

Report from Johns' Trophy Manager - 2021

This is my sixth report. I would like to start my report by paying tribute to Jill Cook, who sadly passed away after a long battle with Cancer. Jill had been an excellent player and advisor for a number of years and I always valued her opinions.

Covid meant that this year there was no prior year achievements which could be taken into account when selecting teams and it also denied us the opportunity to have the usual two trials at the beginning of May. The selected squad did, however, have practices on 29th May and again on 3rd July.

Normally the Johns initially comprises a series of 3 or 4 games against other Counties in our Group with the group winner proceeding to the knockout stages. This year it was, from the beginning a straight knock out. Our first game was against Buckinghamshire played at Sutton's Bowling Club, Reading on 10th July. This we won by 136-97.

The next round was against Berkshire played at Pewsey Vale BC, Wiltshire, where again we won 127-110. This put us into the Regional Final against Surrey.

This was played at Horsham BC, Sussex. At the halfway stage we were level but then, once Surrey saw the scoreboard, they upped their game and we eventually lost 108-122. It was, however, a promising performance against the team, which has lifted the trophy four times in the last seven years and which missed out in this year's final against Devon on the last end.

This year JT badges were awarded to: Janet Ballard (Waterside); Sue Brightman (Milton Park Ladies); Sue Hurley (Lymington); Lesley Johnson (Alton Social) and Laura Kitcher (Kings Park).

The Walker Cup (Double Rink) was played away at Southey Bowling Club, Surrey against Surrey where disappointingly we were heavily beaten 48-17.

My thanks go to the Officers and all the players who showed commitment and supported me in what was a challenging season.

Hampshire Amy Rose 2021 - by Maxeen Fletcher

Until this year the Amy Rose had always been played at the National Championships at Leamington. However, 2021 brought the Championships down to 19 days, so it was decided to change the format and play in regional finals, thereby bringing attendance at Leamington down to one day.

Due to the restrictions in the early part of the year we did not have as much time to practice together as a team, but all thanks to Banister Park for their rinks on a Sunday morning.

Hampshire played in the South West Regional Finals on 18th July at Ilminster Bowls Club in Somerset, drawn against Wiltshire (who won the trophy 3 years ago) in the area semi-final. It was a very hot morning and a very long game, but we eventually beat them 42 – 39 to get through to the final in the afternoon against Somerset (who had either won the trophy or come second over the years). The temperature by then exceeded 30 degrees, even with cold cloths and plenty of iced water, some of the girls were suffering with the heat, at the 15th end one rink was winning but the other rink too far behind to catch up, so for the sake of the girls health it was reluctantly decided to concede at 19 – 45.

This was the first time in ten years that we had come through the first round, it was such a shame that the weather was against us, but their health comes first.

Well done Hampshire Ladies!