

## **Scottish Petanque Association**

### **Doubles Championship 2009**

#### **Port Bannatyne, Isle of Bute**

Members of the Scottish Petanque Association (SPA), from the mainland, descended on the Isle of Bute to meet at the Port Bannatyne Petanque Club where the annual SPA Doubles Championship was being held. This event is held at different SPA club venues and this year it was agreed that Port Bannatyne would host the event. The competition took place on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> August where 11 players from the mainland met 13 of the local club members thus making 12 teams in total. Although the Highland Games on the island had enjoyed rather pleasant weather on the Saturday, unfortunately Sunday's weather decided that rain was to be the order for the day. Undeterred, and with suitable waterproofs, the players took to the two pistes, one of which had been specially prepared for the championship.

Four leagues of three teams were drawn and this resulted in one all mainland league, one all island league and two mixed leagues. The top team from each league qualified for the knockout stage of the main event and the remaining eight teams battled it out for the "Plate".

In the battle of the mainland league, Derek Adam & John Watson emerged triumphant. In the two mixed leagues it was the mainland teams that dominated with Henry & Jean Hutcheson and Byron Milton & Stephane Maurage emerging as the victors. The fourth semi-final place went to the local team of Robert Chrystie & Allen Rew.

Byron & Stephane battled against Derek & John and it was the former team who successfully won their semi-final, where Byron felt very much at home on the rougher piste created for the event. It was just like being back in Wales for the Home Nations, as the surface was similar to that experienced in Swansea the previous weekend. In the other semi-final Henry and Jean fought out a very close battle with Robert & Allen where the local team just squeezed into the final with a very tight 13 – 12 victory.

Once more the final took place on the rougher piste and with Byron & Stephane in devastating form, they overwhelmed Robert & Allen, and Byron Milton & Stephane Maurage were crowned the SPA Doubles Champions, 2009.

Robert Chrystie & Allen Rew took the runners-up prize with a very creditable performance in their first major event and will have the Petanque bragging rights on the island for a while. In addition to the runners-up prize Robert & Allen also claimed the local sponsored Tankard for the best Port Bannatyne team.

Henry & Jean Hutcheson achieved third spot, which was also a good result as Henry is in his first year of playing Petanque.

In the minor competition, playing for the plate a straight knockout took place, with the winning score reduced from the normal 13 to 9 to ensure the games were completed before the last ferry left. The final of this event was contested between John Wilson & Robbie Stronach against Ed Strachan & Alice Sheach. In a close match it was John and Robbie who finished strongly to win

9 – 5 to claim the SPA Doubles Plate, 2009.

Congratulations go to the Port Bannatyne Club for all their hard work in preparing the pistes and their hospitality which, as expected, was second to none. Despite the rain those who took part thoroughly enjoyed the experience and the leadership of Port Bannatyne's Pat O'Sullivan kept everything under control. The SPA also thank the people involved in catering for the players where a BBQ had been laid on with a "Cordon Barbeque" chef, Kees Vogt, ensuring that burgers and bacon butties were cooked to perfection. As usual SPA's Derek Adam ensured the smooth running of the competition and our thanks are extended to him as well.

In hosting the event the Port Bannatyne club are hoping that this will have raised the profile of Petanque on the island and from the comments made, it was certainly an enjoyable experience, despite the rain. Hopefully more of the SPA members from the mainland will consider making the crossing to the Isle of Bute to participate in any future events that are scheduled on the island.

So finally, thanks to everyone who supported this event. We wish Port Bannatyne all the very best in growing their club and increasing the awareness of the wonders of Petanque.

report submitted by Ed Strachan







