

More answers to the questionnaire that was sent out in issue 8 of the Newsletter.

I GUESS I CAN ONLY FILL THIS IN AS A RELATIVELY NEW PLAYER TO THE COUNTY, AND BE HUMBLLED BY THE MORE EXPERIENCED PLAYERS VIEWS. I CAN ONLY ANSWER AS PER MY EXPERIENCES.

And you are.....?

..Jeff Branch



Are you into any other sport ?

..... Football as a young lad. Then in my mid twenties my ham string kept giving me problems. I soon got into horse riding & competed horses to my mid fifties.

How long have you been playing bowls..? .How did you get into it ?

7 years. A friend of my Mums asked me to go to Northiam with him. Ironically I insisted I would only play once a week at the time.

What does the sport give you ?....Can you explain what the sport gives you and many others ?

A big question, and sadly for anyone reading a long answer. First and foremost has to be the camaraderie between not only my club, Northiam players, my second club Letchworth, but all clubs within the County. The spirit throughout the County Squad is a big part of our cohesion. So anyway!! So much for me only playing once a week...I think we all get the benefit of people encouraging us to play in different competitions. In fact there were to be 15 Herts players going to take part in a match at Harrogate earlier this month. Alan Hare constantly finding matches for us. We went off to Suffolk to play in a charity match earlier this year. Also Mick Thrush organises games for us. We recently played a charity match at Northampton. This is just the tip of the iceberg. Then we often have 10/15 players attend the Bucks friendlies, with Margaret Regan encouraging us to play. And on the spirit of County players, I have to say how impressed I was with Mick Thrush last season, despite not qualifying at one venue for the Nationals he went to support his team mates.

Whats the one piece of advice you would give to anyone looking to step up in the game?

Take on board the teaching of the more experienced players. In my case at Northiam I have to say I have been helped by Andrew Frost, Brian Pigott & John Hodgson. And I am sure we all learn from Brian McGivern with his morning sessions at Elm Court. If we had not had to stop this year we had arranged longer sessions to get more familiar with the difficult mats. I do remember some years ago, when I first time I played in the Barnet League ,there was a man sitting on the side watching his team play. Despite not being one of his players he was constantly giving me advice. The next time I

saw him ,he wiggled his woods in wherever. I though 't this guy is brilliant". It was of course Tony Gayler.

If you look back what are you most proud of so far ?

My first experience of being rather pleased with myself was winning my first Northiam single trophy.

Being part of the County squad over the past couple of seasons.

Then being part of the Northiam team winning the second division of the Barnet League.

Qualifying 3 times in the County pairs, to go forward to the Nationals in the last 2 years with Sam Salmon.

Being part of the winning team in the over 55 games at the Olympic stadium.

After having been runners up 5 times in the County Championships within 3 years finally I was part of the winning 4s this year.

What would you say is the most frustrating part of short mat bowls ?

Inconsistency of ones play..

—Name three characteristics that you think a good player should have.

Concentration, calm temperament & killer instinct.

