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THE CROQUET GAZETTE

Number 158

WINTER 1980

The Official Organ of the Croquet Association

Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

Retrospect 1980

"How busy we are on Tom Tiddler's Ground looking for Gold and Silver". Croquet players, Clubs and by no means least the Croquet Association are looking for ways to make the money go round. There are two distinct brands of sponsorship; one is small and local and the other nationwide and this year we had our first taste of both. The former at Cheltenham where Coles, who are Estate Agents, gave money to the Club and a trophy to the players and attracted an even more distinguished field than the Open Championships; it was acclaimed as an unqualified success. The second, the Pimm's Internationals, was arranged at short notice and the sponsors hoped for nationwide publicity and gave a sum of money to the C A from which the expenses of mounting the events and the expenses of the players — and even of the administrators — had to be deducted. The paying of expenses is a sensitive area and one which needs careful monitoring to keep the balance between money to Clubs, which benefits everyone, and money to individuals. Happily both sponsorships are to be repeated in 1981.

After a quaver in 1979 the new-style Aspinall was on song again and is undoubtedly the top-ranking player, but William Prichard (his conqueror in the Championships), Murray (his conqueror in the Pimm's), Mulliner (his runner-up in the President's Cup and who, with William Prichard won the Open Doubles) and Hope (who took a game off Aspinall in the President's and finished 3rd) are at his heels. Wylie (runner-up to Aspinall in the Coles) would be there too if he chose to play more. Each player seems to be judged on his performance against Aspinall: Rees probably owed his place in the Chairman's to a fine match against him and then confirmed the form by winning the Salver; and had Bond, who won the Spencer Ell so handsomely, beaten Aspinall at the Opens, which he so nearly did, he might well have been in the higher event. When most are mere krill to be swallowed by Aspinall, the few who escape from his maw, glow.

The spread of Advanced Play week-end tournaments continues, and they incubate a breed of adventurous players who enjoy the freedom of trying to achieve the barely possible, but those who could not get into these events have been feeling a little hard done-by. Now Cheltenham have added an Advanced Tournament excluding all players below handicap +2 which coincides with Eight's week. It is 4 days, but if popular other Clubs might stage similar 2 or 3 day events. The Open Championships were a little disrupted due to the uncertainties caused by a number of late withdrawals and to the restriction of the Doubles to 16 pairs. Some felt that the conditions needed some adjustment, others were concerned that the singles final was staged too late to have the audience it deserved but nearly everyone agreed that the slow play of a few players is an unacceptable facet of croquet and that if it should lead to a further restriction in the entry it will be a

tragedy.

Retrospection has been made a little more difficult by a policy decision not to print some results until the Winter Gazette (I hope the experiment will not be repeated) but some names stand out. J R McCullough was notably successful; his 12 wins as runner-up in the Spencer-Ell would normally have been more than enough to win the event outright. Mark Avery, at 14, is a bright hope for the future; he is a sought-after Doubles partner and has already completed a triple peel in a tournament. So has T Griffith and he too is still in the B class and in his first season. There are two sets of brothers to watch in the North — Collin and Drury — and Miss J Assheton winner of a 26 entry Swiss event, a rare feat for a long bisquer. From the South there are Haste, Jones, Cordingley, Doughty and Hobbs to note, the last-named having emerged from the shadow of Francis Landor. John Rose has had a good year and Mike Stevens continues upwards and looks like becoming one of the games gastronomical characters. Sykes played entertaining croquet, and with his wife as his partner clinched the Mixed Doubles Championship (X Y this year) with a triple peel against Hope and Mrs Asa Thomas (winners in 1978) having annihilated Murray and Mrs Meachem the holders, in the semi-final. Heap's winning run was ended at Colchester, S J Wright (the Scottish Captain victorious in the Pimm's) taking the crown for which he has so often been the runner-up. But Read had a 9th win at Carrickmines despite a foray by Wylie and Phillips. Of Veterans, Owen and Borrett feature strongly and of the young, Murfitt (N Z) took the Association Plate and will be testing those at the top next year; so would Simon and Matthew Tapp if they could play more. Foulser in his first President's clocked up a win against the winner, the runner-up and both the 1979 and 1980 Open Champions once he conquered his nerves and the narrow hoops.

Mrs Meachem, for the second year running won both the Women's Championship and the Ladies Field. Those challenging her have been Mrs Carlisle, Mrs Sykes and Mrs Wheeler (R F), though neither of the first two named play in the Ladies Field. The Kay Bowl, or 2nd VI, played for the first time, can only continue if all the best players make themselves available. That experience is vital was proved by Mrs Cox with 9 wins and Mrs Prichard with 8 being so far ahead of the newcomers. Mrs Bagnall with 4 was nearest and she happily abandoned caution. The reports praised the phenomenal shooting and "powers of endurance" in both events but there was "too much safety play", and "inability to make breaks", not much to boast about. Best performances were from Mrs Hemsted, throughout the Hurlingham Mixed Doubles, and Mrs Meachem, who only failed by one point to knock out Eric Solomon in the Hurlingham Opens. By doing so she would have changed history because Solomon won the final with a sextuple peel, his first, against no less a player than Croker. Hands scored the first sextuple in the Chairman's four weeks

The Secretary & Editor.

The Secretary of the Croquet Association is Mr. R.F. Rothwell. The Hurlingham Club, London, SW6 3PR. Tel: 01-736 3148.

The Editor of the Croquet Gazette is Mr D.R. Foulser. 61 Hales Road, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. GL52 6SL Tel: Cheltenham (0242) 580295 (Home).

All Contributions other than tournament results should be sent to the Editor. They are not acknowledged but are most welcome. Please send EARLY — do not wait for the deadline. **All Tournament results** to be sent to the Secretary C.A., but **all tournament reports** to the Editor

All Correspondence concerning non-delivery of Gazettes or incorrect addresses must be sent to the SECRETARY C.A. and NOT to the EDITOR.

Deadline

Copy for the Spring Issue of the Gazette must reach the Editor not later than SATURDAY March 7th.

later. Hands as a Manager, also introduced a new variation for a Swiss Handicap which became an instant success. Losers in other events can carry forward any wins to the Swiss event thus entering it at a later round and enabling the whole event to start on the first day if desired. Two other young Managers, Mulliner and Bond, achieved a Double Banking record at Roehampton: 40 matches completed on 4 lawns in one day — admittedly the days were at their longest.

In spite of the wet summer it has been an eventful and exciting season: the membership of Clubs has increased and there are rumblings of changes to come. We must guard against destroying any part of the game we love before we have something better to put in its place. So I will end as I started with a quotation from Eliza Cook: "I love it, I love it and who shall dare to chide me for loving that old armchair?"

E. A. M. P.

Annual General Meeting To Be Held At The Hurlingham Club On Saturday 11th April 1981 At 11.30 am

Agenda**1. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19th April 1980 are published elsewhere in this issue of CROQUET

2. President's Address**3. Chairman's Report for 1980****4. Treasurer's Report**

Copies of the audited accounts for the year ended 31st December 1980 will be available at the meeting. In accordance with new Rule XVI copies will be sent to Associates in the United Kingdom on request to the Secretary

5. Election of Treasurer

The retiring Treasurer, A J Oldham, offers himself for re-election.

6. Election of Members of the Council

Under Rule VI (a) (i) the following members retire having completed their term of office and seek re-election:—

G N Aspinall, Mrs E E Bressey, A B Hope, Mrs W Longman, Professor B G Neal, C B Sanford, S S Townsend and L Wharrad.

7. Alteration to the Rules

It is proposed by the Council that the following alterations be made to the Rules of the Association:—

1) Rule XXIII

Delete sub-section (ii) which reads: 'The annual subscription may be compounded by one payment carrying Associateship for Life, at such rate as shall be determined by the Council (subject to Rule XX).'

2) Rule XXVI

Amend to read: 'A Banking Account shall be maintained in the name of the Association. All cheques shall be signed by at least two persons nominated by the Council from time to time.'

8. Election of Auditors

Messrs Nicholass, Ames and Co offer themselves for re-election.

9. Benefactors

The names in the Benefactors Book to be read

10. Any Other Business

Minutes Of The Annual General Meeting held on 19th April 1980

The President, E P Duffield, took the Chair. There were present Dr W R D Wiggins, Vice President, and 37 Associates.

1. The Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held on 2nd June 1979 (published in CROQUET No. 152, Summer 1979) and of the Special General Meeting held on 8th March 1980 (published in CROQUET No. 155, Spring 1980) were adopted.

2. In his address the President congratulated the organiser, L Wharrad, on the success of the Club Conference held on 8th December 1979 and expressed the hope that the Recruiting Drive in 1980 would prove successful and would bring in many more club members. He emphasised that strong membership in the clubs was vital to the health of the Association and that we also needed to build up the Association's strength.

He presented the Apps/Heley Award for 1979 to Dr R F Wheeler on behalf of the Nottingham Club which had had such a successful Jubilee Year.

3. The Chairman of the Council, Dr R W Bray, presented his Report for 1979, after which he was congratulated by the President on its content and the clear manner in which it had been presented. The report is published on the front page of CROQUET No. 155, Spring 1980.

4. The Treasurer, A J Oldham, presented the audited accounts for the year ended 31st December 1979 (published in CROQUET No. 155, Spring 1980, pages 16 and 17). He pointed out that the deficit for 1979 should be put right in 1980 with the increased rate of subscriptions.

5. The Secretary reported that as there had been only eight candidates for the eight vacancies on the Council the following had been deemed to have been elected:—

D C Caporn, A J Girling, D J V Hamilton-Miller, G B Martin, Mrs B Meachem, S N Mulliner, Lt Col D M C Prichard and Dr R F Wheeler.

6. The retiring Treasurer, A J Oldham, was duly re-elected as Treasurer, and was thanked for the continued time

and expertise he devoted in the interests of the Association.

7. Messrs. Nicholass, Ames & Co were re-elected as Auditors.

8. The names in the Benefactors Book were read by the Secretary.

Extracts From Proceedings Of Council Meetings**19th April 1980**

R A Godby was elected as Chairman and C B Sanford as Vice Chairman for the ensuing year.

The Selection Committee was re-appointed for 1980 as follows:—

G N Aspinall, R A Godby, D J V Hamilton-Miller, Lt Col D M C Prichard (Chairman) and S S Townsend.

With the high cost of printing an updated version of the Handbook, it was decided to update the edition last printed in 1970 with duplicated amendment sheets.

L Wharrad reported that an offer of Sponsorship had been received on the office telephone recording machine whilst the Secretary was in South Africa, which, after negotiations, had been taken up. Messrs Pimm's will sponsor three international matches England v Scotland v Wales in the early part of the season. The C A Selection Committee will choose the England and Wales teams, and the Scottish C A The Scotland team.

18th October 1980

The 1982 Test Tour Committee was announced as follows:—

Professor B G Neal (Chairman), G N Aspinall and J W Solomon.

It was agreed that the principle be re-affirmed that members of the Council should not sign petitions nor write publications on controversial matters in the Gazette either of which express dissent from decisions agreed by the Council.

The Calendar proposed by the Tournament Committee for 1981 was approved. The Ladies Second Event will be continued but there will be no Second Division in the Inter-Counties.

There will be a pre-qualifying competition over two weekends if necessary in the Open Championships to bring the number in the Singles down to 32 for the competition proper.

The word "Eclipse" is to be removed from the General Conditions for Tournaments to permit the use of Jaques' Un-Milled balls.

It was reported that the Recruitment Drive in 1980 had proved very successful. The Census on 1st August had shown that there has been an increase in club membership of over 400. There are 41 Open Clubs with 135 lawns, and 36 Closed Clubs with 42 lawns. Approximately 65% of club members are under 60, and there are 40% women to 60% men.

Messrs Pimm's have agreed to continue their sponsorship of home internationals in 1981 with an increased backing to allow for inflation and increased local publicity. Matches will be held at Southport (Scotland v Wales) at Cheltenham (Wales v England) and at Compton (England v Scotland) on 30th May, 6th & 13th June.

Filming took place near Evesham in July for a proposed BBC 2 TV programme on Croquet, which it is hoped will be screened in the New Year.

Colonel Prichard's History of Croquet, financed out of

Maurice Reckitt's legacy, is due to be published in May 1981 at £8.95. Copies will be available to Associates through the C A office at £6.00. The C A have undertaken to purchase 400 copies at half the published price.

29th November 1980

Regulation 10 is to be re-worded to clarify the retention of fees and expenses of those taking part in TV programmes and sponsored events.

Separate entry fees for the Association Plate and the Du Pre Cup are to be abolished in 1982.

Un-milled Jaques' balls will be offered to Registered Clubs at reduced prices for them to experiment with during the 1981 season.

The possibility of financing the annual Fixtures Book by advertisers is being investigated (cost for 1981 just over £400)

The Apps/Heley Award for 1980 has been awarded to the Colchester Club mainly for its outstanding recruiting campaign during the season.

In 1981 there will be a drive not only to increase club membership but to increase the number of Associates. It is felt that a lot of the 1,500 non-Associate members of the clubs should be encouraged to join.

A J Oldham the Chairman of the Editorial Board expressed regrets at the long delays experienced in getting Gazettes to Associates. He pointed out that an improved service would cost more money, but alternative quotations are being considered and the suggestion that there might be two main Gazettes annually with four broadsheets of results during the season is being investigated. The experiment in 1980 in an effort to speed up the service to members by publishing tournament results in the Summer and Autumn issues with the score sheets in the Winter (and possibly the Spring) issues has not proved a success and will be reviewed for 1981.

Dr Wiggins, Chairman of the Laws Committee gave his ruling on the interpretation of Law 18 (c) in accordance with Rule XV. This is published elsewhere.

Motions — A B Hope proposed that "Regulation 20 (a) be deleted". An amended motion proposed by L Wharrad was that "Regulation 20 (a) be suspended for 1981" which was passed by 12 votes to 9. The effect of this decision is that seeding in first class events in club tournaments is permitted in 1981. Seeding in C A Events will not occur without the express sanction of the council.

The deaths of Kenneth Patterson (Colchester) Eric Meredith (Cheltenham) and Mrs Ada Kirk (New Zealand) were reported with regret.

The possible sponsorship by Irish Distillers to improving and coaching Referees in Ireland and the institution of an annual Ireland v England match was approved in principle.

Standing Committees Of The Council 1980/1981**Finance & General Purposes**

Mrs E E Bressey
c D C Caporn
* R A Godby
A B Hope
* A J Oldham
* C B Sanford
E Strickland, OBE
S S Townsend
L Wharrad

Editorial Board

G N Aspinall
Mrs H B H Carlisle
* R A Godby
A B Hope
S N Mulliner
*c A J Oldham
* C B Sanford

Publicity & Development

D C Caporn
A J Girling
* R A Godby
A B Hope
Mrs B Meachem
S N Mulliner
* A J Oldham
Professor B G Neal
* C B Sanford
E Strickland, OBE
c L Wharrad
Dr R F Wheeler

Handicap Co-Ordination

Mrs E E Bressey
Professor B G Neal
c S S Townsend

Handicap Appeal

D J V Hamilton-Miller
Mrs B Meachem
Lt Col D M C Prichard

Obituaries

Prof A S C Ross

Southwick Croquet Club deeply regret the recent death of Professor Alan Ross who died just before the end of the 1980 season. Professor Ross had been a loved and respected member of the Club for many years since his retirement from Birmingham University. His tall figure and his well known Land Rover were welcome sights at the Club and he will be very much missed as a member.

E A J

Professor Alan Ross

Alan Ross died on September 23rd. His long obituary in the Times stressed his major research in Philology and gave an impressive list of his original and most important linguistic works. Exploring the mountains of Wales in a land-rover using Brecon — where he was born — as a centre, and playing croquet occupied all his leisure hours. For many years he and his wife (who died in 1973) were the hub of the Edgbaston Club and after his retirement he became a familiar figure at Southwick, "a tall gangling figure, slightly stooped, with a heron-like walk". When playing croquet he was totally absorbed and was delightfully quick, never wasting a second in thought or reaction.

Alan was perhaps best known as the coiner of the phrases U and Non-U but to him the differences were purely academic. Latterly his interests were devoted to his commentary on the Lindisfarne Gospels and to his contribution (Germanic numerals) to the massive two volume work on Indo European Numerals. He was an amusing companion and had the endearing quality of enjoying the conversation of his friends of whom he made and kept a great many especially among the young generation.

E A M P

F W Meredith

It was not just croquet and bridge which were Eric's claim to fame. His contribution to our country's war victory was recognised in 1953, when he was presented with a gold medal by The Institution of Aeronautical Engineers for his work in the design of automatic pilots' and aircraft instruments.

Tournament

G N Aspinall
D C Caporn
Mrs H B H Carlisle
* R A Godby
Mrs W Longman
G B Martin
* A J Oldham
T F Owen
* C B Sanford
c K S Schofield
E Strickland, OBE

Special Appeal

D J V Hamilton-Miller
Lt Col D M C Prichard
S S Townsend

* = Ex Officio
c = Chairman

Also about a couple of years before Eric's death, he and his wife were flown to Bahrain and back by Concord in recognition of his war service.

I M R

Roving Eye

Results of the South African Croquet Championships held at Somerset West From 8th — 15th November, which event was sponsored by J & B Rare Scotch Whisky, were as follows:—

1. S A Open Singles Championship (Belcher Cup & J & B Cup) (11 entries)

Winner — T Barlow
Runner-up — C Coulsdon.

2. S A Open Doubles Championship (Lady Steel Silver Salver) (9 pairs)

Winners — C Coulsdon & R Bamford
Runners-up — G Turnbull & Miss M Simkins

3. Restricted Singles (J & B Rose Bowl) (14 entries)

Winner — Miss S Barras,
Runner-up — J Benn.

4. Handicap Singles X, Y and Z (40 entries)

'X' Winner — D Cunningham (—1½)

Runner-up — C W I Gillespie (3½)

'Y' Winner — R B C Le Maitre (9)

Runner-up — Mrs N Coetzee (3),

'Z' Winner — Miss D Galpin (6),

Runner-up — J Beckett (6).

5. Restricted Handicap Singles (Atlanta Trophy) (21 entries)

Winner — R B C Le Maitre

Runner-up — R Ware.

6. Restricted Handicap Doubles (J & B Rose Bowls) (13 pairs),

Winners — B Lloyd-Pratt & R Wucherpfennig,

Runners-up — N Leech & Mrs L Brits

Cup Finals At Wrest Park

A historic occasion took place at Wrest Park on 18th October in that two cup finals (the Inter-Club Championship and the Longman Cup) were played on adjacent lawns. Agreed it was mid-October, but the weather was not kind, rain or drizzle all day and it became very cold. Thanks to the Wrest Park Club for accommodating us. Special thanks to John Wheeler for having six lawns in such good condition despite their being under water 18 hours earlier following torrential rain on Friday, and thanks to Pandora for providing tea and refreshments for the competitors and the 20 or so spectators which were most welcome.

Inter-Club championships

Cheltenham 1 (the holders) had to beat Bowdon, Colchester and Nottingham to reach the final; and Roehampton (winners of the trophy in 1920, 1927, 1938 and 1971) beat the Reckitt Club, Compton and Hurlingham. Roehampton went into lunch leading 2 — 1. After lunch Cheltenham equalised, Roehampton took the lead again, Cheltenham again equalised so all depended on the outcome of the last game. Hope (for Cheltenham) laid up at peg and penultimate with Stevens on the 2nd and 4-back. Stevens hit the lift with his backward ball and pegged out Hope's rover. Despite hitting in once Hope failed to make penultimate and after a few anxious moments Stevens went out to win by 3 and so gave Roehampton the magnificent salver for the fifth time. It is interesting to note that none of the 1971 Roehampton team took part this year

(Camroux, Fidler, Gilbert, Roger Hicks, Neal and Stride).

Scores: (Roehampton names first)

G N Aspinall and S N Mulliner beat Dr M Murray and W de B Prichard by 14, S J H Wright lost to A B Hope by 21, M J Stevens beat P W Hands by 15, S J H Wright lost to P W Hands by 25, Aspinall beat Prichard by 18, Mulliner lost to Murray by 16, Stevens beat Hope by 3.

Roehampton 4 Cheltenham 1 3

Longman Cup

Oxford University (the holders) had beaten Cheltenham, Bath, Edgbaston and Walsall; and Harrow Oak (twice previous winners) had beaten Wrest Park, Hurlingham, British Airways and AWRE (Aldermaston) to reach the final. In a close fought contest Oxford were always in front and emerged the winners 4 — 1 to retain the trophy.

Scores: (Oxford names first)

P H B Boddington lost to J Rolfe by 3 OT, M J H Burn and H Cook beat P Cordingley and G C Roy by 2, C Harmon beat J C Straw by 19, Burn and Boddington beat Roy and Staw by 21, Cook and Harmon beat Cordingley and Rolfe by 5 OT.

Oxford University 4 Harrow Oak 1

All England Handicap 1980

429 entries again in 1980, the same as the record number in 1979, produced from the eight Area Finals at Cheltenham, Colchester, Compton, Edgbaston, Edinburgh, Harrow Oak, Roehampton and Woking, the eight finalists who played off for the two trophies at Roehampton on 27th and 28th September in fine weather on four good lawns thanks to the Roehampton Club and under the efficient managership of Nigel Aspinall.

Three of these eight were scratch players, an unusually high proportion, Frank Norton, Tristram Owen and John Rose. They found the other five playing well below their handicaps and could only muster three wins between them. There were four in the middle bisque range: Ken Jones (3) did not quite produce the form that made him a very close runner-up last year. The other three, John Greenwood (4½), Martin Burn (5½) and Geoff Roy (7) all played superb croquet for their handicaps (which needless to say were lowered after the competition) and any of them might well have won in an average year. An all round break with a double peel does not seem right for a 5½.

The eighth of the octet was Mike Wilson from Wrest Park. After winning the Colchester Area Final he was reduced from 11 to 9, but this, as it turned out, was not enough. He won his first four games in the Swiss final with bisques to spare and only lost the last game to Martin Burn by 6 after being pegged out with his backward ball on 1-back. He emerged a worthy winner and his Club holds the New Zealand Tray for a year. John Greenwood also had four wins but with less net points to receive the runners-up Tingey Trophy.

Altogether a final of above average standard played in very good spirit with most games taking only about two hours apiece.

Score Sheet:

1. J M Wilson (9) (Wrest Park) 4 wins, 77 pts, bt Greenwood +26, Roy +10, Jones +23, Rose +24.
2. J D Greenwood (4½) (Parsons Green) 4 wins, 33 pts, bt Roy +5, Burn +2, Owen +26, Norton +26.
3. G Roy (7) (Harrow Oak) 3 wins, 36 pts, bt Burn +13, Jones +16, Rose +22.
4. M J H Burn (5½) (Oxford University) 3 wins, 29 pts, bt Wilson +6, Owen +26, Norton +12.

5. K E Jones (3) (Edgbaston) 3 wins, 5 pts, bt Owen +8, Norton +19, Rose +17.
6. T F Owen (0) (Southwick) 2 wins, —23 pts, bt Norton +13, Rose +24.
7. F V X Norton (0) (Glasgow) 1 win, —68 pts, bt Rose +2.
8. J Rose (0) (Woking) 0 wins, —89 pts.

Latest Rankings

Details of the first 40 by Average Grade as at 31st October 1980, ie: effective for 1980/1. Current Grades are given in parentheses.

1. G N Aspinall	169	(178)
2. Dr M Murray	157	(151)
K F Wylie	157	(150)
4. S N Mulliner	155	(148)
D K Openshaw	155	(149)
6. W de B Prichard	152	(143)
7. A B Hope	151	(144)
8. Dr E W Solomon	150	(146)
9. T O Read	145	(148)
10. S J H Wright	143	(134)
11. R J Murfitt	141	(151)
12. Prof B G Neal	136	(132)
13. D J Croker	135	(138)
14. D V H Rees	134	(145)
15. D R Foulser	130	(138)
S R Hemsted	130	(127)
17. Dr W P Ormerod	129	(132)
18. P W Hands	127	(128)
J A Wheeler	127	(129)
20. J G C Phillips	126	(126)
21. B C Sykes	125	(128)
22. I D Bond	123	(133)
Dr G J Roberts	123	(130)
24. C H L Prichard	122	(118)
J Rose	122	(139)
26. J McCullough	121	(131)
G W Noble	121	(117)
Dr I G Vincent	121	(120)
29. T F Owen	117	(107)
30. G E P Jackson	114	(107)
E J Tucker	114	(103)
32. B G Perry	113	(110)
33. L V Latham	112	(113)
Dr B G F Weitz	112	(100)
35. M Ormerod	111	(102)
36. C H J Cousins	110	(102)
Dr G K Taylor	110	(119)
38. Mrs B Meachem	109	(111)
39. Dr B D Yallop	106	(101)
40. D J V H-Miller	105	(101)

It will be seen that the list is expressed in order of Average Grades instead of Current Grades as hitherto. The change is deliberate and important and some explanation is called for. Grading systems were originally devised for Chess and a comparison of that game with Croquet is instructive. The main difference between them which is relevant to grading is the much greater volatility in competitive Croquet form. Various factors contribute. Chess is an all year game instead of being limited to the summer months. Thus not only does the competitive Chess player play more often but he is also relieved of the need to start again each year. Many Chess games end in draws. This means that a significant advantage must be obtained before a clear win is obtained. In Croquet a winner and loser always emerge — no matter how close the game.

Finally it may be pointed out that only Croquet contains a component of physical skill. This is inherently much more subject to variation from time to time in any individual than the exercise of a purely cerebral skill like Chess-playing.

These factors render the Croquet grader's job more difficult than the Chess grader's. The latter publishes new grades once a year and does not usually concern himself with the problems posed by rapidly changing form. The Croquet Grading System seeks to accomplish two apparently inconsistent goals. The first is to create an index which will be sensitive to sudden changes in form as expressed in a player's results. This is the Current Grade or 'CG'. However its very sensitivity makes it unsuitable for the compilation of a ranking list because small differences in CG have little significance. The second goal is to create an index which reflects performance over an entire season and is not biased towards recent results. This is the Average Grade or 'AG' which as its name suggests is simply the average of all CGs achieved by the player concerned in the relevant period. It corresponds to a Chess grade and is a reliable index of relative playing strength. AGs are calculated for all players who have played at least 12 games in a period of 12 months. They are recalculated twice a year — on 31st July (end of selectors' year) and 31st October (end of season). Thus it can be seen that the CGs achieved in one half-season will be involved in the calculation of two AGs. In future the proper emphasis on the AG will be reflected by restricting publication of the Current Grades List to 31st July when it will appear with the Average Grades List to indicate those who have enjoyed good form immediately before the Eights are selected.

S N Mulliner

Pre-Qualifying in the Open Championships 1981

At the Council Meeting held on 18th October 1980 it was agreed to accept a Tournament Committee recommendation that pre-qualifying be introduced into the organisation of the Open Championships. The main reason for this important change is the need to counter the increasing congestion in the schedule of play in the Opens due to the steady increase in entries since the early seventies. The Tournament Committee considered various possible solutions before recommending the Pre-Qualifying System ("PQS") submitted by Steve Mulliner who has written an explanatory article printed below. The feature of the PQS which will be of most importance to would-be Opens entrants is that it does away with a handicap cut-off which would bar those with handicaps no higher than 1½ or 2. Instead anyone with a handicap of 4 or less may enter and be certain of having a chance to play at Hurlingham depending on their success in the pre-qualifying stage.

THE PQS

1. Function

The primary function of the PQS is to reduce the entries for the Singles Championship to 32 *qualifiers* before Opens Week begins. The PQS has no direct effect on the Doubles Championship. However entries for that event are now limited by the requirement that each pair must contain at least one Singles qualifier. A qualifier who entered the Doubles without a partner or with one who withdrew before the draw for the Opens proper will be paired with another in a similar position.

2. Method

a) Entries close on 1st May. The Singles entry is then divided into two parts — the *exempt entrants* (the lowest-handicapped entrants who do not have to pre-

qualify and thus become qualifiers automatically) and the *candidates* (the remaining entrants who are required to pre-qualify). The number of candidates and exempt entrants depends on the size of the Singles entry. The theory and mathematics of the PQS are explained below. As already indicated the division of Singles entrants into exempt entrants and candidates is done according to handicap. If, as is likely, there is a tie for the last exempt place or places the matter will be decided by a ballot of all entrants with the relevant handicap. The 'winners' will become exempt entrants, the 'losers' will become candidates.

- The candidates are divided into groups of four. Each group plays best-of-three matches in a two round knockout called an *eliminator*. Each eliminator thus produces one winner and three losers. It follows that after all the eliminators have been played three-quarters of the candidates will have been eliminated. The successful quarter will join the exempt entrants to make up the 32 qualifiers who will contest the Singles Championship at Hurlingham in Opens Week.
- The eliminators are played at conveniently located *venues* on a weekend about six weeks before Opens Week. As far as possible each candidate will pre-qualify at the venue nearest their home address. In 1981 the eliminators will be played at Bowdon, Cheltenham, Harrow, Southwick and Wrest Park on whichever of the weekends 30/31st May or 6/7th June is more convenient to the club concerned. In the C A Calendar for 1981 it will be seen that these weekends are simply referred to as Opens Pre-Qualifying Weekend A and B respectively. Each candidate will be informed of the venue, date and draw for his or her eliminator in the first week of May.

3. Practical points

- The eliminators are played early in order to permit the unsuccessful candidates to rearrange leave or holiday plans as it is anticipated that only a few will wish to play in the Doubles with a qualifier partner should they themselves fail to qualify. In the event that an unsuccessful candidate does decide to withdraw from the Doubles he or she should inform the C A Secretary as soon as possible. For the avoidance of doubt it is pointed out that if both partners in a pair fail to qualify that pair is withdrawn from the Doubles automatically.
- Full entry fees should accompany entries. Unsuccessful candidates will receive a refund of part of their entry fees. Although it has not yet been finalised it is expected that an unsuccessful candidate who also withdraws from the Doubles will recoup his full Doubles entry fee plus about half of his Singles entry fee.
- It is likely that in 1981 entrants handicapped at scratch and below will be exempt and that those handicapped at 1½ and above will certainly have to pre-qualify. If any entrant in the doubtful range knows that he will not be available for pre-qualifying on the dates given above he should indicate accordingly on his entry form. The letters 'NPQ' are suggested. Should he in fact turn out to be exempt all will be well. If he should turn out to be a candidate his Singles entry and fee will be returned.
- Last minute withdrawals from the Singles proper or from the Doubles will be remedied by sitting reserves. Any entrant prepared to act as a sitting reserve in the event of failing to qualify should indicate accordingly on his entry form. The letters 'SR' are recommended.

4. Theory

The central assumption in the PQS is that only one quarter of the candidates should survive the pre-qualifying stage. This arbitrary figure is chosen because it seems to lead to a suitable balance between the numbers of exempt entrants and candidates for any given Singles entry. The mathematical reader will see that it follows that the number of candidates needed to reduce any given Singles entry to 32 is given by the formula

$$C = 4/3 (S - 32)$$

Where C = candidates and S = Singles entry.

If the expression $4/3 (S - 32)$ is not a whole number, C is taken as the next higher integer. If C is not a perfect multiple of 4 it follows that not all the eliminators will contain a full complement of four candidates. In fact a maximum of two eliminators will contain only three candidates, thus giving someone a bye to the eliminator final. The examples given below will clarify all these points.

S	X	C	E	E ₃	E ₄
32	32	0	0	0	0
42	28	14	4	2	2
43	28	15	4	1	3
44	28	16	4	0	4
45	27	18	5	2	3
46	27	19	5	1	4
47	27	20	5	0	5
50	26	24	6	0	6
60	22	38	10	2	8
70	19	51	13	1	12
80	16	64	16	0	16

Where X = exempt entrants (as $X = S - C$)

E₃ = eliminators containing 3 candidates

E₄ = eliminators containing 4 candidates

E = total number of eliminators

5. Conclusion

It is greatly to be hoped that many improving players in the handicap range 1½ to 4 will feel encouraged to enter the Opens in 1981 as the result of the introduction of the PQS. The best way to improve one's standard of play is to compete against the finest players in the country. The Open Championships provide unquestionably the best opportunity for doing this. Now that the PQS is available no-one who qualifies for the Opens need have any qualms about playing at Hurlingham in Croquet's premier tournament. They will know that they have got there on merit and on nothing else.

S N Mulliner

Hunstanton 25–30 August

The 81st Hunstanton Open tournament was marred only by unseasonable weather on the last two days, making conditions for controlled croquet very difficult. High blustery winds and driving rain led to remarks by some onlookers to the effect that they were relieved not to have reached the final stages of the tournament. The use of double banking for virtually every game until Finals day is seldom met in the C.A. Calendar, but it is gratifying to report that at Hunstanton it worked very satisfactorily and accommodated an entry which much exceeded that, for example, of 22 years ago, when the present writer first played there in single banking days.

The abiding memory for most of the participants was the presence of a number of teenagers, embracing James Carlisle who at age 12 had hardly qualified under that head, John

Walters and Mark Avery, already regarded by some as a hardened campaigner. One or more of the three seemed to be always on the lawns and Finals Day was liberally endowed by their participation. One could not fail to be impressed by their impeccable lawn manners, a tribute to their mentors and parents.

Although Mark Avery had already completed a triple peel in a 'B' class event three weeks previously, he had not played in an 'A' Open before Hunstanton. He quickly made his mark beating a handful of lower bisquers before reaching the Final of the Draw where he surprised everybody but himself in beating David Croker, a particularly notable win against a leading Chairman's Salver contestant. In the Play-Off against John Haigh, who had already beaten him narrowly in the Process, Mark just prevailed and has earned a reduction of a full bisque to 2½. It must surely be very rare to find in the annals of the C.A. a 14 year old winning an 'A' class Open event.

It is a pity that David Turner, a local product, cannot spare more time for competitive croquet. He won the 'B' class although only after a tough Play-Off against Roger Wheeler. The 'C' class event and the 'Y' produced the same finalists, James Carlisle and John Walters. In both events the latter's slightly greater experience told against James, who, whilst improving visibly with every game he played, has naturally had little time to acquire tactical ploys. We see a promising future for both these young men. As a light-hearted comment, James & John in the 'Y' were competing for possession of the handsome cigarette box donated by Richard Rothwell. In the doubles it was gratifying to note that of the 17 games only one was determined on time. George Henshaw's experience and John Walter's execution of his instructions sufficed to win them the handsome Hope Cups. Dr. Parker's first appearance at Hunstanton led to success in the Big Handicap, while one who caught the eye in this event was the improving Janet Assheton who lowered Mark Avery's colours.

Sarah Hampson had one or two possible blocking problems (including that of herself) towards the end of the week, but maintained her customary managerial sang froid and can look back to a very satisfactory week.

Edinburgh 25–30 August

The entry for the Club's annual tournament took on a new pattern this year with a decrease in the number of low handicap players and an increase in the number of high bisquers who in previous years had felt "not good enough to play in a tournament". To cope with the imbalance, Bob Calder, acting as manager for the first time, invoked Regulation 19 (f) (iii) and altered the handicap limits for the class events. This resulted in the final of the high handicap event being between Mrs M. Wright (13) and A. Ramsay (16). Mrs Wright's victory showed that high bisquers can enjoy competitive croquet when they are not completely out-classed.

With a total entry of twenty nine the manager would have had problems in fitting in all the games had it not been that a number of players entered for only one event. This produced eighteen players in the "Big Handicap" in which Robert Milne was endeavouring to retain the trophy which he won last year. After narrow wins in the first three rounds he succumbed in the final to R.E. Wallis who used his one and a half bisques in the efficient manner one would expect from a player of his experience.

The unluckiest player of the week was Mrs Margaret Lauder who played more games than anyone else, but all she had to

show for it at the end of the week was to be runner up in the Y of the "Big Handicap". On her way to this relatively undistinguished finish she had reached the final of the Draw in the Open event beating the winner of the Process on the way and had likewise eliminated the winner of the Draw in the first round of the Process. In the Doubles, she and her partner, Geoff Roy, had good wins in the first two rounds but suffered an unfortunate narrow defeat on time in the semi-finals. Beaten in the first round of the X by the eventual winner, she survived to the final of the Y only to fall victim to Donald Lamont.

Finals day on Saturday produced some interesting croquet with a thrilling finish in the play-off of the open event in which Rod Williams eventually beat Stewart Malin by 2. The afternoon game attracting most spectator interest was the Doubles final in which Jimmy and Carol Rowe were playing "at home" against the Glasgow - Middlesbrough combination of Rod Williams and Reg Forth. The home crowd were glad to see the Rowes gaining a solid victory.

Spencer-Ell Cup - Cheltenham 1-5 September

Mr Fraser Ross, in a recent issue of this Gazette, described a croquet machine in the final stages of design. The prototype was seen in action for the first time at Cheltenham. The designer has cleverly made the machine anthropomorphic and even had the courtesy to programme it occasionally to make mistakes. Failings were however, rarely demonstrated and the machine would accept only a very high standard; it would sadly shake its mechanical head when a target ball was merely clipped instead of firmly roqueted in the middle. The device was for some time believed to be a mere mortal called John McCullough, but anyone making that number of long roquets, long rolls and long hoops cannot be of ordinary clay.

It is therefore greatly to Ian Bond's credit that he was able to succeed in the competition so triumphantly. Your correspondent was his first victim, and also had to endure a most outrageous attempted triple where balls were peeled from great distances and impossible angles and only a sad misfortune at rover prolonged the game. From thence Bond settled into a steady routine of accurate shooting and consistent hoop running which proved to be indomitable.

Important influences on the standard of play, were beautiful weather, but slowish lawns, and a barrel of Doddington's ordinary. It certainly assisted Ian Bond to win a second round game from well behind and all paid grateful tribute to Michael Stevens; the ale organiser. The dusk saw Mark Ormerod and Les Butler in a long battle in which Ormerod slowly triumphed. Butler had had a bad day but Bond and McCullough each had three wins.

Tuesday morning saw a fine game between Bond and McCullough. Bond was followed to 4-back but McCullough was unable to maintain his momentum (design fault?) so that Bond led the table with four wins. Les Butler was having a better day and was involved in the match of the week. Bond stared into the abyss for the first time when Butler showed his form and quickly reached the peg with both balls; Bond having made one hoop in the interval. Butler was only able to peg out blue leaving black by the peg. Bond took a sip of ale and hit black (to no ones' surprise) and conducted a safe 3-ball break to the peg. Butler missed the shot and Bond conducted his second break of great accuracy, although there was a crokesque touch when the second break was maintained with a roll to the 4th from north of six. John McCullough showed feet of clay on Wednesday morning when he was beaten by

that master tactician, Michael Stevens, who pegged out McCullough's black when blue was for penultimate and red for 2-back.

The subsidiary tripling competition was making little progress, although your correspondent had a clear lead in terms of failed attempts. However, it was Michael Stevens in the eighth round who retrieved a crumbling triple with a straight double peel. Other Roehampton players maintained the sequence of failed peeling manoeuvres and interest centred on the 12th round game between Bond and McCullough. Here fortunes were reversed in a game where Bond didn't make a mistake - and lost. The end of the twelfth round thus saw Bond with 11 wins and McCullough on 10.

The 13th round, being played in the morning, saw Edgar Jackson in peak form and painlessly despatched Michael Stevens. Thus, although the winner of the event was never in doubt, the battle for 3rd place between Noble and Stevens was level, with each on 7 wins, but Stevens had the misfortune to meet McCullough in the 14th round, whilst Noble found the grail with a straightforward triple against Eddie Bell.

Ian Bond played accurately and adventurously throughout the week; the adventure lying less in elaborate peeling attempts than in brave play to establish breaks. He has sufficient control and delicacy to enable him to continue improving. John McCullough has a more limited style and depends crucially on accurate shooting. He has made much rapid progress but he will need more variety in his style to maintain his development.

This was certainly not the most riveting Spencer-Ell, with few games of a really high standard and an outcome which was never in doubt. However, few invitation events could have had a better atmosphere and much credit must be given to the Cheltenham Club; among the most agreeable hosts known.

G W Noble

Parkstone 11 8-13 September

If there were a Michelin Guide to Croquet Tournaments Parkstone would merit two, or maybe three, rosettes! It is always a friendly, well-organised tournament and this one, again under the watchful eyes of Pat Newton and Margaret McMordie, was no exception. It can be no surprise that there was a substantial waiting list!

Creature comforts were, as always, well provided for and at least the daylight weather, windy and sometimes cool though it was, was mainly dry and often sunny. The lawns were in fine condition - indeed a credit to the groundstaff - although there were those who found them difficult to play! The balls were happily round, gorgeously glistening and all untouched by croquet mallet (a £300 investment?), some players, however, complained that they were too new to control! But then, croquet players love something to grumble about: Their excuses for nondescript play can often be imaginative, sometimes even lyrical and almost never-ending.

Perhaps statistics will not confirm it but it certainly seemed that visitors outnumbered the Parkstone members. Entrants came from Eastbourne, Budleigh, Bristol, Cheltenham, Hurlingham, Leicester and Henley, and half the events were won by 'foreigners'.

Smokey Eades was lucky to scrape through the preliminary rounds of the Open Draw but finished in convincing style against Tiny Tyrwhitt-Drake and, in the play off, against Les Butler - an easy winner of the Process beating Dab Wheeler in the Final - so winning the Bournemouth Bowl.

In the Handicap Singles X both semi-finals were won by a margin of 2. Les Butler had a hard-fought and exciting win over Allen Parker whilst Vera Tyrwhitt-Drake beat Eades with a magnificent 18 yard shot to the peg from the East boundary, (Eades having foolishly taken out her black before laying up).

Sadly, on their way down to Parkstone the Tyrwhitt-Drakes were involved in a motor accident which deprived them of rear lights. It was essential, therefore, that they should start their slow journey home by 16.30 hours and this precluded the playing of the final between Butler and Mrs Tyrwhitt-Drake. Les Butler accorded a walk-over and so became holder of the Bishop Cup.

In the Handicap Singles Y Bob Carder beat Miss Robertson in the Final +3. It was a lively game with Miss Robertson well ahead and then, all bisques gone, Carder catching up, taking out his opponent's Rover and leaving Miss Robertson still to run penult.

The Handicap Doubles saw some exciting finishes. The Parkers beat Alec Rushbrooke and Dr Marshall +2 on time when, at one stage, the latter pair appeared to have the game in their pocket. Whilst Butler and Mrs Mitchel in the other semi-final beat Kent and Pat Parker +1 - again on time. These two home wins allowed the Final of the doubles to be played on Sunday after The Tournament proper had ended, otherwise Les Butler could have had to play four games on Saturday - three finals and a semi!

Whether or not this bunching could have been avoided if Parkstone were not so loath to double-bank is a moot point. The Manager's task is, of course, always made doubly hard when one or more players keep winning in a number of events. It would, however, have avoided the experience of some participants who had to wait until after 16.00 hours on the first day before striking a ball in contest.

In the final of the Level Singles Alan Hutcheson beat Robert Wheeler quite decisively and thus carried away to Eastbourne the Deshon Cup. Whilst Joyce Barnes in the Handicap Singles (9 bisques and over) having failed at Rover on three separate occasions - still managed to win the Halse Salver by beating Mrs Marshall in the final +6.

All in all it was a most pleasant and successful Tournament. Again, a grateful thanks to that hard-working team Pat Newton and Margaret McMordie and to Mrs Allen and her team who catered so well.

Roehampton - 15-20 September

Because of an oversight, Graham Martin who managed this ever popular tournament was confronted with an entry of four more competitors than the maximum he had bargained for. However, with judicious planning and a liberal measure of double banking, everything was tidily wrapped up early on Saturday evening.

Notable features of the week included the entry of Nigel Aspinall fresh from his victory in the President's Cup, the debut of two Cambridge undergraduates who should make their mark in the croquet world, and the presence of Kay Longman who is this year celebrating her Golden Jubilee as an Associate, having played in, and won, her first event at Southwick in September 1930.

Nigel's entry for the Ranelagh Gold Cup produced a rather lop-sided look since he was the only minus player (and 3½ minus to boot!) with Robin Godby at scratch, his nearest rival. In his first six games he conceded a total of only 11 points to his opponents, and although Robin pressed him somewhat

harder in the final of both halves, the issue was rarely in doubt.

The Macdonald clan was much in evidence throughout the week, and Paul with his victory in the B level singles and Pat with hers in the C handicap achieved a noteworthy double. Simon Garrett had been fancied to beat Paul in his play-off but succumbed narrowly. Pat for her part had to play Beryl Gosden in the final both of the Draw and Process, and as the issue went to a third game, the ladies were visibly wilting towards the ninth hour of their tussle, a hard stint for high bisquers.

Hilditch, one of the two Cambridge players already referred to, won the X handicap singles from the rapidly improving Paul Campion, and might well have prevailed in the Handicap Doubles when partnered by his university colleague Bowen, but the latter had unfortunately to scratch before beginning the semi final. The end of the doubles final produced, as is so often the case, a nail biting finish. Liz Neal when set to finish the game, failed at the rover with the opponents both on penultimate. From this point onwards Lionel Adams took charge and peeled his partner's ball through the remaining two hoops and eventually pegged out, although taking three more turns to achieve the victory; Barbara Mansfield, his partner, acting purely as a cheer leader from the sidelines for the last 15 minutes.

Remembering the perfection of the Roehampton lawns in the decade or two following the resumption of play after the second world war, it is surprising to find unexpected unevenness round some of the boundaries together with variations of pace which were seldom met in the past. It is understood that the lawns are to be closed earlier than usual this autumn giving more time for the greenkeepers to address themselves to ironing out the imperfections. What can be guaranteed in any case is the return next year of all the contestants who are able to take the opportunity of resuming acquaintance in the very friendly atmosphere that always permeates Roehampton.

Cheltenham 5 Day Tournament - 24-28 September

Glorious sunny weather marked the first three days of this fun tournament, though Saturday and Sunday failed to reach this high standard. There was fierce competition between the small blocks of 4 in both the doubles and the singles and like the snooker championships, the two winners in each block were drawn to play in the knock-out. Those failing to qualify enjoyed single ball games on the top lawns, again in blocks and much fun was had by all.

One of the highlights of the tournament was a family doubles match between the Newtons and the Tyrwhitt Wheelers in which the combined ages of those on court equalled 313 years. Is this a record?

Carol Chard played well to beat Edgar Jackson with a double peel, using only one bisque to achieve this. She is a rapidly improving player. As usual, the lunches and teas were super. Except for not being able to remember which day of the week it was, as most tournaments start on Monday or at the weekend, it was a great success and was well worth a return journey of over 300 miles, thanks to the efficient management of Edgar Jackson.

J Neville Rolfe

Weekend Tournaments

Roehampton Open Weekend 23-24 August

This tournament is a collection of other people's ideas. Roger Wood and friends of Cowhorn fame had the idea of a weekend warm-up for the Eights and the format is reminiscent of the

new Cheltenham Level Weekend. Due credit is hereby given to the wittiest man in Croquet — Paul 'Turn-Ups' Hands! A field of 16 duly contested a modified 6 round Swiss. After 2 rounds they divided into 4 'goats' with 100% records and 12 'sheep'. The goats played best-of-three semi-finals, final and 3rd place play-off. The sheep played 4 more rounds of Swiss for a separate prize. Anyway — enough of preliminaries.

The three Roehampton lawns were fast (after 5 days mowing for the Ladies Field Cup) and decidedly testing (as Bernard Neal was to discover, for instance). The 1st round produced no upsets as such although all the 'expected semi-finalists' (no seeds at virtuous Roehampton, perish the thought) had to struggle and Ian Bond very nearly defeated Bernard Neal. In fact he could consider himself distinctly unlucky. Facing opponent balls in opposite baulks, a lift and imminent disaster Neal calmly (sic) rolled up to penult from the North boundary, made it, made rover and pegged out. Fortune indeed favoured the brave! However in the 2nd round drama came thick and fast. Robert Prichard (who took a game off Eric Solomon in the Opens) laid up at rover for peg and rover with Roger Murfitt's surviving ball 25 yards away. To his eternal credit he hit — but how nearly another Prichard scalp of international calibre. Graeme Roberts hadn't heard of 'be-kind-to-manager-week' and one mistake from the peripatetic Mulliner was enough to ensure his continued interest in the goat family. And of course Bernard Neal once again showed how much he enjoys really close games and balls that move due East when intended to go due South. However Robin Hobbs made the final error and another 'vegetative generation capsule' survived.

The semi-finals were splendid matches in quite different ways. Neal was first in control in both games against Solomon but a blob at Hoop 3 gave Eric a chance to display his meticulous accuracy with a break and a triple in the first game followed by exactly the same procedure from both in the second. In the New Zealand Closed Championship Murfitt gained sweet revenge for their Opens meeting. He won the first in 45 minutes avec triple and appeared to have the second sewn up too. However Roberts had other ideas and fought back hard — only to come to final grief by failing to approach rover.

Such had been the expedition in play (both semifinals completed on Saturday evening) that a late start of 11 am could be permitted for the finalists. However Roger Murfitt still managed to have lunch with the trophy (of which more anon) already won. The first was as per Roberts — quick, accurate and embellished with a triple. The second was not quite so tidy but ended on a note of supreme confidence. A long peg-out narrowly missed causing the forward ball to finish 10 yards beyond the peg. Eric joined his partner — only to see Roger hit the peg extremely hard and bang in the middle. Meanwhile Roberts and Neal continued a more leisurely duel into the hot afternoon. Graeme won the first decisively if not rapidly and pegged out one ball in the second. Bernard survived healthily for a time but eventually gave his opponent the chance he needed.

In the goat section Steve Mulliner avoided further defeat by adopting a policy of naked aggression (it was rather warm) to win the Swiss Roll. He was closely pursued by Mike Stevens with 4/6. Others who distinguished themselves include Ian Bond (who accomplished all 3 peels of a 'delayed' straight triple, cannoned the peelee up to the peg . . . but couldn't quite get the rush he needed for the combination peg-out), and Messrs. Battison, Cordingley and Greenwood. These latter are newcomers to the A-Class but made it very clear that it is there that they belong.

The tournament finished at 6 pm when Roger Murfitt was presented with the Rowlock — an unusual trophy consisting of the said article gilt and mounted on a mahogany base. Although some doubts were expressed about the trophy's raison d'être none were expressed about the quality of the play or the players. The field contained 8 who had been invited to play in an Eight plus the winner himself and they played 47 games on 3 double-banked lawns in an average time of under 2 hours per game. It was very good fun to manage and — by all accounts — to play in. It is hoped to repeat it in 1981 on the same relative dates. SNM

Cheltenham September Weekend 12–14 September

This year's entrants in the Cheltenham September weekend tournament were divided into 6 blocks of 7 to give each person six games rather than the usual 5. This was achieved at the cost of some double banking (generally 2 of the games); a 9.45 am start on the Saturday and Sunday and implementation of the Bray system to shorten some of the games.

There was the usual strong contingent from Budleigh and Phyllis Court and a generally higher standard of entry than of late (though not an obviously higher standard of play) with such stars as Hope, Hands, Croker, McCullough, Jackson and Neal. The latter won Block I after a narrow victory of 3 points over Sos Roe who played well to come second. Block II looked as if it might be a battle between Hope, McLaren and John Rose — it was, with Rose the eventual winner in spite of being 'twenty sixed' by McLaren who came second. In the third block, comprising Hands, Moorcraft, Gooch, Yeoman, Searle, Gardiner and Bladder, the longer bisquers were more favoured and with wins of 26, 26 and 24 against the top 3 players, the handicapper's attention was quickly drawn to Mr Bladder. However, in the end his prize was only to be runner up to Angela Searle who had played with quiet competence to take 5 out of her 6 games. Block IV held no surprises with Croker taking the first place and Christine Bagnall narrowly beating Kitty Wheeler into second place.

With 3 wins under his belt it was difficult to see anyone stopping 'Paddy' Paddon from claiming Block V but so they did, or at least so did Heather Handley who played some good croquet against strong opposition. In Block VI Taylor came third — his play being likened by himself to some of the lawns — rather uneven and with a number of totally bare patches. Phil Johnson was in his usual winning form but even he could only come second to Colin Snowdon who must be rated 'man of the match' with 6 out of 6 and an impressive points total of 107.

Also to be congratulated is Liz Neal who managed the tournament with a charming efficiency deceptively suggestive of many years experience of this demanding art.

Ryde Weekend 12–14 September

Another Ryde annual weekend tournament has been successfully completed under the able management of Gerald Birch. The weather was fine except for a short heavy shower on Saturday afternoon. 17 took part including six welcome newcomers, Norman and Phyllis Moore (Phyllis Court) playing in their first tournament, Peter Alvey (Harrow Oak), John Bowman (Southwick), Alan Oldham (the C. A's efficient Treasurer), and Stephen Thomas (Nottingham).

The players were divided into 3 blocks by handicap. Block A was played as Opens with 6 players, and was won by John Bowman (4 wins, + 63 points) with Richard Rothwell as runner-up (4 wins, + 32 points). Block B was played under handicap with 6 players and was won by Arthur Rowlands the popular Club Caterer (5 wins + 77 points) with the new Club

Secretary (following the recent sad death of Dorothy Rogers) Roy Newnham (4 wins + 41 points), and Block C (14–16 bisques) with 5 taking part was won by Mrs Sheila Hudson (a new local player playing in her first tournament 4 wins + 38 points) with Stephen Thomas runner up (3 wins + 20 points). Altogether a most enjoyable weekend (as ever) on four vastly improved lawns (under the supervision of Cyril Pountney) and first class hospitality led by the President Joe Orchard including a most successful Wine and Cheese Party on Friday evening when both croquet and lawn tennis members and guests had a happy get-together. RFR

Nottingham September Weekend 19–21 September

The twenty five players in the September weekend this year included visitors from the West Midlands, the North East and even a few intrepid Southerners who found that the tales of the local polar bears creeping up through the blizzards and stealing the cucumber sandwiches were slightly exaggerated. Managers Dab and Roger Wheeler calmly piloted the competitors through a complicated schedule involving American, Swiss and knockout stages which gave most people six games and the more successful seven. The interesting innovation of playing the double-banked games in the reverse direction (hoops 3, 4, 1, 2 etc.) caused some confusion at first but proved to be surprisingly easy to get used to. The event was won by Stephen Hare from Walsall winning all his seven games before tea on Sunday.

Cheltenham October Weekend 10–12 October

A cold wind and leaden sky reminded us that this was the last tournament of the season and within an hour of the start it was raining steadily. Player-Manager Edgar Jackson unfortunately had to retire to his sick-bed, his dual role being taken over by Liz and Bernard Neal. Liz's management was admirable and Bernard completed a triple peel in his first game. Mercifully by Sunday the weather was transformed to glorious sunshine. Partial double banking enabled 42 players each to play 6 games but only Phil Johnson completed the tournament undefeated.

Tournament Results

- The games listed as being won by a player, appear in the order in which they were played. Thus if 'A bt B +2, C +4, D +3', A first played against B, then C and finally D. If the player A won the event, the last game listed would have been the final, the penultimate game the semi-final, and so on. Otherwise the last game listed would have been the one before the player was knocked out of the event.
- In each event the games won by the winner of the event are listed first, then the games won by the losing finalist, then those won by the losing semi-finalists, and so on.
- The initials (and handicap for handicap games) of a player are generally given only once in each event. They will be found in the first game played by that player. But no initials (and handicaps) are given in the results of a PROCESS, of a Draw and Process Competition, or in a Y or Z Event.
- The details given are sufficient to enable the reader to reconstruct the original results sheet."

73rd South of England Championships — Devonshire Park 7–12 April

Event 1. *The Ionides Challenge Trophy. Championship of the South of England.* (14 entries)

Outright Winner T F Owen

DRAW

Winner: T F Owen bt L Wharrad +11, Rees +14, Mrs Wheeler +14.

Runners-up: Mrs R F Wheeler bt D A Harris +12, M Tapp +11, Tucker +9, E J Tucker bt E C Tyrwhitt Drake +20, S Tapp +10, E E Rees bt A F Colman +8, Miss Joly +2, M Tapp bt A E Tapp +2, S Tapp bt J Haigh +10, Miss F Joly bt Cdr G Borrett +2.

PROCESS

Winner: Owen bt Tyrwhitt Drake +19, Rees +1 (t), S Tapp +19, A E Tapp +11.

Runners-up: A E Tapp bt Miss Joly +15, Haigh +4, Mrs Wheeler +11, Mrs Wheeler bt Coleman +18, Tucker opp. scr., S Tapp bt Borrett +19, Tucker bt Wharrad +7, Rees bt Harris +17, Borrett bt M Tapp +2.

Event 2. *The Devonshire Park Salver (2½ bisques and over) Advanced Play* (8 entries)

Play-off: Miss S G Hampson bt C E Knight +3 (t)

DRAW

Winner: Miss S G Hampson bt Mrs G F H Elvey +8, Knight +2, Sanford +12.

Runners-up: C B Sanford bt Dr D A Parker +7, Wheeler +14, Dr R F Wheeler bt Dr C A Parker +2, C E Knight bt R E Wallis +11.

PROCESS

Winner: Knight bt Sanford +20, Wheeler +4, Miss Hampson +5.

Runners-up: Miss Hampson bt Dr C A Parker +12, Dr D A Parker +18, Wheeler bt Mrs Elvey +7, Dr D A Parker bt Wallis +18.

Event 3. *The Luard Cup (5½ bisques and over) Level Play* (11 entries)

Play-off (Reg. 20 (d))

Winner: W Nicholson bt D M Horne +5, R P Chappell +1, Mrs Wills +7.

Runner-up: Mrs H G Wills bt Mrs E C Tyrwhitt Drake +2, Lt Col D F T Brown +16.

DRAW

Qualifiers: Mrs E C Tyrwhitt Drake bt Mrs E M Temple +8, Lt Col D F T Brown bt D M Horne +9, Bowman +4, Mrs H G Wills bt Miss P E Parker +4, R P Chappell bt Miss E X Hodgins +4.

Runners-up: J H Bowman bt W Nicholson +12, Miss P E Parker bt Mrs E J Tucker +5.

PROCESS

Qualifiers: Brown bt Mrs Wills +5, Chappell bt Bowman +10, Mrs Tucker +22, Horne bt Mrs Tyrwhitt Drake +6, Nicholson bt Miss Parker +15.

Runners-up: Mrs Wills bt Mrs Temple + 8, Mrs Tyrwhitt Drake bt Miss Hodgins +15.

Event 4. *The Trevor Williams Cup (9 bisques and over) Handicap Singles* (4 entries)

Winner: S J Hobson (12) 3 wins bt Mrs A E Millns (9) +23, J Van Berckel (10) +23, M A Holford (12) +25, Mrs Millns 2 wins bt Holford +24, Van Berckel +11, Van Berckel 1 win bt Holford +6 (ot), Holford Nil.

Event 5. *The Sussex Challenge Cup. Handicap Singles X* (32 entries)

Winner: S Tapp (0) bt Mrs A E Millns (9) +18, Dr D A Parker +12, Mrs Tyrwhitt Drake +14, Wharrad +13, Coleman +20.

Runners-up: A F Coleman (1½) bt Miss P E Parker (7½) +9, Knight +13, M Tapp +9, Hobson +3, S J Hobson (12) bt Mrs H G Wills (6½) +6, Bowman +6, A E Tapp +26, L Wharrad (3) bt Lt Col D F T Brown (6½) +4, Miss Hodgins +6, Harris +19, M Tapp (1) bt E C Tyrwhitt Drake (½) +23, Miss Hampson +12, A E Tapp (1) bt Mrs G F H Elvey (3½) +23, Miss Joly +2, D A Harris (1½) bt Dr C A Parker (3½) +16, Rees +5, Mrs E C Tyrwhitt Drake (6½) bt D M Horne (5½) +16, Haigh +24, C E Knight (4½) bt Mrs R F Wheeler (2½) +14, Miss S G Hampson (3) bt R P Chappell (6) +12, J H Bowman (6) bt R E Wallis (3½) +16, Miss F Joly (2) bt Cdr G Borrett (½) +25, Miss E X Hodgins (6) bt M A Holford (9*) +23, E E Rees (1½) bt Mrs E J Tucker (7) +3, Dr D A Parker (3) bt Dr R F Wheeler (5) +2, J Haigh (0) bt Mrs M Grout (7½) +13.

Event 5. *Handicap Singles Y* (16 entries)

Winner: Mrs Wheeler (2½) bt Miss Parker (7½) +9, Chappell opp. scr., Borrett +10, Dr C A Parker +14.

Compton (Club) 19 Oct.

R P Chappell 5 to 4½
W Nicholson 6½ to 6
E Strickland 6½ to 6
Mrs E Tyrwhitt Drake 5½ to 5
Mrs H G Wills 6½ to 6

Phyllis Court (Club) 23 Nov.

C L Greenbury 9 to 6
N Moore 16 (D14) to 15 Non-Associate
Miss A Searle 6½ to 5
J G Young 11 to 9

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Will Associates, other than those who pay by bankers order, please note that 1981 annual subscriptions were due on **1st January 1981**. The 1981 rates are the same as for 1980, namely:

Standard Rate £7.00
Reduced Rate (non-tournament and golf croquet only) . £3.50
Junior Rate (under 24 on 31.12.80) £3.50
Overseas Rate (excluding Eire) £4.00

To avoid unnecessary office work PLEASE pay without delay. Irish Associates are reminded that there is a surcharge of £1.00 unless payment is through a bank in England or by bankers draft in sterling.

REGISTRATION FEES

Club Secretaries are reminded that the annual Registration Fee for Registered Clubs of £4.00 is due on 1st January.

Affiliation Fees of £4.00 for Overseas Associations and Clubs are due on 1st January.

FIXTURES BOOK 1981

The 1981 Fixtures Book was sent to all Life Members, Standard and Junior Rate Associates and all Registered Clubs at the beginning of December. Any of these not having received their copy should notify the C A Secretary.

CLOSING DATES

Club Secretaries are reminded that closing dates for C A events are as follows:—

Inter-Club Championship 25th February
Longman Club Team Cup 25th February
All England Handicap (numbers and entry fees) 20th May

For those concerned the entries for the Inter-Counties Championship close on 25th February.

Why not enter NOW so that the dates are not overlooked.

PRICES

The retail price of the new edition of KNOW THE GAME — CROQUET (now available) is 70p. Copies are available from the C A office to Associates and Registered Clubs at 60p exclusive of postage.

The prices of C A Ties has had to be raised. Present prices (which include postage) are:—

Associates Tie (in crimpolene) £4.00
President's Cup, Chairman's Salver and Spencer Ell Cup Ties £6.50.

The price of Miller and Thorp's CROQUET AND HOW TO PLAY IT is now £1.60 + 50p postage. This is the original

published price in 1966.

Copies of the 1972 Handbook (with full list of officers. Rules of the Association, C A Trophies and Winners) are available at 25p + postage 15p). Included are duplicated amendment sheets bringing it up to date.

Colonel Prichard's book on the HISTORY OF CROQUET is due to be published in May 1981 at £8.95. Copies will be sold by the C A to Associates and Clubs at £6.00 (+ postage). Orders can be placed now.

NEW OFFICIAL MANAGER

S N Mulliner

NEW OFFICIAL REFEREE

I D Bond

NEW OFFICIAL HANDICAPPERS

Mrs C Bagnall
D J Croker
M G Tompkinson

INTERPRETATION OF THE LAWS — LAW 18 (c)

In accordance with Rule XV the Chairman of the Laws Committee has given the undermentioned interpretation on Law 18 (c). His decision is final until subsequently modified by the Council.

LAW 18 (c) PLACING THE BALLS FOR THE CROQUET STROKE

The last sentence reads: "He may not move such ball intentionally but if he does so unintentionally he shall replace it without penalty".

In this context 'moving' includes rotating the croqueted ball on an axis for any purpose, such as re-aligning the milling. This does not preclude a player from lifting the ball to remove any mud or a leaf, but it must be replaced in a precisely similar position. This lifting is not allowed if the position of the ball is critical.

Changes In The Clubs

BARBICAN New Secretary: Miss A E Bone, 606 Bryer Court, Barbican, London. EC2Y 8DE

PHYLLIS COURT New Secretary: Miss Angela Searle, 7 Ashby Road, Northchurch Berkhamsted, Herts. HP4 3SJ
Tel: Berkhamsted (044 27) 2944.

WREST PARK New Secretary (Acting): J A Wheeler, 4 Newbury Close, Silsoe, Bedford. MK45 4EZ Tel: Silsoe (0525) 60134.

Clubs re-classified "R" to "A": —

EATON HALL (Retford, Notts)
LILLESBALL (Newport, Salop)
OLD BANCROFTIANS (Woodford Green)
TRAUSCOED (Aberystwyth)

Club disbanded

UNILEVER (Isleworth)

Birthday Honour

Dr C Alan Parker: CBE

CALENDAR 1981

13—18 April
20—25 April
27 April — 2 May
2—4 May
11—16 May
18—23 May
25—30 May
30 May
30 May — 6 June
1—6 June
2—5 June
6 June
8—13 June
8—13 June
13 June
15—20 June
15—20 June
22—27 June
22—27 June
29 June — 4 July
4—9 July
9 July
5—9 July
6—11 July
13—18 July
20—26 July
30 July — 8 August
10—15 August
10—15 August
17—21 August
17—21 August
17—22 August
24—29 August
31 August — 5 September
5—6 September
7—10 September
7—12 September
7—11 September
7—11 September
8—12 September
14—19 September
23—27 September
3—4 October

South of England Championships 1 (Devonshire Park)
South of England Championships 2 (Devonshire Park)
Southwick 1
Cheltenham 1
Budleigh Salterton 1
Peel Memorials (Southwick)
Compton
Pimms International — Scotland v Wales (Southport)
Roehampton Evening
Parkstone 1
Inter-Counties Championships (Hurlingham & Roehampton)
Pimms International — England v Wales (Cheltenham)
Challenge & Gilbey (Budleigh Salterton)
Carrickmines 1
Pimms International — England v Scotland (Compton)
Men's & Women's Championships (Cheltenham)
Ryde
Veteran's Championships (Compton)
Northern Championships (Bowdon)
Budleigh Salterton 2
Woking: 2 Tournaments — Evening & Day
Woking — 1 Day Doubles
Colchester
Southwick 2
Open Championships (Hurlingham)
Cheltenham 2
Hurlingham
Carrickmines 2
Nottingham
Ladies' Field Cup (Colchester)
Ladies' Second Event (Southwick)
Edinburgh
Southwick 3
Hunstanton
All England Handicap Area Finals (at various venues)
Cheltenham 3 (B levels)
Parkstone 2
Chairman's Salver (Nottingham)
Spencer-Ell Cup (Hunstanton)
President's Cup (Hurlingham)
Roehampton
Cheltenham 4
All England Handicap Finals (Roehampton)

Weekend Tournaments

18—20 April	Cheltenham 1	12—14 June	Southwick
23—26 April	Roehampton 1	26—28 June	Nottingham 2
25—26 April	Southport & Birkdale 1	3—5 July	Wrest Park 2
2—4 May	Hunstanton 1	10—12 July	Woking
7—10 May	Compton 1	10—11 July	Colchester 2
9—10 May	Golf Croquet (Harrow Oak)	25—26 July	Compton 2
9—10 May	Hurlingham 1	25—26 July	Scottish C A 2 (Glasgow)
9—10 May	Scottish C A 1 (Edinburgh)	22—23 August	Roehampton 2
15—17 May	Wrest Park 1	28—31 August	Bowdon
23—25 May	Cheltenham 2	29—31 August	Cheltenham 3
23—25 May	Colchester 1	29—31 August	Cheltenham 2
23—25 May	Southport & Birkdale 2	11—13 September	Cheltenham 4
29—31 May	Nottingham 1	18—20 September	Nottingham 3
30—31 May	Opens — Pre-qualifying W/E a	18—20 September	Ryde
6—8 June	Hunstanton 2	18—20 September	Wrest Park 3
6—7 June	Opens — Pre-qualifying W/E b	25—27 September	Budleigh Salterton
		9—11 October	Cheltenham 5