

# The Squire

The newsletter of **GroundhopUK**.

Issue 6

July 2017

Welcome to issue six of the newsletter. Here you'll find the position regarding each event, along with an opportunity to pre-book places to make sure you have your seat for your chosen events.

We have to start with the sad news that Barry Neighbour passed away in May. Many of you will have known Barry, a stalwart of the Hops right from the first Welsh Hop in 2002. Never someone to let health matters get in the way of a groundhop, Barry was a very popular member of the fraternity and he will be much missed. Our condolences go to Barry's friends and family and in particular to wife Linda, who many of you will know from the Hops.

My numerous attempts to get people to pay by Bank Transfer or PayPal have only met with very limited success. However, I can no longer cover the ridiculous amount the bank charges me for each cheque that is paid in, so from the NBFL Hop, I'm afraid I'm going to have to acharge if you still wish to pay by cheque or PO. There's still a charge for a Bank Transfer but it's a third of the cost of a cheque so I'm happy to swallow that. PayPal of course, as long as you choose the "Pay a Friend" option, is free – and gives you the option to pay by card.

## Wales 2017, August Bank Holiday

Based in South Wales again. First hop ground with a UFO parked behind it.....!!

(picture courtesy Don "George" Radsma)

Fri: Cwm Welfare

Sat: Penrhiwfer, Tonyrefail BGC, Trebanog, Ynyshir Albion

Sun: Penrhiwceiber Cons, Cwmbach Royal Stars, Brecon Corinthians

Mon: Llanrumney United, St Josephs, Cogan

Coronation

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**STATUS: OPEN FOR BOOKING UNTIL 19 AUGUST**

## North Berkshire 2017, Saturday 16 September

Our new base will be in Abingdon or Didcot (although Didcot is very short of affordable B&B). Here's the plan at the moment:

Friday: "optional extra" possibly in conjunction with the Hellenic League (see below).

Saturday: Drayton (at the Diamond Light Source facility), Harwell Village, Westminster.

**STATUS: OPEN FOR PRE-BOOKING**

### **Western Hop 2017, 6-8 October 2017**

Based at Weston-Super-Mare based, planned line-up is :

Fri: Ashton & Backwell United

Sat: Welton Rovers – Radstock Town – Odd Down – Hengrove Athletic

Sun: Bishops Lydeard – Shepton Mallet

**STATUS: OPEN FOR PRE-BOOKING**

### **Welsh Premier League, November**

Provisional date discussed with the WPL. Their favoured dates are the weekends of 17-19 November or 24-26 November as they are “non TV” weekends and so games should (in theory) be easier to move. The later one works much better for games, we may struggle with distances on 18 November. With this in mind we are looking at:

Fri 24 Nov: Aberystwyth v Newtown or Prestatyn v Llandudno

Sat 25 Nov: Cefn Druids v Barry Town and TNS v Carmarthen Town (grounds are only 10 miles apart)

Sun 26 Nov: Cardiff Met University (only side to ask for Sunday matches)

Most clubs in the Welsh Premier now have 3G pitches so the possibility of postponements is less of an issue. Is this the first all 3G plastic-fantastic weekend? We will add in games from the Cymru Alliance / Welsh League or more local matches as we can, and perhaps even a visit or two to local attractions.

**STATUS: OPEN FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

### **Europe, 2017/18**

In the very early stages of this, but I still fancy doing a trip to the continent. Looking at France in general and Brittany / Normandy in particular.....

**STATUS: OPEN FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

### **Scottish Hop, 16 – 18 March 2018**

Provisional line-up:

Friday: Mid-Annandale

Saturday: Burntisland Shipyard – Kelty Hearts – Heriot Watt University – Lothian Thistle HV v Tynecastle (two clubs who share ground)

Sunday: Peebles Rovers

The game at Heriot Watt would be played on the indoor 3G floodlit pitch.

**STATUS: OPEN FOR PRE-BOOKING**

### **Welsh Spring Hop, 13 – 15 April 2018**

Provisional Line up:

Friday: TBC

Saturday: Pwll v Bwlch (the game with no vowels!) – Pontlliw v TBA – Penllergaer v TBA

Sunday: Drefach v TBA – AFC Butetown v TBA (SW Alliance)

**STATUS: OPEN FOR PRE-BOOKING**

## **Non-League Finals Day, Sunday 20 May**

At Wembley! The FA Vase and FA Trophy Finals as a double-header. Looking at making a nice big group booking as the ticket prices come right down. It is a seriously cheap way of doing this and a brilliant day out. As it's already been announced, this will be open for booking very shortly, so take advantage NOW and pre-book. There's also a very interesting note on the FA booking site about "groups of 49 or more". That may be a free parking space for the coach or an allocated block for the group, I simply don't know. I'd like to find out though! We'll be booking a coach for travel from the Midlands if required.

**STATUS: OPEN FOR PRE-BOOKING**

## **Central Midlands League weekend late April. Maybe.**

All details etc to be confirmed, but clubs eligible to host are:

North Division: Brodsworth Welfare, Lincoln Moorlands Railway, Tideswell United, Retford (new ground), Welbeck Lions (new ground)

South Division: Hilton Harriers, Mickleover RBL, Swanwick Pentrich Road, Holbrook St Michaels, AFC Kilburn, Eastwood, Sherwood Colliery, Linby CW, Hucknall Town (new ground expected by March 2018)

Division 1: Cromford, Wirksworth Town

IF – and it's a big IF at this juncture – I were to choose here and now, it would be Sherwood on the Friday, Hilton, RBL, Holbrook SM and Kilburn on Saturday, and Tideswell, Hucknall, Linby on Sunday. There's big obstacles to get over first though, the biggest of which is my league's opposition to playing on Sunday. Watch this space!

**STATUS: IN PLANNING**

## **Hellenic League 2017/18**

The Hellenic wants a return to hop action, and there's some interesting clubs that we haven't been to! There's 14 by my count that we haven't visited yet, and a further three that were hopped before we became involved in 2002. Where and when? Don't know yet!

**STATUS: IN PLANNING**