

# N S A

National Stoolball Association

NEWSLETTER

November 2007

## Rosemary Hobbs

15 February 1929 – 2 July 2007

It is with much regret that we have to report that our President, Rosemary Hobbs, died this summer. She was the moving force behind the reconstruction of the National Stoolball Association after its demise in 1943 on the death of Major W W Grantham and she was its inaugural Chairman in 1979, becoming President in 1985. Even when she moved away from Ockley, where she played her Stoolball, after the death of her husband, she kept in touch and attended the Annual General Meetings. She fought tirelessly for the cause of Stoolball and her lively and forthright character will be sadly missed.

<b>President</b>	Mrs. Shirley Reed		
<b>Vice Presidents</b>	Mr. Mick Cawley, Mrs. Margaret Childs, Mr. Richard Emsley, Mrs. Gwyn Griffiths, Mr. Brian Johnson, Mrs. Ann Peck, Mr. John Pritchett, Mrs. Delia Saunders, Mrs. Marion Stanbrook		
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	Edward & Jenny Keates	2 Fernhurst Crescent, Southborough, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 0TD	

## STOOLBALL WEBSITE

[WWW.STOOLBALL.CO.UK](http://WWW.STOOLBALL.CO.UK)

## EQUIPMENT

<b>Tournament Books</b>	<b>£2.00</b>	<b>Bats – Gray Nicolls</b>	<b>£36.00</b>
<b>Large Score Books</b>	<b>£4.00</b>	<b>- Newbery</b>	<b>£36.00</b>
<b>Rule Books</b>	<b>£1.00</b>	<b>- Hunts</b>	<b>£32.00</b>
<b>White Spray Paint</b>	<b>£8.50</b>	<b>Coaching Double DVD</b>	<b>£23.50</b>
<b>Balls (NSA &amp; RSA approved)</b>	<b>£7.00</b>	<b>Let's Play Stoolball DVD</b>	<b>£19.50</b>
<b>Boundary markers</b>	<b>.50 each</b>		

## RESULTS FROM THE 2007 SEASON

### CHANCTONBURY LADIES LEAGUE

Established 1972

Team	Played	Won	Lost	Points
East Preston	16	14	2	28
Aldingbourne	16	12	4	24
Aldrington	16	11	5	22
Burpham	16	10	6	20
Steyning	16	9	7	18
Amberley	16	8	8	16
Pulborough	16	5	11	10
Roffey	16	3	13	6
Barnes Green	16	0	16	0

Mr. Vic Laker 01903 814169

League Tournament Winners Aldingbourne  
Runners Up Aldrington

KO Cup cancelled because of weather

The tournament next year will be at Steyning on  
June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2008

SCSA CENTRAL DIVISION (LADIES)

Secretary: Sarah Draper 01444 245159

Team	Played	Won	Lost	Points	Central Junior Division	Pld	Won	Lost	Points
Horsted Keynes	18	17	1	34	Horsted Keynes	6	5	1	10
Lindfield	18	15	3	30	Hurstpierpoint	6	3	3	6
Partridge Green	18	14	4	28	Partridge Green	6	2	4	4
Clayton	18	11	7	22	Balcombe	6	1	5	2
Blackstone	18	11	7	22					
Hurstpierpoint	18	9	9	18					
Crawley Down	18	4	14	8					
Balcombe	18	3	15	6					
Bolney	18	3	15	6					
Cuckfield	18	2	16	4					

SCSA EAST DIVISION (LADIES)

TEAM	Pts
Mountfield	20
United Friends	20
Little Common	14
Stone Cross	14
Burwash	10
Chiddingly	4
Gebro	0

Secretary: Mrs. Toni Wheatley 01323 848776

Divisional Tournament    Winners            Burwash  
    Runners Up        Little Common

Mountfield won the title after a play off with United Friends

SCSA MID DIVISION (LADIES)

Team	Pld	W	L	Drawn	Points
Adastra	16	12	4	0	24
Ringmer	16	9	7	0	18
Wealden	16	9	7	0	18
Wivelsfield G	16	9	7	0	18
Ditchling	15	9	6	0	18
Isfield	15	7	7	1	15
Plumpton	16	6	10	0	12
Barcombe	15	6	9	0	12
Chailey	15	2	12	1	5

Secretary:

Results Secretary: Pauline Hurley 01273 844265

AUGUST LEAGUE Lily Mead Trophy

Teams Playing:

Adastra, Barcombe, Chailey, Ditchling, Isfield, Plumpton, Ringmer, Wealden, Wivelsfield Green.

August League:    Winners: Adastra

\*See report on page 6

SCSA NORTH DIVISION

Team	P	W	L	D	Points
Maresfield	18	17		1	34
Nutley	18	14	4		28
Fletching	18	12	5	1	25
Uckfield	18	12	6	0	24
Newick	18	9	8	1	19
Ashdown	18	9	9	0	18
Hartfield	18	5	10	1	11*
Bluebells	18	4	14	0	8
East Grinstead	18	3	14	1	7
Copthorne	18	1	15	0	2*

Secretary: Sybil Voller 01444 241243

\* 2 games void

**SCSA WEST DIVISION (LADIES)**

Team	P	W	L	D	Pts
Angmering	18	18	0	-	36
Ashington	18	14	4	-	28
Easebourne	18	14	4	-	28
Clymping	18	12	6	-	24
Stedham	18	8	9	1	17
Yapton	18	6	10	2	14
Eastergate	18	4	11	3	11
Graffham	18	3	11	4	10
Horsham Trinity	18	2	14	2	6
Wisborough Green	18	0	16	2	2

Secretary: Mrs. Melissa Mantle 01903 774769

**SURREY (LADIES)** Chairman: Mandy McGachie Secretary: Andree Hartnup 01737 248765

A LEAGUE					B LEAGUE				
TEAM	P	W	L	Pts	TEAM	P	W	L	Pts
Chiddingfold	14	12	2	24	Oxshott	14	14	0	27*
North Holmwood	14	11	3	22	Holmbury	14	11	3	21*
Dorking	14	11	3	22	Guildford	14	8	6	16
Alfold	14	6	8	12	Ockley	14	8	6	16
Wonersh	14	5	9	10	Ewhurst	14	7	7	14
Forest Green	14	4	10	8	Horley	14	3	11	6
Oakwood Hill	14	4	11	7*	Beare Green	14	3	11	5*
South Park	14	3	11	6	Brockham	14	2	12	4

\* point deducted for late call or result

Alfold celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a veterans match inviting many past players.

**COASTAL LEAGUE (LADIES)** Secretary: Mrs. Kaye Turner, 14 Tennyson Avenue, Rustington, West Sussex BN16 2PB

Aldingbourne, Burpham, East Preston, Middleton, Slindon

League Winners	East Preston	16 pts	League Runs	East Preston	105
League Runners Up	Aldingbourne	11 pts	League wickets	Aldingbourne	46
			League wickets	Aldingbourne	34

League Wooden Spoon: Middleton/Burpham 4 pts

**COASTAL MINI LEAGUE – 6 teams**

Mini League Winners: Angmering	10 pts	Runs:	Angmering	629
		Clean bowled out:	Burpham	8
		Catches	Aldingbourne	21

TOURNAMENT:           Winners: East Preston           Runners Up: Burpham

**DOROTHY MISSLEBROOK**

Middleton Stoolball Club held a mixed Stoolball tournament on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> August in memory of their scorer and chairperson, Dorothy Misslebrook – known to all the Stoolball teams as Dot – who died of cancer on 7<sup>th</sup> July. Included in the ten teams who participated were two teams from Dot’s family. As a result of the tournament £320 was raised and this was then matched £1 for £1 by the employers of one of the Club’s members (HSBC Midland Bank). A donation of £640 was given to St. Wilfrid’s Hospice, Chichester, a thank you for caring for Dot at the end of her life. Dot is already sadly missed by Middleton Stoolball Club and all who knew her.

**WESSEX FRIENDLIES**

Ebernoe, Elsted, Fittleworth, Kirdford, Liphook, Lodsworth, Midhurst, Milland, Northchapel, Steep, Three Counties and Tillington.

Steep won the Milland Charity Cup defeating Milland 88 (Emma Clapham 40, Debbie Geer 3-1-18-3) to 93 for 2 (Deirdre Lindsey 39\*) in 11 overs (14 over game). £610 was raised and the Charity chosen by the winners was The Rosemary Foundation (A Hospice at Home)

Stedham ran The Cancer Tournament. The hosts defeated Easebourne in the final and about £1600 was raised for Macmillan Nurses. Nearly all players wore pyjamas (there was a fine if you didn’t!) – and there were some very natty turnouts.

After 38 years, unfortunately Harting have had to fold but they are still running their Charity Tournament and have raised a team for the Indoor competition at The Grange, Midhurst during the winter months.

**One in a Million.**

Northchapel Stoolball Club (Wessex Friendlies) lost one of their most loyal supporters this autumn when Shirley Bufton died very suddenly on the 12<sup>th</sup> November. She had always been involved with the Sports Club but when her daughter, Carol Brooks who used to run Northchapel S.C. with such passion passed away, she became even more committed. She attended every game and tournament that she could, looking after children and cheering the team. She would have been so very delighted that Northchapel have had one of their most successful seasons yet, winning five trophies, and that some of the work has been started on refurbishing the Pavilion to which end she worked so tirelessly. She was one in a million.

**WEST KENT LADIES**

Secretary: Mrs. Jenny Keates, 2 Fernhurst Crescent, Southborough, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 0TD

TEAM	P	W	L		D	Pts
<b>Bidborough</b>	24	22	2			44
Groombridge	24	20	4			40
Langton	23	20	4	2pts game not played v Penshurst		40
Hildenborough	24	15	9			30
Stonewall	24	15	9			30
Fordcombe	24	14	9		1	29
Penshurst	23	13	10			26
Four Elms	24	9	15			18
Causeway	24	8	16			16
Speldhurst	24	8	16			16
Edenbridge	24	6	17			13
Leigh	24	3	21			6
Cowden	24	0	24			0

League Winners **Langton**  
 Tournament Winners **Fordcombe** Runners Up Langton

League Runs	L.Order	Fordcombe	1853
	A.Hardwick	Langton	1591
	R.Steptowe	Bidborough	1550
League Wickets	Y.Tanzi	Bidborough	41
	A.Howard	Stonewall Park	38
	J.Walker	Stonewall Park	36
League Catches	E.Stanton	Bidborough	30
	J.Bromley	Speldhurst	25
	K.Smith	Groombridge	23
League and County Averages Cup			
	A.Hardwick	Langton	126.1
	T.Saunders	Groombridge	122.8
	L.Order	Fordcombe	99.5
Under 18 League Cups			
Runs	R. Steptowe	Bidborough	1550
	I.Millar	Bidborough	576
	H.Harrington	Four Elms	294
Wickets	D.Parfret	Hildenborough	26
	T.Shah	Bidborough	25
	E.Russell	Langton	22
Catches	R.Steptowe	Bidborough	17
	D.Brown	Groombridge	9
	I.Millar	Bidborough	8
Under 21s Cup	L.Saunders	Groombridge	

**HAILSHAM STOOLBALL LEAGUE**

(MIXED)

Secretary: Sally Morris 01323 843708

This year the Hailsham League’s 10 teams played each other once, and then we had play offs between the two halves. The final positions before the play offs were: *Burwash Common 14 pts, Geebro and Yew Tree 12, Herstmonceaux 11, Ashburnham 11, Five Ashes & Unison 7, Untouchables 6, Hailsham MI and South Heighton 5.*

The play off finals saw Burwash Common and Geebro fighting it out for the Division 1 title. Burwash looked to be going well, but Sue Cable took the vital opening wickets, David Baldock (20) falling to an excellent close catch by Nikki Mackay, Antonia Wheatley being caught on 37 and Steve Wheatley bowled on 52. With only 153 on the scoreboard, the Burwash bowlers were unable to make a breakthrough, Neil Downer, the sole Geebro casualty, being caught off Sarah Baldwin’s bowling on 63. Nick Jenner (53\*) and Nikki Mackay (27\*) batted out the innings to ensure a relatively comfortable win in the 10<sup>th</sup> over.

The Division 2 final between Ashburnham and Unison saw Unison’s opener Will Parsons make 96\* in an opening stand with Sarah Smith (26) setting Ashburnham a target of 150, 64 of which were scored in the last 4 overs. Unison’s Sharon Stretton (6-37) proved hard to get away, and although Ashburnham were close after 7 overs, when Paul Harmer retired hurt and Dick Sheppard was caught on 15 they could not keep up the scoring rate.

Other trophy winners were as follows:

**KO Cup**                      **Winners – Geebro**                      **Runners Up – Unison**  
**John White Cup** **Winners – Burwash Common**                      **Runners Up – Yew Tree Chalvington**  
**Tournament**                      **Winners – Burwash Common**                      **Runners Up – Geebro**

## MID SUSSEX STOOLBALL LEAGUE

(MIXED)

Contact details: Pam Wood Hill, 17 Orchard Close, Haywards Heath, Sussex RH16 1UU

Tel: 01444 455671 Mobile:07751 734574

Team	Pld	Won	Lost	Drawn	No result	Pts
Uckfield Mixed	14	11	1	0	2	22
Maresfield Mixed	14	9	2	0	3	19
Hartfield Mixed	14	6	5	0	3	13
Brook Street	14	6	6	0	2	11
The Plums	14	4	7	1	2	9
Nutley Mixed	14	2	7	2	3	6
Dolphins Volleyball C	14	0	8	3	3	4
Baxters	14	0	2	0	12	0

**The Mid Sussex Mixed League is looking for new teams, so please get in touch if your team would like to play.**

Baxters withdrew from the league in June as they could not raise a team regularly enough. Points have been deducted from all teams to cancel out any won by or against Baxters.

## EASTBOURNE RED TRIANGLE (Mixed)

Sec: Mrs. Cindy Cavie, 40 The Rising, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN23 7PL

### Division 1

Team	Pts
Herstmonceaux	24
Ocean Vets	24
Little Common	16
Sussex Redsox	14
Woolpack	11
Stone Cross	10
DPB A	7
Yew Tree	4

### Division 2

Team	Pts
Red Lion	22
Old Town Wreckers	20
Renegades	20
Social Services	12
DPB B	10
Bushwackers	10
Centra	10
Feathers	8

### Division 3

Team	Pts
Park Royal	20
BHK	16
Marshfoot	16
Willingdon	12
Central	10
Ex Eds	10
Plasa BTs (withdrawn)	0

### Division 4

Team	Pts
Lamb Old Town	20
Pegasus	14
Remnants	10
Taxes	8
Dark Horses	6
Holywell	2

### Division 5

Team	Pts
Trojans	18
British Queen	11
Jevington	10
Deutwag Chargers	8
Plummer Parsons	5
DPB Wombles	4

### Divisions 6

Team	Pts
Seaside Leisure	16
Ocklynge	12
Next Generation	12
Victoria	10
Axa Athletic	10
Rugby Club (withdrawn)	0

## SUSSEX COUNTY STOOLBALL ASSOCIATION RESULTS 2007

### DIVISIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Seniors Winners  
Juniors Winners

**West Division**  
**West Division**

R/Up Central Division  
R/Up Mid Division

### MATTERFACE CUP (Under 17s)

Winners

**Central Division**

R/Up West Division

### VETERANS CUP

NOT PLAYED

### COUNTY TOURNAMENT (Seaford)

Winners

**Angmering**

R/Up Horsted Keynes

### SEAFORD PLATE

Winners

**Stone Cross**

R/Up Clymping

### REST OF LEAGUE TOURNAMENT

Winners

**Trinity**

R/Up Yapton

### REST OF LEAGUE Losers Section

Winners

**Plumpton**

R/Up Little Common

### EXPO CUP

CANCELLED DUE TO WEATHER

### SUSSEX KNOCK-OUT CUP

Winners

**Angmering**

R/Up Mountfield

### SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE CUP

Winners

**Angmering**

R/Up Horsted Keynes

### SUSSEX COUNTY JUNIOR LEAGUE CUP

Winners

**Horsted Keynes**

R/Up Ringmer

### DIVISION CHAMPIONS

CENTRAL  
EAST  
MID  
NORTH  
WEST

**Horsted Keynes**  
**Mountfield**  
**Adastra**  
**Maresfield**  
**Angmering**

## **REPORT FROM MID DIVISION**

We really started looking at the fast approaching season in March: our officers had all been re-elected, our financial position sound, the operative words being – PRACTICE STARTS ON. April was such a lovely month, out came the trainers and joggers (oh No!! surely I haven't put on an inch since last season ) With enthusiasm we practised hard looking eagerly at our fixtures. Then came May – and true to form the RAIN!! What a work load for captains and fixture secretaries. However we survived and strangely enough produced one of our most competitive seasons ever. Our County fixtures were honoured (without too much success) but it was pleasing to see so many youngsters wanting to play Divisional Stoolball. Seaford and the R.O.T.L. saw a few fresh faces with a reversal of roles by some. Plumpton were in good form with “ bat, ball, tea and sandwiches”, two lovely days happily enjoyed, all credit to the organizers.

Adastra, celebrating their 20<sup>th</sup> season did well to win our Senior League and the next five teams tied on 18 points. Every game was crucial with the chasing teams losing by only the odd run or two here and there – and of course those games could have been won ‘If Only’.

The Junior League comprising of only 3 teams was quite uneventful until it was found Newick (our guest team) and Ringmer had tied at the top, necessitating a play off to determine who was to play the winners of Central . Suddenly there was something extra to play for and what a difference it made to the standard of play. Central winners, Horsted Keynes fielded a well -disciplined side in an exciting final to beat Ringmer by only 3 runs. Both came home with a lovely Sliver Trophy, just reward indeed.

By now, of course, we had fulfilled all our League commitments, had run our own Divisional Tournament - which was won by Isfield with Chailey worthy Runners Up - and we could turn our eyes towards the competition we love – THE AUGUST LEAGUE. Here we are encouraged to play our youngsters, are controlled by and play for points, it gives everyone the chance to have a go, its relaxed, its fun, and it is well worth entering if you are fortunate enough to be able to field a team. Adastra again proved their superiority by winning the coveted Lily Mead Trophy.

We have for some years now concluded our season with a Presentation Evening on the Saturday and the Ruby Woods and Heather Pearce Memorial Day on the Sunday with proceeds going to the local Hospice and Hospital. And what a fantastic weekend it proved to be. Plumpton who excel at organization hosted the complete weekend and did us proud, every club was represented and gave generously of time support and prizes. All played their part in their own individual style, from Welly Throwing to buying a Cake for Sunday Tea. If you are interested in facts and figures, the President's XI beat the Chairman's XI in both games (Juniors in the morning, Seniors in the afternoon) – what a change from the usual result!!

Finally we come the ‘Jewel in the Crown’: Plumpton celebrating their centenary – 100 years of Stoolball – what an achievement. Congratulations and good luck for the future, Plumpton.

Obviously we do not know what 2008 will bring, but you can rest assured it will be another season of hard fought Stoolball, fun and friendship, a season we all look forward to.

## **COACHING DVDs**

*We are delighted to receive enthusiastic and positive reports about our latest Stoolball Coaching DVDs. With Stoolball now on the National School Curriculum, we would encourage all school teachers to make sure that they have a copy available for use where they teach. The two DVDs run for a total of 74 minutes, the first coaching DVD lasts for 43 minutes and the second ‘practices’ DVD lasts for 31 minutes. They are available from Kay Price (01403 252419 or kr.price@homecall.co.uk)*

as a pair for £23.50 or £24.95 including postage and packaging. If you already have our video/DVD 'Let's Play Stoolball', there will be an additional deduction of £2 per coaching DVD pack.

### **STOOLBALL CONVENTION**

Please note the next Stoolball convention will be on **Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2008** at Wivelsfield.

### **OLD BATS**

We are finding that more and more schools are enquiring about Stoolball and we have regularly been asked to get them started by loaning equipment - bats are very much in demand. If all clubs could sort out their bat bags and hand on to us those old or unpopular bats which are no longer used it would be very useful. For every bat you donate, the NSA will give you a brand new stoolball. If you have bats in a poor condition, they are rubbed down, cleaned, oiled and given new grips before passing them on to schools. We are very grateful to East Preston, Steyning, Little Common, and Horsham Trinity who have already donated bats and to Keith Younger who restores them so well.

Please contact John Price (01043 252419) or deliver bats to him at 53 Kings Road, Horsham RH13 5PP, or alternatively contact your nearest equipment agent.

### **STOOLBALL IN SCHOOLS**

**Stoolball is being included in The National School Curriculum for the period 2008-2011. The N.S.A. is aiming to maximise the possibilities which this might bring to the game.**

We were intrigued to hear from a member of the Society of American Baseball Research (SABR) that they had heard that a game called "Stall Ball" was being played at Loders Primary School near Bridport. After various abortive attempts to find out more we e-mailed the school directly and the teacher who responded confirmed that the game was, indeed, Stoolball. When he first went to the school 20 years ago, he found the Stoolball equipment in their games cupboard and they have been playing the game ever since.

Highfield School at Penn, near Wolverhampton, contacted us during the summer term. The school was running a Junior Sports Leadership Course and want to use Stoolball as part of the Course. Surprisingly, they had access to bats and balls and we were able to lend them wickets – and a rule book.

Apparently the Year 10 pupils taught the Year 7 pupils the game during a two week period in July and at the end of that time, they ran a tournament. We were told that the pupils thoroughly enjoyed playing Stoolball and their Technology Department has already volunteered to make some new wickets so that the game can be played next year.

Hurst Green Primary School, East Sussex were loaned wickets, bats, balls and rule book for their summer term and at the end of the term joined in a very popular tournament with seven other schools run by Robertsbridge Community College. They asked whether they could keep them so that they could play during the autumn term while the good weather lasted.

### **OTHER NEWS**

A new team was started at **Rotherfield** this season. We hope you had a very enjoyable beginning. *The NSA is planning 'starter packs' for anyone forming a new Club.*

A lady lecturer at Loughborough College, Rutland celebrated her 40<sup>th</sup> birthday playing her childhood game of Stoolball. Her father (a rugby friend, living in Sussex) organised wickets, bats and balls and bought a scorebook for the occasion too.

A veterinary surgeon living in Blackboys, East Sussex decided that a reunion of all the family could best be celebrated with a game of Stoolball. Apparently his wife, mother-in-law and grandmother had all played Stoolball.

### **THE W W GRANTHAM BAT COLLECTION**

Major W W Grantham, who did so much for Stoolball after the 1<sup>st</sup> World War, was known to have commissioned various bats while he travelled the world on cruise ships. Although John Price had heard that they existed, all efforts to track them down failed over the last five years or so. But this summer they were found in the Sussex hamlet of Town Littleworth, very near the Grantham ancestral home of Balneath Manor. There are 11 bats of all shapes and sizes. One painted black has a large hitting area nearly 12 inches wide but a short handle; another is held together with very prominent nuts and bolts. Many of bats carry the name of the steam ship where they had been created and some bear the name of a port visited – Helsingborg in Finland, Vladivostock in Siberia and Kandy in Ceylon. They all show the date they were made, the earliest being 1924 and the latest 1937.

They now add to the growing collection of Memorabilia which John and Kay hold and we hope to put photos of them on the website. If you would like to see them, John and Kay plan to visit various League and Divisional Tournaments with the NSA equipment and would be delighted to bring them along too.

If anyone knows the whereabouts of any early Stoolball bats – perhaps one of your great grandparent's sporting heirlooms tucked away in a loft – or old wickets, balls, scorebooks, club or county badges, indeed anything to do with Stoolball history, do let us know. The number to phone is 01403 252419.

### **MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL**

Just 12 months ago, Joan and Kay Price had a phone call from a lady called Sam Marchiano in New York. She was a film producer for the Media Group responsible for all the media coverage worldwide for the Major League Baseball (MLB) in the USA and was embarking on a project to discover the origins of Baseball through the English games of Stoolball, Bat and Trap, Rounders and Cricket. A film would be made and eventually posted on the MLB website – Could the NSA help?

An opportunity to publicise Stoolball in America was not to be missed so John said he would be happy to help! The next 9 months of planning their trip proved most interesting, produced a sack full of transatlantic e-mails and a large number of phone calls – hectic but enjoyable. As the time arrived, it was not only Stoolball John found himself organising but also Rounders and a trip to Chawton House in Hampshire where Jane Austen wrote 'Northanger Abbey' and mentions Baseball being played.

A month or so before the party of 6 arrived from America, Toni Wheatley (Burwash S.C.) and John had been invited to appear on a quiz programme on BBC Southern Counties Radio to talk about Stoolball and the visit of the MLB Media Group came to be mentioned. As a consequence of this John was asked to appear again to update them and a string of coincidences followed which allowed us to get Stoolball on BBC South Today evening television.

Having organised a demonstration Rounders match in Horsham John thought that the American visit might be of interest not only to newspapers and the radio but also to local TV stations, so duly sent out a Press Release. Although there was no response at the time, the BBC South Today TV crew turned up at the school to film the Americans filming Rounders. A number of problems arose with the Headmaster, but after not a little diplomacy the go-ahead to proceed was given.

During the broadcast it was mentioned that the MLB were researching the history of Baseball and the earliest verified date for the game being played was 1760. That evening there was a call from a viewer to say that she had hand written material dated 1754 recording that baseball had been played at Shere in Surrey. This was potentially a huge find for the two historians in the party, David Block from San Francisco and Professor Larry McCray from Massachusetts. Filming plans for the next day were scrapped and the lady in rural Surrey was sought out - but horror of horrors, when we reached her house she could not find the diary containing this historic reference. It was two weeks later after the research team had returned to the USA that the missing diary was found and John and Kay were there with the cameras from BBC South Today and New York for the first public viewing. William Bray, educated at Eton, was 18 years old when he wrote in the diary (dated 1755 not 1754) "today I played at baseball". The earth in America and the whole Baseball world moved at this verified piece of history.

After the failed mission to find the diary, and with the time that the MLB team had being very limited, John managed to get them to a Stoolball match in Horsham, Angmering v Horsham Trinity at Horsham Cricket Club and also to a local baseball practice. Some of them also journeyed to Chawton, near Alton in Hampshire before returning to the USA.

The plans for the whole trip changed so many times that it was not possible to visit Stedham v Wisborough Green or Tillington v Steep who were on 'standby', but in the end, despite numerous traumas, the whole trip seemed to be a success.



In due course we hope to receive a copy of all the filming which took place and to make it available to all those who would like to see it