only allowed three current (ie last game) Middleton Cup players. The Committee congratulates these players and thanks them for their continuing support and understanding of the situation, and for their patience when not selected. We congratulate those who represented Surrey at all levels during the season and wish the County even more success in 2012.

In response to feedback and suggestions from a number of *grass roots* players, the County Executive is considering a County Bowls League. No decision has been taken, but presentations on possible formats and operation have been made to Council and to the Combined Areas. The initiative has been taken following a recommendation by the Working Group set up to prepare and monitor the Strategy and Selection Policy. More on this in due course.

Surrey's Centenary

2011 was the County's Centenary Year. As we said in the Booklet "*On 15 March 1911, a group of enthusiastic and voluntary club representatives met in a smoke-filled room at the Falcon Hotel in Clapham Junction... That meeting represented the foundation of the Surrey County Bowling Association...*" The year was launched by President Terry Foote at a wonderful gala dinner in the Savill Court Hotel and those who missed it really did lose out on a most enjoyable event. Mike McDonagh (Cheam) master-minded the arrangements and the County – all of us – should be grateful to him for the time he spent on our behalf. The County has had matches against an abundance of the good and the great of national and local bowls including our own Southey which celebrated its 125th anniversary this year. Congratulations to them. The season ended for the Areas with a win for the Combined Areas in a match against a President's team at Cranleigh. There was one rink from each Area, and the *all-unbadged* Area Two four – Ken Bailey, John Hannon, Chas Smith and Mike Annand - took Top Rink; the remaining rinks comprised Officers from the four Areas.

Club Closures

As far as we are aware, only one Area Two club has serious problems in this respect. In the early years of the millennium, Cheam Village, which dates back to 1934, had a record *eight* players in the Middleton Cup team. For many years, it was reputed to have the best green in Surrey. Now, with membership numbers failing, its continuing survival seems unlikely. Its members will be welcomed by any of the neighbouring clubs.

Top Four competition

Mick Harris, Chairman and Area Top Four Competition Secretary will report at the AGM on the Top Four competition. At the time of writing, I know only that Byfleet will play Supreme in the Final at North Sheen on Sunday morning 4 September. The winners will compete in the County Finals at Shirley Park on Sunday 11 September. Support will be welcomed.

Presentation Evening

The annual dinner and prize-giving at West Wimbledon Bowling Club had its usual faithful support - and high spirits. The Area is grateful to the Club for hosting this event. It was, as ever, an excellent evening with good food and good company, and super value for money. We will continue with the Presentation Evening so long as the players support it and clearly wish it to take place. In 2012, it will be on Friday 3 February. I will be in touch with clubs and players by late November.

AGM

In last year's report, I expressed disappointment about numbers not attending the AGM, and about not receiving apologies for absence; the latter at least would acknowledge that Hon Secretaries or Club Representatives had received the AGM papers. There was, in the event, a modest increase in attendees. We – County Secretary, Executive Council, Area Councillors and Area Committees – have all spent a lot of time trying to improve communications to Clubs. Website, *Vertical Response*, *Twitter*, e-mails and old fashioned telephone calls and letters have all been used but, for the most part, it's largely one-way. **You** know what you want to do for your clubs and **you** know the level of support you get from your members. The County and Areas are different only our level of operation and Surrey clubs **are** the County!. We want to consult, communicate and work as a team for the sake of the game of bowls in Surrey – playing, operating, survival and development. But we need to work *together*.

I hope to see you at the AGM – **Sunday 23 October 2011 – 10.00am – King George Field Indoor Bowling Club.**

David Miller
September 2011