

Rounders

Harwell Rounder's Tournament 2018

The long hot summer of 2018 will doubtless be long remembered for the superb weather for rounders for most of the time, anyway. 19 teams from across the Harwell Campus entered the tournament organised in two qualifying rounds followed by a knock-out finals stage. Round 1 consisted of two leagues of 9 teams. Round 2 saw the teams split into the Cup and Plate leagues. After the league matches the knock-out stage consisted of quarter-finals, semi-finals and grand-finals for Cup and Plate competitions.

Ten teams from RAL and Diamond participated in the tournament. Barmy Army made the Plate Final but were beaten 15.5 – 23 by Ace of Diamonds. The Cup competition saw 3 out of the 4 teams through to the Semi Finals from RAL. Oddballs, Take Bat and Magic Rounderbat with Take Bat going through to the Final against Nutty Nukes (NRPB), for the fourth year in a row. On this occasion Take Bat retained the Cup with a decisive victory winning 19.5 – 13.5.

Following the Grand Final, trophies were presented to all finalists and the highest scoring players. The top female scorer with 27 rounders was Emma Marczylo from Nutty Nukes, whilst Ted Brooke from the Empire Strikes Bat topped the male scorer league with 52 rounders'. During the season 329 players scored a total of 4455.5 rounders' in the matches. Martin Rudman, Chairman of the Oxford Area Civil Sports and Social Council and an ex-RAL Rec Soc Chariman presented the trophies.

Rounder's has been played at Harwell since the early 1960s and is a sport in which anyone can participate, regardless of age or ability. You definitely don't need to be a fitness fanatic or a rounders' ace. The tournament is a great opportunity to socialise with people from around the site, as well as being a lot of fun. It's also surprising how whacking a ball with a bat can reduce your stress levels.

The teams are mixed comprising ten players with a maximum of six men, although players can be selected from a squad of any number. Many teams include occasional players, as well as those who play in almost every match.

The season runs from late May to early August. Matches start at 12:30, comprising four ten-minute innings. Matches are not played in wet weather. The annual tournament typically consists of leagues in which all teams play, followed by a knockout stage with trophies presented to the winning teams.

The Rec-Soc supports RAL teams entering the Harwell tournament by subsidising entry fees and providing grants for new equipment.

Rounders is also played on the RAL sports field by teams practicing for the Harwell tournament, students during summer placements, and teams participating in Departmental matches. The Rec-Soc has rounders equipment that's available for any members to use.

Additionally, RAL teams periodically take part in CSSC tournaments and have on two occasions travelled to Barbados to represent the CSSC Southern Region against the Barbadian civil servants in the annual Barbados Challenge games.

Katie Hopgood

