

Pétanque club enters new terrain

Pétanque

A LITTLE bit of French culture has been brought to Monmouth with the opening of the first Pétanque terrain.

Graham Pritchard, chairman of the Monmouth Pétanque Club, welcomed members and the public to the "wonderful facility" that took only 13 months to create from inception to completion.

The club is close to its target of 35 members, set by the Sports Council, who also contributed half the cost of the terrain and gave two grants for equipment and coaches.

He thanked the various sponsors involved in the project as well as Rockfield Community Centre and Monmouthshire County Council for giving permission for the terrain to be built next to the Community Centre.

"This is an example of local people doing things for the local community" he said, and emphasised that the facility was not just for club members, but is open for free to members of the public, community and disabled groups to use.

"It's not an exclusive terrain, but we do hope that they join and take advantage of membership

and get help from our resident coaches."

The charities that helped to get the terrain up and running included Monmouth Charity, Welsh Church Fund, Monmouth Rotary Club, The Green Dragon, Monnow Vale Day Centre, who made the scoreboards, and Monmouth Comprehensive School.

The game was played by the Ancient Romans and by the 19th century had evolved into lawn bowling, but Pétanque, in its present form, was invented in 1907 near Marseilles by a French boule lyonnaise player whose rheumatism prevented him from running before he threw the ball.

The length of the pitch or field was reduced by roughly half, and the moving delivery was replaced with a stationary one.

Graham thanked Fingal Rock and Ernest Opticians for sponsoring the food and the drink for the official opening and invited David Davies MP to declare the terrain officially open.

Anyone interested in joining can contact Graham Pritchard on 01600 713766. The club sessions are Wednesday 6.30pm and Saturday 2pm.



Coach Chris Marshall, Margaret Jones, Jill Woodroffe and chairman Graham Pritchard

