

CROQUET



Inside:

The Royal Bank Nations Trophy

Australia's team for the Westwood Internationals

Tournament Results

Schools Croquet

PLUS: News and Views from Home & Overseas

£1.50



**DEBENHAM
TEWSON &
CHINNOCKS**

Chartered Surveyors
International Real Estate Consultants

THE BRITISH OPEN CROQUET CHAMPIONSHIPS 1986

The Hurlingham
Club
London SW6

Saturday 19th - 26th July 1986

**DEBENHAM
TEWSON &
CHINNOCKS**

Bancroft House, Paternoster Square,
London EC4P 4ET 01-236 1520

44 Brook Street, London W1A 4NA 01-408 1161

75 Davies Street, London W1A 1DZ 01-408 1161

Independent Professionals

United Kingdom - USA - Australia - Bahrain
Belgium - Germany - Hong Kong - Malaysia - Singapore

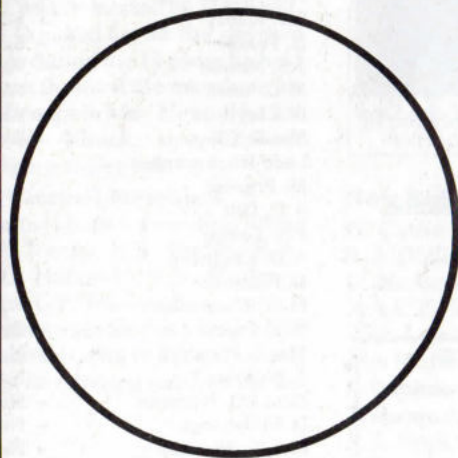
ORGANISED BY THE CROQUET ASSOCIATION

By kind permission of the Hurlingham Club, tickets are available to non members of the Croquet Association.

Apply to:
The Secretary,
The Croquet Association,
The Hurlingham Club,
Ranelagh Gardens,
London SW6 3PR

Price £3.00 per day.

Members of the Association
no charge.



Editorial

Well, it's happened – we've been on TV! A total of eight hours exposure on Granada, unfortunately only seen so far by those who live in the North West.

Reaction has ranged from viewers who were totally bemused by it all, to some who had never previously seen the game and now want to find out where they can learn to play. Viewing figures given elsewhere in this issue confirm that the viewers' reaction has been somewhat inconclusive – not good enough to say we were about to rival Dallas in the ratings, but at the same time not discouraging.

More detailed viewer reaction will be available in a few weeks time, but meanwhile we ought to record our appreciation to the Royal Bank of Scotland, whose sponsorship helped it to happen, to John Jaques & Son Ltd, who provided equipment and clothing for the event, and to Granada TV, who gave the project their full professional backing. Much has been learned by all concerned in this first effort to televise the game, and I am sure that, like the 'Master Chess' series and the snooker before it, future presentations will build on what has been achieved so far.

The Westwood International Croquet



Some of those who took part in the Royal Bank Nations Trophy at Granada: Back (l to r), Phil Cordingley, John Oaksey, Charles Lauder (producer), Stephen Wright, John McCullough, Nigel Aspinall, Eric Solomon, Terence Read, John Walters, Andrew Hope, Barry Keen, Chris Hudson, and Eric Harrison (director). Front (l to r), Fred Rogerson, Martin Murray, David Croker, Richard Hilditch, David Peterson, and Liz Taylor-Webb.

"Croquet", incorporating the Croquet Gazette, is published by The Croquet Association, The Hurlingham Club, Ranelagh Gardens, London SW6 3PR. Tel: 01-736 3148

Series will be in its middle stages by the time this appears in print and no doubt we shall be that much nearer forecasting who will win the MacRobertson Shield in what looks like being a very close contest.

The Series is providing the chance for representatives from a number of countries (both those involved in the series and others where croquet is played) to meet to discuss the formation of a World Croquet Federation.

Such a Federation would encourage the growth of croquet worldwide and would be the first step towards staging an International Croquet event at the World Games in Frankfurt in 1989. We wish all concerned success with their deliberations.

Sadly, as this issue goes to print, we have to record the death of two of Croquet's staunchest supporters – Lt Col David Prichard and Humphrey Hicks. Their considerable achievements will be reported in our next issue. Both have given much pleasure to croquet players generally – David Prichard as the author of the 'History of Croquet' and Humphrey Hicks as a legendary player for over 50 years. Both will be sorely missed.

CHRIS HUDSON

INDEX

	Page
The Westwood Internationals:	
Australian Team	3
An Old Campaigner's Forecast	5
Shield Statistics	6
Schools Croquet	7
Tournament Reports &	
Results:	9,10,11,15,22,24
The Coles	14
The Peel Memorials	23
News from Clubs	12
Referees Notebook	13
Royal Bank Nations Trophy	16,17
Press Cuttings	17
Your Letters	18,19,20
Snippets	21
Regional News	24
News from Overseas	25
Computer Croquet	26
Coaches Corner	27,28,29
Official Business	30,31

Publication Details

The CA Secretary is Mr B.C. Macmillan, The Croquet Association, The Hurlingham Club, Ranelagh Gardens, London SW6 3PR. Tel: 01-736 3148

The Editor (Coordinating) is Mr C. Hudson, The Oaklands, Englesea Brook, near Crewe, Cheshire SW2 5QW. Tel: 0270 820296

"Croquet" is published on the first day of every second month. To be certain of inclusion, copy should reach the Editor on the 20th of the month, two months before the month of issue (i.e. on 20th May for the issue being published on 1st July).

Tournament results and reports to be sent direct, within 7 days of completion of the tournament, to the Secretary of the CA.

Other contributions other than tournament results and reports should be sent to the Editor. They will be much welcomed and acknowledged. Photographs (preferably black and white) should also be sent to the Editor.

All correspondence about non-delivery of "Croquet", changes of address, telephone numbers, handicaps or officials should be sent to the CA Secretary and **not** to the Editor.

Photographs in this issue by: Deborah Latham, Jeff Bowden, Chris Hudson, Leslie Brand, Eric Harrison, Peter Dorke, John Best, Monitor Photography, Lionel Wharrad, John McCullough, and Granada staff photographers.

Front Cover: Nigel Aspinall being interviewed by Granada's Elton Welsby after winning the Royal Bank Nations Trophy. Centre is Mr H.E. Farley, Chief General Manager of the Royal Bank of Scotland, who made the prize presentations. (Photo: Granada Staff Photographer)

Annual Subscription Rate £7.50
(incl P&P). Individual copies £1.50

The Westwood Internationals

The Australian Team



The Australian Team (left to right): Back row - Spencer Buck, Neil Spooner (Capt), Barrie Chambers and Allan Cleland. Front row - George Latham and Damon Bidencepe

Neil Spooner, the Australian Captain, is 33 years old and is representing Australia for the third time. He has won a number of State and National titles and has represented South Australia on six occasions, twice as Captain. He won the British Silver Medal in 1976. He is a driver by occupation.

Barrie Chambers is an investment advisor. 49 years old, he is also representing Australia for the third time. He has won numerous National and State titles and was Captain of the 1982 team which came so very close to winning the Shield. He is from New South Wales.

Spencer Buck, 30, is self-employed and is appearing in his third MacRobertson Shield series. He has the distinction of being the only person to win every title at the National Championships in one year, namely 1980. He comes from South Australia.

Damon Bidencepe is a 26-year old student. He has been playing croquet for only four years, but is a very creative player who is well worth watching. He has represented New South Wales on three occasions.

Allan Cleland is a teacher. Age 33, from Victoria, he has won their Australian Croquet Council's Gold Medal three times and has been a member of the State team on four occasions, twice as Captain. He has an excellent long roquet shot and accurate ball control.

George Latham, aged 45, is also a teacher. He is the Victorian State Captain, and has won the Australian Open and Men's Championships on two occasions. He is the National Coaching Director and his very steady, persistent, and creative play has just earned him the 1986 British Silver Medal. He first represented Australia at Croquet against the United States in 1984.

MacROBERTSON SHIELD FAREWELL DINNER

The Hurlingham Club
Friday 18th July 1986

We are delighted that both the Australian and the New Zealand Ambassadors will be attending the Dinner.

Tickets are obtainable from the CA Secretary.

Price £15.00, inclusive of wine.

Dress: Lounge suits.

If you do not already have a ticket, please apply as soon as possible to make sure of getting one.

STOP PRESS...

LATEST TOUR RESULTS

Carrickmines	
Australia beat Ireland	7-2
Glasgow	
Australia beat Scotland	6-3
Southport	
New Zealand beat England	8-1
Bowdon	
New Zealand beat Australia	6-2
Edbaston	
Australia beat West Midlands	5-2
Cheltenham	
New Zealand beat Great Britain	5-4
Roehampton	
South of England beat New Zealand	5-4
Budleigh	
Great Britain beat Australia	5-4
Hurlingham	
New Zealand beat Australia	6-2

Berystede
Hotel

Bagshot Road
Ascot Berkshire
SL5 9JH
Telephone
Ascot (0990) 23311
Telex
847707 BERYST G

Our croquet lawn offers an idyllic setting for a relaxed game of croquet. Our Leisure Break Weekends afford each guest overnight accommodation full English breakfast, and dinner in our Hyperion Restaurant for the fully inclusive price of £32.50 per person, per night. One night of your stay must include a Saturday when we are sure you will enjoy our Dinner Dance.



Trusthouse Forte Hotels

For further details please contact us at the above address.

Contacts

The Croquet Association:

Administration Secretary:

Brian Macmillan, The Croquet Association, The Hurlingham Club, Ranelagh Gardens, London SW6 3PR. Tel: 01-736 3148

National Development Officer:

Chris Hudson, The Oaklands, Englesea Brook, near Crewe, Cheshire, CW2 5QW. Tel: 0270 820296

Regional Development Officers

Northern Region

Syd Jones, 42 Ventnor Gardens, Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear, NE26 1QD. Tel: 091-252 2962

Yorks & Humberside Region

Bill Lamb, 5 Potterdale Drive, Little Weighton, Cottingham, Humberside HU20 3UU. Tel: 0482 848649

North Western Region

Andrew Collin, 65 Hillfield Road, Little Sutton South Wirral, Cheshire. Tel: 051 339 3614

West Midlands Region

Terry Greenwood, 21 The Fold, Penn, Wolverhampton WV4 5QY. Tel: 0902 336832

East Midlands Region

Ian Vincent, 43 West Crescent, Beeston Rylands, Nottingham NG9 1QF. Tel: 0602 253664

South Western Region

Martin Murray, 4 Queens Mansions, 7 Arlington Villas, Bristol, Avon BS8 2EF. Tel: 0272 741250

Southern Region

Smokey Eades, Tall Timbers, Horton Close, Boulders Lock, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 8TP. Tel: 0628 21811

Eastern Region

Judy Anderson, 16 Wellpond Close, Sharnbrook, Bedford MK44 1PL. Tel: 0234 781783

London & S.E. Region

Lionel Wharrad, Astor Cottage, Ivy Lane, Ashington, Sussex. Tel: 0903 892897

(London & Surrey)

Ron Welch, 67 Rowan Crescent, London SW16. Tel: 01 679 0552

(Kent & East Sussex)

Dennis Shaw, 9 Collingwood Court, Belmont Road,

Ramsgate, Kent CT11 7QQ. Tel: 0843 591789

Regional Coaching Officers:

Northern Region

John Davis, 33 Leventdale, Hutton Rudby, Yarm, Cleveland TS15 0DW. Tel: 0642 701290

Yorks & Humberside Region

Bill Lamb, 5 Potterdale Drive, Little Weighton, Cottingham, Humberside HU20 3UU. Tel: 0482-848649

North West Region

Paul Stoker, 50 Beach Priory Gardens, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 1RT. Tel: 0704 31806

West Midlands Region

Ken Jones, 96 New Road, Rubery, West Midlands, BH5 9HQ. Tel: 021-453 2088

Eastern Region

Tom Anderson, 16 Wellpond Close, Sharnbrook, Bedford MK44 1PL. Tel: 0234 781783

South West Region

Peter Danks, 6 Upper Stoneborough Lane, Budleigh Salterton, Devon EX9 6SX. Tel: 039-54 2711

Southern Region

Jock McElwain, Orkney Cottage, River Road, Taplow, SL6 0BG. Tel: 0628 24170

London & South East Region

Nigel Aspinall, 6 Rivermount, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, KT12 2PW. Tel: 09322 22697

Tommy Vale, 26 Glebe Close, Southwick, Sussex BN4 4TF. Tel: 0273 595920

Federation Secretaries

Northern

Andrew Collin, 65 Hillfield Road, Little Sutton South Wirral, Cheshire. Tel: 051 339 3614

West Midlands

Terry Greenwood, 21 The Fold, Penn, Wolverhampton. Tel: 0902 336832

South Western

John McCullough, 100 Queensdown Gardens, Brislington, Bristol, Avon BS4 6JG. Tel: 0272 779943

East Anglian

Judy Anderson, 16 Wellpond Close, Sharnbrook, Bedford MK44 1PL. Tel: 0234 781783

The Sports Council

Jo Patton, The Sports Council, 16 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0QP. Tel: 01 388 1277

Sports Council Croquet

Liaison Officers

Northern Region

Dacre Dunlop, The Sports Council, County Court Building, Hallgarth Street, Durham, DH1 3PB. Tel: 0385 49595

North West Region

Graham Suthren, The Sports Council, Astley House, Quay Street, Manchester M3 4AE. Tel: 061-834 0338

Yorkshire & Humberside Region

David Heddon, The Sports Council, Coronet House, Queen Street, Leeds LS1 4PW. Tel: 0532 436443

East Midland Region

Anne Rippon, The Sports Council, 26 Musters Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7PL. Tel: 0602 821887

West Midlands Region

Celia Hodges, The Sports Council, Metropolitan House, 1 Hagley Road, Five Ways, Birmingham B16 8TT. Tel: 021 454 3808

Eastern Region

Tony Ploszajski, The Sports Council, 26-28 Bromham Road, Bedford MK40 2QD. Tel: 0234 44281

Greater London & SE Region

Jim Atkinson, The Sports Council, Jubilee Stand, Crystal Palace National Sports Centre, Ledington Road, London SE17. Tel: 01-778 8600

Southern Region

Mike Halpin, The Sports Council, Watlington House, Watlington Street, Reading RG1 4RJ. Tel: 0734 595 616

South Western Region

George Reynolds, The Sports Council, Ashlands House, Ashlands, Crewkerne, Somerset TA18 7LQ. Tel: 0460 73491

The National Coaching Federation

Sue Campbell, Director, The National Coaching Foundation, 4 College Close, Becketts Park, Leeds LS6 3QH. Tel: 0532 744802

The Westwood Internationals

The MacRobertson Shield

The 1986 Test Series – An Old Campaigner's Forecast

By Martin Murray

By the time these words appear in print the Westwood Test Series will be under way, and the early results in the battle for the MacRobertson Shield will possibly contradict my forecasts. From my experience of three Test Series I shall nonetheless offer my own thoughts on how the Series might unfold.

The New Zealand victory in 1979 ended a long period of British domination of the MacRobertson Shield, and although we regained the title of World Champions in 1982, the margin was too close for a British victory in 1986 to be a foregone conclusion. Home advantage has often in the past proved decisive, so Great Britain will be many people's favourites.

At the highest level, croquet is very much a psychological test. All the players involved are quite capable of winning a game on the sixth or seventh turn, but in a Test match most players are too burdened with doubts to perform at their best. 'Am I playing as well as before? – is my opponent on form today? – am I going to let down my team mates? – am I really good enough to beat my opponent?' The list of possible questions is endless, and it requires great powers of concentration to keep them out of one's mind. So experience is one of the greatest assets a player can bring to a Test match; this Series has probably the highest number of participants with Test match experience (5 for New Zealand, 4 for Great Britain, and 3 for Australia) so perhaps we can expect a higher standard of play than ever before.

The New Zealand team is the most experienced in terms of both Test match play and

tournament competition. They have five members of their winning 1979 team, and three of them visited Great Britain in 1974. John Prince, captain for a fourth time, will set a record by competing in his sixth Test Series – and he is still only 41. He also holds the record of being the youngest Test player ever, being only 17 when he played in his first Test match in 1963. In that series he beat John Solomon, then regarded as the best player in the world, and he has since beaten Solomon twice more and Nigel Aspinall three times in four meetings; a truly incomparable record. In 1982 in Australia Prince was below his best, and some of us wondered whether his career was coming to an end; we got the answer in 1983 when he completed two sextuples in one day in the New Zealand President's Cup, which he won against a strong field with 12 wins out of 14. Not only is John a successful player, he is also a wonderful stylist and beautiful to watch.

Despite John's prowess, it seems likely that the strength of the New Zealand team is such that he may play as low as 4 in their team, for New Zealand have three other players who must be considered as world class, Jackson, Hogan, and Skinley. Bob Jackson had only been playing for two or three years when he came to Britain in 1974, but by 1979 he was playing better than anyone in the world. He missed the 1982 series, but has been right at the top of New Zealand croquet for ten years. His powers of concentration are immense, and his game is based on consistently accurate single ball shots, which often enable him to rescue what appear to British

observers to be untidy breaks. Joe Hogan and Paul Skinley both made their debuts as 20-year olds in the 1979 series, but they are in many ways contrasting players. Hogan has the ideal temperament for Test match play, appearing unflappable and calm at all times, and has one of the best records of all the New Zealanders, having won his first 10 Test match singles; his 'death march' as he stalks a critical long shot is an object lesson in concentration. Skinley, who has a better record in domestic competition, is much more

Great Britain's team to defend the MacRobertson Shield. Back (L to R): Steve Mulliner, Mark Avery, and Colin Irwin. Front (L to R): William Pritchard, David Openshaw (Capt) and Nigel Aspinall



Martin Murray

temperamental and erratic; his best play is outstanding, typified by his sextuple peel against Australia in 1979, the only one ever completed in a Test match, but his record in Test Matches has been relatively disappointing. His style, Solomon grip with a very long mallet, is unique.

Backing up New Zealand's top four are an old-stager, Roger Murfitt, who will be well known to many over here from his visits in 1974 and 1980-81, and a newcomer, Graham Beale. Graham, like four of his team mates before him, will be making his Test debut before his 21st birthday.

Australia's team is very definitely a team of two halves. Three of the players are very experienced, Neil Spooner, Barrie Chambers, and Spencer Buck all having played in the 1974 and 1982 series. Spooner in 1982 was technically probably the best player of the three teams; like Bob Jackson, his game is based on hard, very accurate hitting, and his only defeat came in the deciding Test match when nerves just took the edge off his game. Chambers is a determined player who generally wins because he wants to more than his opponent, and Buck is a gifted player who seems to suffer from too many doubts; his solution tends to be to play slower – and slower. The other three Australians are very much unknown quantities to us, though there is little evidence to suggest that they are as good as Peter Olsen, one of the stars of the 1982 team who is unavailable.

Most readers will be more familiar with the British team, which consists of four experienced players, Nigel Aspinall, David Openshaw, William Pritchard, and Steven Mulliner, and two newcomers, Colin Irwin and Mark Avery. Like the New Zealand team, they provide a mixture of styles and personalities, Openshaw and Pritchard relishing the intellectual challenge of a tactical battle, Mulliner, Irwin, and Avery relying more on outitting the complete player, able to play the game any way the situation demands, though these days he probably prefers to rely on his tactics and coolness in a tight spot more than he did some years ago.

As far as forecasting the outcome goes, I must predict a very close battle between Great Britain and New Zealand. Australia, having come so close in 1982 when they had home advantage, do not seem to have the

(continued overleaf)

British and best
Jaques
Equipment

Mallets

made to your own
specification
by Jaques craftsmen

Known and used all over the world

The renowned
Eclipse
Championship Ball

Jaques
& Son Ltd.,

Complete sets or single items,
accessories, from all good sports
shops and stores.

361 Whitehorse Road,
Thornton Heath, Surrey, CR4 8XP. Tel: 01-684 4242

The Westwood Internationals

An Old Campaigner's Forecast

(continued from previous page)

players to win away from home. New Zealand certainly have the players, but the main doubt surrounding them must be whether they can perform as well away from home as they did at home in 1979. In Australia they seemed a poorly prepared team, playing somewhat below potential, and their first two close defeats rather demoralised them. Their failure in Australia will make them that more eager to win, and since three of their players have experience of British conditions, I feel they can improve on their 1982 performance, when, although they lost all 6 Tests, four of their defeats were by the narrowest of margins, 4-5. Looking down the teams I would think

that their top four, on form, would have a slight edge over our top four, but the Shield will probably be decided by the numbers 5 and 6. Roger Murfitt is experienced enough to be more relaxed than either of his two likely opponents, but Graham Beale will probably be in much the same situation as his opponent. Whether Colin Irwin and Mark Avery can overcome their nerves and play their best croquet looks like being the decisive factor in deciding the outcome. Pressed for a forecast, I would choose New Zealand as winners, but I wouldn't put money on it. At least we can look forward to a close, well-fought contest, which should provide plenty of excitement for the spectators.

SHIELD STATISTICS

By William Prichard

The youngest Test players

Listed below are the youngest players to have appeared in the MacRobertson Shield since its inception in 1925, including Mark Avery and Graham Beale, who are making their first appearances in the current series.

We hope that no-one has been inadvertently omitted.

John Prince	NZ	1963	17 6
Spencer Buck	AUS	1974	18 8
John Solomon	GB	1950/51	19 0
William Ormerod	GB	1956	19 5
Tony Stephens	NZ	1963	19 9
Paul Skinley	NZ	1979	20 0
Joe Hogan	NZ	1979	20 2
Leigh Herington	AUS	1982	20 6
Ralph Browne	NZ	1963	20 6
Mark Avery	GB	1986	20 6
Roger Murfitt	NZ	1974	20 8
Graham Beale	NZ	1986	20 10
William Prichard	GB	1974	21 3
Mark Prater	AUS	1979	21 4
Neil Spooner	AUS	1974	21 5
W T McCleery	AUS	1925	21 8/22 5
Paul Hands	GB	1974	22 1
Nigel Aspinall	GB	1969	22 6

Test Match Summary

Total Number of Series: 12 (6 Triangular)

Wins: Great Britain/England 7; Australia 3; New Zealand 2

Total Number of Test Matches: 76

Great Britain/England: Played 55, won 44, drawn 3, lost 8

Australia: Played 50, won 15, drawn 3, lost 32

New Zealand: Played 47, won 14, drawn 0, lost 33

Total Number of Individual Matches: 617

Great Britain/England: Played 437, won 309, lost 126, unfinished 2

Australia: Played 399, won 138, lost 258, unfinished 3

New Zealand: Played 398, won 165, lost 228, unfinished 5

Test Match Venues

Four Test matches: Roehampton, Southwick & Hurlingham

Three Test matches: Cheltenham

Two Test matches: Budleigh Salterton, Nottingham

One Test match: Colchester, Compton and Buxton

New venues this year: Bowdon, Hunstanton and Parkstone

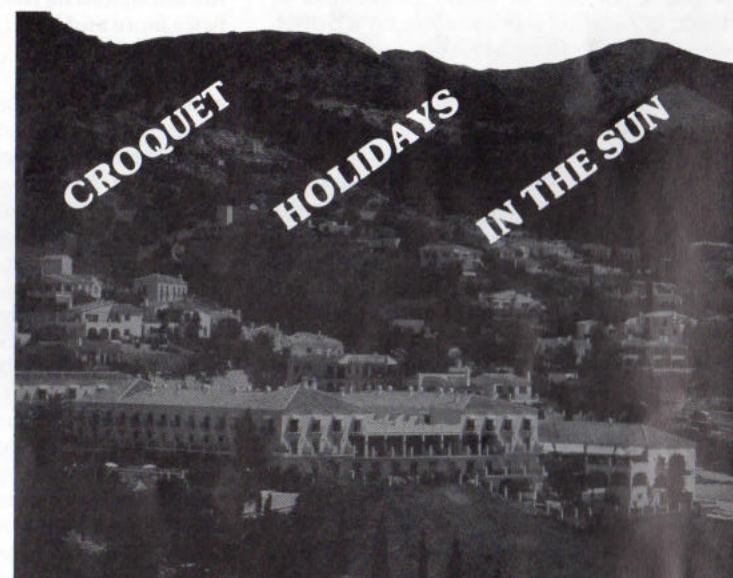
Note: After the current series, Southwick will become the only club to have staged a Test match during every home series.



HOTEL MIJAS

Croquet Club

COSTA DEL SOL
(Spain)



Come and play croquet all year round at the Hotel Mijas, which nestles in the slopes of the Sierra de Mijas amongst pine and palm trees, with a breath-taking view of the Mediterranean and a panoramic view of the Costa del Sol, Spain.

TWO full-sized croquet lawns available for overseas players/club participation and local club activity. Competitions can be arranged as required. Two swimming pools (one heated throughout the year), tennis court, and indoor health centre offering gymnasium, sauna, massage etc., all set in the unique and pretty ambience of this luxury four-star hotel.

From breakfast beneath the shade of the olive tree, to afternoon tea on the terrace overlooking the lawns, to a candlelight barbecue to the accompaniment of guitar music... the perfect ending to a perfect day of croquet at the Hotel Mijas.

For further details please contact in England:
Peter Howell, Croquet Holidays International Ltd. on 034.286.850.

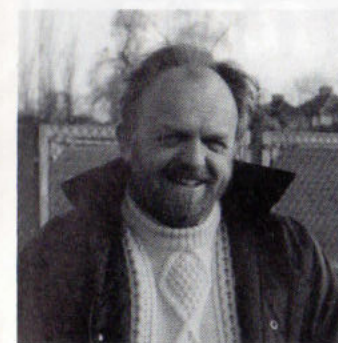
**HOTEL MIJAS,
MIJAS / MARBELLA, (MALAGA) ESPANA**

Schools Croquet

Himley: 17-18 May

Midlands title won by Ludlow

Report by Peter Dorke



Peter Dorke, Chairman of the CA's Schools Committee

This was two tournaments in one: a full-size competition to produce the Midlands' representative in the finals of the National Schools Championship and a short croquet competition to fill the waiting hours and give the losers in the main tournament a second goal to aim for. In the end, both tournaments were a success but the glorious sunshine which banished the wind and rain on Sunday afternoon did not come in time to persuade Warwick and Ashby to stay on for the second day. Nevertheless, Warwick's Germadjz Dhillon stayed long enough to demonstrate how much he has improved since last year. Ashby can at least claim that they were not knocked out but withdrew with dignity, spurning the lure of the Midlands Schools Trophy. This was presented by the tournament's sponsors, the South Shropshire Croquet Club, and was an excellent example of what to do with your old croquet balls.

Wrekin College, probably the weakest team in the tournament, had brought seven players, including several ladies, and were determined that they should all play as much croquet as possible. The fast-improving Eddy Roberts and Sarah Warraner - the tournament's only exponent of the side-stance - registered Wrekin's only win of the main competition but, had there been an award for enthusiasm, Wrekin would have walked away with it.

Ludlow, whose A and B teams were to play in the final, brought with them a mysterious late entry (sadly made necessary by the late defection of Ken Jones and his King Edward's, Birmingham team) in the shape of Palmers' Hall, rumoured to be a small progressive school located somewhere in Shropshire. By the time they had reached the semi-final, having been given a bye with the departure of Ashby on Saturday night, it had become generally known that 'Palmers' Hall' was the nom de guerre of Ludlow C. Though they did not

win many games, they were not disgraced, Simon Armsby, in particular, showing an unexpected skill.

Nailsea, winners of the Short Croquet in a tight finish, were unlucky in having to play Bishop Vesey's 'bandits' in the second round of the main tournament. John Mann, of Nailsea, will remember his match with Paul Loutit, who, had he been a little more experienced, could have won comfortably after pegging out John's red, yellow being on 1 and Paul still in possession of 6 bisques. This was the match of the tournament and the highlight of a fine performance throughout the weekend by Paul Loutit, whose leadership in the doubles was mature and his shooting exceptional. John's team mates could not cope with the disparity between Bishop Vesey's skill and their handicaps. In the doubles, time was a crucial factor: the problem of inexperienced players wasting time in mid-lawn discussions has yet to be solved in this championship and the sight of doubles players trailing each other needlessly around the lawn is not a pretty one.

One pleasing aspect of the tournament was the effort that most players had made to wear white. Nailsea's dramatic transformation from Saturday's black weather gear to Sunday's gleaming whiteness was eclipsed only by the boisterous magnificence of Wrekin's Richard Lane. It was good, too, that almost all players knew both the rules and the etiquette of the game. If they did not, co-manager and tournament referee Howard Stanley soon put them right. As Secretary of the Himley club, Howard made himself responsible for most of the hard work connected with the preparation of the lawns and still found time to run the Short Croquet, coach and keep a sharp eye on the main tournament. It was a dawn to dusk effort which cannot be praised too highly.

The crucial match was the semi-final between Bishop Vesey's and Ludlow A. If the rest of the Ludlow team had played as feebly as Peter Dorke and Merrill Rowan did in the doubles, Bishop Vesey's would have romped home, but Tim Nock and Bob Beckett, racing each other to be the first to finish, won their

games comfortably. Tim's performance was particularly noteworthy, as he was giving Nev Turley, a very competent player, 8 bisques.

After this, the final was something of an anti-climax, the more unruly spectators claiming a fix as the A's won 3-0 and all the glory went to Himley Hall itself, glowing golden in the setting sun.

RESULTS

Midlands Schools tournament

1st Round:

Bishop Vesey's bt Wrekin 3-0
Nailsea bt Ludlow 'B' 3-0
Ludlow 'A' bt Palmers' Hall 3-0
Warwick bt Ashby 3-0

2nd Round:

Bishop Vesey's bt Nailsea 2-1
Ludlow 'A' bt Warwick 3-0
Ludlow 'B' bt Wrekin 2-1
Palmers' Hall bt Ashby (wo)

Semi-finals:

Ludlow 'A' bt Bishop Vesey's 2-1
Ludlow 'B' bt Palmers' Hall 2-1

Final:

Ludlow 'A' bt Ludlow 'B' 3-0

Short Croquet tournament

Winners: Nailsea



Andrew Bennet coaching boys from Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Blackburn, one of the teams competing in this year's National Schools Championship. Chris Clarke, on the right, has already won several CA tournaments.

CUT, SWEEP AND ROLL ALL AT ONCE AND STILL ACHIEVE THAT TRADITIONAL BEAUTIFUL FINISH

Westwood

A REVELATION IN EASY AND EFFICIENT LAWCARE

DESIGNED TO MAKE GARDENING EASIER

As you'd expect from the market leader, Westwood is totally dedicated to making gardening quicker, simpler, and a lot more enjoyable. And for this reason we've designed a direct power take-off - exclusive to Westwood tractors - which is the unique key to a revolutionary new range of garden tractor accessories that are more versatile, more efficient, and better value for money than ever before.



MUCH MORE THAN JUST AN EFFICIENT GRASS COLLECTOR

The amazing Powered Grass Collector is the latest addition to this exclusive Westwood range. It has already been acclaimed as the most effective and reliable lawnsweeper yet - but that's not all it does! It rolls as it sweeps - leaving that beautiful, traditional finish which is the hallmark of a well-groomed lawn.

SAVES TIME, SAVES WORK

Fitted to a Westwood, it's an unbeatable combination that cuts, sweeps, and rolls at once - saving you time, energy, and a lot of unnecessary hard work. You'll be amazed and delighted at the difference a Westwood makes to you and your garden - especially if you have a croquet lawn to maintain! And it still costs less than any other make! Only limited stocks are available this summer, so please don't delay. Take this opportunity to discover more about Westwood now - and ask for a Free Demonstration today.

Just post the coupon below or phone us (24 hrs) on 0752 344545 quoting this special code: 779

FREE DEMONSTRATION
Please Enquire Now - Summer Stocks Genuinely Limited

SPONSORS OF THE MACROBERTSON SHIELD TEST SERIES

Westwood are proud and delighted to be the official sponsors of the 1986 MacRobertson Shield Test Matches and wish all participants - both players and spectators - a thoroughly enjoyable and successful series.

To: Westwood, FREEPOST 779
(no stamp required), Plympton, Plymouth PL7 3BR

YES - please send me your
 FREE BROCHURE I would also like to arrange to try a Westwood for myself.
 FREE DEMONSTRATION

Name: _____ Tel No: _____
Address: _____
Postcode: _____

Westwood
DOING A GOOD DEAL MORE

Southwick: 29-31 March 1986 The first 'Swift' of the summer

Report by Robert Prichard

It is almost impossible nowadays to play tournament croquet while the clock is on GMT but the Saturday of 1986's two Easter tournaments provided an exception. Perhaps this rarity was what lead Martin Murray, managing after a gap of 18 years, to think about the time obtained on the lawns at weekend tournaments.

Rather than guaranteeing 6 games, which gives fast players worse value for money, he aimed for 15 hours play. All 25 players started in a Draw (so 7 had byes). Losers in the first three rounds moved into what Martin called a 'Process' but what turned out to be a knock-out Plate in which later round entrants had deep byes. Only after losing in this too did players transfer to the 'Swift', in which priority was always given in allocating games to those who had played for the shortest time.

The combination of early dusk on Saturday, a deluge on Sunday which halted play for 3 hours, avoiding double-banking on the three Test Match lawns to reduce wear in soft conditions, and 10 o'clock starts (welcomed by some of the younger entrants) forced Martin to lower his sights to 13 hours and abandon plans for a play-off between winner of Draw and Process. Whether the ingenuity and fairness of the original plan really justified the managerial complexities is debatable but it is probably worth another try when more playing hours are available.

Anyhow Martin was rewarded, by winning the 'Swift' which was decided on the number of wins divided by total number of hours played. He had 6 wins from 9 games in 9 hrs 25 mins. As all games in each Event counted towards the 'Swift', second prize went to Robert Prichard who did not play a single game in it!

The early rounds saw: the Season's first triple from Danny Palmer; Hilditch and Prichard both intentionally running 2-back from north of Hoop 6 in the same game; Walters running a similar 4-back with ricochet and forward spin to steal victory from Peterson; jet-lagged starts from those who travelled from Ireland (Simon Williams) or by long-distance bicycle (Robert Race); and the five players from Ipswich spending much of their time playing each other. (When top priority in making the draw is given to seeding, other important

considerations such as separating club members seem to fall by the wayside.)

The two top seeds sped through to the semi-finals, where best-of-three began. Avery, whose entry had been mislaid and had to be injected just before play, dispatched Murray (with a triple and helpful three yard misses by MM) swiftly into the 'Swift'. Cordingley's semi-final victory was also in straight games but only because Hyne suddenly started making errors around 3-back in the second game.

Cordingley just failed his own peg-out in the first game of the final, having earlier pegged out Avery after hitting a 'last shot'. Instead of pegging out one ball, he joined up in the middle. Avery hit a 13-yarder and went out from 4-back. In the opinion of the opinionated crowd it was Avery whose tactics threw away the end of the second game but the crowd was in the warm and the players were in the hail. It was late and Avery was anxious to leave, so he remembered his Test place and won the third game in under an hour.

Meanwhile in the final of the Process, Prichard and Jan MacLeod both sprind round with their first ball, then each hit every long shot for forty minutes but forgot how to approach hoops. It was Jan who remembered first.

Southwick must be thanked and congratulated for producing six lawns so early in the year in addition to the two far ones used all winter. The immense effort was much appreciated, as were the meals, and the draught beer laid on by John Bowman. Despite his fears it was all demolished, helped by the pauses in play. These were filled by Bridge and Scrabble. There was some poor refereeing which allowed culinary alienisms such as COQ and SHABU but objected to DA (Burmese hunting knife) and QUA.

There were also two errors by referees on the lawns. One was looking for a test-ball to test for wiring and accidentally plucked up the ball whose wiredness was to be tested. Another broke off the leg of David Peterson's red dragon mascot while removing it (Welsh dragons obey Law 2) from the top of a peg. We all left thoroughly whetted and sad not to be playing again for four or five weeks.

RESULTS (Advanced Play)

- 1st Round:**
P. Cordingley bt T. Vale +18;
S. Battison bt D. Peterson +20;
M. Ormerod bt C. Southern +12;
D. Gaunt bt J. Bowman +13;
D. Palmer bt J. Walters +9;
R. Prichard bt R. Race +20;
M. Murray bt Miss J. MacLeod +15;
S. Williams bt N. Gale +5;
L. Wharrad bt D. Bull +13
- 2nd Round:**
A. Mrozinski bt A. Palmer +13;
Cordingley bt Battison +20;
N. Hyne bt I. Maugham +3;
Wharrad bt Ormerod +9;

- M. Avery bt M. French +24; Gaunt bt D. Palmer +11; Prichard bt R. Hilditch +10; M. Murray bt Williams +23

- 3rd Round:**
Cordingley bt Mrozinski +24;
Hyne bt Wharrad +19; Avery bt Gaunt +21; Murray bt Prichard +24

- Semi-finals:**
Cordingley bt Hyne +15,+7; Avery bt Murray +22(TP),+14

- Final:**
Avery bt Cordingley +2,+4,+17

SERVICE TO SPORT AWARDS: 1985

Judy Anderson wins major award



Judy Anderson receiving her award.

Major contributions to sport by individuals and organisations were recognised by the 1985 Service to Sport Awards made annually by the Sports Council (Eastern Region).

The award for the Woman who has made the most significant contribution to sport in the Eastern Region in 1985 went to Judy Anderson, our Eastern Region Development Officer, who has been a key figure in the development of croquet in the Region.

She was appointed as the Croquet Association's Regional Development Officer (a voluntary position) in 1983 and, within a matter of months, she had drawn up a 3-year development plan in conjunction with the Sports Council's Eastern Region. Judy has been responsible for implementing this Plan and has gained considerable publicity for croquet by giving demonstrations and coaching at a number of venues.

In early 1983, there were only 3 clubs in the Region; there are now 18, in addition to several groups of people who play the game regularly. The success of Judy's work led to the formation of an Eastern Croquet Federation in 1985. Thanks to Judy's commitment and enthusiasm, the game is now ready for major expansion.

It is the first time croquet has featured among the award winners. The judges were: Brian Taylor (former Essex cricketer), Brian Worrell (Chairman of the Eastern Region Netball Association), Martin Biddle (Cycle Speedway Council), Eric Gent (Director, Technical Services, North Herts D.C.), Sheila Ashford (Norfolk Association of Parish Councils), Ken Charles (Chairman of Royston's Sports Council) and Chris Clark (Regional Director of the Sports Council's Eastern Region).

Tournament Reports & Results (2)

Cheltenham: 29-31 March 1986 Long bisquers triumph at Cheltenham

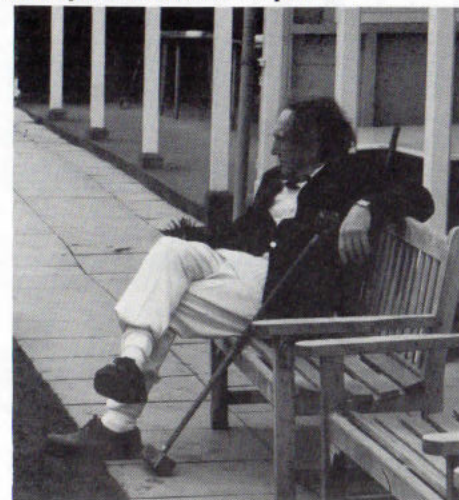
Report by Bill Bawden

With the longest list of open tournaments in the croquet calendar, the Cheltenham Club begins early and ends late. Its Easter tournament opens the competitive season and its October week-end closes it.

If the past few seasons are typical, then it is a brave contestant indeed who dons his summer whites at Easter. This year proved to be no exception - a promising start on Saturday morning was soon followed by storms that on two occasions covered the lawns in hailstones. Play continued, even though for a time it was crazy croquet!

Those players who journeyed south from Newcastle, Middlesbrough, Durham and Manchester were no doubt disappointed not to have left the cold and blustery weather behind them, but D.R. Appleton's journey from Newcastle was certainly not in vain.

Playing off handicap 11 he won his block, trouncing his six opponents by the massive total of 125 points, his best scalp being that of the block runner-up, Cheltenham's most formidable player, D. Foulser (-1), beating him by the maximum 26 points.



Leonard Greenbury at Cheltenham's 'B' Level tournament

RESULTS

CHELTHENHAM: 29-31 March

Handicap Singles

Block A:

6 wins: J.R. McCullough (-1);
5 wins: Dr J.W. King (3½);
4 wins: Dr B.G.F. Weitz (½);
3 wins: Mrs K. Whittall (10);
2 wins: Mrs C.E. Irwin (6½);
1 win: Mrs H. Potter (9);
0 wins: F.J. Exell (5½)

Block B:

6 wins: D.R. Appleton (11);
5 wins: D.R. Foulser (-1);
4 wins: Mrs J. Anderson (4½);
3 wins: K.J. Carter (6);
2 wins: A.J. Girling (1);
1 win: Lady Bazley (4);
0 wins: Mrs M.A.L. Warren

Block C:

6 wins: C.J. Irwin (-1);
4 wins: P.J.C. Hetherington (3) +17,
J.E. Ross (2½) +12;
3 wins: Mrs B.C. Sutcliffe (7) +10,
P. Dyke (8) (and others) +2;
1 win: Dr R.F. Wheeler;
0 wins: Miss J. Wraith (13)

Block D:

5 wins: D. Maugham (12);
4 wins: D. Cairns (1½) (and others);
3 wins: Dr R.C. Jones (3) +9, R.S.
Jenkins (7) +6, T.W. Anderson (1½)
+3, M.J. Finn (4½) -22;
0 wins: D. Clay (6)

Block E:

4 wins: Mrs G.D. Harris (4½) +30,
G. Vince (9) +15;
3 wins: C. Ross (15) +34,
Dr C.B. Snowden (2½) -6, P.A.
Dwerryhouse -27;
2 wins: G. Johnson (4) -12, D.H.
Moorcraft (½) -34

Block F:

6 wins: P.J. Dorke (8);
4 wins: Mrs D.A. Wheeler (4) +14,
P.L. Smith (½) +11;
3 wins: J.W. Potter (2);
1 win: P.F. Leach (5½);
0 wins: Mrs. I. Dwerryhouse (6½)

Block G:

5 wins: D. Beatty (5) +60, Dr G.K.
Taylor (½) +58;

4 wins: A.F. Sutcliffe (2½) +25,
Mrs M. Langley (8) +21;
2 wins:
1 win: Gp Capt R.S. Ryan (6½);
0 wins: Miss Skinner (15) (and
others)

RYDE: 12-14 April

Handicap Singles

Block A:
4 wins: Dr P.A. Watson (5½) +36,
T.I. Card (7) +25;
3 wins: F.A. Rowlands (4);
2 wins: H.B. Brownsdon (6½) -4,
J.F.S. Thomas (9) -32;
0 wins: Mrs F.H. Newman (4)

Block B:

6 wins: J.A. Short (5);
4 wins: Mrs S.B. Hudson (6) +33,
Mrs M. Robinson (12) -10;
3 wins: N.L. Luff (7);
1 win: F.H. Newman (3½);
0 wins: J.O. Mays (9)

ROEHAMPTON: 24-27 April

Handicap Singles (Swiss) (after 8 rounds)

8 wins: J.E. Guest;
7 wins: D. Beatty;
6 wins: I.P.M. Macdonald, A.A.
Read;
5 wins: Mrs I.P.M. Macdonald,
J. Straw;
4 wins: Mrs P. Healy, Mrs B.
Mansfield, F.H. Newman, K.F.W.
Townsend;
3 wins: R.A. Godby;
2 wins: Mrs M. Newman, Mrs C.
Osmond, Mrs K. Townsend;
1 win: Mrs E.E. Bressey, Mrs W.G.
Jones;

SOUTHWICK: 2-5 May

Handicap Singles (8-Round Swiss)

7 wins: R.F. Hall (9) +80, F.A.
Rowlands (4) +68;
6 wins: Mrs P. Hetherington (7);
5 wins: *W.E. Moore (2), D.M.
Bull (4), Mrs E. Mapletoft (5), Dr E.P.
Davey (11), R. Newnham (4½);
4 wins: *P. Emery (7), F. Beard (9);

3 wins: *A. Hutcheson (4), Mrs E.
Asa-Thomas (3), *Mrs L.A. Coombs
(5), Miss M. Loveys (12);
2 wins: Mrs S. French (12) Miss R.
Dennant (8), Mrs E.E. Bressey (5);
0 wins: Miss D. Harding (14)

*Player replaced by a substitute for
some games.

Mrs Bressey & R. Newnham played
only 7 games

COMPTON: 8-11 May

Handicap Singles

Block A:
4 wins: C.B. Sanford (4½);
3 wins: D.W. Shaw (4½);
2 wins: L. Wharrad (1);
1 win: B.G. Hallam (1½);
0 wins: Lt-Col D.F.T. Brown (6)

Block B:

4 wins: H.G. Drake (2½);
3 wins: P. Bishop (5);
2 wins: E.C. Tyrwhitt-Drake (3½);
1 win: J.H. Bowman (2½);
0 wins: W.E. Philp (7)

Block C:

4 wins: E.J.A. Salmon (10);
2 wins: Mrs M. Wharrad (8) +11,
Mrs E.C. Tyrwhitt-Drake (6) +6, Miss
B.E. Dennant (8) -11;
0 wins: Mrs A.E. Millns (9)

Block D:

2 wins: Mrs N.W.T. Cox (4½) +12,
Miss D.V. Harding (14) +9, A.J.
Kellaway (8) +6, Mrs M.M. Grout (7)
-10, Miss P. Shine (7) -17

Play-Off

Semi-finals: H.G. Drake bt C.B.
Sanford +6; Mrs Cox bt Salmon
+7(T)
Final: Drake bt Mrs Cox +2

BOWDON WEEKEND: 9-11 May

Handicap Singles

Block A:
5 wins: M.J. Wilkins (4) +65, P.L.H.
Walters (10) +42;
4 wins: W.E. Lamb (2½);
3 wins: D. Lendrum (16*);
2 wins: C.M. Gerrard (7½);
1 win: Mrs E. Taylor (11) -61, S.E.
Lewis (-1½) -114

P.J. Dorke (Ludlow, handicap 8) also went
on the rampage, collecting 122 points in
beating his six opponents and inflicting a +26
whitewash on Cheltenham's P.L. Smith
(handicap ½), who was managing the
tournament.

Yet another receiver of bisques, D. Beatty
(handicap 5) must have gone home to Dur-
ham well pleased with his 5 wins, which
included a +26 win over the block runner-up,
Dr G.K. Taylor (handicap ½).

It was left to club secretary Mrs 'Bo' Harris
(handicap 4½) and a young newcomer
D. Maugham (handicap 12) to salvage
something from the wreck of local fortunes
with wins in their respective blocks.

The results belie the generally accepted
view that in handicap play the advantage lies
mostly with the low handicap player, as in only
two of the seven blocks in this tournament did
the low handicap player succeed in fighting
his way to the top. So congratulations to
Bristol's J. McCullough (handicap -1) and
C.J. Irwin of Bowdon (handicap -1) for their
unbeaten run of 6 wins each - against the
tide!

(Full Results are given below)

Block B:

6 wins: K.M. McCombe (14)
5 wins: D.B. Maugham (11);
3 wins: Mrs B. Sutcliffe (7) +30, C.J.
Irwin (-2) -35;
2 wins: Mrs C. Lewis (10);
1 win: M.J. Finn (4½) -53,
M. Granger-Brown (2) -90;

Block C:

5 wins: C.H. Wild (9) +60, Dr M.
Elder (6) +4;
4 wins: Dr A. Peterson (15);
3 wins: W.O. Aldridge (½);
2 wins: D.J. Kelly (2½);
1 win: Mrs P.M.H. Lewis (12) -52,
D. Watkins (10) -67

Block D:

4 wins: Mrs A.E. Dawson (11) +24,
A.F. Sutcliffe (2½) +14, D. Peterson
(½) -6;
3 wins: C.J.B. Pace (8) +26, Mrs
C.E. Irwin (7½) +3;
2 wins: Mrs A. Rimmer (15);
1 win: R. Deacon (11)

BRISTOL: 17-18 May

Advanced Play

Block A:

(Handicaps -2 to 2)
4 wins: R.D.C. Prichard +40, J.R.
McCullough +24;
2 wins: B.J. Storey;
1 win: *R. Tribe +13, P.L. Smith -39,
F.I. Maugham -50

Block B:

(Handicaps 1½ to 4½)
3 wins: B.G. Hallam +43, D.J.
Goacher +11;
2 wins: A.F. Sutcliffe;
1 win: W.T. Coles -31, R.W. Ransom
-35

Block C:

(Handicaps 4½ to 6½)
4 wins: J. Jeffrey;
3 wins: Dr M. Elder;
2 wins: R.S. Jenkins;
1 win: Mrs F. Ransom;
0 wins: R.J. Carter

*Player replaced by a substitute for
some games.

Tournament Reports & Results (3)

Cheltenham: 17-20 April Paddy Paddon wins 'B' Level

Report by Bill Bawden

The Cheltenham 'B' Level Advanced Play
Tournament, the only event of its kind in the
CA Calendar, could well be called 'Chelten-
ham's Own', for it was the club's Betty Weitz
who was its innovator in 1981.

The format is near perfect - each
competitor sure of a game in the morning and
another in the afternoon, with no hanging
about, and the added excitement of a Swiss
in which, after the first round, one's opponent
is unknown until the last moment.

That such a popular tournament, on a
change of date this year from September to
April should suffer such appalling weather
was little short of tragedy. Players were
handicapped not only by heavy rain and
sharply gusting winds, but by their own
protection from the elements, and one got
rather tired of seeing players garbed as if
rounding Cape Horn in heavy seas, and
several of the bearded sort bearing a
remarkable resemblance to Captain Birdseye.

Four days of solid double-banking in such
conditions was bound to blunt the competitive
edge, and there was some support for the view
that a cut to three days might be an improve-
ment, and perhaps make it possible for more
players to enter.

In general the results at the top of the table
were much as to be expected, the advantage

in level play clearly lying with the player of
lower handicap. So it was no surprise to find
Cheltenham's Paddy Paddon (2) taking first
place with seven wins out of eight games, and
three of the four second places taken by Bill
Lamb of Hull (2½), John Ross (Cheltenham,
2½) and N. Gale of Horsham (3) respectively.

However it was Ray Ransom of Bristol who
gave the outstanding performance of the
tournament. Off handicap 5 he defeated four
players of lower handicap in his six wins for a
share of second place, incidentally being the
only player to take a game off Paddy. Ray's
ego has no doubt been boosted by the result-



John MacLaren in play at Cheltenham

ing cut in handicap from 5 to 4½, which still
leaves him with something in hand when it
comes to handicap play.

Twelve ladies this year faced up to the
weather as well as the men, three in particular
acquitting themselves well. 'Bo' Harris, Carol
Smith, and Betty Weitz, all of Cheltenham,
had 5 wins each, together with Cheltenham's
Robin Burnell and Roger Wheeler - one way
and another it was the host club's day!

Betty in particular deserves acclaim, for
she carried the weight of managing on her
shoulders, spending each lunch-time and an
evening hour putting the rungs of the Swiss
ladder in their rightful place. Thank you Betty,
and a thank you also to those unsung club
members behind the scenes who prepared
lawns and provided teas with that fast
vanishing luxury - home-made scones and
cakes.

RESULTS

'B' Level Swiss

(Advanced Play: Handicap 2 or more)

7 wins: T. Paddon
6 wins: W.E. Lamb, R. Ransom, N.E.C. Gale, J.E.
Ross
5 wins: Mrs C. Smith, Dr R.F. Wheeler, R. Burnell,
Mrs E. Weitz, R. Smith, Mrs B. Harris
4 wins: M.B. Jackson, R.W. Ransom, W.R.
Bawden, D.J. Goacher, Mrs R.F. Wheeler, M.J.
Finn, Mrs M.A.L. Warren, J. MacLaren/Shaw
3 wins: Lady Bazley, F.J. Exell, Mrs J. Neville-Rolfe,
F. Newman, L. Greenbury, Mrs H. Handley, P. Leach
2 wins: Gp Capt R.S. Ryan, Mrs K.M.O. Wheeler
1 win: Mrs M.T. Paddon, Mrs F. Newman

Puzzle Corner - by Deborah Latham

There are 24 players' names hidden in the following text. See how many
you can find!

When I arrived at the Club I
observed a boy, round-eyed with
awe, standing near the southern
boundary of Court 1. He was
watching a doubles match, the
pairs involved seemingly all at
hammer and tongs - quite lively,
for a doubles.

Soon one of the 'out' players
wandered over to me.

'Hullo, Roy,' I said. 'How's it
going?'

'Well,' he said slowly, 'wasn't
it Sir Winston Churchill who
promised blood, sweat, toil, and
tears? I wonder,' he added reflectively,
'if he ever played croquet
...?'

'Like that, is it?' I said sym-
pathetically. 'Is this handicap, or
not?'

'Oh, yes. Actually, we're play-
ing as a favour to Walter's young
friend there.'

'The girl in grey, you mean?'

'Yes. She's not been playing
long, I understand, but she's very
keen.'

'Like your son, there,' I
observed, indicating the boy,
who was now sharing a bench
with Roy's partner. 'I hope you've
got that child itching to be an 'A'
class player,' I added, with mock
severity.

'I don't know about that, but
he's already got a very good
grasp in all the basics, I'm
pleased to say. Ah!' he exclaimed
suddenly. 'She's broken down.
Excuse me.'

He hurried to his partner,
who rose from the bench to
consult him before moving with
a rather peculiar gait on to the
court; stiff, no doubt, from
prolonged contact with the hard
wood of the seat. The opponents
were affecting indifference to
their mishap; Walter was using
his Rule Book to illustrate a point
to his young guest, while she
stood trying both to toy elegantly
with her mallet and read the book
at the same time. I saw right
through the act; although play-
ing in front of strangers made her
nervous and shy, nevertheless
she was making a noble effort to
hide it.

Roy came wandering back.
'Still enthralled by this duel to
the death?' he enquired cheer-
fully.

My reply was lost as a sudden
clanging noise from the direction
of the clubhouse signalled tea.

'Saved by the bell,' I retorted
as I retreated to see how many
people I knew had turned up...

BERNARD NEAL CROQUET MALLETS

Aluminium Alloy Shafts
Permalin Heads

STANDARD Mallet
Rubber Grip
Length as required

OPTIONAL EXTRAS
Brass Bound Head
Octagonal Suede Grip

Brochure on application to:

B.G. Neal, Moat Cottage, Kidnappers Lane
Cheltenham GL53 0NR
Tel: 0242-510624 or 01-731 6188

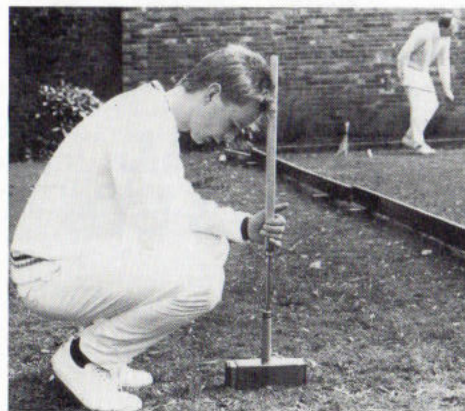
Ludlow: 22-23 March 'Beat Ken Jones' weekend

Report by Peter Dorke

On March 22-23, to the accompaniment of crashing masonry as Ludlow's nearby Town Hall was discretely demolished under the impassive gaze of an execution-morning crowd in Castle Square, an unusual croquet tournament was held at the Ludlow College Croquet Club and demolition of a different kind took place.

Ken Jones, of Edgbaston, the leading player of the West Midlands, took on 15 members of the Ludlow College and South Shropshire Croquet Clubs in level play, playing almost continuously from 10am until 7pm on each of the two days and defeating 14 of his opponents with an apparently casual skill.

The exception was Tim Nock of the College who played brilliantly to defeat Ken by a single point in the first game of Sunday morning. The Great Man - having barely recovered, it must be admitted, from many hours of uninhibited dancing at the SSCC disco the night before - fought like a tiger but eventually played a reckless shot along the 25 degree slope of Ludlow's infamous North boundary and was lost.



Tim Nock deep in thought as Ken Jones fights back

Several other players gave a good account of themselves, particularly Bob Beckett of Ludlow, who impressed with his immaculate stroke play and Nick Davies and Stuart Packer of South Shropshire, both stylish players. Stuart, having decided boldly to play by Advanced Rules, delighted the crowd on more than one occasion with his now famously petulant kick in the vicinity of a just-missed hoop.

The final game, against Tournament Manager Peter Dorke and also under Advanced Rules, was played largely by moonlight. Ken, though fortified by numerous cans of mild, countless slices of fruit cake and a packet of Strepsils, was baffled as he experienced the mysterious nocturnal flattening of the Ludlow lawn. Unnerved by the phenomenon and realising craftily that he was several hoops ahead, he called time, presented Tim Nock with the winner's prize and hot-footed it back to Edgbaston.

It had been a gruelling but very successful weekend.

Glasgow: 27 April A Mary Rose match

By Terry Greenwood

It is unusual to include a first round Mary Rose report in 'Croquet', but I would like to do so in order to pay tribute to the Glasgow club for a very entertaining weekend. Those clubs who could travel to Scotland (but do not) will now know what they are missing.

There was a great deal of amusement when both clubs received the draw of the Mary Rose, because each year Wolverhampton and Glasgow play a friendly match for the Glasgow Cup and therefore it was like playing a neighbouring club.

The run of poor weather caused Wolverhampton some concern, as it would not be pleasant driving some 300 miles on the motorway. However, on 26th April Roy Weaver, Terry Greenwood and Peter West with his wife set off in glorious sunshine and arrived some 6 hours later in Glasgow. The fourth member, Dave Spear, was to travel on Sunday morning, setting off at 5am due to business commitments.

Within half an hour of arrival, Glasgow had whipped us down to the lawns for a 'friendly'; at seven in the evening we left to dine at an Indian Restaurant, followed by an evening at John Sugden's house, and eventually we managed to get to bed at 1.30 on Sunday morning.

A glance through the window on Sunday morning indicated a fine drizzle was in the air. However, by the time the match had started, the sun began to shine on the Principality of Glasgow.

Playing Glasgow is similar to playing the United Nations. Welsh wizard Rod Williams, Dave Warhurst, Yorkshire's Croquet equivalent of Geoff Boycott, and Corla van Griethuysen representing the Netherlands, whilst 'Jack' Naughton, the lone ranger, appears to be Croquet's answer to Harry Lauder.

One wondered, as the match progressed, if the team with the best wit was going to win! Even Edgar Jackson would have found it difficult to compete.

Two and three quarters of an hour after the start, the first result was in; Dave Spear's three hundred mile dash had not affected his play, and he beat Corla +9. But Glasgow soon afterwards levelled the score when Dave Warhurst registered +13 against Roy Weaver, whilst a Brian Rix farce was being played out between West and Greenwood against Williams and Naughton. Wolverhampton were well in front in this doubles match and Peter West had a perfect rush from the boundary for the peg. Unfortunately he pegged out his partner ball with a beautiful stop-shot and was left like a whale on a low tide floundering on the boundary.

During the next 30 minutes, the Glasgow pair edged on to the peg, whilst West fired several salvos to no effect. Then Williams lined up to peg out both balls, missed from a short distance with his partner ball, and decided to peg himself out. Naughton missed from a short distance (he insists his ball was near the boundary, but we all say it was close to the peg!), and left the ball behind the peg, giving West one chance, the peg only. He fired and the swerving shot (which even Steve Davis

would find it difficult to emulate) hit Naughton's hidden ball, enabling Wolverhampton to go 2-1 up at the interval.

A superb salad lunch, plus alcoholic refreshment (which did reach all those parts) enabled Wolverhampton to halve the afternoon's games and win the match. For Wolverhampton, West beat Williams, and Spear beat Corla van G, whilst Glasgow's two afternoon wins were by Warhurst beating Weaver and Naughton beating Greenwood in a shoot-out where it appeared any ball was a legitimate target. Even a 20-yard hoop running shot through 4-back by Greenwood, which was the highlight of the game, did not enable him to win. Tea followed, with Corla's speciality - Dutch Apple Pie.

Thank you, Glasgow, for a superb weekend. As Peter West said, 'What more can one ask in life? - Good croquet, good food and good company!'

1986 Club Competitions

Interim Report by Barry Keen

The early rounds this year have produced one or two surprises. The most unexpected on past performance was the 6-1 defeat of Cheltenham, last year's finalists in the Mary Rose, by Budleigh, who are obviously a team to watch this year.

Last year's winners of the Longman Cup, Tyneside, were defeated in the first round by Durham University. With Oxford University thrashing Harwell 5-0, could we see an all-varsity final?

In the Inter-Club, the only surprise has been the closeness of the score in the Roehampton-Worcester game, although Nigel Aspinall's absence may have had something to do with it.

One disappointment this season is that 5 matches have been settled by one side scratching. Some of the clubs who scratched have relatively large memberships and it is difficult to see why teams could not have been raised. None of the games involved excessive travelling, especially when compared with West Park playing Edinburgh or Wolverhampton playing Glasgow. Let's hope matters improve next season!

Royal Bank Nations Trophy

The Viewing Figures

The average audience over the 11 programmes was 189,000 homes - 285,000 individuals. The highest number of individuals watched the Wednesday 5.15 programme; nearly half a million.

The audience share was highest for the mid-afternoon programmes with the best figure on the Thursday with a 61% share of homes. The average share over the total number of programmes was 33%. (The figures for individuals were 58% and 32% respectively).

We shall publish more detailed viewing figures in our next issue.

To sit or not to sit?

By Chris Hudson

There was a Referees course at Bowdon in the winter of 1984/5, when Barry Keen patiently took some potential Referees through the old Red Laws Book on five successive evenings. Half way through the course, I had come to realise just how involved the Laws and Regulations are, and on being confronted with a specimen set of questions for potential referees that looked like superior logic brainteasers, I decided I was not yet ready to sit the referees exam! However, the fact that Grade II coaches have to be qualified referees finally convinced me that it was time to have another go.

Knowing what was in store this time, I spent several evenings reading through the Laws, trying to clarify for myself the situations that each Law envisaged. Col Prichard's 'Commentary on the Laws' was particularly helpful in this respect.

Barry Keen's refresher course at Bowdon prior to the exam began at 8pm on the Friday evening. This evening session finished at 10.30pm, making life quite difficult for those who had travelled some 60 to 80 miles to be present, as they had to get home to sleep and be back again for a 10am start on the Saturday morning! The course continued through Saturday, and then there was an hour of practical demonstration on Sunday morning before the exam itself.

The time taken by each examination came as quite a surprise. The first candidate disappeared with the examiner into the ladies' changing room, and emerged an hour later looking worn but still determined. Then the two of them went out on to the lawn in the biting wind and pouring rain to carry out half an hour of practical examination. In the distance we could see the examiner shake the candidate by the hand but it was only as we observed the smile of relief as he returned to the pavilion that we realised that at least one of our eight had passed. (Like myself two years earlier, two of the candidates had decided early on Saturday that they would not sit the examination this time.)

During the course, I had discovered that my own copy of the Laws, in virtual pristine condition, was considerably out of date, even though only a year after publication. However, most candidates had come prepared with amendments pasted into their Law Books, together with copious cross-references and indexing systems, annotated margins and so on.

By now, we were all quietly rehearsing the numbers of the Laws and the main sections of the Law Book, as we had been told that whilst there was no objection to the Law Book being used to answer any question, the relevant Law had to be turned up quickly - as someone on the field of play could well query your decision, and you had to be able to demonstrate the relevant Law in the book without any fumbling.

Candidates came and went. One failure, two passes, and the wind and rain continued. Eventually my turn came. The ladies' changing room was very snug by now, the heating having been on all day. The examiner patiently went through a series of questions, picking

them out from a long list. First a list of questions that simply required the stating of one Law. Then another series that required two or more Laws to be combined to give a complete answer. Always, a fight against the clock and a struggle to remember the whereabouts of the relevant Law in the book; then making out the implications of the question and stating the answer whilst the examiner made some sort of mark on his answer sheet.

We had been warned that a pass mark of 80% was required, but 'don't worry if you don't do too well on any section - you can always catch up by doing exceptionally well later!' Well, it was touch and go, but sufficiently OK to be asked to go out for the practical session on the freezing lawns which seemed even colder after the heat of the changing room!

The balls were laid out on the lawn - wired or not wired? - that was the question. In fact, this question proved to be a veritable minefield by the time every implication had been considered. Then a series of questions about crushes and double-taps. Interesting because the examiner had to produce a foul shot which sometimes worked and sometimes didn't. Was it a foul or wasn't it? Well, the Referee's opinion is final!

When I left the grounds, it was getting dark - 5.30ish - and there were still two more people waiting to be examined. They had to be held over until another time, but I must say I was impressed by the way the instruction had been carried out and the way the examinations were conducted. We are very fortunate to have so many members sufficiently keen to give up a whole weekend both to take the examination and to instruct others on the intricacies of the Laws.

Here are some specimen questions for you to try out - (answers below):

1. Red roquets Black. In the croquet shot, Black goes off and Red ends up within the yardline area with a perfect rush on Blue. After replacing Black on the yardline the player indicates she will take a bisque. May she play Red from where it lies?

2. A ball rebounds from a hoop. In order to avoid it hitting his foot the striker topples back and treads on another ball. Has a fault



Drawn by Gillian Rix

been committed?

3. Red takes a 1/2-bisque and is left half-way through the 1st Hoop (its correct hoop). Can the striker

(a) take a bisque and complete the running? (b) complete the running in a subsequent turn if he happens to find himself still there?

A final thought. How useful it would be to have a self-tutor for the Laws; something that you could study by yourself, without having to rely on someone else to explain all the ins and outs. Col Prichard's 'Commentary' is a great help, but could it be enlarged and printed alongside the Laws themselves, like Shakespeare's plays at school which had notes at the bottom of each page giving you everything you needed to know to make the text comprehensible.

Answers to questions . . .

1. No. Red must be placed on the yard line because a bisque is the start of a new turn: Law 29(c) Misplaced ball. Also 38(a).

2. Yes. Because the striker has not 'quitted his stance under control', the striking period is not ended and a fault can be committed under Law 32: 31(c) and 32(xiv).

3. (a) Yes. No Law says he cannot take a bisque and score the hoop. (b) Yes. A player can complete the running of a hoop in one or more turns (the 1/2-bisque is irrelevant).



Bernard Neal (right) examining a potential Referee at Cheltenham earlier this year

The Coles

Cheltenham: 3-5 May

Phil Cordingley wins the Coles

Report by John Walters

In writing this particular report one starts with a considerable disadvantage since there was no tournament dinner, which naturally means a drastic reduction in the scope of this account. There were efforts by John McCullough to lure potential opponents to their downfall with curry dinners each evening, but surprisingly these attempts amounted to little.

The field of players at the Coles this year must have been one of the strongest to appear at any weekend tournament. Nine of the country's top 11 players were present and although several failed in aspiring to their full potential it was clear that there would be few easy victories. The only players conspicuous by their absence were Nigel Aspinall (who was sharpening his international form at the Hurlingham weekend) and 'Captain' David Openshaw (which was fortunate for those test players present).

Keith Wylie made a rare appearance to rout a few 'experts' with his tactics (I believe he is now offering generous HP terms for those who wish to make a sound croquet investment). He resigned his place in the final round of the Swiss to another familiar character - Edgar Jackson - (who chalked up a win for the pairing), but not before playing a magnificent golf-style jump shot on lawn 7 which only just failed to roquet Mulliner on lawn 8 (this tactic will be dealt with in Vol 2!).

Seeds were struggling as early as the first couple of rounds. Prichard vs. Jones produced a period of half an hour where no points were scored. Irwin failed to complete the final stages of a TP against Murray, and after having had all clips on rover simultaneously, Murray later looked to have taken the initiative, only to be foiled by the 'grievous' (roqueted ball pegs out) on a rush to peg from second corner! In a very exciting finish where Cordingley had Rigalled Hope (both other clips on 4-back), Hope missed a short roquet after 4-back and despite a subsequent narrow miss at the peg with a jump over rover, finally lost by 1.

By this stage the Swiss was producing some interesting games. Having Rigalled Moorcraft (4-back against penult and peg), Wylie laid a wired rush at penult with Denis on the south boundary west of first hoop. Denis ran 4-back and hit, but somehow failed to secure the game, finally losing by 1. McCullough should have claimed the elusive sextuple prize, needing only to finish with



Colin Irwin practising in front of Cheltenham's clubhouse

a straight one-yard rover peel, but lost not only this but later the game to Bernard Neal. The final of the Swiss produced Irwin against Croker, which Colin won, thus saving some face for our test team.

In the main event, Cordingley was still felling giants with a 3rd game win over Irwin, a very sweaty +3 Rigall in which Colin came very close to hitting the long shots which would have turned the game around.

Undoubtedly the best turn of the tournament was by Eric Solomon, 1 up and in the second game of his match against Mark Avery. Having Rigalled Mark at penult vs. 2nd and peg, he later accidentally pegged out his own ball shooting at Mark, who was set up in front of rover. Mark ran rover and trickled to the peg,

leaving Eric's remaining ball only two-thirds of a target from second hoop. Eric hit, approached 2nd hoop from near 4th hoop and finished with a 2-ball break - including a hampered shot after 5th hoop, for which 'Big Red' (mallet extraordinaire) was necessary.

At the semi-final stages the

RESULTS

Advanced Play
(Entries limited to handicap 1½)

1st Round:

S.N. Mulliner bt W.O. Aldridge +9;
E.J. Davis bt B.G.F. Weitz +2;
N.G. Hyne bt L.V. Latham +4; J.R. McCullough bt J.D. Meads +25;
E.W. Solomon bt T. Griffiths +21;
S.E. Lewis bt G.K. Taylor +5; B.G. Neal bt A.J. Mrozinski +6; M.N. Avery bt D.R. Foulser +4; W. de B. Prichard bt F.I. Maugham +23;
K.E. Jones bt D.H. Moorcraft +24;
J.R. Hilditch bt D.J. Croker +8;
I.G. Vincent bt K.F. Wylie +14;
A.B. Hope bt J.O. Walters +16;
P.Cordingley bt P.M. Johnson +17;
M. Murray bt D.S. Cairns +17;
C.J. Irwin bt P.L. Smith +14

2nd Round:

Mulliner bt Davis +17;
McCullough bt Hyne +18;
Solomon bt Lewis +4; Avery bt Neal +15; Prichard bt Jones +9;
Hilditch bt Vincent +11;
Cordingley bt Hope +1; Irwin bt Murray +1

3rd Round:

Mulliner bt McCullough +17, +25(TP); Solomon bt Avery +13, +1; Prichard bt Hilditch +7, +26(TP); Cordingley bt Irwin +10, -24, +3

Semi-Finals:

Mulliner bt Solomon +8(TP), -25(TP), +17;
Cordingley bt Prichard +26, +12

Final:

Cordingley bt Mulliner +14, -25, +17(TP)

Play-off for 3rd place:

Solomon bt Prichard +13, +21

Hunstanton: 3-5 May

RESULTS

(Modified Swiss played in blocks)

Block 1:

6 wins: G. Noble
4 wins: D. Palmer, I. Bond
3 wins: M. French
2 wins: D.L. Gaunt
1 win: R. Hobbs, Mrs V. Carlisle, J. Wood

Block 2:

5 wins: J.A. Short (winner), W.E. Lamb
4 wins: Mrs D. Wheeler, R.A. Gosden
3 wins: Dr R. Wheeler, Miss S. Hampson
2 wins: Mrs J. Neville-Rolfe
1 win: J. Gosden

Block 3:

5 wins: N. Harris
3 wins: S.G. Cornelius, Miss D.A. Cornelius, H.F. Barnett
2 wins: Mrs B. Gosden
1 win: Miss P. Hampson
0 wins: J.F.S. Thomas

Block 4:

5 wins: L.J. Palmer
4 wins: J. Reeve
3 wins: D.S. Cornelius, Mrs C.S. Steward
2 wins: Miss J. Waters
0 wins: Miss C. Pearce

Hurlingham: 3-5 May

A Full Pack

Report by Robert Prichard

With most of the aces at Cheltenham and some of the knaves enjoying the good pubs of Hunstanton, who would be coming to the King of Clubs for the youngest of the early May Open weekends?

The 32 of us had varying motives. Aspinall, who admits to finding lawns heavy and cold before June, wanted test practice as close to his warm bed as possible. Spencer from Parson's Green, who had a provisional handicap of 16, wanted a handicap. Most of the Hurlingham entrants were performing valuable roles: Doughty as manager, Coles as his deputy, Godby as handicapper (most necessary, even at Open Tournaments) and Sanford as raconteur, with a surprising story about a telescope.

Peterson, the most northerly entrant, came from Oxford for the lawns and produced the only triple peel. The Ransoms from Bristol came furthest and were each rewarded by an unexpected

defeat by Aspinall and an unexpected victory over Peterson. The rest of us, which included 4 Wigginses (counting Denison), a Lorde from Roehampton and a Lerd from Woking, came for more open games than are guaranteed at any other tournament at Hurlingham.

Lawn 4 (and to a lesser extent 2 and 6) was badly scarred by foraging starlings in the winter and was unavailable. Luckily, the cricket field lawns were available on two days, so dusky play and double-banking were kept to a minimum in providing all who wanted them with six games. By Sunday lunchtime there were



Nigel Aspinall - 7 wins

Colchester: 10-11 May

Report by John Walters

The field of players that collected to play on what have been the finest lawns in the country was not as strong this year as last, although the handicaps were lower. The various minus players must be thankful to the Handicap Coordination Committee for ensuring that the final winner would have been retarded by RECEIVING various numbers of bisques had they played on handicap!

The lone smoker of the tournament was Jan MacLeod. The only other vice around was displayed through Robert Prichard's ability to drink 10 pints without any tendency to fall over more than usual! A mild addiction to chocolate and citrus juice was proliferated by one competitor. Those familiar with the ever present sartorial elegance of John Walters might have questioned his decision to wear an orange spotted jumper; little did they realise that this garment appeared not by choice but by sitting next to Richard Hilditch while the latter ate a 'lively' tomato on the previous day.

Having braved 3 days of frozen croquet in Cheltenham followed by 3 of sodden croquet in Manchester, it was relieving to encounter that most rare species of tournament which can boast neither. Later on the lawns became a trifle windswept, introducing a few 'challenging' patches into what were otherwise easy conditions that produced a number of surprising results.

To whom the moral victory of the tournament went is uncertain. Michael Heap retired unbeaten after the first day and although Mark Avery had already beaten Jerry Guest previously, an 'extra' game produced a well earned reversal of this result for Jerry, thus securing him the tournament (in a game during which Jerry hit the ball in 1-back of Mark's sextuple leave).

Other notable victories included a well controlled straight triple by Michael against John (the fourth consecutive triple in four meetings - honours now being equally divided between the two). Lawn 1 produced last game cliff-hangers to entertain the crowd on both days. Each involved Nick Hyne, who lost by 1 to Robert Prichard (having missed a 3 foot peg) and triumphed by 1 over Robin

Tournament Reports & Results (4)

four invecti, due to play pseudo-semi-finals. Aspinall beat Prichard +27 (Wylie pop through first) but Jeffrey, who had only scraped through +1 on time against Guest, had an even easier victory over Torrington, who was scratched for drinking in Chichester.

In the pseudo-final, Aspinall had both balls on the peg before Jeffrey started and pegged one out. Consistent with having asked Aspinall on the first day whether he was a referee, Jeffrey ignored this somewhat unfavourable position and started to creep round for half an hour. He had reached one-back with both,

before Aspinall hit the peg at his 15th (?) attempt.

Meanwhile, Torrington had returned, stolen a game from a hopeless position against Prichard, and lost convincingly to Aspinall in the post-final. The inevitable winner's only narrow squeak had been against Mrs Wiggins when his failed STP allowed her to peg and 4-back. He will have drawn ahead of Openshaw in the Mulliner Rankings ('National' rankings if you prefer the title in January's issue of 'Croquet'), but his main reward was, like the rest of us, clearly to have enjoyed himself

RESULTS

Swiss Level Advanced Singles

5 wins: G.N. Aspinall

4 wins: J. Jeffrey, P. Torrington,

J. Guest, T. Coles, R.W. Ransom

3 wins: R.D.C. Prichard, Mrs S.

Wiggins, W. Denison, Dr W.R.D.

Wiggins, Miss J. MacLeod, N.E.C.

Gale, J.S.H. Battison, Mrs F.

Newman, D. Beatty, B.

Whitehouse

2 wins: L. Wharrad, B. Sanford,

A. Palmer, Mrs I.P.M. MacDonald,

D. Wiggins, D. Peterson, Mrs R.W.

Ransom, F. Newman, I.P.M.

MacDonald, Mrs B. Mansfield

1 win: J. Straw, G. Doughty,

M. Haggerston, Miss P. Healy,

P. Spencer

0 wins: R. Godby

your opponent's ball.

RESULTS

(Advanced Play: modified Swiss)

7 wins: J.E. Guest

6 wins: M.N. Avery

5 wins: R.D.C. Prichard, D.G.

Palmer, N.G. Hyne

4 wins: J.O. Walters, I.D. Bond, D.L.

Gaunt, M.E.W. Heap, E. Bell

3 wins: M. French

2 wins: R.M. Hobbs, J.R. Hilditch,

W.T. Coles, Miss J. MacLeod, H.C.

Green



'Smoking' Jan MacLeod

Short Croquet

Manchester: 7-9 May

The Royal Bank Nations Trophy

Report by John Walters

7th May, 1986, live from Stage 1, Manchester . . . not 'Coronation Street' nor 'Sherlock Holmes', but the UK's first televised croquet series: 'The Royal Bank Nations Trophy'. Three players from each country (England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales) would all play each other to produce one supreme, him to defend the honour of the team in a two-stage knockout.

Most players attended a meeting on the last day of the 'Coles' to decide what rules we would play. Short Croquet was finally agreed upon (with the proviso of a gentle-persons' agreement not to have any peeling of the opponent - since this encouraged defensive play, confusing to the viewers), and it was also decided that the play would be level, with each player having to complete three mandatory peels. In order that the winner would not be corrupted by the £150 prize money, the CA Council big-heartedly decreed that amateur status could be retained by donating anything in excess of £25.

Just to prove that being a croquet hero and mega-star commentator means nothing if you don't wear a jacket and tie, the Britannia Hotel's bar ('we don't serve pints, Sir!') politely ignored 'our Phil'. Later, as a diversion from the 'mixed fortunes' we were experiencing at the evenings' pizzaland meal, the conversation turned to the temperatures of 90 degrees C for the 1983 Opens and 107 degrees C for one of the last Tests in Adelaide. Unsurprisingly the only weather Manchester produced for us was rain, and the looming clouds' origin in the unseasonably scorching temperatures of the Ukraine, raised no spirits but many umbrellas. (Was it coincidence that our Referee was nuclear safety officer B. Keen?)

Having run the gauntlet of savage autograph hunters, we discovered a number of peculiarities. Firstly, in the large Granada complex, there was not a single television to be had where we might watch croquet's first TV broadcast (eventually we found a monitor to satisfy our vanity). Secondly, colours were decided not by the toss, but by one's shirt size! (Jaques had kindly provided 'purpose built' shirts, in yellow/red and blue/black). Thirdly, the introduction of numbered boxes on top of the hoops, that indicated not only the order in which hoops had to be run, but also when



Richard Hilditch scores a point in the Welsh 'shoot-out'



The two finalists: Nigel Aspinall, with the Trophy, and David Peterson. Centre is Mr H.E. Farley, Chief General Manager of the Royal Bank of Scotland, who presented the prizes.

a hoop had been run (by promptly falling off it!), and so introduced a new intricacy to our game - the mis-placed box!

The first match to be televised was Hope vs. Murray, notable by Andrew mis-placing his clip after running 5th hoop (so that his clips were on 5th and 5th, while he was really for 5th and 6th). When he peeled his ball through 5th (which was really for 6th) his clips became correct, but unbeknown to him, he was a mandatory peel short. Fortunately none of this registered with our commentators, since the referee refused to believe that it had happened, and the fact that players didn't appear to understand the game would hardly encourage our fresh faced TV converts.

The first day also produced the match most likely to halt Nigel's predictable progress to the trophy. However, in the event, Eric Solomon instead became the only player not to take croquet in a particular game. Martin Murray was back for the final game of the day, needing a win to stay alive. Martin was for peg alone when time was called in Stephen Wright's turn. Stephen held together to take his backward ball round, finally needing a half-jump peel at rover. Sadly, after such a valiant effort, this last shot went crashing into the wire, giving Martin victory and allowing him to hit a long peg - thus avoiding the ignominy of a win on time.

Our TV moguls were eager for a play-off situation, which would arise in the Scotch block if Stephen Wright could beat Andrew Hope. Stephen was for peg alone when Andrew reached 5th and 5th, needing two peels and faced with a peel through 5th of 2 yards at 45 degrees! A brilliant approach shot from Andrew placed partner in the jaws and himself 2 feet in front, and a good half-jump shot left him in a favourable position. A missed long shot from Stephen allowed Andrew his final peel. Constructing a final leave, Andrew croqueted Stephen's ball just two inches short of the 4th corner boundary! Now Stephen was certainly faced with his last shot, and to the delight of spectators, he hit the peg from 4th corner, thus forcing croquet's first play-off.

The local election results (received that evening) suggested a 3-way tie at the next

election and I wonder whether their solution to that constitutional crisis will be as original as ours was to this? The sight of Thatcher, Kinnock and Steel having a best of 5 shoot out at the peg would be the political highlight of the decade (and about as conclusive as an election)! The members of the Scottish team each contrived to miss their first two shots, but Martin demonstrated his international experience by hitting the last three, thereby taking a place in the semi-finals.

To summarise the other blocks, coincidentally all games involving Irishmen went to time (and only games including Irishmen). However their block was won outright by Fred Rogerson. David Peterson won the shoot-out for the Welsh block. Although John Walters was not scratched for being (more than 2 minutes) late to play his crunch match against Aspinall, he failed to pull off this major coup, so Nigel progressed to the semi's unbeaten.

Nigel was already establishing himself as the character people could love to hate, not only by playing the game far too well for his own (or rather everybody else's) good, but also by being a 'spoil sport' - depriving the TV people a shot of Richard Hilditch's orange juice and chocolate biscuits (they continued that particular 'character development' regardless). He experienced his toughest struggle against Fred Rogerson in the semi-final before meeting David Peterson in the final. Despite adopting the most peculiar defensive tactics (which might even have confounded Keith Wylie), laying up for rush peels more often seen in the Ladies Field than the President's Cup, Nigel looked untroubled on his way to victory in this final stage of the competition.

Thanks go to the Granada team for their professional approach, to Lord John Oaksey and Phil Cordingley for their commentary, to Elton Welsby our linkman, to Liz Taylor, our scorelady, who always looked splendid in her elegant outfits, and to Chris Hudson for organising everything.

Our hotel were so sorry to see us go that they attempted to prevent Eric from leaving, wrongly presenting him not only with his own bill but those of others as well. Fortunately his honest face soon gained him a release!

Publicity for the tournament was well spread, including an article in the 'Grauniad' which contrived to mis-spell peel - peal, the sort of error which may 'ring a bell' for regular Guardian readers! The first evening's highlights of our up-and-coming sport were usurped by that out-and-going sport, football, (the European Cup match ran into extra time), and by the only man who looks more dour than John McCullough after he's stuck in a hoop - Clint Eastwood, who featured in a double-length film that could not be postponed.

The game's appearance on television seemed to be a successful one. The mood is of a relaxed summer sport (such as cricket) rather than the more usual comparisons with snooker (which has a constantly excited, highly-charged mood). Whether this will suit television viewers we have yet to find out.

RESULTS

England

Nigel Aspinall bt Eric Solomon +14
Eric Solomon bt John Walters +9(T)
Nigel Aspinall bt John Walters +13

Wales

David Peterson bt Richard Hilditch +10
Richard Hilditch bt David Croker +13
David Croker bt David Peterson +7
Shoot-out: David Peterson (3 out of 4)

Scotland

Andrew Hope bt Martin Murray +7
Martin Murray bt Stephen Wright +4
Stephen Wright bt Andrew Hope +2
Shoot-out: Martin Murray (3 out of 5)

Ireland

Fred Rogerson bt Terence Read +10(T)
John McCullough bt Terence Read +1(T)
Fred Rogerson bt John McCullough +3(T)

Semi-Finals:

Nigel Aspinall bt Fred Rogerson +6(T)
David Peterson bt Martin Murray +9

Final:

Nigel Aspinall bt David Peterson +12

Daily Telegraph

(TV Programme Notes)

International Croquet

Granada is attempting to tap the market for obscure sports with three days live coverage of Britain's first televised croquet tournament. Twelve top players from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland are competing for the Royal Bank Nations Trophy, but, despite valiant publicity attempts to inject dynamism into the game, it is difficult to dispel visions of lazy days pottering about on the vicar's lawn.

Daily Telegraph

(after the event)

Peter Simple's column - 'Way of the World'.

'It must not be'

... (Croquet) is the only outdoor game which, though it is one of pure skill, is leisurely enough to allow players to talk and even drink while playing it. A truly civilised game.

I am an erratic player myself, sometimes quite brilliant, sometimes a complete duffer. But at one time I was so keen that I would even play by moonlight in winter, with a light covering of snow on the lawn.

The thought of television getting its claws

Short Croquet

Nigel Aspinall lines up the peg out to win the title.



Phil Cordingley (left) and John Oaksey in the commentary box

Press Cuttings

on croquet makes me shudder. It will soon become commercialised, with huge prizes and 'personalities'. Its present 'tactical ruthlessness' will not be ruthless enough for its promoters.

They will want to speed it up and introduce an element of danger, with the players forced to wear padded clothing and visored helmets . . .

The Manchester Evening News

Mr Manchester's Diary

(The whole diary was devoted to various aspects of croquet in the Thursday edition) . . . Who should I find in the commentator's tent with Elton Welsby but puckish Lord Oaksey, the former leading amateur jockey and now better known as an ITV racing commentator.

You'd think he'd be all adrift with croquet terms like stop-shots, quadruple peels and split-rolls. And so he is, though he'll have to cope with them until the three-day tournament ends tomorrow.

'I know jolly little about it,' he said cheerfully. 'I'm here to ask the sort of questions ignorant laymen would ask' . . .

... He's been playing 'golf-croquet', a basic, one-hoop-a-time version of the game

since childhood, and still has a croquet lawn at home in Oaksey, Wiltshire.

From the Times Television hopes for hit with croquet, by Peter Davenport

'It may not have the crunching impact of American football, the hypnotic appeal of snooker or the bar room familiarity of darts, but croquet has become the latest sport to attract the television cameras . . .

It is the first time a croquet tournament has been televised and Granada executives hope they can make it as popular as snooker and darts that sometimes seem to dominate the screen.

The tournament, involving 12 invited top players from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales has been sponsored by the Royal Bank of Scotland and organised in conjunction with the Croquet Association. It is hoped it will become a regular television event.

The first prize however was only £150 plus a solid silver quach, a Scottish drinking cup, a sum far removed from the £70,000 that snooker's new world champion, Joe Johnson from Bradford, picked up earlier last week . . .

Continued overleaf

Your Letters (1)

Handicap Coordination

Dear Sir,
I have detected 'rumblings' about the decisions of the HCC in carrying out their task of reviewing handicaps for the 1986 season, and I write as a long time critic of the CA handicapping process who finds much to approve in the present regime.

Those affected by the 'arbitrary' handicap movements may feel aggrieved when hard-won reductions are reversed out of season. They should rather be reassured by the careful explanation of the review process which accompanied the adjustment. Each case (excepting minus players) reflects an overall measure of success in tournament handicap play, and is a significantly better option than the blanket changes of the 1970s. It also gives ground for hope that the consistently successful '66%' winner, who never actually wins a tournament event will be recognized by the HCC.

The principal cause for grumbling may be that national statistics may not reflect local rivalries if one regards a handicap as a sort of

order of merit. Unfortunately the system cannot fulfil two distinct roles adequately, and the option chosen seems to be the right one. 'A' class players will pay more attention to the annual statistical table produced annually with such care for the regular tournament players. The rest of us should be prepared to welcome a coordinating judgment based on a respectable view of statistical evidence. In two or three years we can judge by results; meanwhile we can always prove the HCC 'wrong' by going out and winning our new handicaps!

Martin Granger-Brown
Bowdon

Dear Sir,
What follows is a transcript of the speech that I would have made at the recent AGM, had the patriachs of the CA not denied me that right: '... I would like to use this time to denounce the recent action by the Handicap Coordination Committee (HCC), which I believe we might describe, in croquet terms, as a 'miss'. Misguided, miscalculated, mistaken, and if we're lucky, it might become mislaid!

stature as a competitive sport... Now it is in the middle of a renaissance, as a hard competitive game. The cucumber sandwiches and the flamingoes have had their day.

From Today
(Article by Alastair Campbell)

... Croquet came to television last week, courtesy of Granada TV's croquet-playing managing director, David Plowright. He reckons that if bowls and snooker can reach cult status, then the game of aristocratic house parties can make it too.

... The early signs weren't good. There were times when the 35-strong Outside Broadcast team, with their seven cameras, outnumbered Mancunian spectators by about 35...

... Croquet's new 'expert commentator', England international Phil Cordingley... a computer consultant from Harrow, has enjoyed his break from work. His three-day stint earned him £300 - twice as much as Nigel got for winning the final 14-2. And as they're all gentlemen and amateurs he could keep only £25 for himself. The rest goes to the player's club or to the Croquet Association.

'There's no such thing as a croquet professional,' he said, a feeling echoed by Nigel, who is doubtful that he and his colleagues will become instant superstars following their arrival in Granadaland. 'You play for the fun, the trophy, the title and the honour of winning.'

The Mail on Sunday
Croquet set to be the next TV topper

For years, the only sporting sound heard around Granada TV studios has been the thwack of a dart in the Rovers Return.

Not anymore. Next month the genteel crack of mallet on croquet ball will resound around too.

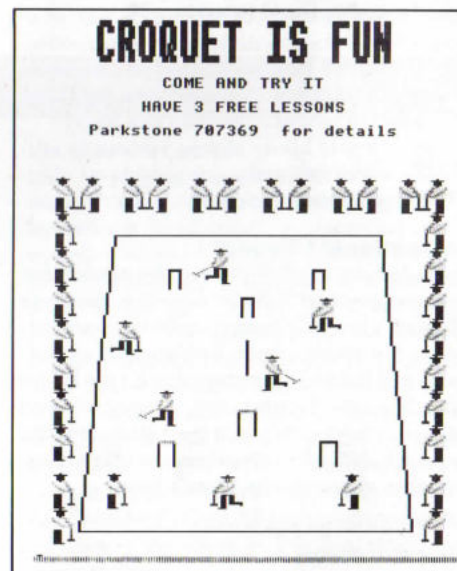
The Manchester-based company intends to turn the pastime of gentlemen into a spectator sport - and they might just succeed...

The centre-pin of the handicap changes is the computer analysis of handicap games, but such an analysis cannot produce conclusive evidence. A player may win a high percentage of his games by playing amongst people whose handicaps are too low. These people will win about half their games because they are equally mis-handicapped. The old computer adage 'Garbage in, garbage out' applies, and the computer mal-adjusts the correct handicap instead of changing the wrong handicaps. Thus this method produces a more subjective handicapping. Although computers may be helpful, their output needs to be interpreted, and a reasonable and experienced observer is still the best way.

What is needed is autonomy, not automation. The HCC itself is responsible for our current difficulties by their previous action of putting the brakes on low handicaps. Their reaction now is like an attempt to mend a Swiss watch with a sledgehammer.

It is true that a bias exists against high handicaps, but this is not something that can necessarily be redressed. Frankly some people (most especially some beginners) wouldn't win with 30 bisques (not that this for one moment means that they won't one day be good players), but they can still enjoy the game.

Handicappers have always used handicaps at this level as a carrot. A reduction from 16 to 15 is of little practical value, but it is invaluable as a source of encouragement to the beginner. A reduction gives a sense of achievement, whether you are 24 or minus 2. I'm sure my own beginners aren't the only ones to feel despondent and cheated at their raises. It is an undermining of confidence in players and handicappers alike. A note in the HCC's doomsday book of handicaps to the effect that changes are not 'real' but adjustments for a new scale, is not enough.



Computer Posters - see Allen Parker's letter on Page 19

It is also correct that minus players tend to beat middle bisquers. What practical steps could be taken that wouldn't have the aforementioned drawbacks? The existing legal handicap range is -5 to 16. Our current lowest handicaps are minus 2, so there is 3 bisques room at the bottom end of the range. I have heard the argument against using that room - 'a minus 5 could never give a scratch player

5 bisques'. The fallacy there is that under the envisaged system a scratch player would be about 3 on the current scale, and someone who receives 5 bisques is off minus 2 now anyway!

Such a move combined with raising the maximum handicap to 18, 20 or even 24 and allowing sensible handicappers to handicap should solve what problems can be solved (most clubs have handicaps up to 20 or 24 anyway). What is objectionable is the HCC's mindless fiddling with handicaps, based on a blind faith in their new toy, rather than the practised skills of handicappers.

I shall now turn to the problems caused by the HCC at the low end of the range. The HCC has severed all links with handicaps and level of ability in open play. Simultaneous must be a transfer to some form of grading in conditions for Mary Rose, Inter-Club, tournaments, etc. Proper consultation could have ironed out problems. Instead the HCC's autocratic handling creates chaos. The question left unanswered - is complete separation of handicaps and level play desirable or necessary?

When the HCC came up with its last daft idea of giving all minus players a handicap 'M', I remember Keith Aiton telling me he didn't want to be an 'M', he wanted to become a minus 2. This reaction - to gain the recognition of a prestigious and limited handicap - is neither extraordinary nor unique. But it is one that must be earned. Dropping it on the heads of many people robs everybody of it as surely as if it ceased to exist.

The blanket reduction of minus players has been explained to me both as redressing the imbalance and as 'flushing out of the system' those who never play handicap games. But their definition of never playing handicap games is playing less than 11 official handicap games a season. Enough to play 2 handicap tournaments, as well as club events and friendlies, so any excuse that their handicaps don't matter is obviously ridiculous.

If these people don't play enough handicap games to be judged, how can they best be assigned accurate handicaps? Fumbling around with a blanket reduction of 1, or using the only guide you do have - their play in open events? The discrepancies in the new handicap list can be seen by comparison with the ranking list (flawed though that system may be). There are so many cases of players conceding bisques to those above them in the ranking! Also few people would argue that many of the new minus 2's could not win 50% of their games against Nigel Aspinall and the other truly top players. Such discrepancies could only be excused if player 'B' is better at handicap play than player 'A' (ie relative to high bisquers), although he is a lesser player. This suggestion is an insult to the tactical ability of the player 'A'.

There are reasons why this might occasionally appear to happen. One I have already mentioned in my attack on computer analysis. The second is that players who play predominantly open games tend to take handicap matches, especially 'Y' games, 'Z' games and Swiss, less than 100% seriously. To handicap them on games where they are not really trying their hardest would be unfair to future opponents, against whom they will try!

I hope you will join me in urging the HCC

to review and reverse this most regrettable action, immediately!

I would like to emphasise my final point, not just that we may correct the folly of this particular instance, but also that we may remind those Council members who might have forgotten, that the CA is run for its members and by its members.

John Walters
Ipswich

Dear Sir,

After some consideration and examination of what figures I have, I wish to alter the conditions of the 'Ability Index' experiment. From now on, only COMPETITIVE SINGLES GAMES should be recorded.

I should also like to thank the people who are so kindly co-operating in this experiment. Simon Williams
Shankhill

Dear Sir,

May I use your columns to draw the attention of both the Handicap Coordination Committee and the 'of course handicaps are relative, not absolute' brigade, to two revealing statements in articles in Issue 185. They occur in the articles by Barry Keen and Simon Garrett, and respectively read as follows:

(1) '... there is a definite trend for lower handicap players to win more than half their games, and for long bisquers to win fewer than half'

(2) 'Occasionally some people have to give up playing with each other. A wins too easily with bisques, but B wins too easily in level play.'

These two totally independent statements clearly indicate flaws in the system. No doubt the HCC's 11-game assessment is a step in the right direction to remove the flaws. But surely Simon Williams' experiment, described in his letter in the same issue, is an infinitely more professional and less arbitrary way of tackling the problem.

I very much hope that the Handicap Coordination Committee will give Simon their active support and encouragement.

Brian Whitehouse
Guildford

The Chairman of the Handicap Coordinating Committee, writes:

The above letters, which incidentally reflect views I have received from various quarters, demonstrate that you can please 'some of the people for some of the time, but not all of the people for all of the time'.

In response to John Walter's final comments, all members of the CA who have an interest in handicap play and in the handicapping system have been aware for some years of a growing concern amongst players that the handicapping system was unfair, in that it favoured the better players. In response to requests from CA members and from club committees (some through the columns of the Gazette), the HCC considered it their duty to attempt to modify the system.

Two approaches were considered. The first option, which we are trying at present, is to assume that the present handicapping system could be made to work properly giving

Your Letters (2)

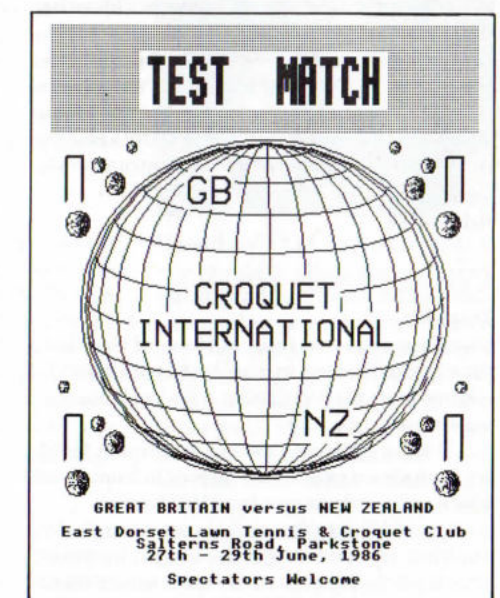
everybody a 50-50 chance of winning. The second option was to introduce 'bonus bisques' on top of the normal bisque difference when players of different classes meet. While the latter system may in the end be the only way of achieving equality in all games, the HCC feels that the extra complication should only be introduced if we prove that the simple approach is unsuccessful. The HCC will of course be very interested in the outcome of Simon Williams' approach, although we should all be wary of adopting more complex solutions if the simple ones work.

I must emphasise again that the actions of the HCC over the last two winters (yes - the system was first used at the end of the 1984 season, although with changes of only 1 handicap point for success rates of greater than 75%) are not an attempt to centralise handicapping. The HCC has always relied on their hard-working handicappers in the field, and intends to carry on doing so. To those cynics who disbelieve this, I can say that central handicapping would involve far too much work for any interested amateur and, as John Walters' letter shows, very little appreciation!

Readers may be interested to know that the Tournament Committee are studying ways of selecting entries to over-subscribed open events. It is hoped to introduce a new scheme on a trial basis next year.

Finally, I would like to repeat my offer which I made to those attending the AGM, that if any member of the CA wishes to contribute to the discussion in detail, or wishes to have a more detailed explanation of the HCC approach, including a statistical breakdown of the 3500 games played in Calendar events in 1985, please drop me a line.

Barry Keen
Knutsford



A sample Computer Poster

Posters by Computer

Dear Sir,

Some of your readers who use microcomputers or word processors may be interested to see some posters that were designed using a BBC Micro, model B. They are reproduced here in black and white, but when painted in various colours or photo-copied on to coloured paper, they make effective posters for Continued overleaf

Your Letters (3)

advertising tournaments, or in croquet exhibitions.

Observant readers will notice that the word 'Association' does not appear on any of them. 'Croquet is Fun' trips lightly off the tongue. If we add the word 'Association' it doesn't seem to carry the same conviction, and also takes up valuable poster space. If the average member of the public has the wrong idea about the game of croquet, I do not believe that the addition of the word 'Association' will alter their view. After all, we do not have it on the cover of our Gazette. No, the name of the game is Croquet. Let's keep it that way, at least for posters.

Allen Parker
Parkstone

Tournament Results

Dear Sir,
I am prompted to write in disagreement with Tim Harrison's letter in Issue 185 of 'Croquet' about the reporting of tournament results in the magazine.

Tim suggests that all results of A class open events should be recorded, but only very limited details be given of other, eg handicap, events. This seems to me to confuse croquet with sports like football, where there are a lot of non-playing spectators. Obviously more people are interested in the result of Manchester United v. Arsenal than in a game between two non-league sides.

But in the case of croquet, it is only the croquet players who are interested in reading the results. For me at least the primary interest is in looking for the names of people I know to see who they have been playing and how they have got on. I do know a few A class players, but the results of those I don't know don't mean as much to me as the games of B and C class players I do know.

Having talked to a number of other players, I know I am not alone in finding the tournament results one of the best parts of the magazine. It would seem odd if the official publication of the CA can find room for an extended joke about the shape of the knee but not for proper details of its own tournaments.

Jeremy Short
Addington

Croquet Marathons

Dear Sir,
I was interested to read in Howard Stanley's article on Himley in the last issue that 20 games were played during a 25-hour croquet marathon.

During our world record attempt in 1983, we completed exactly 50 games in 5 days and nights of continuous play (120 hours).

I would like to dissuade most strongly any aspiring contenders for the record however. This is partly because of the quite severe strain involved in the attempt - I would recommend writing a will first; but mainly because it is, at present, the most noteworthy item on my curriculum vitae!

Yours hopefully,
Simon Clay
Birmingham

Is Croquet in the Clear?

Dear Sir,
Being a well-heeled executive with time on my

hands, I have been looking for a sport to take up to while away a few hours.

Whilst other sports appear higher on my shopping list, Mrs Sparrow has pointed out that they are surrounded by controversy. She thinks that cricketing entails snorting cocaine and (well, no need to go into that); athletics - drug taking; football - night clubbing, kissing and cuddling; darts - drinking and womanising; and snooker - drinking and womanising. As you can probably imagine, she has put a ban on those!

To cut a long story short, we have gone through the Rothmans Sports Journal 1986, and your game has come up tops. However, would you please confirm, to the best of your knowledge, that there are no plans by the 'News of the World' to blow the lid off croquet!

I would hate to kit myself out with the necessary gear, only to find a world exclusive on the goings on behind the croquet green!

I enclose herewith a 12p stamp to facilitate an early reply. British Summertime has, I understand, arrived, and it will soon be time for outdoor sports.

Stephen Sparrow
Felixstowe



Would this bother Mrs Sparrow?
(Cartoon by Shella Legg)

Dear Mr Sparrow,
No, Mrs Sparrow need not worry about Mr Sparrow wandering from the nest. We haven't made the 'News of the World' yet, but there is always a first time.

As you can see from the cover photograph of the 'Croquet' magazine (Issue No 182), it is not only pensioners who play the game. (Don't tell your wife, but for a small fee of £14.00 to join the Association, I could give you their telephone numbers). Perhaps they could coach you - in how to play croquet.

I take this opportunity to enclose literature on the game and the Association, and also a list of clubs in your area.

If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Brian Macmillan
Hurlingham

The TPO - an interruption

Dear Sir,
Much as I hate to interrupt the friendly banter between Messrs Aiton and Rigall (as Dr Wiggins reminded us at our recent AGM, croquet is such a nice friendly game), I cannot resist converting this duet, and private (amicable) battle, into a tripartite discussion.

Mr Rigall's view seems to rest exclusively on Mr Aiton's results, perhaps a somewhat narrow view of life. Such blinkered vision might even qualify one for a place on the

selection committee!

Mr Aiton recently gave a numerical proof (?) of his case and will doubtless go on to prove that white is black, then to be run over at the next zebra crossing.

Obviously, in any top class game, faced with an adversary clip on 4-back, one cannot afford capricious behaviour. It would be imprudent to proceed under the assumption that the opponent will not finish the game from the next opportunity. The lift shot provides a very reasonable opportunity even in the best of the current generation of leave. In our game there are no commendations for achieving -17TP instead of -26TP! One solution might be to dispense with the absurdly aggressive lift leaves that frequent our lawns, which generally guarantee 'all or nothing'. Mr Rigall's indictment of the TPO is perfectly well grounded; unsurprisingly there is a better way, which should consign the TPO to the realms of pure whimsy.

This solution deprives player A (who is for 1 and 4-back) the opportunity of the lift shot to finish, while its advantages over the TPO are two-fold. Firstly it converts the manoeuvre into a trivial affair; secondly, it increases the odds of winning when the manoeuvre is complete.

The tactic is a simple one. The first peel of the TPO is completed as usual. After this, the leave for the delayed sextuple is set. Whether the 40-yard shot is taken or not, the remaining double peel on the opponent should prove no difficulty. One would also expect at least one peel (1-back) on partner to be accomplished. Whether both balls are pegged out or just the opponent will depend on circumstances and could itself be the subject for another debate. In either case, the position is a highly enviable one.

As 'technical' notes, I would add the following: should the 4-back peel 'stick' after 3rd, this presents little extra difficulty, providing one always remembers that 6th must not be made off partner ball. That must be at 1-back ready as the escape ball after accomplishing the cross-wire. The 4-back peel even may be completed going to 6th (in the usual manner), although these complications do require the addition of long croquet strokes to the manoeuvre. It should be remembered that if failure were to occur in executing this tactic, it would most likely result in the turn continuing nevertheless (unlike the TPO where disaster generally ensues), leaving either a break to 4-back or a TPO as compensation.

Of course I will listen to criticism of this tactic by those who find they hit a good percentage of 40-yard shots!

John Walters
Ipswich

Now that we've come to the end of correspondence on the TPO, someone will no doubt think of another subject that needs exhaustive analysis! - Ed.

Women's Croquet

Dear Sir,
I did enjoy Allen Parker's article on Miss Lily Gower - May 'Croquet'. Obviously those were the days. Alas, what has happened to Women's Croquet today?

Firstly we lost our Eight, now the Women's Championship is to be played as Draw and

Your Letters (4)

Process, and yet we pay the same as the Men who still are entitled to enjoy 9 hours per match of lawn time! The mind boggles as to what THEY will think up for the Ladies Field Candlesticks in 1987. Possibly a 20min Hoop Ball clash?

Maybe we are not really needed in the game at all. Obviously tournament day would have to change - no morning coffee, lunch would not appear, and none of those glorious gooey cakes for tea. It is well known that some players manage the tournament day on a couple of litres of orange juice and endless chocolate biscuits, and this may well become the norm.

However, I do see one ray of hope - Page 21. Bryan Sykes wishes to examine our knees. Come on ladies, line up in your knickers - you never know, we may pass the test after all!

Sarah Hampson
Hunstanton

Golf Croquet

Dear Sir,
I find it rather distressing that people should wish to change the name of Golf Croquet merely because the game has nothing to do with either game.

When has that ever been a good reason before? And it is now to become grounds for a change of name, can we expect this to spread further - to the players themselves? I, for one, am comfortable in my glass house, even though, logically, my name has no sensible reason for existence.

Please, please, can we be more aware of tradition, before changing everything around.

J.P.G. Watson
Stevenage.

Surprising that so far this season, Nailsea and Surbiton are the only clubs to have applied for a Grant or a Loan from the CA. With additional money available from sponsorship this year, the CA is anxious to assist clubs who want to develop their facilities. Please make your applications for Grants or Loans as soon as possible to the CA Office.

We must have picked up a set of garden rules for American Croquet. The diagram giving the layout for 6-wicket croquet on page 15 of the last issue shows rover being run in the usual direction. The USCA Official Rules show that the Americans officially run rover in the opposite direction to ourselves. Sorry!

Wylie vs. MacLeod. Jan used 2 bisques to take a ball to peg. After Keith missed she used another 2 to set up a break but then missed. Keith hit a long shot and from an unpromising situation completed 7 peels of a dodectuple, finishing with a Rigall (a 21 point turn!). Admittedly this was 2 years ago in a handicap friendly, but we thought it worth reporting.

Dave Foulser, Andrew Hope, and Geoffrey Taylor helped to launch the new Croquet Club in Swindon on May 11th. Generous support by Thamesdown Council and sponsorship from Burmah Oil has given the club a flying start. They have one lawn in the picturesque Lydeard Country Park on the western edge of the City.



Cyril Pountney, seen above in the uniform of the Fleet Air Arm, learnt to fly whilst out in Calcutta and obtained his Pilot's Certificate in 1930. He has now published his book 'Uncle's War in the Fleet Air Arm' which is available at a discount to CA members and friends.

The book contains details of some interesting and unusual experiences, many of which were hardly to be expected whilst serving in the Royal Navy. Flying Swordfish aircraft off the carrier HMS Ark Royal, Cyril was with the ship when it was sunk off Gibraltar in 1941. Later on in the war, he was shot down by a Japanese fighter whilst based in Ceylon. All told, he has actually flown 36 different types of aircraft, but none since peace was declared in 1945.

The book, (price £5.95 to CA members) can be ordered direct from Cyril at Seacrest, Seagrove Farm Road, Seaview, Isle of Wight, PO34 5HU.

Snippets

Welcome to another new sponsor. **Bombay Gin** are to sponsor the President's Cup this year, and we look forward to working with them. By the time this is published, they will have held a Press event at Hurlingham to announce their support for croquet.



Lionel Wharrad, pictured above with some of the trophies he won last season, has in mind to stage the biggest Croquet Championship ever. This could be a really cracking event, with TV and sponsorship possibilities. More news later!

William Prichard & Jan MacLeod appeared on BBC breakfast TV at the end of May for a 3-minute interview on croquet. William demonstrated a jump-shot on the studio carpet, and a lot of people seem to have seen the broadcast.

Peter Alvey has very generously donated income he has received from the sale of his croquet photographs to the Test Tour Fund - a gesture that was much appreciated by the Council at its recent meeting.

The series of coaching courses organised by **John McCullough** and the clubs in the South West for their local WI County Federations have been very successful, with many of the ladies who attended the 'taster' days booking places on the coaching courses that followed.

Following the release of the Sykes Report and the announcement of the second ESC Study, the **Editor** has been overwhelmed by requests from lady members and regrets any delay that may arise in carrying out the relevant examinations.

Wrest Park reports that they now have 5 new Referees, one of them with a handicap of 18. They ask - Is this a record?

If anyone is a member of the Province of Middlesex, please could they contact **Derek Caporn** at 1 Pinelands, 12 Beechwood Avenue, Weybridge, Surrey, as he is trying to form a Croquet Section of the Sports Association there.

Judy Anderson denies that she features in last issue's photo of 'Judy Anderson in play'. She says they are not her Wellingtons, her trousers, her jumper, nor her mallet, and she is told it is not even her style. Besides, she says, the Wellingtons have heels, so she does not wish to be associated with them! All this doesn't say much for the Editor's powers of observation!

The first **Greene King/National Trust** Tournament was played in May at Anglesey Abbey and was a great success from a publicity point of view. Moet and Chandon, who are sponsoring the event, are giving two magnificent engraved crystal goblet/vases (each a foot high) to the winning pair at the Ickworth finals in September. Who said Short Croquet was only a singles game?



Bowdon's Liz Taylor, ever the one to capture the imagination of photographers and TV cameras, was in charge of the scoreboard at the Granada Royal Bank Nations Trophy event. With a new summer outfit for each of the three days, she looked certain to achieve 'star' status, but umbrellas and other waterproof clothing needed to keep out the rain deprived Northern viewers of a rare treat.

Syd Jones, Chairman of **Tyneside**, has taken over from **John Meads** as our development officer for the North East Region. We wish him every success, and congratulate John on what he has achieved in the Region during the three years he has been responsible for development there.

Reports & Results (5)

Southport: 26-27 April

A Win for Colin Irwin

Report by John Walters

It doesn't seem a year ago since we were burning down the M6 jointly composing the last April Southport Open Weekend report.

A tournament dinner at 'Big Mama's' was planned, but in the event Pat refused so we patronised a Pizzeria in town instead. Their crispy pies were insufficient to fill out the emaciated form of John Meads. Cutlery was in short supply, but this was fortuitous since there was only sufficient arm room for one person to eat at a time. An interesting aperitif was provided by the entertainment of watching a number of vehicles attempting to negotiate a 10 foot car space, but this was the only course for which the management provided ample time.

Past experience of Southport weather might have suggested that the only burn of the weekend would be the manager's pizza. However Southport connoisseurs were to be disappointed; the sun shone relentlessly, the traditional icy wind making only a token

appearance to honour the final.

We were relieved to read in Sundays 'Snoozepaper' assurances from Nigel that one did not need 'Big Money' to play croquet. The looming question is - can one make big money from Croquet?

The final became a struggle to avoid the increasingly prominent irregularities in front of hoops when attempting close approaches. Such difficulties failed to affect Colin Irwin who beat John Walters in straight games, the second of which produced 3 peels of a triple before Colin stuck in rover. He could be consoled by having produced the only triple of the tournament in an earlier round.

Once again the catering produced fine spreads, including cream buns of such magnificence that I consoled myself with 2 on Sunday. Richard Hilditch managed ably despite some dour games, but in the long tradition of managers, failed to produce his true form on the lawns.

WALKER CROQUET EQUIPMENT

TOURNAMENT MALLETS

Made to your choice of weight and length

CLUB MALLETS

The Mallet with a 5-year Guarantee on the Head

TOURNAMENT BALLS

Croquet Association Approved for Tournament use.
2-year Guarantee

also

COMPLETE SETS - FULL RANGE OF EQUIPMENT

Send for Brochure to:

WALKER CROQUET EQUIPMENT
82 Queens Crescent, Chippenham, Wilts. SN14 0NP
Telephone Chippenham 654319

The Peel Memorials

Cheltenham: 12-17 May

Report by Bill Bawden



Dennis Moorcraft plays on, ignored by a couple of mallards

For the second year running the weather played ducks and drakes with the Peel Memorials at Cheltenham, with prolonged blustery showers on five of the six days. It therefore came as no surprise when a charming pair of mallards flew in to share the lawn with the doubles finalists, strutting unconcerned and providing light relief to anxious moments.

Weather, of course, is an ever-present topic of conversation at tournaments, rivalled only by the vexed question of handicaps. There has yet to be a tournament in which bisques have been fairly awarded or used to advantage, or not disastrously hoarded. Nor will there be. Those who feel that they have been vanquished by bisques rather than by their opponents, pray fervently that one day justice might be done. This was one tournament in which their prayers were answered. After the presentation of trophies by that veteran former champion Kitty Wheeler, Betty Weitz rose to announce a long lost of cuts in handicap. Were they severe enough? We shall no

doubt see, with a special eye on young Stephen Cornelius, from Harlow.

For the Cornelius family, father, son, and daughter, this was a predatory invasion, playing for the first time at Cheltenham, and in only their second tournament. The father and son middle-bisque combination in the Lady Murray Memorial and Surrey Challenge Cup doubles, proved too much for scratch player-manager Dennis Moorcraft and his high-bisque partner Jean Wraith, who nevertheless put up a spirited performance, losing on time by a mere three points.

Son Stephen resumed play after tea in yet another final, that for the Trevor Williams Cup (he had already won the Peels Memorial Silver Challenge Bowl, taking it from holder Lawrence Latham by the convincing margin of 17). His opponent now was that free-flow veteran Edgar Jackson, who had had mixed fortunes in other events, and was about to be demolished plus 26 in the fastest game of the tournament. Edgar's wry comment afterwards was that the referee

RESULTS

SOUTHPORT: 26-27 April

Open Singles (Advanced)

Round 1: C.J. Irwin bt E.J. Davies +4; B.J. Storey bt Mrs P. Hague +15; E. Bell bt W.E. Lamb +20; A. Bennet bt P. Stoker +12
Round 2: A. Sutcliffe bt M.H. Sandler +2; J.R. Hilditch bt A.J. Collin +11; D. Gaunt bt J.D. Williamson +19; Irwin bt Storey +14(TP); Bell bt Bennet +9; J.O. Walters bt J.D. Meads +15; P.J. Death bt Mrs C.E. Irwin +1(T); T. Scott bt M. Wilkins +23
Round 3: Hilditch bt Sutcliffe +8; Irwin bt Gaunt +15; Walters bt Bell +17; Scott bt Death +6

Semi-finals: Irwin bt Hilditch +19; Walters bt Scott +16
Final: Irwin bt Walters +20, +23

BUDLEIGH: 12-17 May

Godfrey Turner Challenge Cup (Handicap Singles)

Block A

5 wins: F.H. Newman (3½);
4 wins: R.S. Stevens (3½) +29;
Rev S.M. Scarr (5) +22;
3 wins: D.M. Bull (4) +42;
2 wins: J.H.J. Soutter (2½) -20;
Col E. Vulliamy (3) -48;
1 win: B.G. Perry (1)

Block B

5 wins: N.F.C. Gale (3);
4 wins: Dr D.R. Laney (2) +16,



Debbie Cornelius in play at the Peels

had spent more time on the lawn than he himself!

Last year's winner of the ladies' event for the Peel Memorial Silver Challenge Bowl, Debbie Latham, went out to Cheltenham's Margery Warren in the semi-final, who in turn succumbed to Kismet Whittall of Bath, +19, in the final. These two finalists are very consistent players who have at last caught

the eye of the handicappers. There was some consolation for Debbie in winning the Swiss of the open handicap singles, but alas, no trophy.

This is the last of the Peel Memorials in its present form, as the CA has decided next year to merge it with the Coles. One hopes that this will prove to be a true marriage, of which the outcome will not be a bastard!

I.P.M. Macdonald (3) +15, P.K. Danks (5½) +2;
2 wins: W. Broad-Thomas (4);
1 win: F.A. Rowlands (4) -42, Mrs F.H. Newman (4) -60

Play-Off

N.F.C. Gale bt F.H. Newman +25
J.K. Brown Memorial Challenge Cup (Handicap Singles)

Block C

4 wins: J.C. Hatherley (6) +51, Mrs P.A. Dwerryhouse (6½) +6;
3 wins: Dr W.R. Bucknall (6½) +19, Mrs D.J. Croker (5½) +14;
1 win: Mrs E.F. Grant (9)

Block D

4 wins: Dr C.L. Greenbury (5½)

+37, Miss M. Hardman (10) +19, R.E. Vincent (8) +15;
2 wins: Mrs C. Bagnall (6½);
1 win: F.J. Exell (5½);
0 wins: Mrs E.G. Turner (6½)

Block E

4 wins: Mrs I.P.M. Macdonald (5½);
3 wins: E.G. Kitchener (8);
2 wins: J. McBurnie Wood (6½) -18, Mrs P.A. Dwerryhouse (6½) -18, Mrs B.G. Perry (7½) (one game rained off);
1 win: H.J. Crozier (6½) (one game rained off)

Play-Off

Semi-final: J.C. Hatherley bt Dr C.L. Greenbury +21

RESULTS

The Peel Memorial Silver Challenge Bowl:

Handicap Singles (Men)
(American Blocks & Play-Off)

Block A

4 wins: S.G. Cornelius (8);
2 wins: W.R. Bawden (5), D.H. Moorcraft (0), Gp Capt R.S. Ryan (6½);
0 wins: G.E.P. Jackson

Block B

3 wins: Dr B.G.F. Weitz (0), P.F. Leach (5½);
2 wins: M.T. Paddon (2), Major T. Vale (4);
0 wins: W Cdr R. Noel-Smith (16)

Block C

4 wins: L.V. Latham (0);
3 wins: D.S. Cornelius (9);
2 wins: M.G. Tompkinson (2);
1 win: W.J. Sturdy (3½);
0 wins: R.F. Wheeler (5)

Play-Off

Semi-final: L.V. Latham bt B.G.F. Weitz +6
Final: S.G. Cornelius bt L.V. Latham +7

The Peel Memorial Silver Challenge Bowl:

Handicap Singles (Women)
(American Blocks & Play-Off)

Block A

4 wins: Mrs M. Warren (7);
3 wins: Mrs E. Asa-Thomas (3), Mrs G.D. Harris (4½);
2 wins: Mrs T. Vale (6½), Mrs E. Weitz (4);
1 win: Miss E.M.P. Cheverton (17)

Block B

5 wins: Mrs L.V. Latham (6);
3 wins: Lady C. Bazley (4), Miss I.M. Roe (7½);
2 wins: Mrs W.T. Paddon (9), Mrs E.E. Turtle (15);
0 wins: Mrs G. Bawden (9)

Block C

3 wins: Mrs K. Whittall (10), Mrs J. Cima (11), Mrs V. Tompkinson (7½);
1 win: Mrs I. Moorcraft (11);
0 wins: Miss J. Wraith (15)

Block D

4 wins: Mrs J. Neville-Rolfe (3½);
3 wins: Miss D.A. Cornelius (7½);
2 wins: Mrs M.E. Langley (8);
1 win: Mrs M. Leach (17)
0 wins: Mrs K.M.O. Wheeler (4)

Play-Off

Semi-Finals: Mrs Warren bt Mrs Neville-Rolfe +13, Mrs Whittall bt Mrs Latham +8;

Final: Mrs I.P.M. Macdonald bt J.C. Hatherley +1
L.G. Walters-Long Handicap Challenge Trophy

Block F

4 wins: F.A. Beard (9);
3 wins: Miss D.V. Harding (14) +15, Mrs L.D. Iredale (13) +5;
2 wins: Mrs H. Cruden (10) -1, Mrs J. Broad-Thomas (12) -1;
1 win: T. Brand (14)

Block G

5 wins: Dr A.C. Peterson;
4 wins: R. Forth;
3 wins: W.G. Iredale (12);
2 wins: Mrs C.H. Marshall (10);
1 win: Mrs D.M. Smith (12);
0 wins: Miss K. Holroyde (12)

Final: Mrs Whittall bt Mrs Warren +19

The Lady Murray Memorial & Surrey Challenge Cup:

Handicap Doubles
Semi-finals: Miss Wraith & Moorcraft bt Mrs Harris & Dr Wheeler +15; S.G. & D.S. Cornelius bt Lady Bazley & Miss Cheverton +13(T)

Final: S.G. & D.S. Cornelius bt Miss Wraith & Moorcraft +3(T)
Final of 'Y': Mrs Whittall & M.T. Paddon bt Mrs Asa-Thomas & Miss Cornelius +12

Open Handicap Singles: (Trevor Williams Cup)

1st Round:

G.E.P. Jackson (0) bt Mrs L.V. Latham (6) +8; Mrs K. Whittall (10) bt Mrs K.M.O. Wheeler (4) +21; D.S. Cornelius (9) bt Lady Bazley (4) +12; Mrs G.D. Harris (4½) bt Miss D.A. Cornelius (7½) +7; Gp Cpt R.S. Ryan (6½) bt Dr B.G.F. Weitz (0) (wo); Mrs M.E. Langley (8) bt M.G. Tompkinson (2½) +23; W.R. Bawden (5) bt Mrs V. Tompkinson (7½) +2(T); Mrs J. Neville-Rolfe (3½) bt Dr R.F. Wheeler (5) +12; P.F. Leach (5½) bt Miss I.M. Roe (7½) +5; Major T. Vale (4) bt D.H. Moorcraft (0) +18; W.J. Sturdy (3½) bt Mrs M. Warren (7) +8; Miss J. Wraith (15) bt Miss E.M.P. Cheverton (17) +2(T); Mrs E.E. Turtle (15) bt Mrs E. Weitz (4) (wo); M.T. Paddon (2) bt Mrs E. Asa-Thomas (3) +23; L.V. Latham (0) bt Mrs T. Vale (6½) +6; S.G. Cornelius (8) bt Mrs M. Leach (17) +17

2nd Round:

Jackson bt Mrs Whittall +2; Mrs Harris bt D.S. Cornelius +3; Ryan bt Mrs Langley +5; Mrs Neville-Rolfe bt Bawden +10; Leach bt Vale +3; Sturdy bt Miss Wraith +10; Paddon bt Mrs Turtle +7; S.G. Cornelius bt Latham +24

3rd Round:

Jackson bt Mrs Harris +10; Mrs Neville-Rolfe bt Ryan +4; Leach bt Sturdy +21; S.G. Cornelius bt Paddon +21

Semi-finals: Jackson bt Mrs Neville-Rolfe +12; S.G. Cornelius bt Leach +7(T)

Final: S.G. Cornelius bt Jackson +26

Block H

4 wins: A.J. Wasdell (14);
3 wins: A. Harding (12);
2 wins: M. McF. Davis (10);
1 win: R.C.V. Bazen (16);
0 wins: Mrs R.E. Vincent (10)

Play-Off

Dr Peterson bt A.J. Wasdell +3(T)
The Daldry Cups (Handicap Doubles)

Semi-finals: P.K. Danks & Dr A.C. Peterson (18½) bt Mr & Mrs B.G. Perry (8½) +21; Dr D.R. Laney & Mrs D.J. Croker (7½) bt Col E.L.L. Vulliamy & Mrs E. Grant (12) +8

Final: Danks & Dr Peterson bt Dr Laney & Mrs Croker +6

The Peel Memorials

Regional News

Croquet for mentally handicapped people

Report by Paul Hetherington

The Northern Sports Association for People with Mental Handicap (NSAPMH) has recently developed a new form of croquet; Golfe Croquet. This is short lawn Golf Croquet with hoop boundaries which limit positions from which hoops may be attempted. Golfe Croquet will be extensively promoted throughout the Northern Sports Council region amongst Gateway Clubs and Adult Training Centres this year, building up to a Championship in October.

The Championship will involve local croquet clubs, mentally handicapped people and the general public, all competing on equal terms in handicap singles, doubles and a team event. Joshua Tetley, the brewers, will be sponsoring the Championship and further support for the project is coming from Townsend Croquet Ltd and the Northern Sports Council.

Golfe Croquet will be promoted with the aid of a

50-page coaching booklet, 8 large wall-charts and a series of coaching seminars for staff, backed up by loaning of sets of equipment. The expansion of the game is envisaged through a 5-year plan that will result in regional leagues and a national knockout tournament under the auspices of the United Kingdom Sports Association for People with Mental Handicap, the parent body of NSAPMH.

Golfe Croquet will provide useful therapy for mentally handicapped people since it requires basic skills of coordination and balance essential for everyday living. However the major benefit of Golfe Croquet is its role in the plan for 'normalisation', as it provides a sport where mentally handicapped and 'normal' people can truly be integrated with an even chance.

There will also be benefits for the game of croquet, as staff, parents and the more able



Paul Hetherington

mentally handicapped will be encouraged into Association Croquet, thus expanding Club and Association membership. Golfe Croquet will also have a high media appeal because of the involvement of mentally handicapped people and it will go a long way towards smashing

misconceptions of croquet and vicarage tea-parties.

Copies of the coaching book or wall charts are available at a cost of £1.00 each from Paul Hetherington, NSAPMH Recreation Development Officer, c/o Durham Adult Training Centre, Aykley Heads, Durham.

A New Tournament — Report by

Harrow: 17-18 May

16 people collected for Harrow Oak's first own tournament, from the most experienced — including 1985 Open Champion David Openshaw — to a player for whom this was his first open tournament.

The fact that the lawns were not top class (some croquet enthusiasts stole 2 hoops after the first day, but were foiled by a spare set!) led to some interesting shots, and only David declared that shots went straight (perhaps because he is club chairman!). We were consoled by the thought of the option — Bristol's open weekend with the dreaded lawn 3 (once dug up by vandals, it was discovered that the lawn was better afterwards!).

Apart from the noticeable absence of Robert Prichard (at Bristol lawn 3, presumably, because what's sauce for the goose . . .) the only reminder of Bristol was the McCullough sized entry fees and David's application of market forces to Mars Bar sales — when only 3 remained, the price increased by 7p (carefully buying one first), and this on a day we were told inflation was 3%! The winner was awarded a fine portrait of the

Queen and the Duke of Wellington, in royal blue (thus avoiding any risk that CA Council insist he donate it). The Harrow catering committee produced a fine spread, to rival the supremacy of the Nottingham lunches, freshly diluted orange juice and chilled chocolate biscuits.

Being a Swiss, the situation at the final round in the two crunch games was as follows. If Walters beat Avery and Openshaw beat Cordingley, then a 1-ball play-off between those two. If Openshaw lost and Walters won, then Cordingley could win the tournament. Otherwise Avery would win. In the end it was the last of these multitudinous possibilities.

Final day drew to a close with all but 5 of our number having deserted their posts. After the previous evening's 'mysterious disappearances', Hilditch, Avery and Walters accounted for the hoops ('I counted them out and I counted them all in again'). They toyed with a few Wylie pseudo cannons to while away the hours waiting for Kolbuszewski and Race to finish the last game, but finally rode off into the sunset, leaving those two to complete their struggle in the approaching gloom.

Croquet in Santa Barbara, USA Croquet Players 'hoop' it up in Montecito

As many huddled next to their fireplaces during the stormy weekend, a group of men and women in Montecito were outdoors, whooping it up and playing croquet.

From Friday through Sunday, under cloudy and often wet skies, these hardy sorts competed in the 10th Annual Birnam Wood International Invitational Croquet Tournament

'When it rained, we just put on our foul-weather gear,' said retired Navy Capt. Forrest Tucker, President of the Birnam Wood Croquet Association.

Players came from Bermuda, Phoenix and Los Angeles to play in the match.

They were: John and Nelga Young, and Fran and Colin Baxter of the Bermuda Croquet Association; Stan Patmor, Jeff Rowe and Don Stallings from the Arizona Croquet Club; Maurice Marsac (an actor who played Charles de Gaulle in an NBC mini-series), from Los Angeles; and Charlie Webber, Hector Cameron and Tucker, from the

Birnam Wood Croquet Association.

The 26-member local club is affiliated with the British Croquet Association in London. Some local players have fared well in matches held in England.

The three-day event began with elimination style matches between all 11 contestants, and ended with Rowe and Stallings ('the indefatigable boys from Arizona', according to Tucker) winning the match Sunday.

The rain failed to put a dent in anyone's style.

'Actually, we only stopped the tournament for 45 minutes — one time, when one corner of the court was under water', Tucker said.

After the final match (in which Rowe and Stallings beat Patmor and Webber 26-24), the competitors played a friendly 'knock up' match under Sunday's cloudy skies, while spectators on a nearby bench watched. No one seemed to mind the weather.

Tucker said the Birnam Wood tournament is played with British rules — which means that a player gets an extra turn for going through a hoop.

In American croquet, the player does not get an extra turn. To aficionados of the British rules, the American version of the game is a 'dead ball' game. There is more opportunity for strategy with the British rules, they argue.

And strategy, Tucker said, is the key thing that attracts people to the game.

He said Australian croquet expert Damon Bidencope will be giving a three-day croquet clinic at the Birnam Wood Golf Club beginning today.

Report by Hillary Hauser in the Santa Barbara News-Press, 3rd February 1986, submitted by Capt Tucker. Note: Damon Bidencope is playing for Australia in the MacRobertson Shield matches

John Walters



John Walters

Drawn by Liz Taylor

RESULTS

Advanced Play

(6-Round Swiss)

- 5 wins: M.N. Avery (winner), P. Cordingley;
- 4 wins: D.K. Openshaw, J.O. Walters, Miss J. MacLeod;
- 3 wins: J.E. Guest, E.W. Solomon, J.D. Meads, R. Race, J.R. Hilditch, C.J. Southern, T. Mrozinski;
- 2 wins: M. Kolbuszewski, J.P. Dawson;
- 1 win: D. Beatty;
- 0 wins: D. Ruscombe-King

Croquet in China

From the Daily Express, 10th March 1986

Croquet Crazy

A Croquet mania is sweeping China as thousands of pensioners take up the traditional English game. 'They like it because it doesn't need much effort and it's safe' says the People's Daily in Peking.



Winners Don Stallings, left, and Jeff Rowe of the Arizona Croquet Club watch play

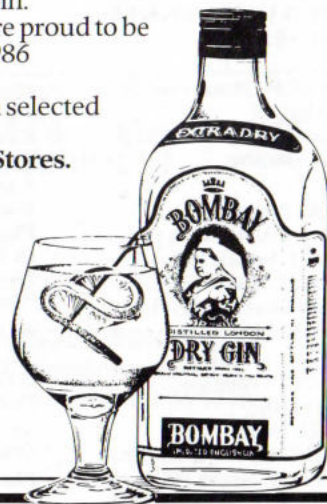
BOMBAY
ENGLISH DRY GIN
Created in 1761

The game of croquet is a great English tradition, played throughout the world on some of the finest lawns and enjoyed by many. Like Bombay Gin for some people, nothing else will do.

Bombay Gin has the flavour of a fine English dry Gin, and is the ideal base for the perfect cocktail to relax with when your match is over. The flavour is acquired by distilling from eight 'botanicals', and the unhurried distillation process ensures that there is only one world's finest - Bombay Gin.

Bombay Gin are proud to be sponsoring the 1986 President's Cup.

Available from selected branches of
Army and Navy Stores.
Harrods.
Selfridges.
Peter Dominic
and good
Off Licences.



TOWNSEND CROQUET
LIMITED

For a comprehensive range of Croquet Equipment, Mallets, Balls, Hoops, Winning pegs, Clips, Corner flags, Corner pegs, etc. All at competitive prices.

Ask for Townsend Croquet equipment at your local sports shop.

Write or 'phone for a free Croquet Aimer to help practise lining up the balls when taking Croquet.

TOWNSEND CROQUET LTD.
CLAIRE ROAD
KIRBY CROSS
FRINTON-ON-SEA
ESSEX CO13 0LX

TELEPHONE: FRINTON (02556) 4404

News from Overseas

Computer Croquet

Even Computers play Croquet!

By Chris Hudson

You may have noticed in Issue No 182 the report that a 'Dr Colin Parker' had invented a BBC micro 'Croquet Game' for sale to computer addicts.

I can now reveal that 'Colin Parker' is in fact Allen Parker, and furthermore, his computer game has been undergoing trials in the North East. Here's a report from Derek Trotman, who tried the game out with Syd Jones at the Tyneside Club.

'Back in the middle of February when the North of England was encased in a thick layer of snow, my mental and physical hibernation was interrupted by a challenge to play a game of croquet on Syd Jones' computer.

'Now as my knowledge of computers is only marginally greater than zero, Syd must have fancied his chances but after only 10 minutes instruction from his 12-year old son, I managed to find the right keys to make things happen on the screen.

'So the game commenced with me playing Red and Yellow and Syd playing Blue and Black (spelt with a capital 'K'). I learnt that it helps to read the instructions thoroughly as after six hours of cut and thrust play I pegged out my second ball to win by one, but only because Syd was using the wrong instruction for the peg out. I didn't see the point of telling him during the game.

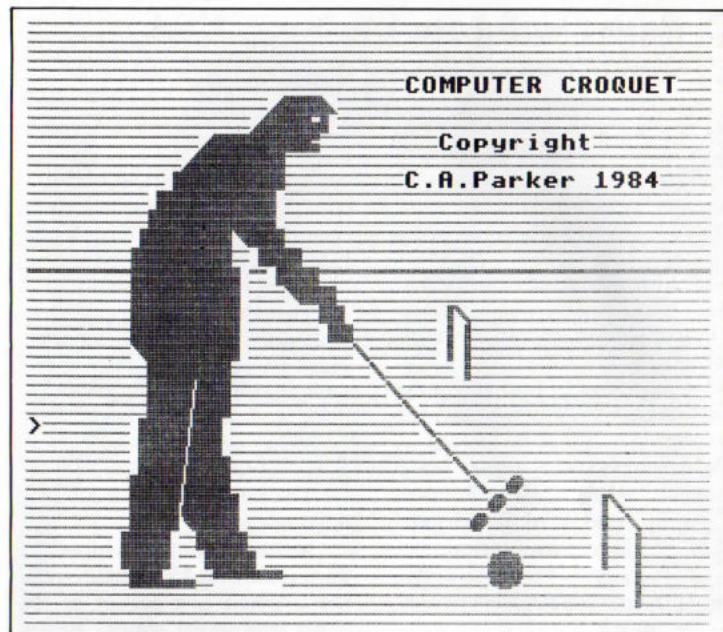
'You will have gathered that I was an immediate convert to the game, possibly because there was no referee to accuse me of

double hits, pushes and crush shots. The pace of the lawn will initially test the lowest handicap player and the split shot may take a time to conquer but as with the outdoor game the skills develop with practice. Three and four ball breaks are possible and one develops tactics to suit the new environment.

'The computer's ability to judicate on roquets and running hoops may frustrate the low bisque player but my snorts of disbelief when I failed to hit in from three yards and my expressive commentary when I clanged in 4-back for the sixth time were considered by my opponent as typical of what he has to endure from me in a club game. He also commented that at least the only mallet waving was by the player on the screen. So the verdict was 'Well done, Allen Parker!'

'I am sure many croquet players will find the game a means of surviving the long winter days until they can get back to the real thing.'

So how does **Computer Croquet** work? The tape comes complete with detailed instructions, which explain that the skill of the 'average' player is correctly simulated, and the angles at which the balls rebound and the distances they travel follow closely what happens in real life. The computer allows a player to use various types of shot, including the roll, the stop-shot, the split shot, and the take-off, as



well as the single ball shots involved in hitting another ball or running a hoop.

Two separate games are provided on the tape. 'Hoop Croquet' which is effectively Golf Croquet, and 'Croquet', or Association Croquet. There are remarkably few differences from the real game of Croquet. There is only one balk line (lack of memory prevents the computer being programmed to allow use of the 'B' balk line) and the balls have to be played into court in a fixed sequence. There is no lift for a wired ball, and no advanced play with lift at 1-back and 4-back. There is no provision for cannons: when two or more balls are in mutual contact, the computer will take croquet from the first ball present in the sequence Blue, Black, Red, Yellow. This is at the start of a turn: in the middle of a turn, it will of course take croquet from the ball just roqueted and ignore the third ball. Apart from these minor restrictions, you can do on the computer exactly what you would do on the lawn.

At the start of each turn, you indicate which ball you want to play by depressing the relevant computer key. The player sitting down at the side of the screen then walks on to the court to the designated ball to take his shot. (The keyboard player has the option of dispensing with this figure if it gets in the way of aiming the next shot). Clip positions are indicated at the side of the screen.

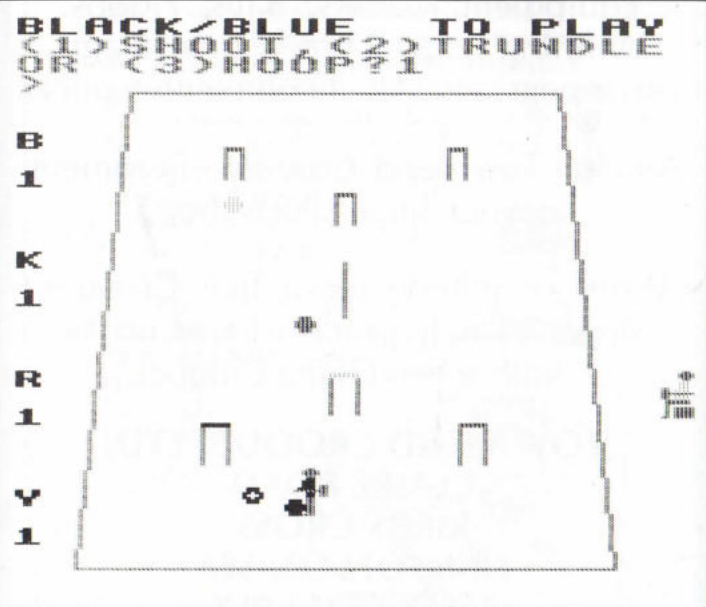
Once a ball is designated to be played, a pointer locates itself automatically with one end on the ball. The pointer can be rotated and shortened or lengthened to indicate the

direction and strength of shot required after the player has indicated whether he wants to shoot (at another ball), trundle up to a particular position, or run a hoop.

When everything is set up, the shot is played by pressing RETURN on the keyboard, and the computer calculates what has happened, assuming you are an 'average' player. The procedure to set up the shot is more complicated with a croquet stroke, but as it requires the keyboard player to indicate the angle of aim of the mallet, beginners should have a good grasp of how to play a split shot (in theory at least!) after playing Computer Croquet.

This game, as Derek says, can provide a great deal of amusement and I liked the animation and sheer joy displayed by the player on the screen when he made a roquet or ran a hoop - great graphics which give the button pusher on the computer quite a sense of achievement too! But besides giving pleasure on a wet afternoon, this game might well be developed as a coaching aid for use in clubs, providing as it does a method of demonstrating the playing of both 3- and 4-ball breaks.

Instructions for playing the game and a tape containing the computer program can be obtained from Chris Hudson, price £12.50 (inclusive of p&p), if anyone with a BBC micro would like to try their hand. Allen Parker has generously donated any profit from the sale of the game to the Croquet Association.



Print-out of the screen during play. The player has opted to try to roquet the ball at Hoop 1, with a 4-ball break ahead of him

Official Business

Handicap Alterations

(Continued from Page 31)

D.B. Maugham	12 to 11	Mrs C.M. Steward	16 to 15
D.R. Appleton	11 to 8	Miss J.A. Waters	17 to 16
C. Ross	16 to 15	Cheltenham: 10 May	
Cheltenham: 17 April		A. Armstrong	11 to 13
R. Ransom	5 to 4½	S. Badger	14* to 14
C. Ross	15D13 to 12D10	Bowdon: 9 May	
Parkstone		Dr M. Elder	6 to 5½
R.F. Bailey	2 to 1	D.B. Maugham	14 to 10
Miss N. Robertson	8 to 9	K.M. McCombe	12
Mrs D. Mitchell	10 to 11D10	Budleigh: 12 May	
C.F. Moon	16 to 12	During Play:	
F.L. Shergold	1½ to ½	Dr A.C. Peterson	15 to 12
Bentley		After Play:	
V.R. Carter	10 to 8	P.K.L. Danks	5½ to 5
F.H. Northcote	10 to 9	N.F.C. Gale	3 to 2
Southwick		A. Harding	12 to 11
Dr E.P. Davey	12 to 11	Miss M. Hardman	10 to 9
J.J. Lawrence	6 to 5½	J.C. Hatherley	6 to 5½
Miss J. Loveys	13 to 12	Mrs I.P.M. Macdonald	5½ to 5
Mrs E. Mapletoft	5½ to 5	Dr A.C. Peterson	12 to 9
G. Paxon	5½ to 7	R.E. Vincent	8 to 7½
G.A. Hutcheson	3½ to 4	J. Wasdell	14D12 to 12
Mrs M.E. Wharrad	9 to 8	G.H. Webb	14D12 to 12
F.A. Beard	10 to 9	Cheltenham: 12 May	
Colchester		Miss E. Cheverton	17 to 16D14
R. Hobbs	1½ to 2	Mrs J. Cima	11 to 10D9
C. Sheen	3½ to 4	S.G. Cornelius	8 to 5½
D. Purdon	5 to 5½	Mrs L.V. Latham	6 to 5½
Mrs G.S. Digby	6 to 7	Mrs A. Warren	7 to 6½
E.A. Locke	6 to 7	Mrs K. Whittall	10 to 9
J. Williams	9 to 10	D.S. Cornelius	9 to 8
Miss S.A. Bressey	11 to 12	Colchester: 24 May	
C. Minter	12 to 14	P. Elliott	9 to 8
R. Alford	5½ to 6½	D.A. Schonbeck	17 to 16
Mrs M.W. Gough	16 to 17	Miss D. Cornelius	7½ to 6
Southport		S.G. Cornelius	5½ to 5
C. Clarke	9 to 8	Mrs B. Gosden	8 to 9
Compton		J. Haigh	3 to 4
Miss M. Braddy	10 to 11	N.R. Harris	7 to 6
Miss P. Embleton	8 to 9	R. Jones	3 to 2½
Mrs M. Grout	6½ to 7	L.J. Palmer	8 to 7½
Miss D.V. Harding	14 to 12	Mrs C. Steward	15 to 14
Mrs D. Sinclair	4 to 7	Bristol: 17 May	
Miss E.A. Taylor	15 to 16	D. Goacher	4 to 3½
Bath		R. Jenkins	7 to 6
Mrs E. St John	14D12 to 15D13	R. Sampson	15 to 13
Ipswich		Mrs F. Ransom	6½ to 6
Miss C. Steward	13 to 16	R. Ransom	4½ to 4
Miss J. Waters	14 to 17	Parkstone	
Budleigh Salterton		J.P.G. Watson	3 to 2½
J.S. Toye	½ to 0	C.F. Moon	12 to 11
Ramsgate		M.J. Wilkins	4 to 3½
J. Ruddock	1½ to 3½	Mrs E. Wilton	15 to 12
Hurlingham: 3 May		Woking	
D. Beatty	5 to 4	N.F. Luff	7 to 5½
P.G. Spencer	16 to 11	M. Young	10 to 9
R.A. Godby	3 to 4	Oxford	
J. Jeffrey	6½ to 4½	M. Wormald	4 to 3
Southwick: 2 May			
R. Hall	9 to 7½		
Hunstanton: 3 May			
L.J. Palmer	9 to 8		
J.E. Reeve	12 to 10		
J.A. Short	5 to 4		

We regret that we cannot list handicaps of non-Associates.

RECRUITMENT DRIVE

Over £1000 to be won for development grants!

As at 1st June, High Wycombe (Group 2) and Southwick (Group 3) had both achieved 50% of their recruitment targets. Other clubs are well on the way.

How is your own club doing?

Enrol another CA member today - it could help your club to develop its facilities!

For full details of the Recruitment Drive and the details of the competition, see Issue No. 185 (page 20) or phone the CA Office.

Coaches Corner (1)

Refresher Course for Beginners

As an experiment, two Coaching Days have been arranged as follows:

Bristol:
Sat 30th August, 10am-6pm.
Southwick:
Sun 10th August, 10am-6pm.

Each Day will be run by two Grade I Coaches and there will be places for 12 players on each. They are designed for beginners in their first season who have been on an initial coaching course and now want some revision of what they were taught. The emphasis will be on revision of basic strokes, some guidance on the Laws, break building and playing a 4-ball break. Cost £7.50 (£5.00 to CA members). Applications with an sae, a cheque made out to 'The

Croquet Association', and the player's club and handicap should be sent to:

For Bristol:
Mr J.R. McCullough,
100 Queensdown Gardens,
Brislington, Bristol, BS4 3JG.

For Southwick:
Major T. Vale, 26 Glebe Close,
Southwick, Sussex, BN4 4TF.

As these Days are likely to appeal to non-CA members in small clubs without resident coaches, Secretaries of those clubs are asked to publicise these courses to their members.

Should the experiment prove successful, it is hoped to extend this scheme to most Regions in 1987.

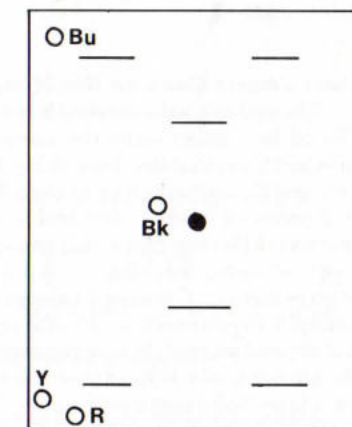


A coaching course was held at Southport on 12/13 April for Grade II coaches and middle-bisquers. The sun shone for this final group photograph, but otherwise it poured with rain and there was a bitter wind. The course was organised and run by John McCullough

BREAK-BUILDER (B.B.) - No 1

We welcome a new regular feature that should provoke plenty of interest and controversy. In each edition of 'Croquet' B.B. will present you with a game situation and ask you how best to set up a break. Don't send your answers in - wait for B.B.'s solution in the next issue and then submit your solution and your arguments for it if you violently disagree.

TODAY WE ASSUME YOU ARE HANDICAP 14, YOU ARE ABOUT TO PLAY WITH RED (which is for hoop 3), AND YOU ARE PREPARED TO SET UP A BREAK USING ONE BISQUE.



Blue (Bu) is 2 feet from the North and West yardlines

CANNONS FOR BEGINNERS

Part 2: Six cannons for the price of one.

By Allen Parker (Parkstone)

Introduction

In Part 1 of this series (Gazette No 184, March, 1986) I described the Wafer Cannon which I regard as the most important because it can be used anywhere on the yard line and is the easiest to learn. The cannon dealt with in this article is probably the second easiest to learn. With minor modification, it can be employed in six common situations so that the opportunities for its application are sufficiently frequent to make the time involved in perfecting it well worth while. It can be used when you have three balls in contact in corner 1. The object of the cannon is to croquet one ball to hoop 2 and in the same stroke rush the other ball to hoop 1, thus getting a 3-ball break. Obviously the identical cannon can be used when the balls are in corner 3 and you are for hoop 3, and further, by simply changing the ball arrangement from right-handed to left-handed, the same cannon can be used to make hoop 1-back from corner 2 or 3-back from corner 4. By slight modification which I shall describe, it can be made to give a reasonable chance of a break from corner 2 when you are for hoop 2 and from corner 1 when you are for 2-back.

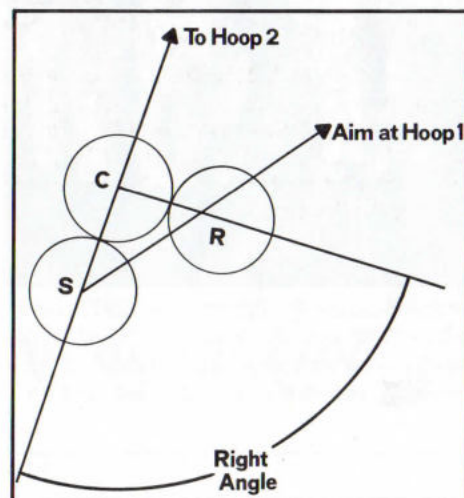


Fig. 1. Hoop 1 from Corner 1 using Right Angle method.

First Corner Cannon (for Hoop 1)

The striker's ball (marked S in Figure 1) is placed in contact with the croqueted ball (marked C) so that the line joining the centres of S and C points slightly to the left (about 1 to 2 yards) of hoop 2. The ball to be rushed (marked R) is then placed in contact with the ball C in such a way that the line joining the centres of R and C is at right angles to the line joining the centres of C and S. The point of aim will depend on exactly how you intend to play the stroke, and it is here that you need to go on a lawn and experiment until you find the method that suits you best. For guidance the point of aim will lie somewhere between hoop 1 and hoop 6. With a full stop shot hard

enough to send the croqueted ball to hoop 2, you should try aiming at hoop 1. If you find the rushed ball (R) goes too far beyond hoop 1, try aiming at the peg. If it still goes too far, then try aiming at hoop 6. You will probably find, as I do, that with a stop shot you need to aim at or near hoop 1, but with a drive (ie. no roll or stop) you need to aim near hoop 6. (I prefer the drive method, aiming at hoop 6). Having decided which is the best method for YOU, practise it until you can produce a good 3-ball break situation every time. Of course the strength required to get the croqueted ball to hoop 2 will vary according to the speed of the lawn, but if you can get this ball right, the other ball will be right, or nearly so.

Using the right-angle method, the distance travelled by the rushed ball can be adjusted by simply varying the direction of aim, while keeping the right-angle arrangement of the balls in the corner the same.

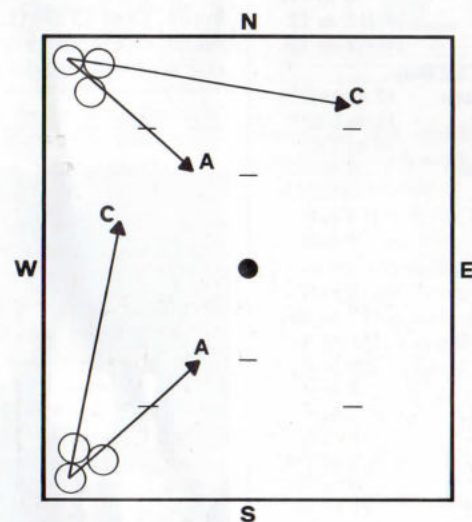


Fig. 2. (Bottom) Hoop 1 from Corner 1 and (Top) Hoop 2 from Corner 2.

Second Corner Cannon (for Hoop 2)

Now what are the modifications required to make it work across the WIDTH of the court, eg. to make hoop 2 from corner 2. Look at Figure 2. This shows the right-angle cannon as described above placed to make hoop 1 from corner 1, and the same cannon with the balls in corner 2. The ball placement is identical for both cannons. The line marked C represents the direction in which the croqueted ball is pointed (1 to 2 yards to the left of the next hoop but one), and the line marked A is the recommended direction of aim (directly at hoop 2 for the cannon from corner 2). The only difference between the two cannons is that from corner 1 the stroke is a stop shot or drive while from corner 2 it is a drive or slight roll. Again you must go on to the court and experiment to find the best stroke for YOU. You should now aim always directly at hoop 2 and adjust the amount of roll and the strength of the shot to send the croqueted ball to hoop 3, and rush the other ball to hoop 2.

Summary

We can now summarise the six cannons as follows:

Hoop 1 from Corner 1:
Aim between 1 and 6
Stop/Drive



Allen Parker

Hoop 3 from corner 3:

Aim between 3 and 5
Stop/Drive

Hoop 1-back from corner 2:

Aim between 1-back and 5
Stop/Drive

Hoop 3-back from corner 4:

Aim between 3-back and 6
Stop/Drive

Hoop 2 from corner 2:

Aim at 2
Drive/Roll

Hoop 2-back from corner 1:

Aim at 2-back
Drive/Roll

Remember, you should experiment with the amount of roll or stop, and the direction of aim as described above. Then practise until perfect. It is this experimenting with shots that can make practice more interesting.

As I pointed out in the earlier article, you do not have to wait until a cannon appears. You can often deliberately create one, either by rushing a ball into a corner that already contains a corner ball, or by taking off to a pair of balls in a corner and roqueting one of them carefully so that they both end up in the corner.

In a later article (Part 3) I shall deal with promotion cannons.

Loughborough Summer School 11th-15th August 1986

Qualifying Courses for Grade 1 and Grade II Coaches.

Coaching for Beginners and Improvers. Opportunities for competitive play.

The demand for these courses has exceeded our expectations, but there are still a few places left.

Applications should be made as soon as possible.

Further details from Chris Hudson, or write for the Course Prospectus from The Director Loughborough Summer School, University of Technology, Loughborough, LE11 3TU. Tel: 0509-263171, Extn. 226.

FUN WITH COACHING

By David Higgs

Practising particular strokes is boring. One way round this problem is to introduce an element of competition. The following scheme has been tried at Reigate, and enables players of all abilities to take part. It can also be used for coaching in particular strokes.

About two hours should be allocated to the event, and you need as many balls as you can put your hands on. There are ten sections in which, usually, three shots of increasing difficulty are played, and are scored. The position of each section on the lawn is shown in the accompanying diagram.

The individual sections and the scoring methods are as follows:

- To hoop 1: Roquet from 2, 4 and 6 yards (1 point for each roquet).
- To hoop 2: Take off for rush on pioneer at hoop 2. (2 points if within 4ft of pioneer, 1 if within 6ft. Extra point if perfect rush to hoop 2).
- To hoop 3: Rush from near hoop 2. Ball separations of 2, 4 and 6ft. (1 point if in general direction, 2 if reasonable hoop approach).

Extra point for perfect rush to hoop 3).

4. At 4-back: 4 tries at hoop running. Straight from 2ft, straight from 4ft, at 20 degrees from 2ft, and at 30 degrees from 3ft. (1 point if no clear continuation stroke, 2 points if 1 to 5 feet through hoop, and 3 points if 2 to 4ft through. Extra point if good rush on marker ball to penult).

5. To penult: 3 tries. Drive. Croqueted ball to rover. (Extra point for perfect rush to penult, 2 points for possible rush or takeoff, 1 if behind penult plus 2 points if croqueted ball less than 4ft in front of rover, 1 if within 6ft of rover).

6. To hoop 4: Roll. 3 tries. (2 points for good approach, 1 for difficult approach. Extra point for straight hoop run from under 3ft plus 1 point for croqueted ball S & W of hoop 2 if good rush position to hoop 5).

7. To 3-back: Stop shot. 3 tries. (1 point if croqueted ball within 6ft of 2-back, 2 for good pioneer plus 2 for fair rush on marker to 3-back, 1 if within 3ft of marker. Extra point for perfect rush to 3-back).

8. At Rover: 3 peel attempts. Roquet assumed. Straight from 3ft, 15 degrees from 3ft, 30 degrees from 4ft. (2 for croqueted ball cleanly through, 2 for own ball through on continuation stroke, 1 if either in jaws).

9. Mid-point East boundary: Take off to

within yard line to get rush to peg. 3 tries from 2, 4 and 6 yards. (4 points if straight rush to peg, 3 if straight rush between hoops 5 & 6, 2 if rush between hoops 3 & 4, 1 if within yard line).

10. At peg: Rush partner to peg. Peg out both. 1 try. (1 if each ball pegged out in rush, 2 for peg out of croqueted ball in croquet stroke, 1 for peg out of own ball in croquet stroke, 2 for peg out of own ball in continuation stroke, 2 for cannon peg out of partner ball).

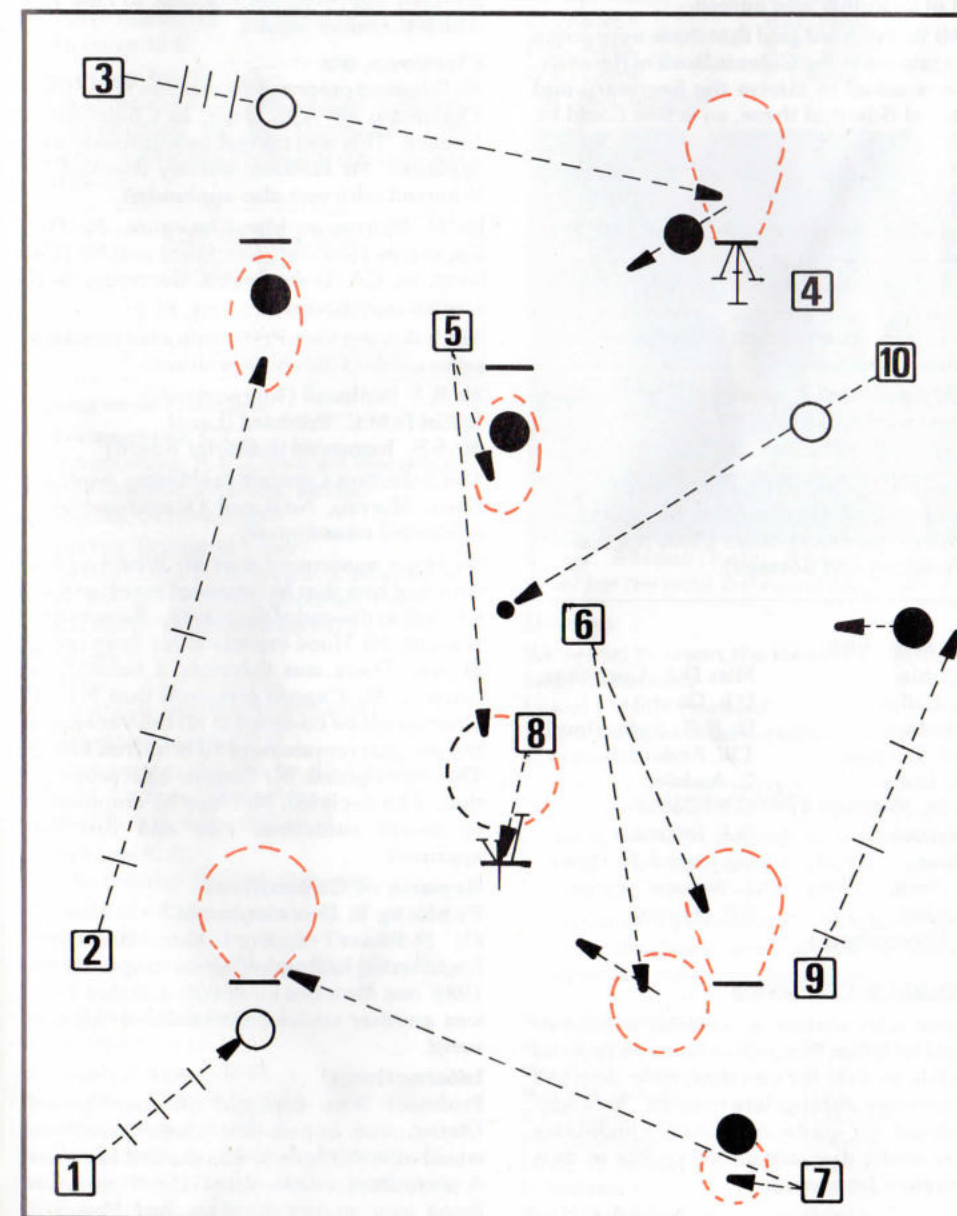
Most sections end near a hoop, and the scoring scheme can be modified to include the running of the hoop as part of the section.

The marking out of areas in which the balls should end is not absolutely necessary but can be done with roof felting nails, and starting ball positions with bisques, corner flags, etc. It takes about half an hour to arrange the court.

It is suggested that the sections are competed in groups of three to six players, so the balls can be retrieved by those not in play, and non-playing time is not too long. It is further suggested that the scores are kept by a non-player. The event is suitable for players of all abilities, and it is desirable that beginners and more experienced players compete, so that the beginners can see how others tackle strokes. In the course of the event, beginners can be coached and helped by the other competitors on an individual level that the coach is often unable to give to a group.

Note: The basis of this event is the practice sessions from the 'Coaching Handbook'. On club days at Reigate, beginners usually score about 45 out of 110, and players of a handicap of about 3 score about 90.

The 'Coaching Handbook' is available from the CA Office, price £5.75 (Non-members £8.25) inclusive of P&P. Full of useful tips for players and coaches alike, it also contains a lot of other information of general interest to the croquet player.



KEY

- 4 Event number and start position.
- Ball to be roqueted.
- TARGET BALL - to be roqueted in any continuation stroke.
- Areas in which balls score more points.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

held at the Hurlingham Club on Saturday 19 April 1986.

Present: Vice-Presidents Dr W.R.D. Wiggins and R.F. Rothwell and 56 Associates.

Apologies from: President J.W. Solomon and Vice-President S.S. Townsend.

In the absence of Mr J.W. Solomon (President) Dr W.R.D. Wiggins took the Chair.

- Minutes of previous meeting held on Saturday, 27 April 1985, copy in 'Croquet' No 180 (page 18) were taken as read and adopted.
- Dr Wiggins welcomed all present. He said that we were extremely fortunate in playing the 'Queen' of games; it was all friendly, free from professionalism and sham amateurism, and long may this continue.

We are all looking forward to the International Test matches to welcome our visitors, Australia and New Zealand. He hoped many Associates would come to watch these matches.

He thanked the Hurlingham Club for their help in many ways and in particular for the high standard of its lawns, the Council for its hard work and particularly thanked the Chairman, Mr Wharrad, the Treasurer, Mr Oldham, Administration Secretary, Mr Macmillan, and Development Officer, Mr Hudson.

3. Chairman's Report in 'Croquet' - May, No. 185.

4. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer, Mr A.J. Oldham, presented the audited accounts, a copy of which appears on pages 24 and 25 of the May Gazette No. 185. He informed Associates that there was a healthy surplus which would enable assistance to be given to the Development Fund, an additional issue of the 'Croquet' magazine to be published and loans to be made to Clubs for their development.

5. Election of Treasurer

Mr A.J. Oldham was re-elected as Treasurer. He was warmly thanked for all the devoted work he had put in during the 19 years he held office. Mr Oldham thanked the members for their vote of confidence in him. He said he felt like one clip on 4-back, one clip on penultimate, hoping to peg out.

6. Election of Council Members

The successful candidates for election were: D.C. Caporn, P. Danks, R.S. Eades, R.A. Godby, Miss S.G. Hampson, S.N. Mulliner, A.J. Oldham and C.P. Townsend.

Dr Wiggins congratulated the winners and thanked the scrutineers, Mrs W.J. Browne and Mr A.V. Camroux for carrying out their duties so efficiently.

7. Motions

(A) Proposed amendment to Rules of the CA.

Add new 2nd sentence to 7(b)(iii)

'If some of the vacancies to be filled are part-time vacancies, these vacancies shall be filled by the elected candidates with the least number of votes in accordance with the principle that the shortest vacancy be filled by the elected candidate with the least number of votes'

J.R. McCullough.

The above motion was defeated.

(B) 'That the Croquet Association should take active steps to ensure that any television of Golf Croquet is in an acceptable form'. S.N. Mulliner.

The above motion was carried by a large majority.

(C) 'That Rule 1 of the Association Rules of Croquet be amended by the deletion of 'Eire' from the definition of the domain'. S.N. Mulliner.

Carried nem con.

8. Election of Auditors

Messrs. Nicholas Ames & Co. were re-elected as Auditors.

9. Benefactors Book

Richard Rothwell read out the names of the benefactors.

10. Any Other Business

(a) Mr R.D.C. Prichard brought up the subject of the new Handicap system. It was decided that it was not an appropriate occasion to discuss it. He was asked to write to the Chairman of the Handicap Coordination Committee.

(b) Professor Neal informed members of the forthcoming MacRobertson Shield Internationals, also of the Farewell Dinner. He suggested that they wish the British team the best of luck; this was agreed.

(c) Mr W. Prichard said that there were some inaccuracies in the Guinness Book of Records. He was asked to inform the Secretary and Editorial Board of these, so action could be taken.

Dr Wiggins then presented the following trophies:

Apps Bowl (most improved man): Mr W.E. Lamb.

Steel Bowl (most improved lady): Mrs K. Whittall.

Apps Heley Award (most progressive club): Durham University.

Dr Wiggins closed the meeting by thanking everyone for attending.

THE CA DIRECTORY 1986

The new 1986 Directory is now available. Price (to members only): £5.00 (inclusive of packing and postage).

New Referees

G. Cuttle	Miss D.A. Cornelius
A.J. Collin	D.L. Gaunt
C. Hudson	Dr R.R. Sutherland
Mrs C.E. Irwin	T.W. Anderson
W.E. Lamb	E. Audsley
Mrs M. Newman	G.K. Collin
F. Newman	G.F. Redman
J. Rose	Gp Capt R.S. Ryan
R.J. Smith	J. Watson
P. Stoker	J.P. Dawson
P.A. Dwerryhouse	

REFEREES COURSES

Anyone who wishes to become a Referee should let Brian Macmillan know as soon as possible so that we can determine demand and arrange appropriate courses. Arrangements will be made to examine candidates either whilst they are on the course or at a convenient later date.



New Council members: Charles Townsend (left) and Peter Danks.

Extract of Minutes of COUNCIL MEETING

held at the Hurlingham Club on Saturday 19th April, 1986.

The Chairman, Mr L. Wharrad, welcomed the two new members elected to the Council, namely Messrs P.S. Danks and C.P. Townsend.

Mr Caporn said that entries in the Benefactor's Book were not limited to those who had died and left bequests. He proposed therefore that Mr Peter Alvey's name be added in recognition of his donation to the Test Tour Fund. This was agreed.

The amendment to Regulation 14(c)(iii) was formally approved but not that to Law 1(g) which therefore lapsed.

Elections, etc

Mr Wharrad proposed the election of the Vice-Chairman, Mr A.B. Hope, as Chairman of Council. This was carried unanimously with applause. Mr Mulliner warmly thanked Mr Wharrad who was also applauded.

Dr M. Murray as Vice-Chairman, Mr D.C. Caporn as Honorary Secretary and Mr B.A. Keen as CA Tournaments Secretary were elected unanimously.

The following Vice-Presidents were elected to serve on the Committees shown:

- Mr R.F. Rothwell (Tournaments)
- Lt Col D.M.C. Prichard (Laws)
- Mr S.S. Townsend (Editorial Board)

The Selection Committee (Messrs Aspinall, Keen, Murray, Neal and Openshaw) were re-elected unanimously.

Mr Hope announced that Mr Wharrad had informed him that he proposed to resign from Council at the end of the meeting for personal reasons. Mr Hope expressed his deep regret at this. There was therefore a vacancy on Council. Mr Caporn proposed that Mr T.P. Greenwood be co-opted to fill the vacancy of the one year remaining of Mr Wharrad's term. This was agreed. Mr Caporn also proposed that, if he declined, Mr Hope be empowered to co-opt somebody else and this was approved.

Reports of Committees Publicity & Development

Mr Mulliner reported that Westwood Engineering had agreed terms to sponsor the 1986 Test Matches for £6000 and that there was another sponsor interested in another event.

International

Professor Neal reported on the Farewell Dinner, and hoped that many Associates would attend this as well as the Test Matches. A party from Japan (10 to 15 strong) were flying over to see the final Test Match at

Colchester.

Equipment

Mr Keen reported that the 'Southport' ball met all the CA requirements. 8 sets were being produced for trial and then the matter would be further considered.

Administration

Mr Macmillan said 927 Associates had paid their current subscriptions, and 83 had not. There had been a considerable number of resignations, mostly by the elderly and one or two spouses. 35 new Associates were elected.

F & GP

Mr Mulliner said that he hoped new ways of raising levy would be discussed at the Conference due to be held this year. In the meantime, he proposed that the levy for 1987 be increased from £1.00 to £1.20, with 60p for doubles in lieu of 50p. This was agreed. He also reported that his Committee were generally opposed to an increase in subscriptions for 1987.

Motion

Proposed by Miss J. MacLeod, and seconded by Mr G.N. Aspinall:

That seeding be used in the 1986 Open Championship and the fact be advertised in 'Croquet'.

After discussion, the motion was passed by 16 votes to 5.

Any other business

It was agreed to hold the bi-annual conference at Hurlingham on 6th December 1986. Messrs Caporn and Hudson were appointed organisers.

**CA MALLET
1986 Prices**

£35.00 to Associates
£45.00 to Non-Associates

Changes in Officials

Aldermarston C.C.

New Secretary: R.E. Coles, 63 Westwood Glen, Tilehurst, Reading, Berks, RG3 5RW. 0734-428886.

Beverley Croquet Club

Secretary: Dr J.R. Gillespie, 2 Westwood View, Westwood Road, Beverley, East Yorks, HU17 8EL. 0482-869371.

Reading C.C.

Secretary: A.G. Edwards. Office phone number 01-898-6091.

South Shropshire C.C.

New Secretary: P.J. Dorke, 15 Castle View Terrace, Ludlow, Shropshire. 0584-4546(H), 0584-2628(O).

St Albans C.C.

New Secretary: Dr R.H. Barnard.

Thameside C.C.

New Secretary: L. Lucas, 7F Peabody Estate, Hammersmith, London, W6 9PS.

New Clubs Registered

Welcome to . . .

Burmah House Club

Pipers Way, Swindon, Wilts, SA3 1RE. Secretary: J.E. Swaley.

Newport (Essex) Croquet Club

Secretary: J.S. Gordon, The Old Maltings, Newport, Essex. 0799-40293.

Harwich & Dovercourt Croquet Club

Countryman Club, Marine Parade, Dovercourt, Essex.

Secretary: C.P. Townsend, 30 West Street, Harwich, Essex, CO12 0LX. 025-55-505340

Ealing Croquet Club

Parks & Amenities Dept, 24 Uxbridge Road, London. 01-579-2424, Ext'n 3321.

Newark Croquet Club

Kelham Hall, Newark, Notts. Secretary: Mrs Betty Howells, Elmfield House, Burgage, Notts. 0636-812184.

South East Essex Croquet Club

Secretary: Mrs P. Bertorelli, 215 Warwick Road, Rayleigh, Essex SS6 8UJ. 0702-341177(O)

Harrogate Croquet Club

The Cairn Hotel, Harrogate. Secretary: Ian Fenning, 24 St Mary's Avenue, Harrogate. 0423-61555(H), 0423-702383(O)

Ripon Croquet Club

College of Ripon & York St John, Ripon. Secretary: Bill Gibson, 1 Lowgate Cottages, Lowgate Lane, Sawley, Ripon, N. Yorks HG4 3EL. 076-586-377

New Coaches (Grade II)

A. Bennet	P. Stoker
Dr T.J. Haste	T. Vale
C. Hudson	B.G. Neal
B.A. Keen	K.E. Jones
W.E. Lamb	P. Danks
J.R. McCullough	



Kismet Whittall (Bath): Winner of the Steel Bowl for the most improved lady player.

Deaths

We regret to report the following deaths:

- Lady Simmonds
- Lt Col D.M.C. Prichard
- Major General Wilson-Haffenden
- H.O.Hicks

CA CLUB CONFERENCE

The CA Club Conference, held every 2 years, will take place at Hurlingham on Saturday 6th December 1986. It is being organised by Derek Caporn and Chris Hudson, who would welcome suggested topics for discussion.

New Associates

M.J. Appleby	- Beverley
Mrs B.G.M. Amner	- Bath
Mrs Y.M. Arnold	- Bath
R.F. Deacon	- Bowdon
P.W. Goldberg	- Bowdon
Dr P.L.H. Walters	- Bowdon
D. Watkins	- Bowdon
Mrs B.C. Ashford	- Bristol

CA OFFICE ANSWER PHONE

I have been having numerous calls on my answer phone asking me to telephone back. On doing so, I find out that many calls are simply requests for leaflets etc.

It would be appreciated if Associates when using the answer phone would state their requirements, as this would assist us in reducing our telephone bill which is getting astronomical.

Brian Macmillan
Administration Secretary

B.J. Bleach	- Bristol
W.J. Lee	- Budleigh
L.S. Mills	- Budleigh
R.E.G. Minter	- Budleigh
G.F. Webb	- Budleigh
R. Bateson	- Cassiobury
Mrs E.M. Purvis	- Cassiobury
A. Blenkin	- Cheltenham
Mrs A. Blenkin	- Cheltenham
Mrs M.E. Cushen	- Cheltenham
Mrs M. Evans	- Cheltenham
Mrs P.F. Leach	- Cheltenham
C.J. Ware	- Crawley
Mrs C.J. Ware	- Crawley
R. Adams	- Durham Univ.
M.C. Hutchinson	- Durham Univ.
Dr D. Warhurst	- Glasgow
F.V.X. Norton	- Glasgow
R.S. Brand	- High Wycombe
Mrs B. Tennant	- Hurlingham
F.H. Butler	- Ipswich
Mrs C. Steward	- Ipswich
R.J. Whiting	- Leicester
Mrs G.J. Nix	- Nottingham
Dr B.C. Sykes *	- Oxford
M.R. Wormald	- Oxford
C. Brightwell	- Surbiton
Mrs C. Osmond	- Parsons Green
J.E.R. Millar	- Parkstone
Mrs M.A. Robillard	- Parsons Green
Mrs C.R. Howlett	- Phyllis Court
C.J. Miller	- Ramsgate
R.H. Tilcock	- Reading
Mrs A.V. Camroux	- Roehampton
P.D. Hardymont	- Roehampton
S.W. Packer	- South Shropshire
Mrs N.W.J. Cox	- Southwick
S.P. Kilbey	- Southwick
G. Pearse	- Southwick
J.S. Maude *	- Woking
M.D. Town	- Woking
D. Clay	- Worcester
Mrs D. Clay	- Worcester
Lady Duckmanton	
M. Frame	
A.E. Gill	
P.A. Gregg	
A.D. Kinghorn	
D. Ransom	
M.G. Waterman	
N.E. Forest	- Canada
Mrs E. Managh	- New Zealand
J. Menzies	- New Zealand
Miss I.O. Norman	- New Zealand
D. Vollebregt	- New Zealand
Mrs Z. Wagstaff	- New Zealand
D.E. Skinner	- USA
(Total 66)	
* Rejoined	

Handicap Alterations

Bentley Croquet Club	
Mrs V.R. Carter	13 to 12
Cheltenham	
P.J. Dorke	8 to 5
Dr J.W. King	3½ to 3
D.H. Moorcraft	-½ to 0
Dr G.K. Taylor	½ to 0

Continued on page 27