THE TALK OF THE TERRAIN

IN THE CIRCLE



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Pétanque gets a publicity boost









Dave Ibitson shows how it's done



Let's be honest. Pétanque could do with a higher public profile. It's a mainstream sport in France but even they couldn't get it onto the agenda for the Paris Olympics in 2024. Instead break-dancing will make its first appearance alongside other relative newbies like skateboarding, sport climbing and surfing.

However there is now a chance that the sport will receive a much-needed dose of limelight. It's to feature in a series of TV adverts promoted by Visit Jersey. They will suggest that the Island is a destination worth visiting because while it's close to home, it's not quite British. So, while they go to the pub on the mainland to shelter from the rain and view football on the big screen, in Jersey they sit outside the bar in the sunshine and watch pétanque.

Okay, you may be thinking that's a bit of a stretch. I guess in reality the nearest we get to it is at the Troubadour next to the Weighbridge, the home of Liberation Pétanque Club. And that's where the production company creating the campaign decided to film. They set up café tables on the actual terrain, laden with bread, cheese, bowls of olives and bottles of wine and pastis – somewhat at odds with the sport's authorities trying to clean up the image of the game by banning alcohol consumption at major tournaments.

Nearly thirty onlookers were then sat round the tables. A member of the production team pointed out that they were not actors – the budget wouldn't allow for that. In reality, they were friends, family and colleagues. There was however one 'extra'. JPA chairman Dave Ibitson was allowed on set to give the actors a few tips about how to throw the boules – by the end of the day they were actually playing quite well.

"We're trying to create a taste of that alfresco ambience that makes Jersey special," said Ben Jordan, creative director of the marketing agency producing the film. Visit Jersey's autumn campaign is due to launch any time now and the pétanque TV advert 'The Big Match' will air on ITV, Channel 4 and also run in national news media including The Times, Telegraph and The Guardian.









The Coach

Recently I have been asked by players for more advice on the tactics of the game.

As far as I am concerned there are no right or wrong tactics. Each boule played must be in response to the situation on the ground.

There are, however, three essential elements when discussing tactics.

The first is the terrain:
What kind of surface are you playing on. This of course relates to the second element.

The technical skills of your team:
Can they make the different throws demanded of the different surfaces?

What are the teams shooting skills?

The mental attitude of the team:
What is the team's level of confidence. Can they cope with pressure, do they support each other? Is the team aggressive or diffident when it comes to taking a shot?

Some general advice I would offer to the less experienced player.

* It is better to have one shot at moving a boule close to the cochonnet than to waste boules trying to get closer.

* Always count the boules. Knowing how many boules the opposition have left will help determine your next throw.

* Always have a player at the cochonnet end. Do not rely on your opponents to direct play.

Think of the games as being in three parts or phrases.

The opening:
Lose the toss, that way you are already one boule up if their first boule is no good. If you win the toss, make sure your boule is in front.
You can at this stage be aggressive in your play.

The middle game:
If you are in the lead do not change your play - forge ahead. If trailing change.

Do not be precious about who plays when - if it is not working, change!

Remember that at seven points a game can be won in one end.

The end game:
The "fear " of winning often causes players to become tense and become defensive-concentrating on the score rather than the play.

Play well and you will win. Play to win and you will

Editor's note

Profound apologies for the long gap between this issue of In the Circle and the previous one. I'd like to blame the Covid pandemic, but while that hasn't helped, I seem to not to have had my eye on the boule, having been have been distracted by a series of issues outside the game.
I'm also afraid the long hiatus will probably mean that I've omitted some important events through forgetfulness and, worse still, made more than my fair share of mistakes in trying to dredge up details of events long gone by.
Regards Mike

THE GROUND RULES

A regular series in which we look at some of the laws of the game that can lead to misunderstandings. One of the rules introduced recently stipulated that the cochonnet's position had to be marked, a requirement that has been questioned by many players. Derek Hart explains the thinking behind the rule change.

Marking the cochonnet

Why are we required to mark the position of the cochonnet? This a question I have been asked on more than one occasion. Perhaps the following will help.

Marking ensures that should the cochonnet be moved by something from outside of the game (for example a boule coming from another game, a spectator or a dog accidentally displacing it or, as in a case I have witnessed, of a gull carrying it off), the cochonnet can be replaced.

If the cochonnet is placed near to the side or it is near the end of the terrain a boule can cross the dead boule line and come back onto the playing surface. Again the cochonnet can be replaced if moved by the "dead" boule. As can boules if they have had their position marked.

Often a good tactic is to shoot out the cochonnet to score points for "boule in hand ". The circle, should this happen, must be placed over the spot where the cochonnet had been, i.e. where it had been marked.

Marking the cochonnet

This should not interfere with the run of the boule or the cochonnet. A few discrete marks a couple of centimetres long is sufficient. There is no need to create deep ruts into which a boule can role!

A cochonnet thrown too long or too short

The opposition gets to place the cochonnet should the cochonnet fall short or long. If the opposition fail to place it within the legal limits they are required to **replace** it (If I am umpiring they will get a yellow card for misplacing it in the first place!).

CAPTION COMPETITION



What on earth was Alan Lahiffe up to at the Home Nations?
Entries to mlpfennell@googlemail.com



Gourmet adventure in Granville - spiced with a petit soupcon of pétanque!



Those dastardly French – inviting teams from Jersey to play them at pétanque, but ensuring that the visitors lose by killing them with kindness in the name of hospitality! It's surprising how we always manage to fall for the ruse. Take the latest example. Twinning arrangements between Granville and St Brelade have been on hold for the past couple of years. But earlier in the year an invitation came from Andre Le Gars, the president of the Granville Club de Pétanque, to the St Breladais Pétanque Group to join them for a couple of days of sport. Derek Hart takes up the tale:



Thirteen was the lucky number of players of the St Breladais Pétanque Group who eventually made the journey to Granville to get a stamp in their passport. The number had been much higher but as usual Covid intervened!

On arrival we were greeted by Andre and several members of the club and taxied to the hotel and restaurant for our first taste of French hospitality in two years. Perhaps we had forgotten, in that time, the scale and scope of our hosts' generosity. It did play a major role in our performance over the two-day visit!

On our first full day, the Friday, we were taken on a visit to the old town before returning for lunch. Full of ham, chicken, saucisson, salami, pate and dessert not to mention, pastis and wine we took part in the club's afternoon competition partnered by a Granville club member. We each paid 5 euros and received 1 euro 50 back for each win. After four rounds some of us were wealthier whilst others were poorer but wiser.

Saturday, after a visit to the marché, we had aperitifs before settling down for a simple meal! Melon, Parma ham with port, paella and dessert accompanied by wine, coffee and, for the health conscious, a touch of vitamin C in the form of Calvados. Oh Mon Dieu! After that we were ready for a nap but rallied by our captain, who does not drink coffee or calvados anyway, we steadied ourselves for the challenge! The first round was tête-a-tête with each game worth one point. The second round, doublettes, for three points and the concluding round of triplets each game being awarded five points. Luckily for us there was a big competition in nearby Avranches and several of the club's players were taking part, so we only had to contend with the 2021 French National Triples Champions, the 2022 Espoirs National Champions and a couple of old guys who had been National Veterans champs!

Despite the hospitality the St Breladais put up a sterling fight and the eventual outcome was Granville, 33 points. to St Breladais, 26 points. A close-run thing and the best we have ever achieved. With hindsight maybe it was a diplomatic move although it would appear that the French enjoyed their own hospitality as much as we did. After the match the entente cordiale became even more cordiale as you may gather from the photos!

There is only one fly in the ointment of the jumelage entente and that is passports or in the case of the Granville Club members a lack thereof! The visit next year will be in jeopardy and not in Jersey, unless arrangements can be agreed with immigration as only four of the Granville members have passports!

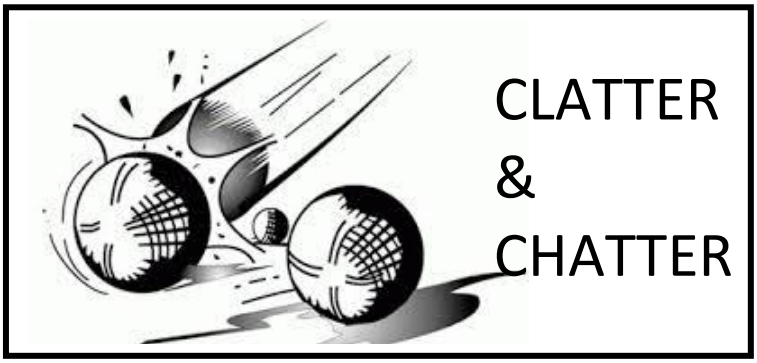
However the St Breladais group all agreed that, if needs be, we will go to them again, so not to worry eh?

A l' année prochaine!









The Great Escape: Part 2



There was a touching scene at the St Mary boulodrome when, after many months apart, Alan Still's boules were reunited. After a Parish League match against Grouville last year one of the St Mary player's set of boules went missing, but was replaced by a look-alike. It turned out that somehow the errant boule had swapped places with one of those belonging to Grouville player Julie Leach. The reason became obvious when Alan discovered that his boule had gone on holiday to South Africa for the southern hemisphere summer. Apparently It had a delightful time rolling around the pétanque terrains of Franscchoek in the wine-growing region of the Cape. Meanwhile its replacement had to endure the rigours of the St Mary winter but Alan managed to cope pretty well with the odd set of boules. After the boules were exchanged St Mary went on to win the match against the then league leaders, Grouville.

However there's been another mystery disappearance – this time of a complete set of boules. They belong to Mike Fennell who took part in the JPC match against Coutances. He too would like to be reunited with them. They're marked N46.

Big boule takes centre-stage



Mike Ritzema's been trying out a new set of boules. The problem is that they're event bigger than the one's he normally plays with – so much so that, it would appear from the picture, it needs four people to carry one of them. Actually the giant boule was created especially for the opening of a new sixteen-lane pétanque terrain at 's-Hertogenbosch West in the Netherlands which then became the venue for the latest CEP European championships in July.

New pétanque centre certainly has the edge



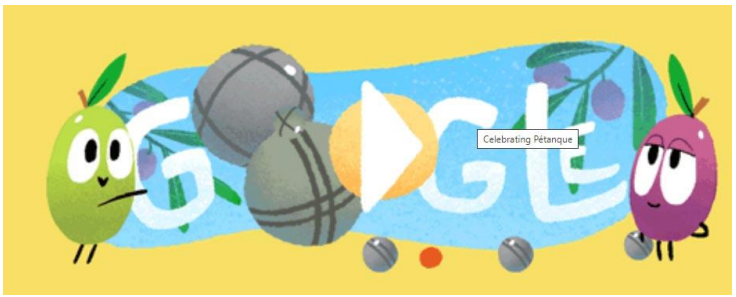
Has your taste for pétanque become a bit jaded? Need something to sharpen up your appetite for the game? Well, a visit to Margate Leisure Centre in Kent may be just the pick-me-up you need. A new arena there is offering two sports for the price of one – pétanque and, er, axe-throwing! The pétanque side of the centre is called Klak - the sound the balls make when they collide - with a separate part of the building used for the axe throwing. Just how separate they are isn't clear! Gareth Fairlie, founder of the Black Axe Throwing Co, which already has sites in Edinburgh, Belfast and Lancaster is one of the brains behind the operation. He hopes the complex will capture people's imagination and provide a unique experience. "Pétanque is really social for any age group," he said. "People can have a night out but also participate in a game." He says he wanted to bring in axe-throwing to the centre as well. Building the indoor pétanque pitch involved 17 tonnes of gravel and it'll allow groups of up to six people to book a session on one of four pistes. The axe-throwing will have three lanes. Mr Fairlie said the two activities complement each other well, despite one being more high-energy! Wonder which one he meant.

Terrain today – tarmac tomorrow



One day it was a pétanque terrain in Kinsale in Cork, Ireland. The next day it was a car park. The terrain had been there for nearly 40 years, as a result of being twinned with the French town of Antibes. The regular users knew nothing about the destruction of their terrain until it was too late. Councillor Alan Coleman said that the decision to remove the boules pitch was 'taken on the hoof' when council officials were resurfacing the car park and they took the opportunity to tarmac the whole park. However there was some good news. Its intended to reinstate the terrain before the end of summer.

Pétanque makes the front page on Google



You may not have noticed it but in late July Google published one of its Doodles on the front page celebrating the sport of pétanque.

Glowing tributes for French inventor



At last an end to those tricky Inter Club games that extend well into the night and have to be completed either by the light of mobile phones or car headlights. A 34-year-old technician called Raphaël Paesa, based in Castelmaurou near Toulouse, has been hailed a genius after he invented a luminous cochonnet. Apparently he was challenged by some pétanque friends while he was cooking some merguez sausages to come up with a solution to enable them to play in the dark. At first, he designed a prototype with an LED, a small battery and a switch using his 3D printer, but it wasn't strong enough to withstand the impact of a heavy boule. He then made a shell using a plastic injection process and the "Cocholed" was born. Already more than 2,300 of them have been sold across France and also in Sweden and the United States. They retail for 13.90 euros and are sold in two colours, green and orange. Already Monsieur Paesa is working on a second invention, an "intelligent" circle. Apparently it would make sound if you were to step on the edge of the circle while making a throw.

Hot new pétanque venue



Dijon will be hoping its new boulodrome, the Zenith, cuts the mustard when it hosts the 2024 Men's Triples and the World Firing Championship. It's due to take place between December 5th-8th. The venue is normally a vast concert hall.

Naked ambition

The International Naturist Pétanque Championships will take place in Hanover in early September



Making the most of the sunshine

Jersey Pétanque Club's annual charity fund-raiser on behalf of South African children in need was a big hit. The Bangers, Burgers and Boules event on behalf of Esperado attracted a big turnout in the warm sunshine. £465 was raised by the raffle alone and altogether the event raised more than £1,400 for the charity. Sadly the one person who wasn't in attendance was the man who helped organise the event – Dennis Le Mercier was laid low by Covid – but his family stepped into the breach and ensured its success.

Keeping their boules dry



Playing pétanque in the Western Australian town of Edmonds can be a bit frustrating. They can only do it at low tide!

Sioux takes the silver



A Native American Sioux women became the first US player to win a medal in an international pétanque championship during the 2022 World Games, staged at Birmingham, Alabama. Rebeka Howe from Washington lost 41-21 to Cambodian, Ouk Sreymom, in the final of the Women's precision shooting final. 110 countries competed in 34 different sports at the games.

All dressed up for a highland fling







The best dressed players in pétanque are back after a long Covid interlude. The villagers of Monymusk near Aberdeen always make a fine spectacle of their annual event in which the main square is closed to traffic and temporary pistes set up. Forty teams took part in this year's competition, most of whom played in fancy dress. The overall champions were Los Bouleros, a team with a Mexican wrestler theme. They beat Macduff Boule Sharks in the final

Presidential boules for sale



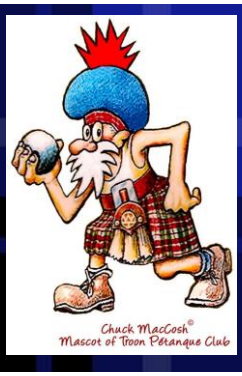
Next time Emmanel Macron invites you to the Elysée Palace you can pick up a special set of boules commemorating the French Republic. Made by Obut they'll set you back 70 euros

Nyet firing

The CEP (along with the International Olympic Committee and the FIPJP) has banned both Russia and Belarus from taking part in any competitions The official statement said" "By taking this action we confirm our full solidarity with all the people affected in Ukraine

HOME NATIONS PETANQUE
2022
12th – 14th August
TROON, SCOTLAND

Always the bridesmaid, but only just this time



"To sleep, perchance to dream. Ay there's the rub," written by a Scottish player of some repute. We'd hoped against hope that this would be the one – the one where we finally beat England in the Home Nations. But, for the fourth tournament in a row, we had to make do with second best – and even that was a close-run thing with Wales coming on strongly at the end to tie with us on games won, only for them to lose out on points difference.



The setting for our dream had started in the grounds of Fullarton House, built on the site of Crosbie Castle which had been demolished in the 18th Century. *"This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air-nimbly and sweetly recommends itself - unto our gentle senses,"* said team manager Steve Foster – or was it that Scottish player again? What's left of it includes what had been the stable block and two pediments that today overlook one of the three terrains we played upon. Today it's also the starting point of what's called the Faerie Trail. It's where our fairy tale ended. *"Stands Scotland where it did?"* Indeed it does and it's a long way from Jersey but we all made it to Troon – well, apart from Mike Fennell's suitcase - on west Scotland's Gold Coast, sorry, Golf Coast. The area is absolutely strewn with links courses, one of them, not far away at Turnberry, owned by Donald Trump, although ironically Troon Pétanque Club sits cheek by jowl with the local rugby club, the facilties of which included a bar, which we all enjoyed, some more than others. "*It provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance."*



It was an exceptional weekend for Scotland as far as the weather was concerned – very warm with unbroken sunshine and even the threat of thunderstorms on the Sunday afternoon didn't materialise until long after we had gone to bed. The event was exceptionally well organised and included copious supplies of ice-cold water. There were bacon baps on offer at breakfast time and sandwiches were provided at lunchtime. Many of us stayed at the Old Loans Inn which provided native fare like 'haggis burgers', 'black pudding and haggis pakora', 'breast of chicken and haggis wellington' and 'highlander loaded fries' (no idea, but they included haggis). It had a gym and fitness club but I didn't see any team members taking advantage of the facilities.

Oh and we played some pétanque as well – after a rather splendid opening ceremony in which the four teams assembled outside the impressive Fullarton House stable block and were led to the main terrain by a piper in full Scottish regalia. A nice touch, appreciated by all.



Then down to the serious business. "*Double, double, toil and trouble"* – except it was triples. In truth we got off to a bad start, losing our first match 5-3 to England. But, early days, and we went on to trounce Scotland 6-2 and beat Wales 5-3. The afternoon session however produced the disaster which in hindsight effectively ended our chances of finally toppling England – who've won the competition every year since its inception in the year 2000. We lost 8-nil, the only time any team suffered a whitewash. It was an uncharacteristic display and hard to explain – and, no I don't think it had anything to do with excessive intake at lunchtime! We then went on to beat Scotland 5-3 and Wales 6-2.

Day 2 dawned and any hopes of redressing the balance evaporated as we lost again to England, 5-3. We then beat Scotland by the same margin, but the slide began when we lost 5-3 to Wales. In the afternoon







session we suffered another 5-3 defeat by England and only managed a 4-all draw with Scotland. Wales meanwhile had managed to administer England's only defeat (6-2) and were now hot on our heels. We needed at least a draw in our final game against them to confirm second place, but some incredibly tight matches all went the way of Wales and both nations ended up on 45 wins (behind England on 63 wins with Scotland lagging behind on 39 wins). That left a bit of nail-biting to be done before the computer worked out the points difference which, as it happens was in our favour by a huge margin – we were on plus 3 while Wales was on minus 135.

The top trio was Scotland 8 which gives you an idea that maybe the seedings weren't taken too seriously. They won 10 of their 12 matches. England 4 were ranked second on 9 wins (+57) with Jersey 1 (Laurent Pellaton, Geoffroy Buffetrille and Neil Selby) in overall third place, also on nine wins (+48). An honourable mention should also be given to Jersey 4 (Matt Pinel, James Rondel and John Lane) who also recoded nine wins (+42) making them the fifth best threesome overall.

The proceedings ended with the trophy and other prizes being awarded. The English team manager announced that the next Home Nations would take place at a club in



















Royal Leamington Spa. Two very long days of intense competition had taken their toll and there weren't many takers for the post-match celebration at an Indian restaurant in Ayr. Steve Foster's postscript went as follows: "On behalf of the JPA and personally can I thank you all for a superb display of pétanque over the last two days. It has been a privilege to be the team manager and I am proud of the way you have conducted yourselves both on and off the terrain. You have confirmed that Jersey is once again (just) the second best team in the UK, a wonderful result given the restricted numbers we have available and our insular position." Oh, and in case you were worried about it, Mike Fennell's suitcase finally made it home to Jersey, all by itself, four days later. And his personal postscript on the above: *"It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."*















Following in the footsteps of an old master

It's not often that In the Circle receives articles about great Impressionist painters – indeed, if you have one up your sleeve, please send it to the editor. However, on this occasion we have one of the old masters of the game of pétanque, Derek Hart, to thank for giving us an excuse to use the picture above. It's not by Van Gogh (it's actually by an artist called Theophile Louis Deyville of a group playing pétanque somewhere outside Concarneau) but it's the nearest we could get to an oil painting depicting the noble art. The justification will immediately become clear, as Derek Hart takes up the story



Vincent Van Gogh spent the last seventy days of his short life in Auvers- sur-Oise before shooting himself. He was a very troubled and lonely individual.
To fill a few days before traveling to Coutances for the JPC Twinning, Joy and I travelled to Auvers-sur-Oise to follow the "Van Gogh" trail seeing the spots were Vincent painted and visiting La Ravoux Auberge where he died and from where his funeral procession left for the cemetery.
Less than twenty metres from the Auberge and just across the road from our hotel a small pétanque terrain had been built. Six players were just leaving as we approached. With wry smiles they invited us to join them the following evening. You could read their thoughts:
" Les Anglais playing pétanque- ridiculous."
Three evenings later Jean Luc, Patricia, Oscar, Frank, Didier, Vincent (no, not that one) and a dozen or more citizens of Auvers-sur-Oise gathered to wish us 'bon voyage'. New friends in a foreign land.
A game had given us a way in.
If Vincent (the dead one) had lived another twenty years he could have witnessed the birth of a new game and perhaps with this new pursuit he would not have been so lonely.
We may have started out as a curiosity but by the end of our visit we had been accepted and we were part of something special thanks to a set of boules.

The three wise men

The most recent course aimed at qualifying Club Level Coaches has now finished with three new coaches passing both the written examination and the practical. The course was held over four sessions with the written paper being taken on the fifth evening. My thanks go to St Mary's Pétanque Club for allowing us to use their facilities and to Richard Sowerby for his support during the course presentation.

The Course content involved the candidates in the following aspects of the sport of pétanque: The history of the sport; The importance of safety; The image and reputation of the sport; Basic rules; Choosing boules and equipment; clothing and footwear suitable for players; and Running Coaching Sessions

The candidates were expected to develop their skills in demonstrating: The grip (of the boule); The stance and posture necessary for a smooth swing and release of the boule. They also covered aspects such as: The importance of the landing spot; The seven main types of throw; The need to warm up. All of these topics were the basis of questions in the written paper. Observation of their practical skills was made at sessions held at Haute Vallee school where the prospective coaches worked with groups of students over a period of half an hour. I am pleased to say that the three successful candidates were Dave Ibitson, Steve Foster and Robin Stockton and they are now accredited JPA Club Level Coaches on condition that they hold a JPA licence and abide by and conform to the conditions required by the JPA.

Derek Hart

Boules et la belle vie





More than 30 years on, they're still at it – the annual pilgrimage to Agon-Coutainville, made by members of Jersey Pétanque Club. There have been interruptions – noticeably the last two years, thanks to Covid – and the numbers are dwindling as the players get older, but the entente-cordiale between the two clubs is alive and well. In the past there have been trips with more than thirty visitors from Jersey taking part but this year it was down to seven pairs plus a few hangers-on, but what they lacked in numbers they more than made up for in enthusiasm to maintain the spirit of fraternité the event continues to foster: friendships were renewed, food and drink was consumed in industrial quantities and there was even some pétanque played.

One of the friendship groups met up on the Friday night at a wild west-themed restaurant called Uncle Scott's. It even features a jail area similar to that seen in many cowboy movies – presumably reserved for English customers who commit a faux pas under the French dining code, like putting butter on their bread. The JPC members have been going there for years. Among them were Mick Rondel and Pru Vibert who met up with their long-standing hosts, Henri and Hélène.

A picture was produced of all four of them on an earlier visit to Agon-Curtainville, some 24 years previously. The hair is a little sparser, the girths are a little plumper, but the smiles are even wider. "I don't know why we come here every year," said Mick Rondel, "but we do. Perhaps they felt English visitors might feel more at home in a restaurant where French fries are de rigeur and tomato ketchup is not frowned upon. Either way it's become a habit, but a very welcome one."





The clubhouse and main terrain



Mick, Hélène, Henri and Pru



The jailhouse at Uncle Scott's



Picnic in the park



BBQ King



Jersey's top twosome



Bottoms up

The players assembled there early on Saturday morning and after a brief practice the serious business was underway. Jersey edged the first round 4-3 and then to the dismay of their French opponents stormed ahead with a 6-1 win in the second session, at which point the two teams got down to the even more serious business of eating lunch. It's a social activity at which the home side proved to be the masters, but their guests did their best to match them.

Not only did the hosts bring baskets and cool-boxes laden with food and drink, the contents of which were spread out on picnic tables alongside the lake, but also provided a mobile BBQ at which a French couple got on with cooking pork steaks and sausages – and some rather scrumptious frites. The wine, beer and pastis flowed. It's a dastardly Gallic tactic, but one with which the Jersey players have become familiar over the years, by which they render their opponents completely incapable of playing the rest of the match due to overindulgence.

However the subterfuge became somewhat unstuck this year due to forewarning by the more experienced hands and the two afternoon sessions ended in close results. Two couples in particular stood out for Jersey – Derek and Joy Hart and Dennis and Joan Le Mercier – both of whom won all four of their games, making a major contribution to Jersey's overall 17-11 victory.

The spoils of victory were presented to the winners that same evening at the casino in Agon-Coutainville. However it was anything but a black tie and tuxedo event, the casino being more like an upmarket amusement arcade where the emphasis is on being parted from your money at slot machines rather than via roulette or baccarat tables. The awards ceremony took place in the adjoining restaurant following another belt and braces loosening banquet.

And so to bed. The following day the friendship groups met again for yet another sumptuous feast provided at the home of their hosts before making their way back to Jersey and a return to the ascetic life with which Islanders are more accustomed. "A la prochaine" were the watchwords.













The Jersey Open: the good times are back







It wasn't exactly a blue riband event!



Andrew Bellamy-Burt with the Singles shield



Look what Daddy brought home for us



Triple smiles from Beeches Old Boys



Doubles champions: Laurent Pellaton & Geoffroy Buffetrille



Guernsey's finest

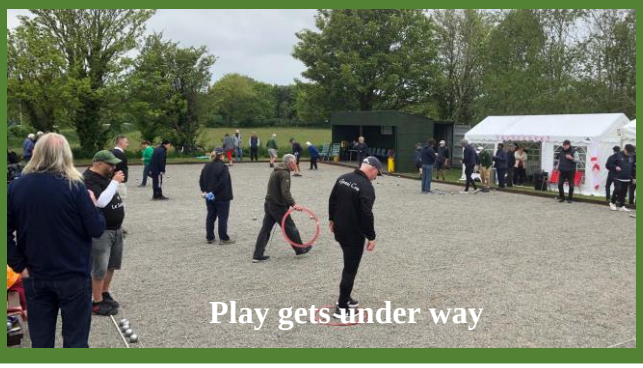
The Jersey Open is back. After a two-year hiatus, thanks to Covid, the big curtain-raiser to Jersey's pétanque season, finally resumed in early May. It did however have a brand new home – Carrefour hosting the event at its new terrain in Grouville - but many of the old faces returned, as did a few fresh ones.

Altogether 38 teams took part in the doubles on the opening day, 23 in the triples on the Sunday and there were 40 competitors in the singles. Visiting teams came from as far afield as Guernsey, not to mention Bath, Cricklade, Kent and, apparently, Lanzarote!

The weather was kind and there was a widespread feeling that the new organising team had done a splendid job. The jamboree kicked off with the doubles competition and it ended up in an all-Liberation final, Laurent Pellaton and Geoffroy Buffetrille beating Mark Nicol and Andy Bellamy Burt. Carrefour duo, Michel Morel and James Gennoe, took third place with a win over visitors Sam and Dave Ramplin. Keith Boleat and Neil Selby won the Plate competition against Gary John Lee and Andy Briggs. Christine Eccles and Paul Waters took third place after a win over Delphine and Seb Renaud from Guernsey.

In the following day's triples Beeches took top spot beating "Don't mess with Guernsey" which meant that Laurent Pellaton claimed his second piece of major silverware. The Carrefour trio, Lethal Limbs took third place. New for the 2022 edition was a Plate competition and the 2019 champions Geoffroy Buffetrille, Joy Hart and Steve Foster, beat Bath in the final, whilst TGV on tour were victorious in the 3rd place play-off.

In the Singles on the Bank Holiday Monday Andy Bellamy Burt went one better after being runner-up in the Doubles beating Martin Britton in the final with Andy Briggs taking third place after beating Cassie Stewart Le Gallais. In the Plate, Carrefour captain Alan Lahiffe won a close game against James Gennoe while Andy Limbrick was third. In the Consolage, Daniel Villalard beat Shirley Henry with Nicky Maindonald in third place.



Play gets under way



Alan Lahiffe



Keith Boleat & Neil Selby



Martin Gritton



The big birthday bash



Laurent Pellaton
Singles champion









You've got to hand it to Liberation - the club put on a three day party to celebrate its tenth birthday over the August Bank Holiday weekend. And the icing on the metaphorical cake was that everyone seemed to have a thoroughly good time, not to mention the rather substantial party bags with which the winners went home. "We had absolutely amazing feedback," said organiser-in-chief, Toby Northern. "Everyone who came said how much they really enjoyed it. They all thought the competitions were very well run and there were no issues throughout the weekend. Everyone loved the venue and terrains."

Setting up a three-day festival of pétanque from scratch is an ambitious project, but the club's management committee wanted to celebrate their 10th anniversary in style. The idea was to use it as a vehicle to attract players from overseas and promote Jersey and the sport locally. Well drilled as the club is at running competitions, there was a lot of extra work dealing with people off-Island and supporting them with finding accommodation and dealing with queries about the event.

The club celebration had been due to take place on the actual anniversary last year but Covid intervened. Finding a date for the event was always going to be difficult because the pétanque calendar is already pretty well-packed. "Of course we would have liked more players taking part, especially from England but they organised their national competitions on the same weekend which had an obvious impact of the numbers," said Toby. "Overall, we had many more people from overseas than we did locally which was more disappointing from a local perspective given the opportunity to play against different people of different levels and styles of play."

So, the big question – will they do it again next year? "It was only ever really meant to be a one-off competition to celebrate our 10th anniversary. There is so much work involved in organising three full days play and more people are really needed to support the organisation not just on the days but all the work in the run up to the competitions," said Toby. "But based on the amazing feedback, and with all those who attended keen to come again, we will be mad not to do it again, so we will be looking into another one in 2023, but the dates will need to be worked out to make the most of the event and to attract as many players as possible. But we also really need the support of the JPA in promoting these events with other European members of the CEP."



The multi-hued contestants in the Singles

The Triples

Liberation trios dominate



Matt Buesnel, Geoffroy Buffetrille and Laurent Pellaton

The competition gave Laurent Pellaton his second major trophy of the Bank Holiday weekend having already won the singles on the opening day. He and his partners Matt Buesnel and Geoffroy Buffetrille beat Toby Northern, Callum Stewart and Paul Bell 13-6 in the final.
In the semis, the runners-up narrowly won 13-11 against Andrew Bellamy-Burt, Steve Leathem and Roy Noel while the eventual winners beat Neil, Ross and James 13-12. Third place went to Ross Payne, Neil Selby and James Gennoe. The Plate winners were a visiting team: Tony Griffiths, Dave Snook and Jay Geldert who beat Cassie, Jean and Alex Stewart 13-10 in the final.

The Singles

Pellaton wins the prize



Keeping it in the family, Matt & Keith Pinel

Two dozen players took part, but only one of them emerged with a perfect five out of five record in the qualifying round: Matt Pinel. Three players managed four wins each: Andrew Bellamy-Burt, Laurent Pellaton and Matt's Dad, Keith. In the last 16 Matt cruised through to the final beating his father Keith 13-6 in the semi-final. Laurent Pellaton meanwhile had a tougher time of it beating Andy Limbrick 12-11 and Toby Northern 13-10 to reach the final. In a titanic decider Matt lost to Laurent 13-12 while Toby Northern beat Keith Pinel 13-7 in the third place play-off.
In the Plate Ross Payne was the winner after a 13-9 win against Michael Payne.

The Doubles

Unbeaten throughout



The Doubles finalists, Buffetrille, Bellamy-Burt, Ryan and Pinel

Eighteen pairs were in contention for the Doubles silverware. And it was the eventual winners who were the only pair to come through the qualifying round unbeaten. Matt Pinel made up for his narrow loss in the Singles with partner Matt Ryan beating Andrew Bellamy-Burt and Geoffroy Buffetrille 13 - 6 in the final. Third place went to Scottish duo of John Wilson and Robert Stronach with another visiting pair, Lynn Jenkins and Derek Adam in fourth.
The Plate was won by Shirley Legge and Gemma Foster who beat Michael Watt & Alec Davie in the final. Neil Selby and James Gennoe came third.

Meeting the Sports Minister





Jersey's new Sports Minister made a point of meeting Pétanque Jersey chairman Dave Ibitson (and St Mary Petanque Club member) during one of the club's Monday morning melee. Lucy Stephenson said she was touring sports facilities on the Island to hear about the issues facing clubs and associations and to see first-hand the good work they were doing. Dave told her about the sport's hopes to host European competitions in the future and asked for help providing the facility needed to progress that ambition - an all-weather pétanque arena.

Keen to host a world championship

Dijon will be hoping its new boulodrome, the Zenith, cuts the mustard when it hosts the 2024 Men's Triples and the World Firing Championship. It's due to take place between December 5th-8th. The venue is normally a vast concert hall.

PoSH Winter League presentations

St Helier Constable Simon Crowcroft presented the awards to the top teams in the Parish of St Helier Winter League in April. Once again L'Homard Qui Rit took the top prize in Division One with Dave Ibitson receiving the trophy, although the result went to the wire, L'Homard Qui Rit needing to win their final game to take the title. The Generals finished second with Les Miseraboules in third place. Division 2 was also not settled until the final day of the season with Equiom Boules Hitters taking the victory over Barclays Eagle Lab, by a single point, to settle first and second place with Great Balls of Steel in third.



L'Homard Qui Rit



Equiom Boules Hitters



The Generals



Barclay's Eagle Lab

Geoffroy the Great



Liberation held their Winter presentation evening in February and the top award went to Geoffroy Buffetrille after he was named Winter 2020-21 Player of the Season. Amongst his many awards he was the club's Singles champions having beaten Ross Payne in the final. He was also the winter season Singles Premier winner

Liberation Open Doubles

Fanny in the final



A disappointing twelve teams turned out for this year's Liberation Open Doubles, The trophy holders Andrew Bellamy-Burt and Callum Stewart crashed out in the quarter finals to the eventual winners, Neil Selby and Ross Payne. It was the latter who went on to seal a 13-9 win in their semi-final against Laurent Pellaton and Toby Northern with a perfect fire. In the other semi-final Brian Harris and Gary Cowburn had a really tough game, just squeaking through 10-9 in a timed game against the only pair that came through unbeaten in the qualifying round, Andy Limbrick and Matt Pinel. All was set for a close final but it seemed as though Brian and Gary had exhausted themselves in the semi and they found themselves on the wrong end of a fanny. Andy Limbrick and Matt Pinel beat Laurent Pellaton and Toby Northern in the third place play-off.



Liberation firing competition

Pinel versus Pinel

They certainly kept it in the family with Keith Pinel winning 2022 Club Precision Shooting Cup and son Matt Pinel taking second place. Ross Payne third – no relation – was third. It meant an end to Geoffroy Buffetrille's three year winning streak.

Liberation Open Women's Singles

Taking it in turns



Last year Cassie Stewart-Le Gallais won the Liberation Open Women's Singles title, beating Joy Hart in the final. The same pair reached the final of this year's competition but this time the tables were turned and Joy Hart lifted the trophy. Nicky Maindonald took third place.

Liberation Club Doubles

Toby takes five



Toby Northern won the Liberation Club Doubles in June for the fifth time. For partner Laurent Pellaton it was a first time. They beat Gavin Scott and James Rondel 13-3 in the final, though it was much closer than the scoreline suggests. Ironically Laurent and Toby's only defeat in the qualifiers was against the pair they were to meet in the final. Third place went to Neil Selby and Ross Payne who were unbeaten in the qualifying round but lost in the semis to the eventual winners. The title-holders Andrew Bellamy-Burt and Callum Stewart lost in the quarter-finals by one point to fourth placed Graeme Follain & Keith Pinel.

Liberation Open Singles

Pellaton leads the field



There was the lowest ever turnout for the Liberation Open Singles, blamed on the Home Nations play-offs the following day. Still, it was a pretty impressive field. Mark Nicol, the winner of the competition for the last three (pre-Covid) years from 2017-2019 got off to a great start, fannying Brandon De La Haye, and he went on to top the first round rankings. He was 9-nil up in the quarter-finals but then it all went pear-shaped and Laurent Pellaton won 13-10 and he then went through to the final beating Gavin Scott 13-10, while Alan Lahiffe saw off Callum Stewart 13-6 in the other semi. In the final Alan Lahiffe took an early 7-2 lead before Laurent Pellaton sealed his first major trophy win thanks to a 13-11 scoreline. Gavin Scott won the third place play-off.

Liberation Open Mixed Doubles

Final went all the way



Matt Pinel and Alice Dilks were the winners of Liberation's Mixed Doubles open competition in early July, but it was a close run thing after defeating the 2021 champions, Dawn Buckley and Geoffroy Buffetrille 13-12 in the final. The finalists were the only two pairs to emerge from the qualifying round unbeaten. Third place went to Callum and Jean Stewart who along with Andrew Bellamy-Burt and Cassie Stewart Le Gallais were the two pairs to register three wins in their four games.



The Inter-Parish Knockout Cup is back in business



Mixed emotions in the Boleat household



Doubling up: Nicky Maindonald & Robin Perchard



Happy in St Helier: Alf Le Masurier, Rosie Boleat & Christine Eccles

After a three year wait, thanks to Covid, the Inter Parish Knockout Cup, was back on the agenda in early July – and at a new venue, Carrefour's home in Grouville. Nine parishes were represented on the day but just three of them were left by the time the finals were contested. And it was St Martin who went home with the biggest smiles, winning both the Singles and the Doubles. St Helier took the Triples but missed out in the Doubles and it was St Brelade that went home empty-handed after losing in both the Singles and the Triples.

With the event's usual organiser, Ken Le Brun, away at a funeral it was left to Mike Fennell to organise the event on the day and he managed to ensure it took place in warm sunshine. He was grateful to Carrefour for setting up the terrains and to Kevin Lajoie for providing the coffee and biscuits in the marquee.

The 2019 Singles champion, Brian Harris, representing St Martin, managed to make it two in a row. He beat Kevin Daly (St Brelade) 13-7 in the final. In the semis Kevin had a titanic struggle with Gil La Roche (St Peter) but won 13-12 while Brian had an easier passage beating Ken Vibert (St Ouen 13-1).

The only event that needed a qualifying round was the Doubles and Nicky Maindonald and Robin Perchard (St Martin) not only won it but they went all the way, beating St Helier pair Keith Boleat and Roy Langlois 13-2. The St Martin duo reached the final after ousting the Grouville representatives 13-9 while St Helier had defeated St Saviour 13-5.

In the triples Rosie Boleat (St Helier) made up for her husband's disappointment. With her partners Alf Le Masurier and Christine Eccles they had a surprisingly easy 13-1 win against the St Brelade threesome of Joy Hart, Mike Yates and Vanessa Nash. In the semis St Helier had prevented a St Martin hat-trick, beating them 13-3, while there was a much closer game between St Brelade and St Saviour which the former won 12-10.



Singles champion, Brian Harris















Making a come-back after his back injury: Mark Nicol is the new Island champion

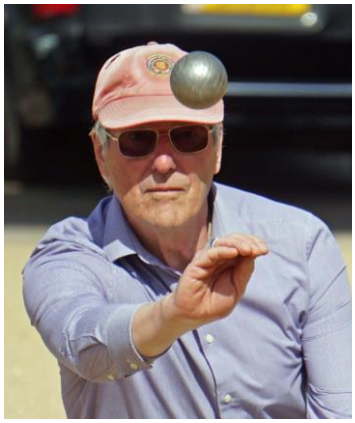


Geoffroy Buffetrille



Laurent Pellaton

Fighting back after being out of pétanque for more than a year because of a serious back injury, Mark Nicol became Island singles champion again after an epic final at the Weighbridge in May.
The match against Geoffroy Buffetrille, the reigning champion, was tied at 12-all, meaning a last end decider. Buffetrille's last boule slid past the cochonnet and Nicol had completed his comeback, winning the trophy for the third time in his career.
Twenty-four players took part in the championship. They were divided into four groups of six with the top two in each qualifying for the quarter-finals.
Nicol was in a veritable 'group-of death' but despite that he was the only player to emerge unbeaten and one of his victories, a 13-7 win against his opponent in the final, foreshadowed what was to come. Cassie Stewart was the only woman competitor to reach the final eight but she found herself up against Nicol and lost 13-5.
Buffetrille meanwhile edged out Brian Harris 13-9 while in the other two quarter-finals Neil Selby beat Matt Buesnel 13-7 and Alan Lahiffe emerged the winner in a tight 13-10 victory against Laurent Pellaton. The semi-finals were comparatively straightforward for Nicol and Buffetrille, the former beating Neil Selby 13-6 and the latter taking out Alan Lahiffe 13-4.



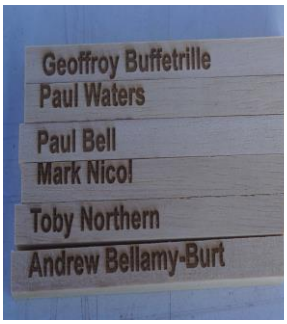
Brian Harris



Andrew Bellamy Burt



Toby Northern



Group of death!



James Villalard



Mark Nicol





Kevin Daly

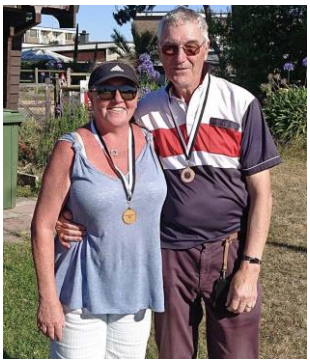
Mixed Doubles but pure joy for Ross and Cassie



Cassie Stewart Le Gallais & Ross Payne



Gary Cowburn & Wendy Ritzema



Dawn Buckley & Brian Harris

The JPA ran its first ever Mixed Doubles competition this year on the Jersey Pétanque Club terrains and it looks likely to become a permanent fixture on the annual playing calendar. Ten teams took part in the inaugural event and the first names on the new trophy will be those of Cassie Stewart Le Gallais and Ross Payne. It was the latter's firing that proved decisive in their 13-6 final win against Wendy Ritzema and Gary Cowburn. The third place play-off was a long and tense game with Christine Eccles and Paul Waters' early lead being pegged back by Dawn Buckley and Brian Harris who took the bronze medals 13-10.
The competition began with three initial rounds with eight pairs going through to the quarter-finals. The eventual winners beat Jean Stewart & Paul Bell; Joy & Derek Hart lost to Christine Eccles & Paul Waters; Wendy Ritzema & Gary Cowburn saw off Ella-Jay Limbrick & Alan Lahiffe while Dawn Buckley & Brian Harris beat Brigitte & Dave Ibitson. In the semi-finals, Cassie & Ross beat Dawn & Brian 13- 4 and Wendy & Gary won against Christine & Paul 13-5.

JPA Doubles: Familiar names on the trophies



Christine Eccles & Wendy Ritzema



Geoffroy Buffetrille & Matt Pinel



Callum Stewart & Andrew Bellamy Burt



Laurent Pellaton & Toby Northern



Jean & Cassie Stewart (with Dave Ibitson)



Dawn Buckley & Kat Stewart

The Men's & Women's Doubles took place at the Weighbridge in late June and it was a case of the usual suspects carrying off the silverware. In the women's event it was Christine Eccles and Wendy Ritzema who came out on top, winning all their four games in the round robin event, meaning they'd retained the title they won in 2021. Five teams took part with Cassie & Jean Stewart second and Dawn Buckley & Kat Stewart third. In the Men's event eight teams took part. Geoffroy Buffetrille and Matt Pinel, who between them have appeared on the trophy no less than six times previously proved top dogs once again. Andy Bellamy-Burt & Callum Stewart came second with Toby Northern & Laurent Pellaton third.

Carrefour trio double up in the JPA Men's Triples



Alan Lahiffe, Mat Scholefield & Andy Limbrick



Cassie Stewart, Nicky Maindonald & Jean Stewart

The 2022 Men's & Women's Triples were held at the Carrefour terrains in early June in brilliant sunshine. Four teams took part in the women's event, each team playing the others twice, and Cassie & Jean Stewart and Nicky Maindonald took top spot with 5 wins and a score of plus 18. Joy Hart, Judy Dove & Glenda Killip were second on 3 wins and plus 9, just ahead of Dawn Buckley, Alice Dilks & Brigitte Ibitson in third who also won three games with an aggregate of plus 6.
In the Men's event, seven teams took part with Alan Lahiffe, Andy Limbrick & Mat Scholefield retaining the title they won in 2021 finishing on 5 wins, plus 16. Second were Geoffroy Buffetrille, Ross Payne & Neil Selby with 4 wins & plus 26 and just behind in third were Paul Bell, Matt Pinel & Callum Stewart with 4 wins & plus 21.



Grantez



Pink Elephants

Cup hands together for the winners in the JPA winter and summer leagues plus the KO Cup



James Rondel



Richard Sowerby



Vanessa Nash and Kevin Daly

Grantez were the big winners at the JPA awards presentation at St Mary Parish Hall in mid-January. They achieved a hat-trick of trophies, winning both the Winter and Summer Leagues and the Knockout Cup. Runners-up in the KO Cup were Beeches Old Boules. Beeches' James Rondel also picked up the trophy for winning Division 2 of the Winter League. In the Summer League the entire Pink Elephants team were on hand to receive the Division 2 trophy while Vanessa Nash and Kevin Daly were presented with the cup on behalf of newcomers, Tabor Troubleshooters, for winning Division 3.

Meanwhile Richard Sowerby was the recipient of the Wooden Spoon on behalf of the Hopefuls who finished bottom of Division 3, although the St Mary team with three eleven-year-old players earned plenty of plaudits for their spirited performances. Returning to the St Mary Clubhouse trophy cabinet was a bit of a homecoming for the Wooden Spoon. It was first presented to the Fleur de Lys team in 2007 and in the next five years St Mary teams – including Bleu et Blancs and St Mary were awarded the trophy (for both seasonal variants) no less than nine more times. However it wasn't until this year that another St Marv team achieved the feat.

The JPA is under new management



Nearly 40 members attended the JPA AGM at the St Mary Parish Hall in mid-January which meant thankfully that the meeting was quorate, compared to the previous attempt when only fifteen turned up at St Helier Town Hall. The meeting was able to confirm the election of officers to the JPA executive committee, including the new chairman, Dave Ibitson. He thanked the members for the show of confidence.
"I think this is something I've been building up to for 20 years. Now that I've retired, I'm really pleased that I am able to represent this organisation. "The JPA is here to promote and develop the sport of pétanque. Ask not what the JPA can do for you, it's what you can do for the JPA. Let's set targets and work to achieve them. Let's make Jersey the Home Nations champions." He also talked about another JPA ambition to send a youth team to compete in a European competition for the first time.
As well as appointing the new Chairman, Matt Ryan is the new Vice Chairman, Steve Foster stays on as Secretary as does Mike Fennell in the Communications Officer role. Steve Harvey replaces Gill Blampied as Treasurer, and there are two new roles: Robin Stockton takes on the job as Youth Development Officer and Tom Le Sueur moves from Competitions Officer to Sport Development Officer.

Dates for your Diary

(Please note this is only a guide. It's drawn from the club web-sites and is subject to change. Please check with the host club before attending any event).

SEPTEMBER

3rd JPA Open Triples at Carrefour
11th JPC Club Men's and Women's Singles
10/11th Guernsey Open
15th Liberation Open Charity Triples
15th Parish Knockout Cup, JPC, 9.30am start
17th St Mary Club Doubles
18th JPC Club Mixed Triples
25th JPC Club Doubles

OCTOBER

1st St Mary Club Singles
8th JPA Veteran Triples at St Mary Boulodrome
9th JPC Club Triples
15th Liberation Open Charity Triples
22nd St Mary Club Triples
23rd St Mary Open Firing Competition,10am – midday

NOVEMBER

10th CEP European Cup for clubs

DECEMBER

17th Liberation Open Christmas Charity Doubles

REGULARS

Carrefour
Wednesday afternoon melees from 1.45pm
Saturday melees from 11am

St Mary
Social pétanque every Monday morning from 10am, Wednesday afternoons from 2pm and Saturday afternoons from 2pm

JPC
Wednesdays and some Sundays: Social pétanque from 1.45pm

Inter Club hat-trick for Liberation and they're heading for France



Liberation squad members with the Inter Club trophy

Even with one game to go – and that against closest rivals, Carrefour – Liberation knew they'd already retained the title. Their 19-12 victory in that match did however mean that the club had recorded their highest ever points total of plus-106. It was their third championship running and their second 100% record in a row. At the other end of the table St Mary picked up their first points of the season in a 19-12 win against Jersey Pétanque Club but still finished bottom of the table. Liberation's triumph means they will represent Jersey at the EuroCup finals in Angoulême in southwest France in November.

	PLAYED	WON	LOST	GAME POINTS FOR	GAME POINTS AGAINST	MATCH POINTS
LIBERATION PC	6	6	0	146	40	18
CARREFOUR PC	6	4	2	107	79	12
JERSEY PC	6	1	5	65	121	3
ST MARY PC	6	1	5	54	132	3

Parish League winners receive their awards



The Inter Parish League trophy was presented to the 2021/2022 champions, St Saviour, at the annual dinner in late February. JPA Secretary Steve Foster said pétanque had had a couple of difficult years thanks to Covid but that the event was another sign that things were getting back to normal and that, thanks to the two Kens, we had the prospect of a couple of knock-out competitions to look forward to in the coming months. He also passed on thanks to all the parish captains without whom the Parish League wouldn't run anything like as well as it does. He added: "I just hope we can get back as soon as possible to a piece of cake with our pétanque." Then the St Ouen captain Ken Vibert said a big thank you was due to Ron Le Herissier for organising the annual dinner – and hoped he would do it again next year.

Evening up the score



Congratulations to Neil Selby who won Liberation's annual Club Singles Handy Cap Cup. Lower ranked players get starting points to even up the chances of winning. Callum Stewart was runner-up with his wife Kat coming third

Youth will have its day



Learning the game at St Mary

The dream of sending Island youngsters to compete in European competition is a small step nearer thanks to the work of Pétanque Jersey's new Youth Development Officer, Robin Stockton. The JPA have also been given a significant sum of money by the Jersey Community Foundation to develop terrains at Haute Vallee and Les Quennevais. Two terrains have now been created at Haute Vallee and a suitable site at Les Quennevais School has been identified. Work on this will hopefully start soon and be completed by the start of the next academic year.