

BEMBRIDGE 2026

On Monday 9th March 26 members of Lockswood BC were due to travel to the Isle of Wight for the club's Spring trip to bowl against other clubs from around England.

On the day though only 24 were on the ferry from Portsmouth as Ron & Jan were delayed due to a medical problem. The weather was not good that day and the ferry was delayed almost half an hour. The group were told that the Red Funnel ferries from Southampton were cancelled so their delay not as bad as it might have been.

Once on the Island the absence of Ron & Jan was explained and Warners lent us two local bowlers for the games that started Tuesday morning. Ron & Jan were able to join us after lunch that day and Ron resumed his position in the team with Jan remaining a spectator for the week.



There was a good turn-out for the competition in March with 30 teams competing from eight different clubs. In the group stages played on Tuesday and Wednesday everyone got four games with the top eight going through to the quarter finals on Thursday.

The Lockswood teams were a mixture of regulars who had been attending the Warners Competitions since they had been running at its previous venue of Hayling Island and a sprinkling of first-timers. Alan Weatherall made his first appearance in October 2024 and now returned to skip his team of Sally Collins with Janet and David Harle all of who were on their first visit.

Although Bembridge is a carpet bowling surface it is faster than Lockswood and it takes a while to find the line and length. Due to the ferry running late our afternoon practice session was cut short and Lockswood had to rely on the third L word of bowls, "LUCK"

We had six teams in though, what could possibly go wrong?

The entertainment at Bembridge is generally very good and so it proved this time. The top spot went to a Country singer who was rated excellent by those who went to hear him. Others of the group played cards or chatted and there was even a Mah Jongg teach-in one evening.

Back to the bowls, the top eight had been decided. six teams with 6 points and two teams with 8 points having won all their games.

And one of the 8 point teams was Alan Weatherall, Sally Collins, Janet & David Harle.

None of the other Lockswood teams made this top eight but had no hesitation in attending and cheering on our top team. The quarter final was tense with both teams playing well and at the bell the score was a draw at 7 all. Another end to decide the winner. Our team held their nerve, and took the end.





There was no time to rest, a short break and then into the semi final. This game was held on rink 4, an end rink but David did not let it worry him and made some great shots along the ditch side. The other three also showed they had the measure of the Bembridge surface and it was another victory to Lockwood.

For the second year in succession Lockwood had a team in the Final. Their opponents were entered as Pagham and Bognor but played at Arun an indoor bowling club.

The final started at 1.00pm and the different style of the indoor team showed immediately. Alan's team did not play the tight controlled game as they had been to get to this stage and Pagham were soon racking up a large score. Lockwood pulled back a couple of points later in the game but there was no way back and the final score was 16 - 2.

Pagham were presented with their winners prize at 2.30 and the Lockwood team received acrylic photo frames as runners-up. A splendid achievement against the standard of bowling this year.

The Warners Bowls manager, Anne had a tricky job managing the 30 teams and arranging substitutes at short notice. She also had to contend with bowlers not turning up at the right time, not Lockwood players, and other issues on the day.

Mention was made of the fact that a Lockwood team was drawn against a second Lockwood team and a Crofton team was drawn against a second Crofton team.

We will be in contact with Warners Bowls before the next trip in October to see if this can be avoided.

