

Regional News (2)

The East Anglian Croquet Federation Development Report

By Judy Anderson

1986 was again another hectic year, with over 3500 miles clocked up on croquet business by Tom and myself.

New clubs and croquet groups were formed or discovered at Bury St Edmunds, Cromer, MAFF (Lowestoft), Stevenage, BT Research (Nr Ipswich), Harwich and Dovercourt, and Frinton.

Particularly significant is the development at Bury St Edmunds, which fills a big gap in our region. Over 75 people attended our 'Come and try it' day and 44 signed up for the 6 week coaching course run by stalwart members of Ipswich. The BSE club committee are now negotiating for better lawns and we look forward to playing friendly matches with them.

The Greene King/National Trust sponsored tournament is reported elsewhere. It gave us very good publicity and we hope that some clubs have gained new members. My grateful thanks to all the helpers - particularly Nick and Betty Carter, Adrian Kirby, Trevor Wilkins, Harry Green, and Martin Hodge.

During 1986, our equipment was on loan at eight locations, plus that used for the GK/NT event.

More than 500 'Association Croquet in East Anglia' green leaflets were distributed last year. Four videos have been available for hire during the winter - Granada Short Croquet, USCA (American), Short Croquet (Aspinall/Mulliner) and Natwest

Coaching (Stills with commentary).

Our plans for the coming season include helping existing clubs, particularly the newly formed ones, to increase their membership.

Area Reports

North Area - by Adrian Kirby
Six clubs entered the short croquet all-play-all team tournament at Hunstanton on 21st June. The most successful individual player was Roger Green of Thomas Cook with 5 wins. The winning club hold an engraved shield for one year, and the players from the winning team also received a presentation of wine.

Team result: 1st **Norwich** 5 wins; 2nd **Thos Cook** 3 wins; 3rd **Hunstanton** 3 wins; 4th **Werrington** 3 wins (decided on tie break); 5th **Cambridge** 1 win; 6th **Cromer** 0 wins.

West Area - by George Collin
Four teams entered the Clubs Day at West Park on 14th September - **Colworth, West Park, Newport, and St Albans**. Matches were 3 games of 14-point handicap doubles, with a 2-hour time limit on full-size lawns. Colworth emerged as clear winners. Seemingly, most games went to time, but it is the opinion of your reporter that 2½ hours would have resulted in more games pegging out.

East Area

The East Suffolk League results were reported in our last issue.

Federation of Croquet Clubs in the South East

Report by David Higgs

The inaugural meeting of the Federation was held in the comfortable surroundings of the Bridge House Hotel, Reigate, on Saturday 21 March with Dennis Shaw in the chair. Seventeen representatives from thirteen clubs were present to launch the Federation into a busy year, with Chris Hudson lending helpful support.

Coaching is high on the list of activities. One of the lighter coaching activities is a series of one day short croquet doubles tournaments with at least one experienced player in each block off partnering in turn the other four during an exhausting day. Other one day tournaments in Golf and Short formats are also planned, as well as leagues.

If there is sufficient interest, the Federation could supply very lightweight, white wet weather suits in waterproof material which is also vapour permeable and should minimise the problems of perspiration. The jacket and trousers are expected to cost £32 to Federation Club members (£33 to others) provided a reasonable order can be placed.

The activities of the South East Federation will be available to non-members at a small additional cost. Anyone interested should contact the Secretary (address below), or any of the Committee members, who are Stephen Badger (Dulwich), David Higgs, Secretary (Caterham), Richard Hilditch (Harrow Oak), John Knight, Treasurer

The Moët & Chandon Challenge

Report by Betty Carter

This tournament, sponsored by Greene King and Moët & Chandon in collaboration with the National Trust, was played at various National Trust properties and considered a great success by all those concerned in the organisation. Glowing praise on finals day from the sponsors and national trust officials seemed to point the way to 'the same again next year'. (See Issue 190 - Ed). It was indeed a tribute to the organisers that both Anglia and BBC TV paid a visit on finals day.

As was known by the competitors, the lawns could not be described as perfect, and weatherwise at times things could have been better. Nevertheless all the players who took part seemed to thoroughly enjoy themselves. A huge vote of thanks to Judy and Tom Anderson and their band of helpers for putting on a venture that without any doubt had many of the general public showing interest.

The public were able to have a go and try to win a bottle of champagne in a simplified game. Many asked for information about clubs near where they lived, so it is to be hoped that clubs in the region have benefited from new members as a result of the competition. We would be interested to know of any new members obtained in this way.

The finals were held at Ickworth on 7th September. The four teams that made it to the final competed for some excellent prizes.

RESULTS

1st: Newport (John Hobbs and John Farley). Received Glass goblets.
2nd: Ipswich (Yvonne Ruscoe and Paul Crummay).
3rd: Werrington (Michael Hutchings and Peter Biddlecombe).
4th: Felixstowe (Bob Sutherland and Paul Elliot).

All players received a bottle of champagne.



Players celebrating after the finals at Ickworth.

FEATURE ARTICLES FOR 'CROQUET'

John Walters has joined our editorial team to help with feature articles.

We are looking for material to make up regular features. Our readers span decades of croquet history and every one probably carries an amusing anecdote or story of croquet's rise and fall.

Col. Prichard demonstrated in his wonderful 'History of Croquet' that such expositions need not be dry recounting of days gone by. But we're not just seeking to recount croquet's heritage. During my short time in

the sport, I have travelled many hundreds of miles each year, visiting clubs from one end of the country to the other. But I'm already aware of the new ways croquet is developing, well away from the 'mainstream' that we inhabit where most players learn the game. School and University clubs seem increasingly to be nurturing croquet's future.

So whether you're a beginner with fresh views and experiences from the game, or a hardened campaigner who's seen it all, whether you could give a whole article or a few comments and observations, do send your contributions.

Look forward to hearing from everybody on everything!
JOHN WALTERS,
Ipswich.

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(Reigate Priory), Tony Mrozinski (Guildford & Godalming), Brenda Sandell (Southwick), and Dennis Shaw, Chairman (Ramsgate/Compton).

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CROQUET

Face the
CLASSIC
CHALLENGE
Entry form
inside

Inside:

Garden Croquet
Chairman's Report & 1986 Accounts
Feature articles
Coaches corner
Your letters

A NEW SEASON

The new season gets off to a blaze of publicity. By the time this magazine reaches you, our new garden croquet tournament will have been launched (see below), and the Channel 4 video will have been shown (it is currently scheduled for 18th April). Then at the end of April, the Sports Council begins its TV advertising campaign 'What's Your Sport?'

We are expecting that these three events will generate a lot of enquiries about croquet, and details of any contacts made will be passed to clubs. Many clubs will have recruitment and coaching courses already organised for the start of the season, and I hope that the pre-season national publicity will help these activities.

It would be appropriate here to welcome Lassale, our new sponsors, and to say how much we are looking forward to working with them in promoting garden croquet. Their generous support is much appreciated. Our thanks are also due to 'The Observer', whose early commitment to supporting the competition did much to ensure its successful fruition.

Browsing through an old Gazette recently, I came across an Editorial in which much of the Editor's comment remains as true today

as it was then. He said 'The health of any game ultimately depends upon the vitality of its local units. It is in our clubs that Croquet must be taught and fostered; that interest in it will be stimulated by amicable rivalry and friendships made which can immensely add to the pleasure we gain from the actual playing of the game.'

He went on to say: 'New members have not only to be attracted, they have to be retained. And they will not be retained if, when they join a club, no one seems to pay any particular attention to them. . . We have got to make our new members feel that they have become our friends, and there is no quicker way of doing that than by showing them how to play well enough to become our partners - and ere long our victorious opponents.'

Fortunately today the vast majority of our 'local units' - the clubs and the federations - are in good heart and eager to spread the word. But it always pays to remember that people don't necessarily join clubs to become expert players; they look for friendship and other benefits as well. And in this respect, your 'social' member is perhaps even more valuable than your tournament player.
CHRIS HUDSON

The Observer/Lassale Croquet Classic



Jan MacLeod and Jeremy Sinden helping to launch the event on the lawns at the Inner Temple.

With this issue, you will find enclosed an entry form for The Observer/Lassale Croquet Classic, our new garden croquet tournament. Sponsored by Lassale, one of the leading international names in top quality watches, and promoted by 'The Observer', the competition is open to anyone living in England, Scotland or Wales.

The tournament is designed for 1000 competitors and entries started coming in immediately after its official launch on 23rd March. However, with an event like this, it is difficult to reach the target audience precisely, and this is where we are relying on our own members to help.

If you have not yet reached a handicap of 18 or less, why not have a go yourself?

If you have been playing longer and have reached that magic figure, you probably know a garden player somewhere. This competition is an excellent way to introduce them to the rules of the club game, so why not give them the entry form? With a little bit of surreptitious coaching, you might even have a national champion on your hands!

Entries close on 5th May, so please do what you can before then to spread the word around. All entry fees received go towards making a coaching video for next season.

Extra entry forms can be obtained from your club secretary, any Lassale dealer, the CA Office, or direct from the organisers at PO Box 9, Southsea, Hampshire, PO4 0BP. Tel: 0705-753666.

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'CROQUET'

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

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.

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Front Cover: Limbering up at Hurlingham for The Observer/Lassale Croquet Classic. Photo by Eamonn McCabe of The Observer.

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Club Registration Fees.

By John McCullough

The Croquet Association has 8 main sources of income:

1. Individual subscriptions.
2. Levy from Club tournaments advertised in the Fixture book.
3. Direct income from CA tournaments, e.g. Open Championships, Longman Cup, All-England Handicap, President's Cup, etc.
4. Club Registration Fees.
5. Sale of Books, Laws, etc.
6. Advertisements in 'Croquet'.
7. Sponsorship.
8. Sports Council Grant Aid.

The high level of Sports Council Grant Aid (£27,300 in 1986) over the past three years cannot be expected to continue indefinitely, although we hope for further significant support over the three year period 1988-1990. One of the aims the Sports Council is keen for us to achieve by the end of their period of significant support is financial self-sufficiency, so that in future years we do not need their support to be able to employ a full-time Development Officer and to fund a number of development programmes. By a happy coincidence Sponsorship (£16,082 net in 1986) has increased dramatically during the same period but that is a source of income we cannot as yet rely upon and which may well desert us if we fail to hold out the prospect of future TV exposure.

In 1983 the total income from the other six sources was approximately £11,000. By 1986 we had doubled this to just over £22,000. This is a good start but is clearly far too low a proportion of the near £68,000 total income that the Croquet Association based its activities upon in 1986. The Finance and General Purposes Committee of Council believe we must substantially increase our annual 'reliable' income, as provided by these six sources.

Individual Subscriptions
There are two ways we can substantially increase income from subscriptions:
1. We can bring in a hefty increase in subs.
2. We can try to increase the number of individual members of the Croquet Association.

The standard rate has stood at £14 since 1985 and by recommending no increase for 1988 (except for a small increase in the Reduced rate to keep pace with the increasing cost of producing and distributing 'Croquet') we are firmly committing ourselves to the second of the above methods.

We feel a hefty subs increase would be counterproductive and unfair to those members who join the Association to support us, yet play only rarely in tournaments.

As reported on Page 21 of Issue 190, the Club Conference supported our view that regular tournament players get the greatest benefit from the Association and thus we will be instituting a large increase in the Levy on tournaments in 1988. Most events will cost at least £1 more to enter and this should raise an additional £2000 - £3000 in 1988. Similarly we are continuing to increase the fees for CA tournaments. We have proposed a decrease in the subs for under-18's to help cushion them against these increases, as we want to see

more juniors playing in tournaments. Keeping subs low and thereby increasing our membership more rapidly will have a number of important knock-on effects:

1. The marginal cost of each extra copy of 'Croquet' decreases as the number of subscribers increases, meaning that a greater proportion of each additional sub can be used for development purposes.
2. Increasing the number of subscribers to 'Croquet' improves our opportunities to increase advertising income.
3. Increasing the number of subscribers to 'Croquet' improves the information flow to members, making them more aware of what the CA does for them and also probably increasing our income from sales of books and laws, which are advertised in each edition.
4. Increasing our membership gives us more 'clout' when dealing with bodies such as Councils and potential sponsors.

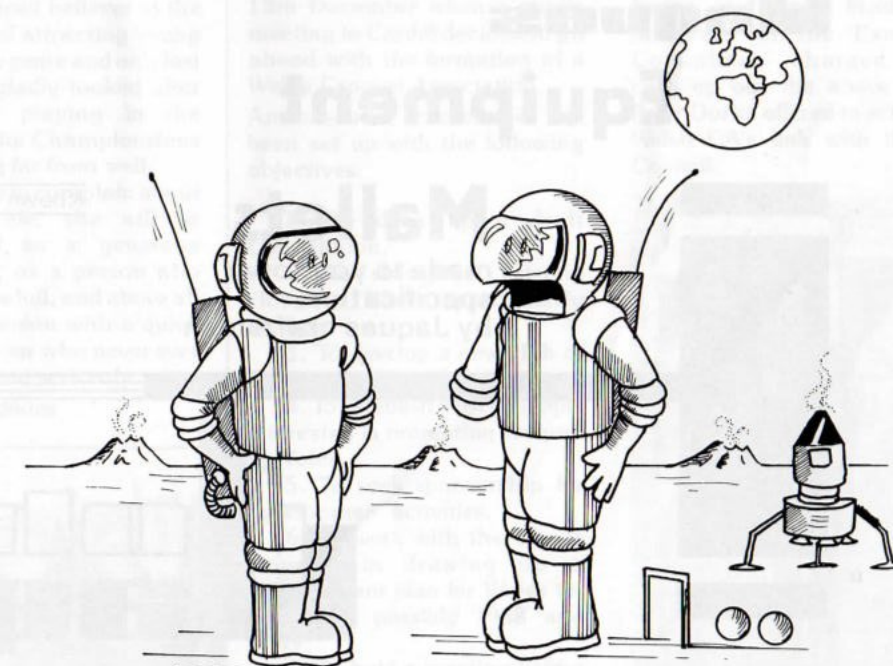
Club Registration Fees
Each Club pays an annual fee to the Association, based on the number of members it has. This not only helps to pay for Club copies of 'Croquet', the Fixture Book, and the Directory, but is a valuable way of getting a contribution to the Association from non-Associates. It was based on a rate of 35p per member in 1986 and has been increased to 60p per member (inclusive of VAT - an unfortunate new factor) for 1987. New Clubs, Schools and Colleges are given special lower rates to reflect their special problems. This increase should raise an extra £600 - £800 in 1987.

I am one of a number of Council members who feel that non-Associates get tremendous benefits from the Association and that their contribution should be steadily increased in the years ahead. I feel it is unfortunate that we do not have the situation present in a number of Sports, where a Club member pays a combined annual sub and automatically becomes a member of the National Association.

What are these benefits, you may ask? Well, many new clubs today are given a tremendous amount of help in the form of Grants or Loans from the Association, encouragement and support from Federations and Development Officers (who themselves receive CA funding) and from CA coaches. Once they become Club members they are heavily dependent on the largely unacknowledged CA infrastructure such as the Laws of the game, the All-England and Inter-Club competitions, the handicapping and rankings systems, central support for Clubs in areas like publicity, and the development of equipment.

It is for this reason that I am proposing that the Club Registration fee should rise to £1 per member in 1988, but with the important rider that Clubs be allowed to deduct £1 from their contribution for each individual CA member they have. This would have the added benefit that for the first time Clubs would have a direct incentive to encourage their members to become at least Reduced Rate members of the Association. To pay, the Clubs would simply send in an up-to-date membership list, with their CA members clearly marked, eg. by an asterisk or underlining, and would enclose a cheque purely to cover their non-CA members. This would allow the CA Secretary to write to non-members from time to time, encouraging them to join the Association, a method that has been highly effective this year in the instances that Brian Macmillan managed to get hold of a Club Membership list.

Before taking a final decision on this specific proposal at their meeting in the Autumn, the Finance and General Purposes Committee wanted to get the feeling of Clubs and Associates about it, so the Editor of 'Croquet', Steve Mulliner (Chairman of F&GP), and myself now await your letters. I hope I can count on your support.



'Do you think we should inform NASA or the CA?' (Cartoon by John Shotton, Tyneside)

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Chairman's Report

The Chairman's Report for 1986/7

By Andrew Hope

When Lionel Wharrad was elected Vice-Chairman of Council in 1982, few realised what an enormous impact he would have on the game. By the time he was elected Chairman, I think all but the most pessimistic of us realised that there was a huge untapped potential for development. Then, during his two years as Chairman, Lionel dragged croquet into the 1980's out of whatever era it thought it was living in, and made it one of the fastest growing sports in the country.

1986 was the second year of the first 3-year Plan drawn up by Lionel and Chris Hudson in collaboration with the Sports Council. It was also the year that the fruits of Lionel's endeavours began to ripen, having been carefully nurtured by the Development Officer, the Treasurer, the Council Sub-Committees and their Chairmen. We had our best year for sponsorship income, more clubs registered with the CA than had ever done in a single year before and CA membership increased by 20%. We had our first television tournament and the Schools' Competition showed a huge increase in entries.

As a result of these factors we were able to make direct grants, loans and payments to Clubs of nearly £12,000 and through the development and coaching schemes, indirectly benefit Clubs with a further £7000.

The magazine continues to improve and in 1986 we were able to produce 6 issues with a total of 192 pages and I hope it will not be too long before it starts appearing on news stands.

Granada Television have been enthusiastic about their first experiment with Short Croquet and we expect them to televise a further tournament in the Autumn of this year which will be indoors. The Sports Council have set aside a grant for us to purchase an indoor surface which will be used for this event and for other indoor events which Chris Hudson and John McCullough are organising.

As you all know, 1986 was New Zealand's year in the MacRobertson Shield and our congratulations go to their team, manager and supporters who all demonstrated dedication, discipline and enthusiasm. We have already started planning our campaign for 1990 in New Zealand and the International Committee believe that the Shield will be regained.

The International scene is rapidly gaining momentum and in 1986 we held our first meeting of an embryonic World Croquet Federation when eight countries were represented. The main objects of the Federation will be to maintain international relationships and to hold world individual and team championships.

The main theme of the Club Conference in 1986 was on subscriptions and levy. It was the general feeling of the meeting that those who play should pay and Council has therefore informed all clubs that the levy for playing in tournaments is to be increased and that for the time being the Croquet Association subscription will remain unchanged.

Andrew Hope,
Chairman of
Council



It is very important that we keep the momentum of croquet's expansion going, and thus achieve the objectives we agreed with the Sports Council in our 3-year Plan. To this end, we are actively encouraging croquet in schools, the WI and Townswomen's Guilds, and most recently, the Lassale Croquet Classic, which was launched with the aim of introducing Association Croquet to some of the estimated 300,000 people who play a variation of the game at home in their gardens.

During 1986 croquet suffered the loss of some of its most well-known personalities, namely Humphrey Hicks, David Prichard and Robin Godby. They will be sadly missed, for all three contributed vast amounts of their time and energy to croquet to help make it the game they loved.

I hope that 1987 will prove to be as successful as 1986 and I would like to thank all the Clubs and members of the Association for supporting a hard-working Council who will endeavour to run the Association in a progressive but prudent manner.

Obituary

Mrs Vida Worsley

It is with great sadness that I must record the death of Mrs Vida Worsley.

Vida Worsley first came to Croquet and the Edgbaston Club just over twelve years ago. She took up the game with the same enthusiasm and energies which she showered upon her multifarious activities outside the Club. As her game improved, her involvement with the Club deepened. Club members and friends will remember with gratitude and affection, her kindness and her willingness to open her home to the Club for parties, dinners and many other activities. She served as an active

and energetic member of the Club committee during the recent years which have seen such changes at Edgbaston. She was a convinced believer in the importance of attracting young players to the game and only last August she gladly looked after competitors playing in the National Junior Championships despite being far from well.

Never one to complain about her lot in life, she will be remembered as a generous benefactress, as a person who lived life to the full, and above all as a warm person with a quick sense of humour who never ever took herself too seriously.

Raymond C Jones



The lawns at Dyffryn.

News from Wales

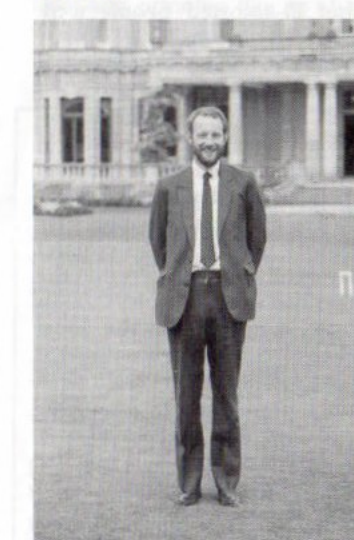
The Welsh Croquet Association is formed

Another Croquet Association came into being on Saturday 13th December when a public meeting in Cardiff decided to go ahead with the formation of a Welsh Croquet Association.

An executive committee has been set up with the following objectives:

1. To draw up a draft Constitution.
2. To strengthen existing clubs in Wales, particularly Dyffryn.
3. To develop a new club at Swansea or Llanelly.
4. To establish a list of people interested in promoting croquet in Wales.
5. To seek sponsorship for development activities.
6. To work with the Sports Council in drawing up a development plan for Wales for 1987 and possibly 1988 and 1989.
7. To hold a meeting before the 1987 season starts to outline the development plan and prepare a Press Launch and publicity drive.

The meeting elected William Prichard, John Grimshaw, John Evans, and David Melding as members of the Executive Committee charged with carrying out the above tasks. Peter Dorke offered to act as the Welsh CA's link with the CA Council.



John Grimshaw, Secretary of
Dyffryn Croquet Club.

Miss Marple and the 1-back leave

A Short Story, by Dorothy Rush

'When the gods play croquet, they undoubtedly use 1b tactics.'
Keith Wylie.

I do not remember whether Agatha Christie ever mentioned that Jane Marple was a croquet player but she most certainly must have been: croquet would have been just her game. In fact I am sure that I glimpsed her on lawn five at Cheltenham one day last year, but of course, that might well have been one of several other worthy ladies.

Here then, with apologies to the beloved memory of both Miss Christie and Miss Marple, is the croquet story that the one might have written about the other:

The Rectory at St. Mary Mead rejoices in one of the finest croquet lawns in England and England is a land where the nurture of stretches of level greensward has so preoccupied the inhabitants that they have invented or adopted as their national sports, games which involve not so much the playing of sport upon grass, as the watching of grass upon which these sports are being played. Hence, the Englishman sits at a cricket match with no more than a cursory glance at the play and in croquet the matter is even further advanced for here no-one, not even the outplayer pays the game itself any attention at all but luxuriates instead in the proximity of all that lovely, flat grass.

But it is the lawn of St. Mary's Rectory that we are considering and on a warm day in late summer, a small group of somewhat ill-assorted people were gathered along the North boundary. This boundary, I should mention, runs precisely West to East, a fact which indicates that the construction of this impeccable lawn was no fortuitous accident but the result of a deal of careful planning. Five of those present, keen croquet players all, were aware of this; the other two were humble, though large, members of the local police-force who knew nothing of such esoteric matters and indeed would have blithely perambulated their size twelves all over the hallowed turf had not the Rector himself prevailed upon them to desist.

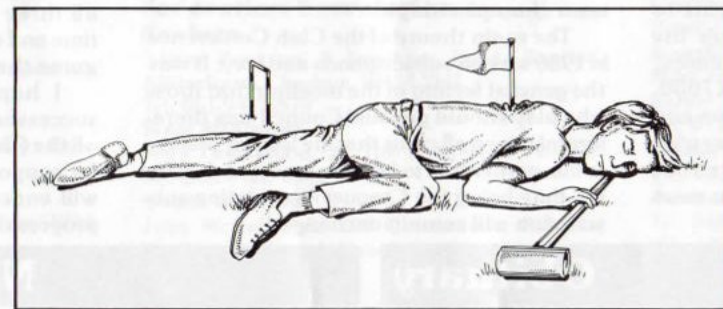
'We shall 'ave to go onto the lawn eventually, sir, to inspect and remove the body,' Sergeant

Courtney spoke in measured and patient tones. 'Unless you'd like us to 'over above the spot, sir.' He allowed himself a small smile: 'Unfortunately sir, as you doubtless appreciate, pigs can't fly!'

'That joke is in very bad taste, Sergeant and not at all in keeping with the sadness of the occasion. Mr Fellows was not only a respected and much-loved member of our close-knit village community, he was also a minus player and tipped for the President's Cup this year. We shall miss him profoundly and I hope you are going to bring his killer to book forthwith.'

The Reverend Doctor Bender was beginning to lose his habitual calm.

'Well sir, I can't solve the crime, if such it be, till I've made a close examination of the victim and ascertained the circum-



'Presumably that corner flag sticking out between his shoulder blades had something to do with it.'

stances in which he died, now can I sir? So 'ow about you letting me and Constable Boswell 'ere approach the corpse in the manner laid down in regulations, eh?'

He spoke gently as to a small child. Gesturing to his colleague, he was about to pulverize the sacred turf when a tiny but firm and restraining hand grasped his arm. He looked down with a sigh at the frail figure of an old lady whom he knew well as one of those village busy-bodies who appear, like moths around the police-station lamp, whenever a whiff of scandal is in the air.

'Well, Miss Marple, what is it now?' The Sergeant's patience began to wear a little thin.

'If I may, Sergeant, I should like to prevail upon you to respect what I know would have been the wishes of the deceased in this matter. Had he known he was going to be murdered, he would have gone to any lengths to see that no harm should be caused to the lawn, either in the committing of the crime or in the solving of it. It puts me in mind of

dear Virginia Braithwaite who used to live at Stretton Magna: when she decided to commit suicide by jumping out of a chestnut tree onto her own tennis courts, she was very careful to land on the en-tout-cas and not on the grass court.

No, Sergeant there are some things a dedicated player will not do and dying violently in the vicinity of the sixth hoop is one that Brian Fellows would have tried very hard to avoid.'

'Now look 'ere madam, I've got my job to do and do it I must, in spite of your misplaced desire to protect the grass. The cause of death must be ascertained without further delay.'

'I should have thought *that*, at least, was obvious, old bean,' drawled a young man in white shorts and tennis shoes, who was leaning nonchalantly on a slim-shafted croquet mallet. Presumably that corner flag sticking out from between his shoulder blades had something to do with it.'

His companion, a blonde girl

with big baby-blue eyes, who clung possessively to his arm, giggled, drawing a frown from the Rector.

'May I ask your name sir?' said Constable Boswell ponderously, taking out his note-book and a newly sharpened pencil.

'You may, indeed, old thing. It's Hargreaves, Ronnie and one or two other things to this gorgeous creature at my side, whose name is Cynthia - or to you, Miss Boundford. Cynthia, say hello to the nice policeman.'

Cynthia giggled again, 'Hello, nice policeman,' she said seductively.

Miss Marple had been witnessing this exchange with clear disapproval.

'I really think you ought not to speak to the officer like that, Roland.'

'Sorry, Aunt Jane, just nervous tension, really. I was pretty fond of old Brian, even if he did beat me hollow every time we played.'

Miss Marple continued to hold the sergeant's sleeve in

apparent absent-mindedness.

'There really is no need, you know, to go onto the lawn in order to deduce exactly what happened.'

While the long suffering policeman stands in open-mouthed amazement at this astonishing statement, let us consider the most important protagonist of this tale, the one without whom, as it were, none of this would have been possible. I refer of course to the victim, the late Mr Brian Fellows.

He had been found a short while before, by the handsome young twosome, Ronnie and Cynthia, as they came onto the lawn for an early-morning game. The Rector not only allowed the village's group of keen croqueteers to play on his lawn, he encouraged them to practise as often as they could, for it was his dearest wish to lead a team to victory in the Croquet Association's Interclub competition. Brian Fellows had been the shining hope of his ambitious plans.

So there they had found the minus player's cold body, stretched as though asleep on that delicious turf, his head resting on his left arm and in his right hand his favourite Solomon mallet, his right arm stretched out towards the sixth hoop and his feet pointing towards hoop two. When the young people had fetched the Rector and his friend Miss Marple, who had just happened to drop in for some rather early elevenses, the face of the dead croqueteer had been found to be bathed incongruously in a broad and satisfied smile.

A call to the local police-station had brought the boys in blue at a trot, eager to solve this crime before Miss Marple could interfere yet again. (It is a curious fact, worthy of notice here, that, for a small village, St. Mary Mead had an astonishing crime rate. In spite of this, however, the local bobbies were hard put to get any practice at solving these crimes due to the activities of the ubiquitous Miss Marple, who kept popping up with the solution before the forces of law could get their act together. Hence the speed with which Messrs. Courtney and Boswell had arrived on the scene.)

Thus it was with ill-disguised irritation that the good sergeant bent his gaze once more to the small figure of Jane Marple in her flowered summer frock and, finally, managed to stammer a few words:

'I 'ave a nasty feeling, Miss Marple, that I don't want to 'ear this, but I'll ask anyway: "Ow on

hearth do you know what happened?'

Miss Marple smiled in kindly fashion and released the policeman's arm. 'Perhaps we could all sit down, if Jennings would be so good as to bring out the folding chairs.'

She turned to the middle-aged man who had, until this moment, remained standing in silence on the fringe of the group, a faintly cynical grin on his weatherbeaten features and a bright-eyed sheepdog at his side. This was the gardener, Jennings, whose skill had created and now tended one of the finest lawns in England. He bestirred himself now and set out six chairs, choosing his own seat on the stump of an old elm.

When all were seated, Miss Marple looked around rather smugly.

'The crime,' she said, 'which has been committed here is not punishable by your law, Sergeant, for no earthly agent placed that red corner-flag in the back of poor Brian Fellows. No, no, sit down Sergeant and do take that look off your face. I shall explain what I mean.'

What you cannot be expected to understand, Sergeant Courtney, but what will be immediately clear to my dear friends here as I unravel the mystery, is that Brian Fellows died because he was a minus player and not just an ordinary minus player but a minus 3. That was the reason for his tragic demise.'

'Look here Aunt Jane, I'm sorry but I can't see why a chap has to die for being a minus player, even a minus 3. I'm a scratch player myself and hope to go down another half soon. Shall I expect to be murdered shortly?'

'Be patient dear, and all will be revealed. What you must remember is that minus players - and especially minus 3s - never, ever practise. I believe I am right in saying that the famous Mr Wylie did not practise for ten years.'

So what do they do instead? No, Cynthia, that was a rhetorical question and I intend to answer it myself. Instead of practising, dear friends and gentlemen of the police, they play croquet with the gods. Never seen on the lawns by day, at night they set the hoops to a 1/64" clearance, open a new set of Jaques balls (second colours, of course, to avoid those over-sized blacks) and play game after game against celestial opponents and by the ethereal light of the stars.

Which is precisely what

Brian was doing last night when he was, perhaps inevitably, killed. When Ronald and Cynthia found him, he had been lying there since a little after midnight.'

'How can you possibly know the time of death without recourse to medical evidence?' asked the constable, who was studying for his sergeant's exams.

'I shall make that very clear before I'm finished, constable, if you can just manage to be patient. First, I should like to explain how I am certain that Brian's opponent, in this, his final match, was a godly croquet player: if you examine the position of the balls and clips, you will see that white and pink are cross wired at the first hoop, green is in the jaws of one-back and brown about a yard North of that hoop. All the clips bar the green are on the crown of the first hoop, the green clip being on the side of one-back. Any croquet player, Sergeant, certainly any minus player would know that this is the 1-back leave. Now, Mr Wylie informs us, in his excellent treatise on the game, that when the gods play croquet, they undoubtedly use 1-back tactics and this is how I know, not only that Brian Fellows was playing against a member of that heavenly croquet club but also that his opponent hit the fourth shot and, having made hoop 6 left what he thought was a perfect 1-back leave.'

Unfortunately, Brian was a minus 3 and minus 3s never miss a trick. He spotted that not only were white and pink wired from each other and, of course green, but brown was fractionally too close to hoop 2 to give a clear shot to either ball. Brian believed that he had a lift and had turned with his mallet raised, to call a referee. Hence the reversed grip of his hand on the mallet and the curious position of his arm above his head, even as he lies there.'

Miss Marple paused a moment, looking at each of her listeners in turn.

'And hence, I would say, the extraordinary smile of triumph on poor Brian's face. He thought that he was about to perform the first S.P.O. in the Universe - on one of the gods, no less, and, possibly be reduced to - 3 and a half!'

'Well that's most interesting Jane, but it does not explain, to me, at least, why he's lying there dead on my lawn'. Once more Dr Bender was showing clear signs of profound agitation.

'If I maybe allowed to borrow the expression, it's elementary, my dear Rector. Brian's oppon-

ent, enraged at this insult to his august person, caused the red flag to rise from the ground and imbed itself violently between Brian's poor mortal shoulder-blades, killing him instantly.'

Sergeant Courtney rose to his feet.

'Well that settles it for me, Miss Marple. Looks like you've done it again. I expect the Super'll be wanting to 'ave a word with you later but for now I'll just go back to the station and write up my report. Come along Boswell.'

The young policeman hesitated. 'Just one more thing, Miss Marple. You haven't explained how you knew that the death occurred at midnight.'

'A little after twelve, to be exact,' said Miss Marple primly, 'and that was the easy part. Last night, I happened to be awake rather late, writing to my dear friend Jessica, who's gone to



Only Jennings the gardener remained . . .

Budleigh Salterton for the sea-air. A few minutes after midnight there was a sudden and terrific gust of wind which shook the house but passed almost immediately. This I take to be the gust of wind with which Brian's opponent propelled his improvised dart. Moreover, on the way here this morning I noticed that the weather vane from the roof of the village hall had been torn from its elevated position, and hurled in a west south westerly direction across the village green to imbed itself in the church clock, stopping it at precisely 3 minutes past twelve. West South West is, of course, the direction in which the red flag must have flown to hit Brian as he walked towards hoop six.

But at least he died happy, knowing that he had the game in his pocket.'

Miss Marple stopped speaking and began to gather up her handbag, parasol and cardigan.

The two policemen walked briskly towards their car, carefully skirting the lawn, shaking their heads as they exchanged comments of evident amazement and bravely disguised disgruntlement.

The Rector took Jane Marple's arm as they returned with the two young people to the house.

The body of Brian Fellows, who, but for the intervention of the gods, might have seen his handicap fall to - 3½, lay still upon the lawn, waiting to be removed by suitably shod undertakers.

Of the living, only Jennings the gardener remained, sitting on the stump of elm, his hand resting on his quiet sheepdog. He leaned down to speak to her confidently as though she understood his every word.

'Silly old bat! She 'asn't been right in the 'ead since 'er friend

Miss Christie died. It's me as stuck that corner flag in his back, weren't it, my beauty? Practising his damned jump shots on my lawn and grinning like an idiot when I told 'im off. He deserved to die, didn't 'e? Bleedin' minus player!'

PRIZE COMPETITION Write a Short Story

A £10.00 Book Token will be awarded to the author of the best croquet-related short story published in this magazine in 1987.

The Judges Panel will be ten readers selected by the Editor. Their identity will be revealed when the result is announced!

Entries, which should be no longer than 2000 words, should be sent to the Editor as soon as possible - not later than 20th May if they are to be included in the next issue.

Your Letters (1)

Influencing Council

Dear Sir,
In his letter in issue 190, I believe Ken Cotterell addressed a very important point when he discussed the need for Ordinary members of the Association to be able to influence the decisions of Council.

This is more crucial than ever now. In the past years the budget at Council's disposal has risen from £23,000 (1983) to £68,000 (1986) and it could well be in six figures by 1990. The availability of that extra finance plus the untiring efforts of Chris Hudson, our National Development Officer, which has led to a host of new initiatives (Schools and Universities tournaments, National Coaching scheme, liaison with WI and Townswomen's Guild, National Garden Croquet Championships etc.) has placed a tremendous extra burden on Council members. Paradoxically, the harder they work on your behalf, the less time they are likely to have to actively seek out your views.

At this moment Council is in the process of restructuring itself to meet these new challenges. A number of new committees have recently been formed and, for the first time, non-Council members and Regional representatives will have a place on some of these committees. This should help to spread the work load and involve a wider body of opinion, but it is not enough. I see four ways for Ordinary members to apply influence to Council and keep themselves informed:

1. I agree with Ken's point that, when seeking election or re-election, prospective Council members should say what they intend to do when elected. In the previous two years, when we have had contested elections, some candidates have used their 100 word allocation to state their intentions. If Members want such manifestos, they should make it known that they will only vote for candidates who produce them. Of course this presupposes that we have contested elections so you also need to encourage more people to stand for Council. Many of us believe that the views of high-handicappers are under-represented on the present Council, but what do you expect if none stand or are encouraged to stand?

2. Clubs should get to know their local Council members and invite them to Club committee meetings or Club functions occasionally and get them to explain what is going on. I have arranged to attend a Club

committee meeting at Bristol in March and Martin Murray and I have always tried to make ourselves available to attend Club functions at the Avon Clubs, where we are only too happy to talk about current developments.

3. Perhaps your best opportunity to get your individual views across is when you have the chance to chat to a Council member over a drink at a tournament during the season.

4. Like Ken Cotterell, send in contributions to the Letters section of 'Croquet' and make your views known on topics important to you.

Unless people do at least some of these things, I feel they have no right to feel 'frustrated and in some cases angered by decisions', as Ken reports.

Finally, could I suggest Mr Editor, that you publish, in the May issue, a list of the names of all elected Council members, together with their Clubs and handicaps, so that all members are aware of how it is currently constituted and whom they can buttonhole to make their views known.

New Tournament Conditions

Dear Sir,
As a result of the new ruling on Mary Rose and Inter-Club teams, the West Park Club will not be entering the Inter-Club. We feel that this ruling is prejudicial to our best interests and that the only people to benefit will be the large clubs with strings of minus players.

We fully understand the reasons for this decision, but believe that in practice clubs like ourselves will not enter both contests. We also believe that many other clubs will be similarly affected.

We have written to the tournament committee to voice our feelings and we hope that all other clubs in our situation will do the same. In this way we hope to persuade the tournament committee to reconsider.

We are aware that, unless a sufficient number of clubs feel as we do, our protest will, quite rightly, go unheeded. We request that club secretaries or captains make their feelings known to the tournament committee.

J P G Watson,
Captain: West Park CC.

Why promote croquet?

Dear Sir,
I could not agree more with the sentiments expressed in Ken Cotterell's letter (Issue No. 190). Speaking as a reactionary old

fogey, I deplore all this urge for promotion which has taken place over the last few years. Why does croquet have to be promoted? What is the urge to make croquet into a National Game with television coverage? In my view television is the ultimate disaster for any amateur sport - look what it has done to the top levels of the delightful game of lawn tennis.

Of course clubs have to run recruiting campaigns to get new blood and replace wastage, but there are enough clubs round the country now to cater for everyone who wants to play croquet, so why go further?

As for the trend towards professionalism which Ken has noticed, I was horrified to read Andrew Hope's note that the Council has found it necessary to set up a committee 'to look into the ramifications of professionalism within all facets of croquet from administration to appearance money' Already? Soon we shall not be allowed to stop for tea and the winner will not buy the loser a drink. Alas for the good old days!

R.F.A. Crane,
Henley-on-Thames.

Dear Sir,
I welcome the progress that is being made in the promotion of Association Croquet particularly amongst young people and which is most evident in the contents of the January 1987 edition of the Gazette. There is no doubt that school participation will play an important part in recruitment.

At Colchester following our successful recruitment drive of four years ago for which we received a CA award we have consistently tried to interest our local schools in the game resulting in the coaching of the Colchester Royal Grammar School by myself, the culmination of which was their magnificent first time achievement in winning the National School Championship. Robert Fulford, the leading member of the side and a young player of outstanding ability, became the National Junior Champion and won the Selectors Weekend Tournament.

This group of players, including members of other Colchester schools, have all learnt their croquet on Colchester courts and hopefully will continue to support the club in the years to come.

R.S. Alford,
Colchester.

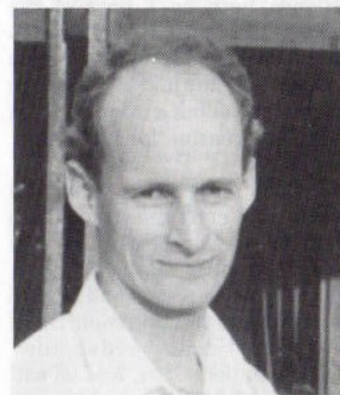
John McCullough,
Bristol.

As requested, here is a list of the Council Members for 1987/8.

Keith Aiton	Nottingham	-1
Nigel Aspinall	Roehampton	-2
Judy Anderson	Colworth	4½
Les Butler	Parkstone	½
Derek Caporn	Woking	3
Peter Danks	Budleigh	5½
Peter Dorke	Ludlow	6
Smokey Eades	Phyllis Court	2
Terry Greenwood	Wolverh'ton	4½
Sarah Hampson	Hunstanton	3½
Andrew Hope	Cheltenham	-1½
Colin Irwin	Bowdon	-2
Barry Keen	Bowdon	1
Jan MacLeod	Hurlingham	3
John McCullough	Bristol	-1
Steve Mulliner	Roehampton	-2
Martin Murray	Cheltenham	-1½
Bernard Neal	Cheltenham	-½
Alan Oldham	High Wycombe	9
Dennis Shaw	Ramsgate	4½
Pat Shine	Southwick	7
Charles Townsend	Harwich	-

'Expert Croquet Tactics'

Dear Sir,
Sales of the first edition of 250 copies are well advanced, but I still have several copies left. Those who may have held back in the hope of picking up remainders are to be disappointed. I am raising the price to £21 plus £2 p/p for all orders received after the 18th July 1987 (ie after the Championships).



Keith Wylie

The vagaries of the book-making processes have left me with 6 misassembled copies which would appeal to amateur bookbinders. They are available for £10 plus £2 p/p each (including a spare case if wanted), or £50 the lot.

Keith Wylie,
Southampton.

Accommodation during tournaments

Dear Sir,
In view of the difficulty sometimes experienced in finding reasonably priced (and reasonably quiet) accommodation during tournaments it may be encouraging for

some potential entrants to be able to apply for lists of private accommodation appropriate to each venue. Many of the more regular entrants are often fixed up all right, often on a reciprocal basis, and in fact many weekend tournaments are oversubscribed anyway. However, some players may well be deterred from entering, especially for the week-long tournaments which may require five nights' accommodation. It is these week-long tournaments that would often benefit from more entrants, so those with the time available may be glad to enter if they can get somewhere to stay without difficulty at moderate cost.

Providing lists of accommodation does, of course, depend upon enough players being able and willing to put entrants up, for which they should be recompensed at, say, £5 per night to include reasonable food for breakfast (but not a commitment to cook one). It is suggested that a separate list for each venue would be appropriate, which would be sent upon a request accompanied by SAE.

To set the ball rolling, I am putting myself on the lists for tournaments at Roehampton, Surbiton and Hurlingham. Those who are interested in encouraging and helping entrants by offering accommodation on such a basis please write to me with addresses and telephone numbers and the appropriate tournament venues. Provided there are sufficient volunteers by mid-June I will confirm the establishment of these arrangements in the next edition of 'Croquet'.

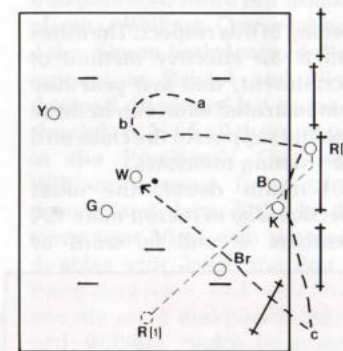
Jerry Guest,
19 Montague Road,
Richmond, Surrey TW10 6QW.

Gamesmanship

Dear Sir,
In response to the quite overwhelming interest, expressed by at least one person, in the 'Gamesmanship' letter of the March issue of 'Croquet', I once again shyly put forth a shrinking shoot from the parent stock of Gameslore.

Double-Banking, the trump suit of Croquetship, is the one area where the Queen of games pre-eminently wields her sceptre. Other games bring you in contact with your opponent, and with your respective partners, but where else do you find yourselves in the midst of an entirely separate, extraneous, and eminently distracting sporting encounter? In Golf, indeed, you share the course with other matches, but a distance of several hundred yards from the

other players somewhat limits the lively exchange of social amenities (J. Streamlyne made what capital he could of being exaggeratedly polite to other pairs and to foursomes when he was passing, until silenced by the capable counter of T. Mumsman. Mumsman, after tolerating Streamlyne's platitudes for 5 holes, suddenly on the 6th tee, produced a pair of small Semaphore flags, and attempted, in vain, to communicate with a distant, retreating party. (Thereafter, the mere threat of the flags, lurking in Mumsman's bag, took a full 50 yards off Streamlyne's famous drive). Politeness Play is the cornerstone of Doublebankmanship. You must at all costs be more considerate of the other game than your opponent. The plying begins long before the game itself, when you suggest to the Manager that YOUR game could start at the third hoop, and progress in reverse, to avoid a 'pile-up'. Say to your oppo.: 'We don't mind taking secondary colours, do we?', especially when your game is more important than the other. In fact, the more trivial the other game, the more considerate you should be. In play, never walk in a straight line from point a to point b - when following your last shot or retrieving a ball, describe a wide arc, as if to keep out of the double-banker's line of sight (See diagram).



----- : Route of Pink (in hand) after rushing White to the Peg.

..... : Route of Red ball.

At point a, P rushes W and proceeds in normal arc.

At point b, R misses and P goes considerably to retrieve the ball at R(2).

At point c, P kindly moves the check-boards for a player on the next court.

At point W, P should return to point c to move the board back; it might be in B/K's way.

(This style of play may seem extreme, but remember that the player is fighting back after his opponent forced him to take the more popular colours.)

It is not a bad thing, when addressing the balls for a routine Croquet shot, to ask the NON-PLAYING double-banker if you may mark a ball, which is several yards from anywhere your balls might go. When he refers you to the PLAYER in the other game, say; it isn't really strictly necessary to move the ball - you will be careful. O. Budward, having thus made a good impression, would without a qualm leave an opponent's ball in the jaws of a hoop for 25 minutes, while he tottered round on an unlikely-looking 3-ball break. His opponent it was, of course, who had to share a bench with the waiting double-bankers!

Odysseus,
Eire.

Dear Sir,
As a high-bisquer who suffered from what I think we may now call 'Readsmanship' at Carrickmines, I should like to thank Odysseus for his letter ('Croquet', issue 190). I never realised that Terry missed the short roquet or fluffed the easy hoop *on purpose*, deliberately feeding me with false hopes of a final triumph.

I did indeed find the continued perusal of the 'F.T.' most unnerving, for often when I hesitated as to the best play the thought uppermost in my mind was 'Have they gone down? Ought I to have sold last week?' Also the retirement to the pavilion when the weather is particularly foul leaves the high-bisquer quite alone in a hostile world of nature. Again, he considers not which stroke to play, but 'Where is Read? Has he gone for ever?' The high-bisquer begins to hope that he has.

I look forward very much to guidance from you on Double-Bankmanship. Even I have already noted the following points:

a) Pale faded light-green and light-brown, pale pink, off-white - all four muddy. Very difficult to distinguish. During end-games in the twilight Authority often substitutes a pegged-out ball for one of the dingier balls still in play - thus compounding the confusion.

b) I succeeded twice at Carrickmines in avoiding double-banking by inducing first that nice young man from T.C.D. with the voracious appetite and then young Charles to play on the top lawn. I thought that this would please Authority by relieving pressure on the more water-logged of the lawns. But Authority, three different avatars of it, informed me that it was very wrong to play competition croquet up there.

c) As I become more accustomed to D-B - but I must waste your time no further.

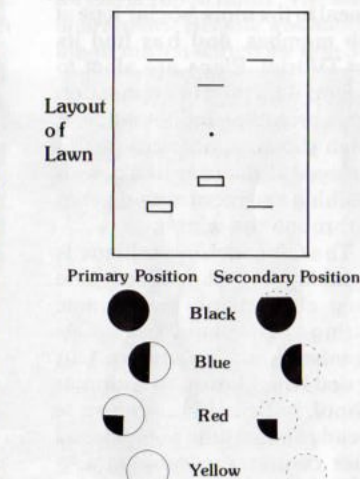
My wife and I would indeed be delighted if the travels of Odysseus brought him to Geneva (much easier to get to than Eire, and *much* less rain) for a drink, for a meal, or for a lodging; and let him bring with him his Penelope, his Telemachus, or even his Circe.

Michael Quin,
Geneva.

Croquet diagrams

Dear Sir,
In the March issue of 'Croquet' Dr Allen Parker extolled Mr Locock's book of 1907. What an easy book it is to follow having, as it does, each diagram in colour.

Although I appreciate for a monochrome publication colour is not practical, I would however recommend the following convention.



Richard Stevens,
Salisbury.

Is the Law an Ass?

Dear Sir,
I am flattered by Bill Bowden's comments in his letter (March 190) and to an extent I would agree with him that the law can seem an Ass. The tenor of the laws is generally speaking biased towards practicality rather than actual truth, and whenever possible the need for a referee to adjudicate on a dynamic situation is avoided. The main exception to this being watching to see whether a ball is hit if it is on or near a wire. Although this is an 'umpire' task I personally find it one of the most difficult judgements, because there is rapid movement at the critical moment.

I am grateful to those who decided the spirit of the law book for their practicality and I would like to suggest that if the law is an ass, it is at least a 'well-meaning Ass'.

J.P.G. Watson,
Stevenage.

Your Letters (2)

Increasing Our Membership

By Chris Hudson

About this time last year, I wrote an article on 'Increasing our Membership' (Issue 185), in which I gave my view that we had to be successful in two areas if we were to meet our membership targets.

The first area was improving services, and here I touched on a number of hopes that I had for the coming 1986 season. In retrospect, these hopes were not misplaced. The magazine has been expanded, giving a wider coverage, with more people writing for it on a greater variety of subjects. As we obtain more advertising, it will expand further, and we now have two advertising agencies working on our behalf to test the market.

Short Croquet, in its infancy last year, has now proved its appeal to the more 'social' type of club member, and has had its first TV trial. Plans are afoot to develop it further in connection with a prototype indoor surface, which should enable croquet to be played all the year round, with coaching and recruitment going on through the winter.

The CA coaching scheme is beginning to take effect, and many club members are now getting the benefit of CA-organised coaching courses. Our second Loughborough Summer School, to be held in August, is already almost fully booked, and other centres are running CA-backed coaching courses this year.

The amount given by the CA to clubs and federations in the form of Grants and Loans increased considerably in 1986 over 1985, and the CA is actively seeking additional sponsors to

enable us to maintain this level of support.

At both ends of the game, the CA has made significant contributions since I wrote my article. On the international side, we have initiated the formation of the World Croquet Federation, and taken steps to expand the international programme. At the same time, the tournament calendar has been considerably extended to meet demand and to



Some of the players who took part in a Short Croquet competition at the East Riding Club at the end of last season.

The competition was won by Stuart Rogers (Harrogate), centre, with medal, and was the final event of a development programme organised and carried out in the Yorkshire & Humberside Region by Bill Lamb (back left in bat) and Ross Gillespie (back right).

provide players with different forms of competition to meet their particular requirements.

At the other end of the scale, we have made further progress in developing Short Croquet, and in encouraging Golf Croquet, and in encouraging Golf Croquet amongst groups such as the WI and the Townswomen's Guilds.

Our plans for a national garden croquet tournament have come to fruition with the recent launch of the Lassale Croquet Classic.

Other improvements in member services currently being explored include the provision of personal equipment of various types at discount rates, the classification of equipment, and the approval of various items as being suitable for particular categories of play.

As I said last time, providing better services for members is half the battle, and I believe our record shows that we are suc-

mouth. If those who are already members really feel it is worth their while to join the CA and are prepared to recommend it to others, then our membership will grow rapidly. So once again, I am asking clubs and existing members for their full support in 1987 to enable us to achieve our membership target.

In the last issue of the magazine (190), I gave details of how our rate of recruitment had been increasing steadily over the past few years, from a net gain of just 28 members in 1983 to a net gain of 215 members last year.

Total membership at the end of 1986 stood at 1329, and our target for the end of 1987 is 1600. We are therefore looking for a net gain in CA membership of 271 in 1987, and allowing for wastage, this can easily be achieved if each club recruits at least 3 more full members to the CA during the year.

The Lassale Croquet Classic and the Channel 4 television programme should help considerably in putting us in contact with many more potential members this year, but even so, we are still greatly dependent on personal recommendation from existing members to encourage others to join the Croquet Association.

We are therefore running another Club Recruitment competition this year, in a slightly different format to the last one. This time, clubs will not be divided into groups according to the number of CA members they already have. Instead, all clubs will compete on level terms, and the awards will simply go to the six clubs with the most successful recruiting record in 1987.

Please do all you can to help us achieve our target, and in doing so, help us to help you.

ceeding in this respect. The other half is an effective method of recruitment, and last year has demonstrated what can be done with the support of the clubs and our existing members.

Without doubt, the most effective way to recruit more CA members is still by word of

those who are influential in their clubs to do something about it. Subsequent issues will carry a list of the current top 20 clubs and will announce when each club achieves its target - 3 full members, 6 reduced members, or an equivalent combination.

Administration
Clubs will be required to list their new members when they apply for the awards, and this list will be checked against subscriptions received during the 1987 season.

The lists of clubs given in each issue of 'Croquet' will be subject to confirmation at the end of the season. Information to compile

the lists will be taken from the membership application forms held at the CA Office.

In case of any query, the CA Directory will be used to establish the date of CA membership. The late payment of a 1987 subscription by someone listed in the 1986 Directory will not count as a new member.

Conditions
The Association may require to see the membership list of any club applying for a prize.

The decision of the Association in awarding the prizes will be final and subject to no discussion or appeal.

CONDITIONS OF 1987 MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT COMPETITION

Prizes

The six clubs that recruit the largest number of members for the CA between 1st January and 31st December 1987 will receive an award equal to the CA subscriptions of the members they have recruited.

A condition of the awards will be that the prize money is used to develop club facilities or to improve existing facilities for club members.

Procedure

Details of the scheme are given in this issue of 'Croquet' to alert all CA members to this year's competition, and to encourage

1987 LOUGHBOROUGH SUMMER SCHOOL COURSES FOR PLAYERS AND COACHES

Course Dates
Grade I: 1-7 August
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PLAYERS

Beginners: 3-7 August
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Loughborough, LE11 3TU.
Tel: (0509)-263171

ONLY A FEW PLACES LEFT

BRISTOL CROQUET CLUB

By Ray Ransom

In an effort to revive interest in tournament croquet, the Croquet Association began arranging tournaments in the last years of the nineteenth century. In 1896 the CA arranged a tournament at the County Cricket Ground in Bristol. Walter Peel agreed to manage the tournament and several well known players entered, including C E Willis who, in the following year, became Open Champion in the first year of the revival of the Opens. Mrs Tivy, the wife of a local doctor and a cousin of Walter Peel, caused a sensation by beating Willis, the first time he had ever lost to a woman.



A general view of Bristol's grounds, with the old and new clubhouses in the background

The tournament was considered to be a great success and stimulated local players sufficiently for them to acquire enough land to set up two lawns and erect a pavilion. Thus in 1897 the Clifton and County Croquet Club was born and Mrs Tivy became its first chairman. The name persisted until 1957 when it was changed to the Bristol Croquet Club.

In the years following formation, the club held fairly regular annual open tournaments, although never at their grounds. The last of these tournaments was held in 1911 and from this time until the mid 1920's little seemed to happen other than four moves of the club premises, before a period of comparative stability ensued. After a further 10 years, hooliganism forced the club again to seek a new ground, but it took until the winter of 1939/40 before a suitable site was found and occupied. This site, at Stoke Bishop in North-West Bristol, has been the location of the club since that time.

In 1938 the club again arranged a tournament which was managed by Miss D D Steel. Ten lawns were set up on the

Clifton College grounds to host the event. C F Colman thrilled the spectators, who numbered between 50 and 100, by almost completing a triple peel! Thanks to a last minute donation by the CA the event raised the princely sum of 2/10d towards the move the following year. Although the intention was to repeat the tournament in 1939, sadly the Clifton College grounds were not available and it was another 43 years before the next one took place.

In 1955, Dr G L Ormerod, best known for producing the excellent booklet 'Know the Game', took over as club

president and during the next dozen years, the club flourished and produced some remarkable players. William Ormerod and John Simon both learned their croquet at Bristol and Nigel Aspinall developed his game at the club. In 1966 all three played in the President's Cup with William coming first, Nigel second and John fifth. In the same year Nigel won the open doubles with John, the first of three occasions, and went on to win the event many more times with William. Sadly, by around the end of the decade, Nigel and William had moved on and John was lost to croquet.

In the late 70's, John McCullough joined the Bristol club and quickly rose to prominence. John's enthusiasm gave the club, which was again declining, a much needed boost, providing the fuel for growth in the membership and the improvement in the standard of play within the club. He introduced coaching courses and a recruitment programme which has caused the membership figure to soar. The membership figure had remained in the 30's almost since the original formation, but it breached 50 in

1982 and the current figure of 80+ has brought the likelihood of a restriction on overall membership levels closer.

Although club members were again having the individual successes characteristic of the mid-sixties, team successes were mixed. The record was good in friendlies but Longman Cup wins were rare. In 1985 Bristol entered the Mary Rose for the first time, but lost in the opening match to Stourbridge. In the same year, the Shield of the newly formed South West Federation of Croquet Clubs was contested and in the final, Bristol beat Nailsea in a thrilling match that had everything. John McCullough levelled the score at two games all with a fine delayed triple peel when the Nailsea pair were for peg and peg, and in the final game Nailsea almost snatched victory in the last turn but just failed by the minimum margin. This was Bristol's finest team success to date.



The Club President, Lady Elena Porter, presents the doubles cups to Roger Sampson and Ann Sammons on the Club's Finals Day in September 1986.

Developments to the club grounds were also going on at this time. Our clubhouse had been purchased second hand in 1926 for £43 and the facilities available were primitive. In 1985 members had the satisfaction of seeing the results of their fund raising efforts, when a new block was erected providing a decent kitchen and flush toilets. The old clubhouse will remain for some time, but when funds permit will be replaced by something more modern.

And so to 1986. The club had maintained a policy through the 80's of giving as many players as possible the chance of participating in team matches and partly as a result of this, the middle bisquers of the club were very experienced in competitive play and there are a large number to call upon. During the year 41 members played 165 games in 25

matches, winning 19 matches and drawing 1. In the three national competitions which Bristol won, 17 members took part, 4 of these playing in both Short Croquet and Longman Cup Matches.

It was the first year of the Short Croquet Competition and Bristol just crept through to the final when, level on games with Bath 1, our captain produced an incredible sequence of shots at the peg to win the right to proceed. The final at Edgbaston proved to be fairly one-sided with Bristol running out easy winners.

In the Longman Cup, Bristol had never progressed beyond the third round, a position which they had achieved in the previous two years. In 1986 it looked likely we would do no better when 2-0 down at lunch against Bath. The same position occurred in the 4th round match against Oxford, but we just scraped home. The semi-final against Reigate was another tough match which we won 3-2.

In the final against Thomas Cook on a sanded cricket patch at Hurlingham, our opponents were unfortunately without their most experienced player and they were unable to overcome this disadvantage. The margin, 5-0 did not, however, represent a fair indication of the difference between the two teams.

In the first round of the regionalised Mary Rose competition, we met Hunstanton. We are not sure how we were both in the same region but on the desolated rolling lawns of West Park, Bristol won their first ever Mary Rose match. Wolverhampton, Cheltenham 2 and Edgbaston followed with Bristol having more than their fair share of good fortune. In the final we felt very much the underdogs but met a Roehampton team playing below par, and ran out comfortable

Continued on page 17

Historical review

Hoops

By Allen Parker (Parkstone)

At the Roehampton Championships in 1909 the hoops were 3¾ inches for the three principal events and 4 inches for the handicap, and the report of this tournament made point of the fact that in the previous year 3¾ hoops were used for the first time since 1882. Hoop widths had varied considerably since the first ever open croquet tournament and these changes may be summarised as follows.

In the year 1867 Walter Jones Whitmore held an open tournament at Evesham at which he beat all comers. In the next year another tournament was held at Moreton-in-the-Marsh at which Walter Whitmore was beaten by W H Peel, who also beat all his other opponents, and became the second champion. Towards the end of that year the All England Croquet Club at Wimbledon came into being, Whitmore being one of the founders. While their lawns were being constructed the club held the championship meeting of 1869 at the Crystal Palace, and held the first meeting on their

own lawns in the following year.

At Evesham and Moreton-in-the-Marsh the hoops were 8 inches wide (Yes, eight inches!), while the balls were 3½ inches in diameter, i.e. the same as they are today, one hundred years later. In 1869 the hoops were 7¼ inches wide, while at the first Wimbledon tournament in 1870 the hoops were 6 inches for the early rounds and 5 inches in the semi-finals and final, but in the Ladies Championship they were 6 inches throughout. In 1872 the hoops were 4 inches wide for the Championship and the Ladies', and 4¼ inches for the handicap event.

The year 1874 saw the introduction of braced hoops of half-inch steel, 3¾ inches wide, set firmly on oaken sockets. These continued in use until 1882, and it used to be supposed that a special knack of imparting a top spin had to be acquired in order to negotiate them successfully, because on account of the wooden sockets and rigidity of the steel there was no 'give' in the hoops at all. In his little book

entitled 'Croquet', Arthur Lillie blames these difficult hoops for the decline in popularity of croquet from 1882 until the revival of the Wimbledon tournaments in 1896. In 1887 W H Peel founded the United All England Croquet Association, the name of which was changed to the Croquet Association in 1900. By 1909, the year of the Roehampton championships referred to in the first paragraph above, the ½ inch iron hoops supported by iron carrots (i.e. similar to those of today) had been adopted for tournaments. However the discussions over hoop width were still not over, as may be judged by the following correspondence which appeared in the 1910 volume of the Gazette.

To the Editor

FOUR INCH HOOPS

The question of 3¾ inch hoops versus 4 inch hoops seems likely to give rise to a good deal of discussion, and will exercise the minds of managers, and committees of open tournaments a good deal this summer. No doubt the 3¾ inch hoops make croquet much more interesting, especially to first class players, but if they come into general use, managers of tournaments will have an extra burden laid on their shoulders, and will find it a very difficult matter to finish the tournaments in the stipulated time, especially as the entries in tournaments are growing larger every year. I doubt if the Peel Memorials could be finished in a week if it were played with 3¾ inch hoops, as the games between inferior players must take much longer, and even between first class players take long enough already. May I venture to suggest that the setting on all ordinary tournaments should be four inch hoops on the outside and 3¾ inch hoops down the 'Ladies' Mile'. This seems to me to meet the case, and will make the game much more interesting. The 'Ladies' mile, as it stands, is far too easy, and 3¾ inch will just give it that extra interest and excitement which it now lacks. It will also make peeling and pegging out much more difficult, and first class players will have something to exercise their skill on.

Yours truly
H E Acklom,
Bournemouth, May 27th 1910.

To the Editor

I don't think Mr Acklom's suggestion would meet the case, but he is perfectly right, I believe,

in saying that if 3¾ inch hoops were in universal use managers would have too much to do to get tournaments finished in a week with the usual programmes of 4 or 5 events. But why have these events for every player? If many places can only run their tournaments on cricket pitches with 4 inch hoops, people who go to such know what to expect; but on the Roehampton lawns the very best croquet can be played, and in my opinion the word 'absurd' is the only term to apply to any committee's decision to use 4 inch hoops there . . .

Yours truly
John W Thain,
5th June, 1910.

To the Editor

Mr Thain's constant demands for small hoops are beginning to get on one's nerves. Surely he might leave the matter to the committee. I know that hundreds of players would be bored to tears by the introduction of 3¾ inch hoops . . .

Yours obediently
'Port Arthur',
June 17th 1910.

To the Editor

After this season's experience of the strain thrown upon my nerves (now I confess somewhat the worse for wear) by the introduction of 3¾ inch hoops at tournaments, I have with the utmost reluctance been driven to the conclusion that I can no longer compete with any personal comfort or satisfaction in tournament events in which they are used. I feel certain that amongst croquet players of advanced years I am not alone in the experience, though I hope still to enjoy many a pleasant game at my club and on private lawns.

I am etc.
S A W Waters,
3rd Sept, 1910

To the Editor

Allow me to make a suggestion; why not adopt a universal standard of 3¾ inch hoops?

To the Editor

Is Mr Walters serious - even though he does take up the greatest part of a column of valuable space?

Surely I might as well request the committee to do away with the Open Championship, as I have been unable to win it the last two or three years; or better still write to secretaries of all golf clubs and request them to shorten their courses, do away with bunkers, and make the

Historical review

putting holes half as big again, as I, being such a very bad player, cannot cope with existing difficulties.

Yours very truly,
R C J Beaton,
Sept. 24th, 1910.

To the Editor

I can assure Mr Beaton that my letter as to the use of 3¾ inch hoops was conceived in all seriousness, and it is evident from other letters which have appeared in the last two issues of the Gazette that I am not alone in my opinion as to the inconvenience of the present system of using two gauges of hoops at croquet tournaments. When Mr Beaton can find any other game in which a similar system exists, he is free to argue from analogy. Certainly it is not to be found in golf, and one can realise the absurdity of our use of various gauges of hoops by imagining a golf course in which there were holes of various diameters for the use of different classes of players. The existing rules of croquet as to peeling and pegging out already give the expert player an advantage which exists in no other game.

I think it but reasonable that moderate players should not be required to play with hoops which absolutely preclude any possibility of their success in open events.

With all due gratitude to Mr Beaton's offer of lessons in hoop running, I shall not trouble him at any price, as I have never had any pretension whatever to his style of play, and I am quite certain that no amount of education would enable me to acquire it.

I am, yours very faithfully,
S A W Waters,
Oct. 7th, 1910.

To the Editor

I do not profess to speak with the same authority as Mr Beaton, but I venture also to think that the one outstanding feature of the year 1910 has been the recognition by the committees of the leading clubs of the necessity of using 3¾ inch hoops if the best croquet and croquet players are to be obtained.

During the last 3 weeks another school of thought appears to have arisen, advocating 3¾ inch hoops, but there steadily remains the interesting ruck, with whom I am almost entirely in agreement, who say that croquet is not a profession, that they thoroughly enjoy a tournament with 4 inch hoops, that they frequently win and often beat players much

Models of Polyhedra

by Eric Black (Bowdon)

It has been suggested to me that I write an article on one of my recent pastimes - making models of polyhedra (mathematical models).

About 3 years ago I remembered having been impressed in my young days by having seen some of these polyhedra made skilfully in cardboard by a grammar school boy. Looking into the subject, I found that they were connected with 'The Five Perfect Solids' (crystals). Euclid (330-260BC) arranged these in one of his Books under the heading of Polyhedra.

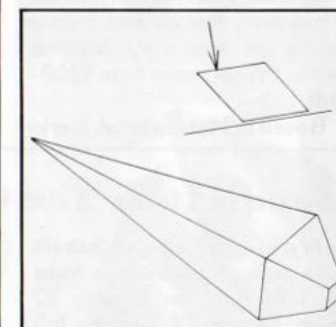


Fig. 1. An individual stellate.

As a challenge, I made one of these in wood, known as a stellated Icosahedron. I first made the core crystal, which had 20 faces. I then pegged on stellates. When completed, it measured 12' across.

Having done this, I was tempted to make others. This was out of pure interest. I only made one more with pegged-on stellates, as it is very difficult to align the faces accurately. On the

better than themselves (great sport this), while they frankly own that good fast lawns and 3¾ inch hoops mean hopeless nerves and an end to enjoyment.

Why not then recognise honestly the two divisions? The first, in which people enter to see if they are good at croquet, as in the Championship, Gold Medal, and any club meeting using 3¾ inch hoops throughout. The second for those who want the wholesome open air enjoyment of croquet without tears - all of us at odd times.

Yours truly,
Edgar Whitaker,
Oct. 7th, 1910

In the light of the wide hoops then in use, the proposal in a letter published in the magazine 'The Field' in 1868 does not seem quite so impossible. This letter, by a certain 'Meliora Spero', suggested the establishment of

rest of the polyhedra, that is eight more, I made the roots of the stellates to form the core; as far as I know, this method is original. This is where the skill comes in; to get all the angles true for alignment. The three most recent models have 92 stellates - 12 pentagonal and 80 triangular ones - and these are known as Stellated Snub Dodecahedra, the last being 21' across, so all have to dovetail-in accurately.

I show here an interesting type, known as a stellated

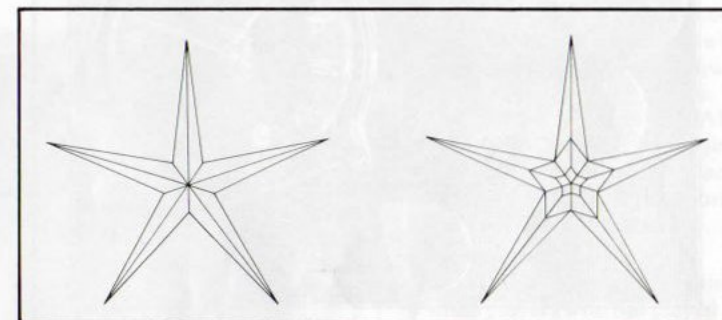
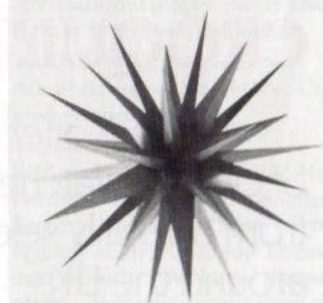


Fig. 2. The front (outer) view of a sub-assembled group of 5 stellates (left). On the right, the core end of the same sub-assembly.

Rhombic Triacontahedron. As can be seen in Fig. 1, the stellates have to be diamond shaped in section. A difficulty is holding the stellates rigid while planing them, as the pressure of the plane when applied at the point indicated by the arrow will tend to tilt the stellate. Thirty stellates are required for this model, each with 8 surfaces to be machined. Figs. 2 and 3 show, in sharp relief, the front (outer) and inner (core



The finished model of a stellated Rhombic Triacontahedron

they will be of interest to four subject areas - chemistry, mathematics, art and woodwork.

This is one example of a number of projects I have undertaken and they are unconnected with my vocation. In all that I attempt, I never like repeating myself; every pastime I take on must have some novelty (It's boring to keep going to four-back!). I also prefer an even measure of mental and physical skills.

Pastimes

end) of a group set of 5 stellates. The picture indicates the finished model, made in beech, and finished in gold. In size it is 14' across.

As can be appreciated, the models take months to make, and, though recognising that they are of limited interest, and that mainly from the point of view of art, I have been concerned to preserve them into the distant future and in an appreciative environment, so I am pleased that Manchester Grammar School has accepted them to put on indefinite display, suspended from the ceiling in the foyer of the chemistry department. There

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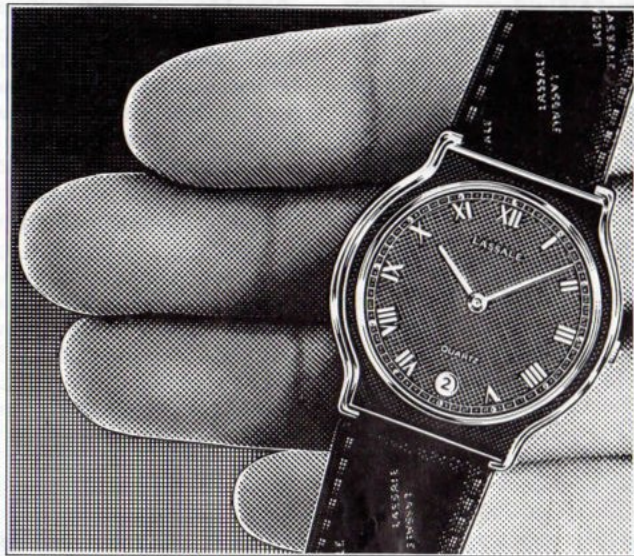
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ABOUT LASSALE

By David Innes, Lassale.

Lassale is fast becoming one of the leading international names in top quality watches.

As part of Hattori-Seiko Company Limited, the world's largest quality watch manufacturer, Lassale has been able to devote significant resources both to research and development and to advertising and promotional support in all its international markets, in particular Europe and the USA.

In the UK the Lassale range covers both unique distinctive styles and classically elegant slim models for both ladies and gentlemen. The common feature is, however, design and manufacture of the very highest quality. Prices range from £200 - £600.

Based in Maidenhead, Berk-

shire, Lassale is a division of Hattori UK Ltd, employing 250 people. Lassale watches are distributed only through a limited number of carefully selected jewellers and we organise various activities to support these stockists and to increase awareness of Lassale within our target market.

Sponsorship is a relatively new area for Lassale and 1987 will see increased activity here. Croquet in particular appeared to offer us an excellent opportunity to help develop an exciting 'new' sport which would have appeal both to our jeweller stockists and to our target consumers.

Cucumber sandwiches on the vicarage lawn may be a thing of the past but the image lives on! Lassale looks forward to a long and mutually beneficial relationship with the Croquet Association.

Support from 'The Observer'

The first national announcement of the tournament came from 'The Observer' on Sunday 22 March, the day before the full press launch at the Inner Temple, close to London's Fleet Street. Right from the conception of the tournament, 'The Observer' had offered to help with its initial promotion and to cover the final, with reports on any newsworthy items at various stages during the summer. Their help was most valuable in bringing the tournament to fruition, and below is part of David Hunn's launching article.

Swing the mallets aforethought

David Hunn invites croquet novices to enter the biggest competition in the history of the game - one that could lead from garden to glory.

Croquet never was what you thought it was, and from now on it never will be. This week we launch, in collaboration with the Croquet Association, the biggest competition in the long history of the game - the croquet tournament for those who don't play in croquet tournaments.

Anyone who has ever swung a mallet is entitled to a crack at this one; and anyone who has swung so well that he or she played club croquet and ever had a bandicap of 18 or below must stay away: *The Observer*/Lassale Croquet Classic is not for you.

The nationwide tournament starts in your garden - or someone else's... After that, it's up to the pair of you, or to you and your families. The Croquet Associa-

tion will send both of you... a booklet telling you how to set up the lawn and how to play the basic game of garden croquet. You play when it suits you both... In these preliminary rounds you can play as family against family...

The number of preliminary rounds of this totally informal kind will depend on the size of the entry - probably two or three, each of them linking the successful family (or solo player) to the nearest opponent still in the competition; and each of them, perhaps, providing the opportunity for a picnic tea or a barbecue or whatever the host wants to arrange...

Once you reach the regional finals - well, somebody has got to - all you need is your mallet. The Croquet Association will see to the rest and will stage each of those eight competitions in late July in the garden of a stately home or some other historic attraction. There will be free coaching available if you want it, as well as the knock-out tournament for eight players in the morning and eight in the afternoon in every region, each providing two winners to go forward to the national final. Every one of them will receive a Lassale watch worth at least £250.

Some time around the end of August those 16 most successful players from the Croquet Classic that may have begun in your own back garden will meet for the national final, at the end of which the winner will emerge with the Lassale Rosebowl and a passion

PRESS RELEASE Croquet for all

A new concept was unveiled in London today (Monday) at the launch of a national garden croquet competition for all the family.

Lassale, a leading quality watch manufacturer, make their debut in major sports sponsorship in the biggest sponsorship in Croquet Association history.

The company will be spending £35,000 this year to support and promote the Lassale Croquet Classic, in association with *The Observer* newspaper.

To the majority, croquet conjures up pictures of stately homes and vicarage lawns but over 300,000 people in Britain alone play the game casually in their back gardens and the Lassale Croquet Classic offers a unique opportunity for both sexes and all ages to participate in this new tournament.

Croquet is one of the very few sports that can be played by men and women on equal terms and by all ages, 12 to 80. Success relies on precision and tactical flair; not physical strength. And experienced players - handicapped at 18 or below - are barred from entry - the Lassale Croquet Classic is aimed at those who **don't** play at tournament level.

PRESS COMMENT

The launch on Monday 23rd March was covered by three television programmes. Charlotte Stockdale and Sarah Clempson featured on John Craven's 'Newsround' and the launch was also covered by BBC and STV Regional News pro-

grammes.

All the major national dailies carried a photograph and comment. Excerpts from some of the press cuttings are given below:

The Times: 'Croquet arrived in suburbia yesterday when a watch manufacturer invited anyone with a medium-sized lawn to enter a new competition to find a national champion. The game is getting the largest sponsorship in its history from the Lassale Company of Maidenhead, who are spending £35,000 on their new competition.'

The Daily Telegraph: 'A quick run from Fleet Street took me to the hallowed lawn of Inner Temple yesterday for the launch of the first-ever national garden croquet competition. Here was British sport at its challenging best: the rain poured, the lawns were waterlogged, there were not enough umbrellas...'

The London Evening Standard: 'It was the perfect example of the eccentric behaviour that has endeared the English to nations across the globe: Croquet on the lawn... in the pouring rain.'

The occasion, outside the Inner Temple, marked the launch of a new nationwide croquet tournament, aimed at all the family.



A new line in referees? Charlotte Stockdale poses for photographers at the launch of the Croquet Classic.

grammes.

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Quote of the Launch by Alan Pascoe:

'This is the first time that sponsorship has got into people's back gardens.'

The London Evening Standard: 'It was the perfect example of the eccentric behaviour that has endeared the English to nations across the globe: Croquet on the lawn... in the pouring rain.'

The occasion, outside the Inner Temple, marked the launch of a new nationwide croquet tournament, aimed at all the family.

Tel: 0705-753666.

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

* All Lassale dealers.

* Local croquet clubs.

Closing date: 5 May 1987.

END OF RELEASE.

23 March 1987.

For further information, please contact Penny Dain/Betty Maitland, Alan Pascoe Associates Ltd., Durham House, Durham House Street, London WC2N 6HG. Tel: 01-930-6332.

THE LASSALE CROQUET CLASSIC

Personalities attending

KEITH AITON

International croquet player who will compete in the match v. USA in Palm Beach later this month. First played croquet in the garden at the age of 10 and went on to captain the Cambridge University team. Keith recently passed his final law exams.

ANNETTE JACOT

Croquet mistress of Heathfield School, Ascot, the first all-girls school to enter the National Schools Tournament. One of 90 schools in Britain to teach croquet, including comprehensives. 2 more staff members will shortly be attending a Croquet Association coaching course.

With Mrs Jacot are CHARLOTTE STOCKDALE (Headgirl, Heathfield School, aged 16) and SARAH CLEMPSON (sixth form pupil at Heathfield, also 16).

JAN MacLEOD

One of the country's leading woman players who has played at international level. Took up croquet about six years ago after a challenge over the bridge table by Steve Mulliner, himself an international player. Jan is also a former international fencer.

BRIAN MACMILLAN

Administration Secretary, Croquet Association.

JEREMY SINDEN

Well remembered as 'Boy' Mulcaster in 'Brideshead Revisited', Jeremy opens in 'Spin of the Wheel' at the Comedy Theatre next month. A keen croquet player, Jeremy is organising the pro-celebrity event at Leeds Castle this summer, where the stars will include his father Donald.

RON WELCH

Regional Croquet Association coach based in West London, Ron has played the game for 14 years and has been responsible for recruiting many new enthusiasts. APA Ltd. 23 March 1987.

vague about the game, tending to alter the rules from time to time or order extra hoops to be placed in unlikely positions...

At one time, I was so keen on the game that my father, fearing for my sanity, forbade me to play. I used to slip out and play by moonlight, even when there was a light fall of snow upon the lawn.'

The Guardian

'A garden croquet competition designed to bring out the rabbits of the game was launched on the

Continued on page 19

Your Letters (3)

Jellyfish triolet

Dear Sir

The eagle eyed Eric Solomon is of course correct in recognising my verse as a triolet. I had thought of writing to point it out, but it seemed a little ungracious after you had been so generous as to publish it.

His point about the relative position of the fifth and sixth lines has the support of Webster's Dictionary and some other works of reference. The form he advocates is also the only one I have yet discovered among the early French examples. In fact the only argument I can adduce in favour of the form I used is that G K Chesterton used it in his triolet beginning

I wish I were a jellyfish
That cannot fall downstairs
which can be found in the New Oxford Book of Light Verse.

As to the catastrophe, it did not happen in a single stroke. All the same I believe it could be done and would be prepared to attempt to demonstrate it on a suitable occasion.

Finally since he has brought the subject up, perhaps I should mention that my first attempt at a triple was made in a friendly game with Eric himself, and was finally achieved with the aid of all eight of the bisques that remained to me.

David Ruscombe-King,
London.

Tram-lines

Dear Sir,
We are all familiar with the 'tram-lines' on the tennis court, defining alternative surfaces for singles and doubles play. The croquet court can also be said to possess 'tram-lines' (though not for different types of play), with one set of lines only existing in the imagination. I refer of course to the YARD LINES.

The rules require that a ball coming to rest within the yard line area (i.e. between the tram-lines) must, unless it is the player's ball and he is still in play, be lifted and placed on the yard line. But what does this mean and how is it done?

Unlike tennis, measurements from the court boundary are made from the inner edge of the 'line' which in actual fact is usually about an inch wide. No particular difficulty arises here - but what about the (imaginary) yard line? Presumably this has length but no width.

The rules indicate when a ball is to be lifted and placed on the yard line. 'On the yard line' presumably means centrally

across where the line would be if it was actually marked and not merely imagined. But it is interesting to note that if the boundary (near edge) and the yard line are to be regarded as exactly one yard apart, a ball off the court will only be moved 34 and three sixteenths inches forward from the point at which it began to leave the court to be squarely on the yard line (Fig.1).

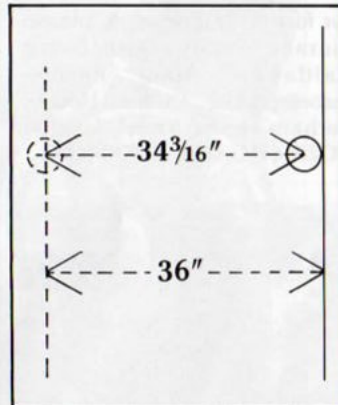


Fig. 1.

Obviously such considerations as these will not materially affect the game, but very occasionally the exact placing of a ball on the yard line, for example, could make the difference between the need to play an immediate croquet shot (should the balls be in contact) or to have the opportunity of playing a very advantageous 'dolly rush'.

But the main object of this letter is to raise the question of whether a case exists for 'materialising' the yard line. Fig.2 shows the possible alternatives in any corner of the court.

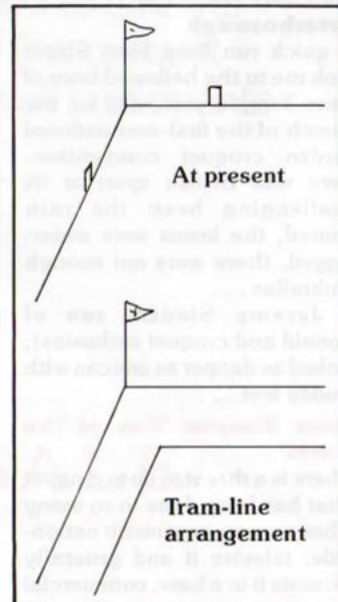


Fig. 2.

The first thing to notice is the disappearance of those annoying corner pegs if the tram-lines are

marked. These pegs seem destined to be trampled on and they are the bane of the groundsman.

Then there is the question of accurate placing of balls which are to be moved onto the yard line. This becomes a simple matter when the ball has merely to be put squarely on a marked white line. No more need to use the mallet shaft as a (most unreliable) ruler and, for those using short-handled mallets, no more guessing at the 3 or 4 inches of non-existent shaft. Not to mention the discomfort of having to lean down to make the measurement and in wet weather having to play with a soaking wet grip as a result.

Some may say that the 'tram-line' arrangement would make the game easier - but considering all the effort which has been put into making croquet easier in recent years, perhaps this would not be a bad thing. But I doubt if in fact this would be the case. Possibly the better view of the court provided by the second line would be of some value in judging the strength of the long shot, but this would in no way be to the detriment of the game and would encourage a higher degree of accuracy.

I am hoping to experiment with the 'tram-line' marking this year and shall be interested to hear the comments of anyone who decided to give it a trial.

Bill Scarr,
Seaton.

The Swiss method

Dear Sir,
When I introduced the Swiss method into croquet I had been greatly helped by my friend CHO'D Alexander, the well-known chess player, as he had had wide experience of the method from his game. He also played croquet. We thought our game needed another system which would give more play if we were to attract new players and get them all to come to our Cheltenham tournaments.

In the early 1960's almost all tournaments consisted of knock-outs only. The notable exceptions in Club events were the many American tournaments at Budleigh and the emerging weekends played without overall winners. The reason for this was that the American required so many rounds. For 16 players an XY needed only 7 rounds and 22 games, whereas an American would have needed 15 rounds and 120 games. The Swiss method, adapted for croquet though still containing the five

basic principles to give a result the same as, or at worst similar to the lengthy American, could be done with 7 rounds and 54 games, though more rounds would provide a truer Swiss.

Its introduction at Cheltenham though was dreadfully unpopular. Looking back, it was a very rough time. However some of the objections now seem hilariously ridiculous. 'How will I know whom I'll have to play after this?' 'How shall I do the shopping if I've got to play all these games?' 'I'm sure you just fix it so you can end it all when you want to!' 'I'm always out of everything by Thursday night, thank you!' However it seems if anyone says the same thing over and over again a convert eventually emerges and then the thing has caught on! Now look what's happened? The word Swiss appears on almost every other page of the current 'Fixtures'.

But the mystery of how the thing worked was a telling criticism; so I asked the Cheltenham Committee to authorise a Set of Rules. These were prominently displayed about the Club. After a rewarding correspondence with Nigel Aspinall, we got him to come down to manage and to play in a Swiss Weekend. But it was playing the Big Handicap in Giles Borrett's newly invented veterans week in 1971 under Cheltenham's Swiss rules which really clinched success and put the Swiss method on the croquet map. It demonstrated several advantages. There was lots of play: the man who won all his early games and would have gone away with the prize had the event been a knockout, was seen, when he lost later matches to have had 'an easy draw'; he didn't even come third: the winner had 'a difficult draw' and sailed home after early losses: there were real contests for secondary places: later on those who saw they were not in the running could go away or go on playing as they wished (several left): best perhaps, everyone won at least once! The report in 'Croquet' ends: 'The competitors completed an average of twelve games each in the week. Has any Tournament ever been quite like it!' In those days the average player got five games in a week!

Paul Hands, when he first put on the Coles weekend, invented a consolation event for the losers from the main event. He took from Swiss

1. the need to keep the original order derived from the initial draw so that only one

Thameside Croquet Club

Report by Bill Gardner

In idyllic surroundings the 'Thameside Croquet Club' is the stage for a game which the Victorians played in a leisurely age. 'Thameside' is now 2 years old and was started on a shoe-string budget with enthusiastic members who established a public croquet club in London with the help of a grant.

For a membership fee of £10 per year, members can play on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays in the grounds of the Bishops Palace Botanic Gardens, Fulham, from 2 pm till dusk.



Sideline supporters at Thameside

Non-members can use the lawns for the fee of £1 per person per game. The fee covers the cost of hiring mallets and balls.

The club is within a fierce drive through the hoops from the headquarters of croquet 'The Hurlingham Club'. The tranquil sound of mallet upon ball amidst the wisteria and the lush smell of the herbs is a joy in itself and a complete escape from life's toil. Beginners are welcome at 'Thameside' and are encouraged to participate with players of a higher standard whilst they are taught the rules and basic play.

A rush under the Tower at Thameside.

The Club House is quaint and holds the playing equipment (hoops, balls, mallets), which are transported to the three lawns by hand propelled trolleys each day.

When the hoops are in position and play starts, it would only need a lady in a crinoline dress to complete the picture of a faraway age.

Continued from page 11

winners. We were fortunate to play the final on the fine lawns of the Parkstone club and to experience excellent hospitality from its members.

This year Bristol Croquet Club celebrates its 90th anniversary and it is unlikely that we will have a season as successful in team competitions as the last. However we will not give up the titles easily, of that you can be sure.

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Your letters (4)

random element existed.

2. those of equal score played each other

3. no-one played another twice; and

4. he took from Double Elimination (Croquet No 142, Dec '76) the way to bring in later stage losers. He wittily called this method a SWIZ, as it was basically a Knockout!

It is a pity this name has been dropped. Indeed many of the events advertised as a 'Swiss', 'Swiss handicap' or 'American or Swiss' in the current fixtures cannot possibly be an authentic Swiss as clearly there is insufficient time to obey Regulation 16(a) page 55, which requires at least two rounds more than a knock-out. My guess is that the term Swiss is used for three quite different kinds of methods of play:-

1. A true Swiss: according to Regulations,

2. An authentic SWIZ, as above,

3. Anything else which is not a simple XY, DP or an American: in other words a knock-out with losers just going

on playing!

This is a method wrongly christened 'A Swiss' ignoring as it does Regulations 16(a) and 16(b)(i) and using only 16(b)(ii) and (iii) and taking any old pairings regardless of the initial draw. That great manager V.A. de la Nougerede often used this form, chiefly as an Extra. He called it a Semi-American: a good name, which obviously denoted using a selection of matches from an American block, taking any order and any pairing, provided they hadn't previously met.

I suggest it would be in all our interests if the C.A. were to tidy up this nomenclature so that potential contestants know what they are entering for. Perhaps the use of the term Swiss might be permitted for any event which will include at least two rounds more than the corresponding knock-out. This is the kernel of the Swiss. To be more precise however might hinder development. We all should welcome change.

G.E.P Jackson,
Cheltenham.

'The Croquet Game': An Art Exhibition

Extracts taken from the Catalogue for the exhibition 'Winslow Homer: The Croquet Game', organised by Yale University Art Gallery in 1984.

During the 1860s, the American artist Winslow Homer produced a series of five oil paintings showing croquet scenes. Linked with these paintings are two chalk drawings that have survived and a pair of wood engravings.

The existence of these works stimulated the Yale University Art Gallery to hold an exhibition of croquet paintings, drawings and photographs during 1984, and the catalogue of the exhibition contains some interesting facts about the game, as well as demonstrating the wide range of work that features croquet in one form or another.

Homer's interest in the game coincided with the appearance of

illustrated rule books heralding the game's transfer from England to the United States. From the outset, his images of croquet display a knowledge of the rule books and familiarity with the conventions of the game.

According to the catalogue, the croquet field 'has always been dominated by women', and we are shown a photograph of members of the family of the British Prime Minister, Gladstone, playing croquet at Fasque, Kincardineshire, in the 1860s.

Croquet received steady comment in the press as the first sport to allow Victorian women to participate in physical activity while in men's company. Thus the game was linked with other

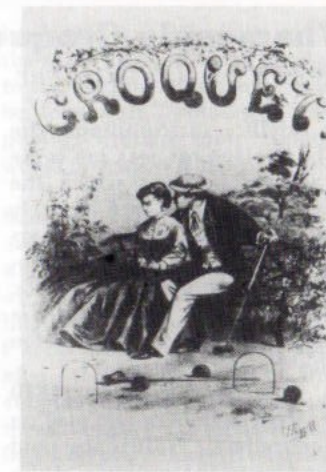
social activities organised by women. Croquet parties were held every week or two during the summer season: 'they were very extensive . . . expensive affairs, each costing a cold champagne dinner for nearly a hundred guests, and compensation to a band of musicians . . . 'Croquet, appointed for 3 p.m., commenced playing at four, and was continued up to seven'. This was usually followed by supper and dancing which lasted until about ten-thirty in the evening.'

Croquet 'strayed beyond the bounds of the private park' in about 1853 when a French toy manufacturer, John Jaques, started mass production of croquet equipment in Britain. A contemporary writer credited Jaques with the sport's burgeoning popularity. ' . . . the London toymaker Jaques . . . was among the earliest manufacturers of croquet implements . . . By dint of a great deal of advertising he gained such preeminence over his trade rivals that he was enabled to set the fashion for all England, and as we find, also for America: since manufacturers in this country appear one and all to have copied him to a turn'.

The equipment was called the 'croqueterie'. A complete set included 'eight balls, eight mallets, ten iron bridges, and two posts', according to Prof. A. Rover, FCR (pseud) in 'Croquet; Its Principles and Rules, with Explanations and Illustrations for the lawn and parlor' 1867.

Some sets also included colored metal clips, patented by Jaques, which were moved from hoop to hoop as the game progressed, helping players to keep track of others' whereabouts. None of Homer's paintings shows the clips, however, and the British popularizer, Mayne Reid, decried the clips as detrimental to the 'scientific' exercise of rational strategies.

Another writer on the game declared: 'Each mallet should have a color corresponding to its ball, painted on the handle near its insertion in the head; these colors are not so much for the sake of keeping the mallets and balls in pairs, as for the purpose of distinguishing the players', and that: 'The upper half of the stakes are painted alike with the eight colors in contiguous rings, and these may best be laid on in the following order, beginning at the top: black, white, yellowish green, bright blue, brown, pink, scarlet, yellow' Other combinations occur, but the books are



'Croquet', sheet music cover, lithograph, reproduced frontispiece, Charlton and Thompson.

consistent in suggesting black and white for the first two colors, designating the two team chiefs.

By 1866, Milton Bradley, an American toy company had patented its own set of croqueterie in an 'elegant chestnut box'. It was not long before enthusiastic American amateurs were 'trotting out the scape-goat' or finding themselves 'sent up Salt River' to use the then-current croquet slang. (Rule books usually included a section at the end with definitions of the game's extensive terminology. 'Trotting out the scape-goat' meant knocking one ball into another so as to place it in a more favorable position, while 'sent up Salt River' applied to a side when all its members fail to pass the wickets, strike the stake and go out.

In his painting 'The Croquet Player', Homer has seized upon the game's most salient moment. The solitary figure is about to engage in the act of croqueting another ball. She wields her mallet with one hand, using the other to lift up her skirt. Each action is touched upon in the rule books, which emphasised the 'fashionable bend' of the players' bodies, and 'easy and pleasing attitudes in playing'. According to the book, 'very little practice will show one that to hold the mallet in one hand and swing it from side to side gives the finest blow and is most graceful'.

Also in the rule book, we find 'With all deference we suggest to ladies that, where it is possible, they should dress with some regard to the requirements of the game; it is hardly conducive to elegance to behold half a dozen officious young gentlemen hovering about a lady as train-bearers and fly-catchers whenever she wishes to perform the croquet, and we protest

against those sweeping skirts that whisk the balls about and change the whole feature of the field'.

In some of the paintings, we can surmise that the party is using a toy manufacturers set, probably made of expensive boxwood. Beautiful mallets and balls with stripes were intended for ostentatious display. ' . . . it is just as if you played billiards with balls of solid gold, instead of ivory; . . . a ball of boxwood is an absurdity . . . Jaques introduced them, because it enabled him to charge three guineas for a set . . . and this brings me to another of the iniquities introduced by Monsieur Jaques - the colored stripe or band around the balls. It was done to avoid concealment of the costly wood! . . . there will be harlequins in the croquet arena, as on the stage of a theatre . . . (but) anyone should understand that the eye, in making the stroke, must be misled by the stripe. To beginners it is not of much consequence'. Homer painted amateurs at play. He included six players - two more than the number considered perfect for serious games involving carefully worked out strategies and teamwork.

As the rule books consistently advise, most of Homer's wickets are painted white. In 'Croquet Scene', the man's act of setting the balls in place for the croquet shot can be interpreted as a standard act of courtesy, seen in rule book illustrations. For a woman clad in stiff hoops and petticoats to bend down and place her ball would have violated the game's emphasis on graceful attitudes.

In 1873, Harpers Weekly published a wood engraving entitled 'Never Too Old to Play Croquet - Nor Yet Too Young', reflecting the claim made that 'The game of croquet is the most scientific, healthful and social recreation ever known. Old and



'Palo Alto Spring', by Thomas Hill, 1878, oil on canvas. Stanford University Museum of Art.

young meet on its arena on more nearly equal terms than in any other game of skill. A correct eye, steady hands and nerves, good judgment and clear brain, are the essential qualifications for a good player, and the possession of these advantages, of course, is not dependent upon the age, sex, or condition of the person. And it may be considered as the chief excellence of this game, that it gives the opportunity, which very few other games combining scientific play and physical exercise afford, for persons of the opposite sexes and disparity of age to join in one common amusement'.



Man checking to see whether the croquet ball is legally through the wicket. Wood engraving, from Scudder, 1865, p21.



'Croquet Scene', by Winslow Homer, 1866, oil on canvas. The Art Institute of Chicago.

regard to strategic planning. The game was intended for men only, there was no interest whatsoever in graceful attitudes, and women were once again relegated to the 'tame and unsatisfactory position of mere lookers-on'.

Although croquet is currently enjoying a serious revival, and is played with great skill by many men and women in Britain, America, and elsewhere, the image of croquet in the arts has been a negative one since the mid-1860s.

There were other games that stimulated the intellect, like whist or billiards, but these carried the dangerous temptation to bet. Early in the game's popularity, Mayne Reid averred 'Perhaps the finest argument in favor of croquet . . . is its morality. It has no taint attached to it, and never will. It is too refined . . . ever to become a gambler's game'.



Setting the balls for the croquet shot. Wood engraving, ca. 1865, reproduced in Charlton and Thompson, opp. p104.

Other artists of the period also depicted croquet. Amongst them, Manet's 'Croquet Party' focuses on a woman about to make the croquet shot, whilst Tissot's 'Croquet', painted in 1878, shows an alluring nymphette standing facing the viewer in a pose that goes far beyond the 'graceful attitudes' recommended by early rule books. Eventually, croquet was seen as an encouragement to unhealthy competition that awakens 'the dark spirit of jealous rivalry'. Simultaneously with croquet's decline into disrepute, a new game, called Roquet, developed. The first national association was founded in 1882. The game stressed physical prowess and speed, and was frankly allied with billiards in

Continued from page 15

lawns of the Inner Temple, London, yesterday (Jan MacLeod (a top player) helped at the launch but all handicapped at 18 or below are excluded from The Observer/Lassale Croquet Classic. Schoolgirls like Charlotte Stockdale and Sarah Clempson stand a better chance of success'.

The Independent
'The sport of croquet yesterday began its most organised attempt to break free from a vicarage tea party image, at the same time fearing an indelicate transition from cucumber sandwiches to hard cash . . .

. . . the Croquet Association launched a new national contest designed to attract thousands of ordinary folk. Anyone can enter . . .

Backed by considerable business sponsorship for the first time, the CA insists croquet does not have to be played only by ladies in white crinoline or by chaps called 'Biffo'.

But there is also anxiety that alongside efforts to popularise the game, commercialism may become a spoilsport . . .

Keith Aiton, one of the six-man British team which will compete against the US in Palm Beach later this month, said yesterday . . . 'Money coming into the game has to be put to the right purpose. People are concerned that cash could go to a group of top players instead of assisting struggling clubs . . .'

UNITED STATES

Croquet In Santa Barbara

Report by Xandra Kayden (Boston Croquet Club)

The Birnam Wood Golf Club hosted its annual winter tournament in early February and I was delighted to be included in the five team round robin event, not just because the snow was falling every other day in Massachusetts.

The court itself is fabled among American players. The surface and marble boundary markings have been talked about all over the country. The Club and Santa Barbara are among the most beautiful. Of course, that's California, where you have to remind yourself to get depressed. It didn't even rain during the tournament! But what made this year different was that it marked a turning point for the popularity of the Association game in the United States.

Santa Barbara, Robert McClean who founded the Club, and Forrest Tucker, who carries it on, have provided the home of Association croquet in the United States for many years. Any number of players have gone there to learn the game, most notably the founding members of the Arizona Croquet Club, which turns out most of our best players. Now, there is a dramatic upswing in interest and an eagerness to learn it that has led to the creation of the American Croquet Association, principally devoted to structuring play for Association croquet in the United States.

But it all began in Santa Barbara and this year's tournament reflected the change. Half of the players had never competed in an Association tournament before, although all were seasoned, highly-ranked players in the United States Croquet Association. Most of us

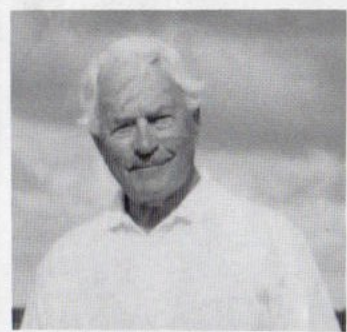
US/GB Challenge announced Countries to compete for new Solomon Trophy

A proposal to stage a regular series of matches between Great Britain and the United States for a new 'Solomon Trophy' comes to fruition in August 1988, when a US team will visit Southwick to play in the first match of the series.

It is planned to play the match over a five day period. All games in the 'Solomon Trophy' series will be played to Association rules. The format currently under consideration is 12 singles matches and nine doubles.

were as interested in learning the nuances of the game as we were in winning and talked frequently about strategy with Neil Robinson, who many will remember at Wrest Park, and who had come down from the San Francisco Bay area to referee the matches. In fact, given the uneven quality of play, I would say we were far more focused on strategy than shooting and it was not until the finals that the game itself got beyond curiosity and became exciting. I say this not just because I played that game, but because of the way it went.

Tom and Jane Lufkin, led mostly by Jane's consistently good shooting with a new 4 pound mallet, won most of the matches and were clearly the strongest team. Tremaine Arkley,



Forrest Tucker, stalwart of the Association game.

The Origins of the US Challenge

Report by Nigel Aspinall

Six years ago the United States renewed contact with its croquet playing friends over here when Jack Osborn, President of the USCA, telephoned me out of the blue and suggested a challenge match to be played under both our rules and theirs, half and half, with the battleground (and generous hospitality) to be the Palm Beach Polo & Country Club. So, reckoning that an ace British team would embarrassingly overwhelm the hosts, known to be relatively unfamiliar with our adventurous game, I responded by assembling a team of past champions - the four of us captained by John Solomon with Bernard Neal and William Ormerod, all of whom brought their wives. Despite problems with standby tickets of low priority code and an out-of-date visa, we managed to arrive at that splendid club, just fifteen miles west of the Atlantic Ocean, before play started and cruised



The Clubhouse at Birnam Wood, Santa Barbara

runner-up in doubles in the USCA nationals this year, and I were more uneven all the way through the tournament and it was not until our last game, just before the finals, that it seemed we had a chance to get to the finals. The Lufkin's ran to rover, while Tremaine and I were still for 3 and 4. But they fell into the trap American players always fear when switching games: Jane ran rover the wrong way, leaving Tremaine within five feet of their balls. He ran to 4-back, leaving a break for me, which I recklessly lost by sending a ball out of bounds after 2-back. They attacked. I hit in, but then lost the opportunity to take back the innings by hitting the peg on my take-off across court to them. The game, the tournament, and the beautifully-etched crystal ice buckets and glasses were theirs.

None of us felt we lost, however, because the tournament marked a big step forward in our sense of Association competition. I came the greatest distance, but others came from

all over the West coast to participate. Many were turned away. In fact, none of the local members played because the demand was so great, leaving those of us who did participate an incredible sense of luxury, with the warm and welcoming attention showed us by the Birnam Wood Club members who watched the games, treated us to lunch and dinner and made us feel at home. The Lufkins shared their booty with the rest and everyone went home bearing a heavy crystal glass etched with the initials of the Birnam Wood Croquet Association as a remembrance of a happy and valuable weekend in croquet. Tremaine and I carted off our second place prize of a set of four, which sit now prominently - taking up as much space as possible - in my glass cabinet in Cambridge.

Selectors pick 8 for Sonoma-Cutrer

Players from Great Britain have been given three extra places this year by the organisers of the second Sonoma-Cutrer international Invitation Event, which will be held from 25th July to 1st August.

Those selected are Keith Aiton (Nottingham), Mark Avery (Ipswich), Michael Heap (Colchester), Andrew Hope (Cheltenham), John McCullough (Bristol), Steve Mulliner (Roehampton), Martin Murray (Cheltenham) and Keith Wylie.

Last year's inaugural event was won by Steve Mulliner, who beat Neil Spooner in the final.

team to contest the US International Cup at the new headquarters of American croquet, situated at the PGA National Resort Community in North Palm Beach, which, besides being the home of the US PGA., with its four championship golf courses, has other residential and athletic attractions. Of those who are available the chosen team is David Openshaw (captain), Keith Aiton, myself, Mark Avery, Philip Cordingley, and Colin Irwin.

NEW ZEALAND

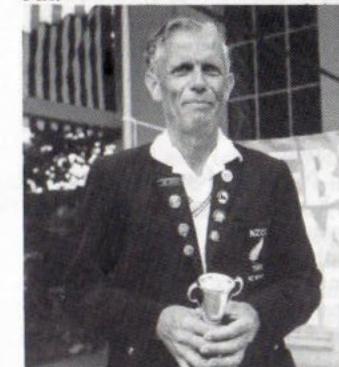
North Island Highlights

Report by Jerry Guest

New Zealand's North Island Championships commenced on 27th December at Napier and Hastings, using Australian balls (similar to 'Walker' balls). Headquarters were at Napier with six good lawns, however with the automatic sprinkler system coming on every night these lawns were always lush and heavy. The four lawns at Hastings were more challenging, being slightly more bumpy and with less grass. Hoops were not too difficult being a bit loose and perhaps slightly wide, however by finals day on the Saturday (that is to say the final stages of the Open, Mens and Womens) the hoops at Napier were reasonably firm and standard.

Bob Jackson commenced the Saturday by beating Tony Stephens in one side of the Open. The play-off between Bob Jackson and John Prince was very interesting: John Prince started by putting his ball a quarter of the way up the east boundary, Bob Jackson laid a long tice which Prince missed, Jackson then fired down the east boundary from B baulk and missed, whereupon Prince hit that corner ball and went round as far as one-back laying up near corner three for a sextuple. Jackson missed, then Prince went from hoop one to the peg doing two peels to end up on three-back and peg. Jackson had contact and went round as far as one-back with a similar sextuple lay up, Prince missed and Jackson did one peel and laid up

in the second corner when he was for four-back and two-back. Prince hit the short lift and went out.



Bob Jackson.

Bob Jackson's third game of the day, against Basil Sutherland in the Mens, saw him go round as far as hoop 5 and lay up for an octuple peel. Red and yellow were cross wired at hoop 3, blue in the jaws of 5 and black two feet away in the direction of hoop 4. Red fired at black, missed and went down to the middle of A baulk. Jackson rush peeled blue through 5, failed to peel it through 6, made hoop 1, peeled hoop 6, made hoop 2, failed to peel 1-back, made hoop 3, peeled 1-back, made hoop 4, failed to peel 2-back, made hoop 5, rushed his blue back up to 6 and made it, sent blue back down to 2-back, made 1-back, then a **straight quintuple** which included a jump at 4-back. Is this the first octuple completed in a major tournament?

Bob Jackson's fourth game of the day, against Tony Stephens in the Mens, saw another octuple lay-up with black and blue cross wired at hoop 3, red in the jaws of hoop 5 and yellow about four feet towards hoop 1. Tony

Bowdon's members get around!



(Left) Club President, Judge Gerrard, inspects the croquet lawn at the British Club in Tenerife. (Below) Mr and Mrs Rupert Webb playing a game of croquet at the Umaid Bbawar Palace Hotel, Jodhpur, during a recent holiday in India.



Stephens jumped black over hoop 3 and his other ball and ended up in the middle of B baulk. Bob Jackson rush peeled hoop 5, made hoop 1, peeled hoop 6, made hoop 2, made hoop 3, peeled 1-back, made hoop 4, made hoop 5, made hoop 6, peeled 2-back, made 1-back, failed to peel 3-back, made 2-back, Irish peeled 3-back at an angle, peeled 4-back, made 4-back, peeled into the jaws of penultimate, jumped through penultimate, rush peeled through penultimate to northwest of the peg, 7-yard peel of rover, peg out to complete his second consecutive octuple.

Bob Jackson's fifth game of the day saw the now-familiar octuple lay up. We thought this was to be the de-luxe version when he peeled hoops 5 and 6 before going down to hoop 1, but all did not go smoothly and it was a case of having to attempt another straight quintuple. The 4-back peel failed, so he had to make the remaining peels in arrears, completing the 8 peels but only pegging out one ball. Keith Woolatt, with a contact, completed one 3-ball break before Bob Jackson hit the peg

with his other ball.

An exciting day in a championship which saw 30 triples (9 by Tony Stephens), 2 quadruples and the 2 octuples.

World first in croquet?

NAPIER (PA) - An octuple peel by top Auckland croquet player Bob Jackson at Marewa on Saturday is believed to be the first recorded in the world.

During the North Island open final, Jackson achieved the feat which is thought to be unprecedented in the game. Playing against Hawke's Bay's John Prince, Jackson put his opponent's ball through eight consecutive hoops in one break.

A triple peel, putting the ball through three consecutive hoops, is considered a difficult feat but no player at the championships could remember hearing of an octuple peel being done.

Incredibly, Prince recovered from the display from Jackson to beat his rival 26-16 to take the title.

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HOOP APPROACHES

By Andrew Bennet (Southport)

Why do many players refer to hoop approaches as if they were a special sort of shot? They are simply croquet strokes played at (one hopes) a short distance.

I suppose it is because many beginners get used to their rush going to the wrong place, so the next stroke is the infamous 'scoop to the hoop', landing both balls in the vicinity of the hoop so that the continuation stroke can be used to place the striker's ball for a bisque if position is not obtained. This 'scoop' is a bend-down-and-shove shot which is always unsightly, often inaccurate and illegal.

As their game improves, some fail to apply their wider range of croquet strokes to hoop approaches, using only take-offs and rolls. Even a former holder of the Ladies' Field Cup admits to this limitation.

It is useful (and infuriating to your A-class opponent) to be able to approach from a long distance, especially with an opponent ball, so that you can retire to safety if necessary, leaving him by your hoop. However, the hoop approach should normally be a short drive or stop-shot from the playing side. Practise from three or four feet away so that your ball stops one foot in front of the hoop

and the croqueted ball three or four feet behind it. Start from almost directly in front of the hoop, then as you improve try from wider angles and greater distances.

Next, practise approaches from the side of the hoop. This stroke will never be a roll because of the wide angle of split, so adopt an upright stance and be sure to send the croqueted ball to a position well behind the hoop. This is excellent practice for splitting the angle. If you want the striker's ball to go further than the croqueted ball, play a thick or thin take-off.

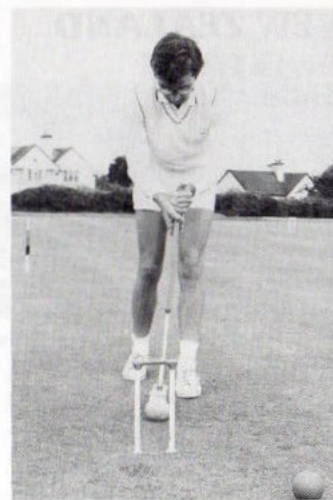
Now think about the position of the croqueted ball when you approach a hoop in a textbook four-ball break. To make the next pioneering split as straightforward as possible, you need to have decided previously about the rush you will need after running the hoop. For example, you have just run third hoop and a ball is waiting at fourth. Your pivot is by the peg. If you have a rush to the peg, the next four hoops should be possible without a bisque. If you realise too late that your rush is pointing to third corner, second corner or one of those uncharted parts of the lawn that the coach never told you

about, you will probably need at least two bisques before the next hoop is made. So, when you approach a hoop, the croqueted ball needs to be carefully placed, often much further away than you think. If you want evidence of this, try approaching first hoop and running it for a rush to second.

Not only does the croqueted ball need to be placed further away, it needs also to be further to the side than the long-bisquer imagines. For an illustration, approach second hoop and run it for a rush to third. You will find that it is better to abandon the idea of a dolly rush to nowhere in favour of a longer rush which stands a chance of arriving near hoop 3.

Some top players approach hoop 2, on a fast lawn, with a stop-shot which leaves the croqueted ball one or two feet away from the yard-line, so that they can boost through to the boundary and be sure of a useful rush into the court. The same applies to hoops 4, 2-back and 4-back.

Sometimes you need to place the croqueted ball to the side of the hoop in the direction opposite to that of the next hoop. After hoop 4, for example, you might need to pick up a ball you left near hoop 3 (whether to revive a four-ball break or condemn it by attempting a triple peel. Having



David Openshaw makes Rover with a rush to the East boundary to pick up his partner ball for the peg-out.

run hoop 4, therefore, you need a rush not to hoop 5 but back to the third corner. And after sixth hoop, if your pivot is by the peg, you have a much better chance of an easy split shot if your pilot ball is to the right of the hoop, even though your instinct tells you otherwise because 'one-back is the next hoop'. Two-back is in my experience the hoop where breakdowns occur most often, usually because of inadequate placing of the pilot ball at hoops 4, 5 and 6.

The lesson is 'THINK BEFORE YOU STOOP OR SCOOP'!

probably the most difficult but the ball positions at the end of that stroke are not critical - Black just needs to be somewhere in the middle of the court and Red just far enough into the court that it doesn't have to oblique an angle when shooting off the yardline behind Blue.

Summary

Rush Yellow just North of hoop 4 and take off to Blue. Roquet Blue and play a thin take-off to Black, just nudging Blue a couple of feet into the court. Roquet Black and play a straight half-roll, sending Black a couple of yards South East of the peg. In the continuation stroke hit Red off the boundary behind Blue and take a bisque. Rush Blue halfway to Yellow's new position and stop-shot Blue to hoop 5, sending Red as close as possible to Yellow.

secret of this play. Play a thin take-off from Blue to Black, just nudging Blue a couple of feet into the court. Roquet Black and play a straight half-roll, sending it to the pivot position with Red ending up well into the court. You can now make use of your readjustment of Blue's position by, in the continuation stroke, shooting Red off the court so that, when replaced on the yardline, you have a rush towards hoop 4. Take your bisque and rush Blue halfway to Yellow and then stop-shot it to hoop 5, ending up as close as possible to Yellow. Wherever possible you should arrange to dispatch pioneers with stop-shots, so that the striker's ball never has far to travel and there is little chance that it ends up out of range of the ball it is being sent to.

Once again I have tried to find a way of constructing a break that doesn't involve any difficult strokes. Can you say the same about your solution, if it is different? The half-roll is

CANNONS FOR BEGINNERS

Part 4. Two Fourth Corner Cannons

By Allen Parker (Parkstone)

Of the cannons to make each of the eight corner hoops from their respective corners, six were described in Part 2 of this series (See 'Six Cannons for the Price of One', Issue No. 186 July, 1986). The remaining two corner hoops, viz. Hoop 4 from Corner 4, and Hoop 4-back from Corner 3, may both be made using the first of the two cannons to be described here, i.e. the 'Halfpenny Cannon'. The other cannon to be dealt with in this article, the 'Twopenny Cannon', is more difficult, and is used to make Hoop 1 from Corner 4.

The Halfpenny Cannon

In the six corner cannons previously described, the croqueted ball is sent to the next hoop but one, and the rushed ball is sent to the next hoop. In the cannon to make Hoop 4 from Corner 4 the reverse is the case. The placement of the balls for this cannon is shown in Figure 1, in which the striker's ball is marked 's', the croqueted ball 'c', and the rushed ball 'r'. The balls are shown greatly enlarged relative to the size of the hoop and the dimensions of the corner of the court, in order to indicate the details of the placement. The balls 's' and 'r' are adjusted as though to rush 'r' to a point about 2 yards to the right of Hoop 4, with the gap between 'r' and 's' equal to 10 mm (3/8"), i.e. equal to one half of the diameter of a new penny. The size of the gap is important, and a penny should be used in practice to get this right. (In a game the gap must be estimated by ocular test alone, as the laws do not allow the use of measuring aids). If the gap has been adjusted correctly, it will be found that the line between the centres of balls 's' and 'c' will point slightly into court, say at a point about 3 yards up the West Boundary.

The shot is played directly at ball 'r' with a drive (flat mallet), hard enough to send ball 'r' to just

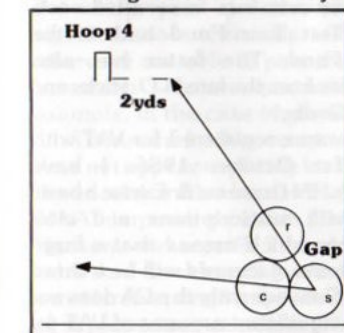


Fig.1. The Halfpenny Cannon (Not to Scale). The Gap is Half the Diameter of a New Penny.

beyond and to the right of Hoop 4. The croqueted ball 'c' will then end up near the yard line behind Hoop 4. The striker's ball 's' is now in hand and takes croquet from Ball 'r' (See Figure 2) with a little stop shot that sends ball 'r' towards Hoop 5 and takes position in front of Hoop 4. The striker then runs the hoop firmly to ball 'c' and has a 3-ball break. The difficult shot for the beginner is the stop shot hoop approach. It is difficult because it is not

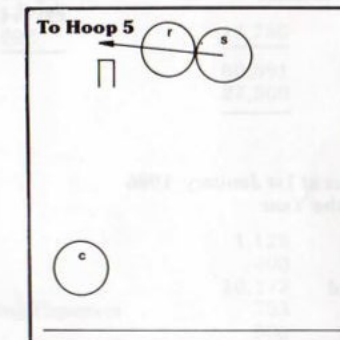


Fig.2. Positions of Balls after Halfpenny Cannon (Not to Scale).

normally practised. Thus if you want to use this cannon in earnest, you must practise not only the cannon itself, but the stop shot approach from various positions to the right of Hoop 4.

The application of the Halfpenny Cannon to make Hoop 4-Back from Corner 3 needs little further explanation. The rushed ball is now directed 2 yards to the LEFT of 4-Back and, with gap adjusted, the croqueted ball will point a little way down from Corner 2. After playing the cannon shot, Hoop 4-Back is approached with a little stop shot sending ball 'r' towards Penult, and the hoop run firmly on to ball 'c'.

The Twopenny Cannon

This is more difficult and should not be attempted on a heavy lawn. Like the Halfpenny Cannon it is a derivative of the wafer cannon (See Issue No. 184, March, 1986) but in this case the wafer is very fat, say a wafer ice cream 25 mm (1 inch) thick, i.e. the diameter of a two pence piece. The object is to croquet one ball to Hoop 2 and rush the other to Hoop 1, thus getting a 3-ball break from Corner 4. Cannons from Corner 4 at the beginning of the game arise fairly frequently, and although difficult, this cannon is worth perfecting. The ball placement is shown in Figure 3. The croqueted ball is aimed at a point between Hoops

2 and 6, and the gap adjusted to equal the diameter of a two pence piece. The line between the striker's ball 's' and the rushed ball 'r' will now be found to be directed to 2-3 yards South of Hoop 1. The stroke should be played as a hard drive aimed directly at Hoop 1. On a fast lawn it is possible to get ball 's' near to Hoop 1 and ball 'c' near to Hoop 2 with the possibility of a 3-ball

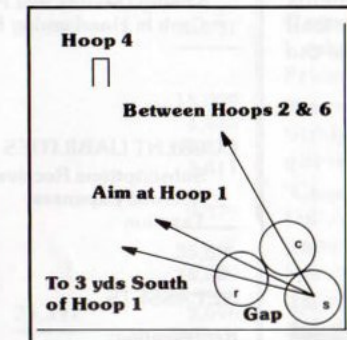


Fig.3. The Twopenny Cannon (Not to Scale). The Gap is the Diameter of a Two Penny Piece. This cannon really does need practising and unless you have an enormously heavy mallet and great strength, it does need a reasonably fast lawn. On any other lawn you must be

content with the standard wafer cannon, in which the gap is made wafer-thin (say 2 mm). If the ball is then rushed hard enough to reach Hoop 1, the croqueted ball will end up somewhere near Hoop 4 and can be picked up after making Hoop 1, or later, depending on the position on the court of the fourth ball.

As with all shots, practice makes perfect, and this applies particularly to the two cannons described in this article. It can be fun practising them, and you may find that the Halfpenny Cannon is not so difficult as you at first thought.

The East Pennines League

The East Pennines League will be sponsored in 1987 by Statos Stationers. Mr Oswald's company is North Tyneside's largest commercial stationers, and their generous support has enabled the League to produce a high-quality croquet leaflet for the clubs in the North East.

1986 - Final League Table:

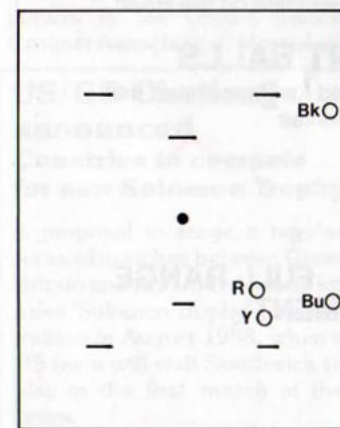
	P	W	L	D	Pts	Pos
Tyneside	4	3	0	1	7	1=
Durham U. A	4	3	0	1	7	1=
East Riding	4	2	0	0	4	3
Durham U. B	4	1	3	0	2	4
Teesside	4	0	4	0	0	5

BREAK-BUILDER (BB) No 3 (see page 25, Issue No 190)

By John McCullough (Bristol)

The Question

You wish to play with Red, which is for hoop 4. You are prepared to set up a break using one bisque. What sequence of shots should you play to set up the break?



The suggested play

The first temptation you should avoid is to make hoop 4 off Yellow before trying to set up the break. If you have a good pioneer at a hoop and you intend to use a bisque, always try and set up the

break before making the hoop.

The second temptation you should avoid is to take the 7-yard shot, Red at Blue. If Black were in corner 2 this would be the obvious play but here there is a better play. You might be lucky and hit Blue and thus, by croqueting it to hoop 5, sending Red back North of Yellow, be able to set up a three-ball break. It is wiser, however, to invest a bisque for a certain four-ball break rather than risking a bisque for a three-ball break that will only cost you more bisques in the long run.

First form your mental picture of where you want the three balls, other than the striker's ball. Here you want one ball close to hoop 4, a good pioneer at hoop 5 and a pivot ball midway between hoops 4 and 6, a couple of yards South East of the peg.

Start by rushing Yellow to a perfect position, a couple of feet North of hoop 4. Take off to Blue and roquet it. Now comes the

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 1987 President's Cup.

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1986 Accounts

The Treasurer's Commentary on the 1986 Accounts

Subscription income has increased by 15% reflecting the increase of about 200 in the number of Associates; Registration fees have increased by 36%, largely as a result of the increase in the number of registered clubs. These are healthy and encouraging signs.

Income from entries to CA Tournaments (£4300) exceeded expenditure on Lawn & Ball Hire etc by a sufficient amount to enable the



Alan Oldham

CA to purchase a stock of new balls for major tournaments and still show a significant surplus (£936).

Comparison of the principal expenses in 1986 with those for 1985 shows that Council, through the Development Officer, has fully carried out its intention, to which I referred last year, to utilise last year's surplus in developing the Forward Plan. Thirteen Clubs and six Federations received grants and awards during the year; the coaching committee has acquired a valuable stock of training equipment; and it was possible, with the assistance of £6000 sponsorship from Westwood Engineering, to devote over £8000 to staging the 1986 MacRobertson Shield Series, including hosting of the visiting teams in a proper manner. There has been greatly increased expenditure on our publications but they now stand comparison with those of other sports and are an important factor in attracting sponsorship and advertising and increasing awareness of Croquet amongst the general public. Although the results achieved justify the level of cost now reached, it is not expected that any further increase in that level will take place – other than that necessitated by inflation.

The CA has acquired a long lease of land at Kingston-upon-Thames at a current rent of £400 per annum and has sub-let it to the Surbiton Club.

The structure of the CA's premises has been improved by our landlords, the Hurlingham Club, and we are most grateful to them for this. The office has been redecorated (£720) and new chairs purchased for use at committee meetings.

Sponsorship was received during the year from Anchor Foods (Inter-Counties Championship), Debenham Tewson & Chinnocks (Open Championships), Westwood Engineering (MacRobertson Series), Bombay Gin (President's Cup), Greene King (East Anglian Croquet) and the Royal Bank of Scotland

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS AS AT 31st DECEMBER 1986

	1985	1986
FIXED ASSETS		
Office Furniture and Equipment at Written Down Value	620	300
Trophies, estimated to realise	10,000	10,000
Investments, as per attached schedule	37,119	38,300
	47,739	48,600
CURRENT ASSETS		
Stocks of Literature and Equipment	1,900	2,500
Loans to Member Clubs	2,750	750
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments	1,814	2,862
Cash in Hand and at Bank	3,897	8,217
	10,361	14,329
	58,100	62,929
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Subscriptions Received in Advance	2,481	1,969
Accrued Expenses	11,954	9,395
Taxation	589	293
	15,024	11,657
NET ASSETS	£43,076	£51,272
Representing:		
Accumulated General Funds as at 1st January 1986	34,362	21,250
Less: Deficit (Surplus) for the Year	11,372	13,112
	22,990	34,362
Life Membership Fund	1,640	1,710
Apps-Heley Memorial Fund	216	216
Test Tour Fund	2,879	2,197
Benefactors Fund	12,832	10,518
Tournaments and Trophies Fund	2,519	2,269
	£43,076	£51,272

Signed: A.B. HOPE, Chairman of Council
A.J. OLDHAM, Hon. Treasurer.

INVESTMENTS HELD AT 31ST DECEMBER 1986

Nominal Value £		Market Value £
18,817.92	QUOTED INVESTMENTS 10% Treasury Stock 1990	20,000
10.00	UNQUOTED INVESTMENTS Roehampton Country Club Nationwide National Building Society	10 17,109
		£37,119

(general support). The figure shown in the Accounts is net of directly related expenses for the Inter-Counties and the events in East Anglia.

Although the overall surplus of income over expenditure (£13,112 in 1985) has been replaced by a deficit of £11,372, this is in accordance with the expressed intention of Council to spend heavily in 1986 on Publicity and Development as described earlier.

The Association's investment in Treasury Stock produces a net income of 6.7% per annum. During 1986 the money kept with Building Societies has all been transferred to a Treasurer's Account with the Nationwide Building Society where it has earned a time-weighted rate of return of 7.9% net of tax. This is a considerable improvement on the rate earned previously. The Association also uses a Deposit High Interest Bank Account with Robert Fleming & Co Ltd (with chequebook facility) so earning interest (credited gross) at 'money market' rates which more than offset the bank charges which we unfortunately have to pay on our ordinary account with the Midland Bank. Any Club Treasurer who would

like to have more details of these advantageous forms of account is invited to write to me.

Associates will, I hope, note that the CA has also invested a part of its funds in Loans to Clubs. Three Clubs have so far taken advantage of the facility, of which details were given in 'Croquet' No 185, and £2750 has been lent.

A part of the interest earnings from the Association's investments is credited each year to the Test Tour Fund and to the Benefactors' Fund. The latter has also received legacies from the late H.O. Hicks and the late R.A. Godby.

The CA became registered for VAT with effect from 1st October 1986. I have negotiated with HM Customs & Excise a basis for dealing with subscriptions and club registration fees which means that a large part of these items of income will be treated as zero-rated. Consequently the CA does not have to pay a significant amount of VAT on them. This tax has, however, affected a number of other items in the 1986 Accounts, viz. Levies, Tributes, Sales (other than of

1986 Accounts

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 1986

	1985	1986
INCOME		
Subscriptions	12,290	10,657
Registration Fees	1,485	1,095
Levy	2,564	2,527
Tribute	20	63
Sale of Books, Laws etc. (net)	3,281	4,408
Advertisements in Publications	1,645	1,340
Surplus on Tournaments	936	1,051
Investment Income on General Funds (net of tax)	2,040	2,090
	24,261	23,231
EXPENSES		
Development Officers' Fees	20,265	18,000
Grants to Clubs and Federations	7,612	3,455
Coaching	2,262	1,251
General Publicity and Development Publications, Magazine, Fixtures Book and Directory	13,772	3,611
	16,780	9,379
	60,691	35,696
Less: Sports Council Grant	27,300	26,000
	33,391	9,696
	(9,130)	13,535
GENERAL OVERHEADS		
Office Rent	1,125	1,125
Rent of Land	400	-
Staff Salaries	10,172	8,137
Council and Committee Travelling Expenses	753	806
Postage and Telephone	906	1,214
Printing and Stationery	1,478	1,286
Insurance	405	338
Sundry Expenses	1,185	938
Audit and Accountancy Charges	1,050	575
Maintenance of Office, Furniture and Equipment	998	190
	18,472	14,609
DEFICIT ON ACTIVITIES	27,602	1,074
EXTRAORDINARY ITEMS		
Sponsorship (net)	16,082	14,186
Surplus on Sale of Investments (net of tax)	148	-
	16,230	14,186
DEFICIT (SURPLUS) FOR THE YEAR	£11,372	£13,112

We have examined the books, vouchers and other records maintained by The Croquet Association for the year ended 31st December 1986 and obtained such further information as considered necessary. To the best of our knowledge and belief the Accounts give a true and fair view of the State of Affairs of the Association at 31st December 1986 and of the Deficit for the year ended on that date.

Alhambra House, 27 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0AU
2nd March 1987

NICHOLASS, AMES & CO.
Chartered Accountants.

literature) and Sponsorship, and after allowing for tax recoverable on various items of expenditure it has, in effect, cost the CA £286 in 1986. All these sources of income will, of course, be affected to a much greater extent in 1987 because the tax will be operating for the whole year and the result will be a significant loss of revenue to the CA, except where we are able to pass the tax on to the 'consumer' – as we expect to be able to do, for example, in the case of sponsorship.

There is a further cost to the CA, which does not appear explicitly in the Accounts, in the administrative burden that the collection of VAT imposes on Brian Macmillan, Chris Hudson, and myself. The additional paperwork and bookkeeping which it creates is considerable, despite the alleviation in respect of subscriptions mentioned in the previous paragraph, and it is therefore very disappointing that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has not been prepared either to

exempt non-profit making sporting associations or to raise the threshold of VAT substantially above the current limit of £21,300 per annum turnover.

The budget for 1987 has already been approved by Council. It maintains the momentum of the publicity and development programmes in the Forward Plan so as not to nullify the considerable gains that have already been achieved and consequently there may be a need to commit a further part of the Association's financial reserves to this task. Even on a pessimistic view of this year's income and expenditure, however, the deficit should not exceed £6000 and the resources of the CA are amply strong enough to withstand such a strain. Moreover, with the development schemes bearing fruit in the form of increased membership, and if a substantially higher income from Levies is forthcoming in 1988 and subsequent years, we can confidently expect to reach financial self-sufficiency in

Publications

1987 PRICE LIST

Publications available from the Croquet Association.

(Prices to non-members in brackets).

Laws & Regulations.
The full Laws of Association and Golf Croquet, and the Regulations for tournament play. Price: £2.00 (£2.00). P&p 18p.

Basic Laws.
Gives all the Laws necessary for beginners. Price: 50p (£1.00). P&p 18p.

Commentary on Laws by Col. Prichard. Explains and amplifies the Laws. Price: £2.00 (£3.00). P&p 26p.

'Know the Game: Croquet'. Straightforward guidance on how to play the game. Price: £1.25 (£1.50). P&p 26p.

'Croquet' by John Solomon. Fully comprehensive book on all aspects of the game. Reprinted in 1983 by public demand. Price: £5.00 (£8.00). P&p £1.20.

'History of Croquet' by Col Prichard. A well illustrated, complete, and interesting book on the history of the game. Price: £6.00 (£8.95). P&p £1.20.

Twelve Hints for Beginners.

A useful booklet for beginners. Price: 60p (£1.00). P&p 18p.

CA Coaching Handbook.

As well as giving suggested coaching programmes for players at all levels, this 50-page booklet covers recruitment, practice routines, tips for improving play, and the rules of alternative croquet games. A mine of information, gleaned from many players and clubs over the years and a 'must' for club coaches. Price: £5.00 (£6.00). P&p 50p.

Coaching Video.

Seven coaching film strips and commentary available together on one Video film (VHS or Beta), complete with book containing details of each slide and commentary. Total running time approx 105 minutes. Price: £20.00 (£30.00). P&p 64p for film and book together. Please indicate type of film required when ordering.

Other items

CA Brooches
£2.30 (incl VAT). P&p 18p. Total £2.48.

CA Ties
£8.05 (incl VAT). P&p 18p. Total £8.23.

Please send your orders with the appropriate remittance to: The Administration Secretary, The Croquet Association, The Hurlingham Club, Ranelagh Gardens, London SW6 3PR. Tel: 01-736-3148.

terms of ordinary expenditure and income within a year or two.

A.J. Oldham.
19th March 1987

Official Business

New Clubs Registered

Welcome to . . .

Bedford Modern School
Manton Lane, Bedford. Secretary: Andrew Wilson. Tel: 0234-55517.

Colchester Royal Grammar School
Secretary: Jonathan Collis. Tel: 0206-578735.

Dulwich College
London, SE21 7LD. Secretary: Andy Archibald. Tel: 01-778-0129.

Farnham College
Morley Road, Farnham, Surrey. Secretary: Ted Vidler. Tel: 0252-727323.

Fettes College
Carrington Road, Edinburgh. Secretary: David Orchard. Tel: 031-343-1623.

Noadwood Comprehensive School
Dibden Purlieu, Southampton. Secretary: Geoffrey Hawkes. Tel: 0703-840025.

Rottingdean Croquet Club
Secretary: Mrs J. Leech, 80 Eley Drive, Rottingdean, E. Sussex, EN2 7PG. Tel: 0273-33222

Settle High School
Settle, N. Yorks. Secretary: Roger Attwood. Tel: 07292-2451.

Taunton Junior School
Staplegrove Road, Taunton, Somerset. Secretary: A.D. Wood. Tel: 0823-73804.

Verdin Comprehensive School
High Street, Winsford, Cheshire. Secretary: Helen Roberts. Tel: 0606-592300.

Changes in Club Officials

NEW SECRETARIES:

Dyffryn C.C.
J.E. Grimshaw, 60 Coleridge Ave, Penarth, S. Glamorgan. Tel: 0222-709266.

Edgbaston C.C.
A.J. Girling, 41 Copper Beach Close, Harbourne, Birmingham B32 2HJ. Tel: 021-427-8302.

Edinburgh C.C.
F. Mann, 13 Park Place, Dunfermline, Fife, KY12 7QL. Tel: 0383-722368.

Carrickmines C.C.
Padraig Thornton, Bellemer, 1 Coliomore Villas, Dalkey, Co. Dublin, Eire.

Havering C.C.
Mrs V.R. Carter, 88 Guysfield Drive, Rainham, Essex, RM13 7AL. Tel: 04027-54771.

Hellidon C.C.
Mrs C.A. Russell, 2 Home Close, Staverton, Daventry, Northants. Tel: 0327-705860.

Nailsea C.C.
P. Dyke, 23 Broom Farm Close, Nailsea Bristol, BS19 2YG.

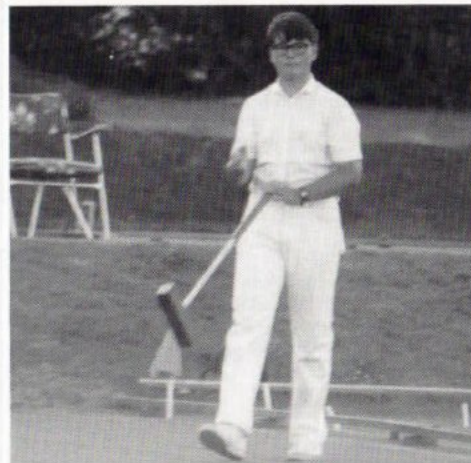
Preston Lawns C.C.
P.R. Henning, 27 Harrington Road, Brighton, BR1 6RJ.

Surbiton C.C.
Miss D. Wright, Byron Court, Parkleys, Ham, Richmond, Surrey. Tel: 01-546-0541.

Sussex County L.T. & C.C.
L. Wharrad, Astor Cottage, Ivy Lane, Ashington, Sussex. Tel: 0903-892897

NEW ADDRESS

Harrogate C.C.
Secretary: Ian Fleming, 65 Cawthorn Avenue,



Chris Clarke, winner of the Apps Trophy.

THE 'MOST PROGRESSIVE' CLUB

Congratulations to PENDLE CROQUET CLUB on winning the Apps-Heley Award for the most progressive club.

Five clubs were nominated for this award and details of their individual achievements will be given in later issues.

Council has accepted Mr C.P. Townsend's offer to present a new annual Development Award for 'The Club under 3 years old which had made the most progress', to be awarded for the first time in 1988.

Harrogate, Yorks. Tel: 0423-883186.

CHANGE OF NAME

Newark C.C. has been renamed Southwell C.C.

New Associates

Mrs E. Hoar	Bath
R.C. Danby	Bear of Rodborough
Mrs J. Hardy	Bracknell
Mrs A.P. Sammons	Bristol
R.M. Peacock	Bury St Edmunds
J.D. Hawkins	Cambridge Univ.
Susan J. Young	Caterham
A. Potter	Cheltenham
C.G. Bennett	Edgbaston
R.T. Platon	Harwell
Dr H.J. Elverson	Hurlingham
F.W. Prescott	Hurlingham
H.A. Albrecht	Nottingham
A. Grimbaldeston	Queen Elizabeth's GS
Mrs M. Fiello	Ramsgate
I.P.F. Morgan	Ramsgate
R.A. Munro	Ramsgate
C.P. Diver	Roehampton
Mrs J.S. Diver	Roehampton
Mrs R.S. Wilby	Roehampton
M. Burgess	South Shropshire
L.E. Toye	Sidmouth
R.S. Howells	Southwell
W. Sanders	Teesside
Mrs W. Sanders	Teesside
W.P. Trafford	Walsall
Mrs B.C. Day	Wellington
Mrs E.M. Sutton	Wellington
Mrs M.F. Forrest-Marshall	Worthing
Mrs G. Wiggins	Worthing
P.J. Duquemin	
Mrs C. Simpson	
Lt-Cdr B.D. Woodgate	
(RN Ret'd)	
M.R. Williams	Australia
T. Woodford-Smith	Australia
Miss R.P. McCormick	South Africa
(Total: 36)	

MISSING MEMBERS

The following have 'gone missing'. Please

C.A. AWARDS

THE 'MOST-IMPROVED' PLAYER

The Apps Trophy for the most-improved man has been awarded to Chris Clarke of Southport.

The Steel Bowl for the most-improved lady has been won by Debbie Cornelius (Colchester).

Congratulations to both of them on the wonderful progress they have made this season.



Debbie Cornelius, who won the Steel Bowl.

advise Brian Macmillan of their whereabouts if known:

D.P. Turner	Hunstanton
Hilary Shuff	Crawley
D.L. Gunasekera	Holland
A.G. Darby	Portslade

Deaths

Regretfully, we have to report the deaths of the following members:

Dr R.W. McNabb	Mr A.C. Mason
Mr H. Thake	Mrs V. Worsley
Mrs L. Wharrad	

1987 SUBSCRIPTIONS

There are still some subscriptions for 1987 outstanding. Please help Brian Macmillan by paying them as soon as possible.

Current subscription rates are:	
Full membership	£14.00
Reduced membership	£ 7.50
Junior membership	£ 7.50
(under 21 on 1/1/87)	
Overseas	£20.00
(covers 3 years)	

This will be the last issue of 'Croquet' to be sent to those whose subscriptions remain unpaid by 1st June. But you can avoid being cut-off by sending your subscription NOW.

HELP US TO HELP YOU!

Handicap alterations

Southwick Club	
F.A. Beard	8 to 7½
Mrs H. Coombs	5 to 4½
N. Cox	4 to 3
P. Emery	7 to 6
Mrs S. French	12 to 11
Mr R. Smith	6½ to 5½
Mrs E. Staddon	7 to 8

Development in the South West in 1986

Report by John McCullough

The **Glastonbury** club, although a member of the Federation, started playing late in the year because permission to use its site was withdrawn prior to the start of the season. Happily the club's efforts to find a new site were rewarded in August and they are using part of the cricket outfield at the Morlands Sports centre, between Street and Glastonbury. The club at **Millfield School** has been promised a new, flat, full-size lawn in 1987, replacing the rough patch on which they started, and Croquet is being recognised as an official Summer sport of the school. **Swindon** have been so successful in their inaugural year that they are already making plans for a second lawn. **Wellington** are hoping to get extra space for another lawn at Nynehead Court or nearby.

Possibilities exist for new clubs in the coming season at **Dorchester** (at the College of Agriculture) and **Winscombe** (Avon) and we are still hoping, despite setbacks for two years running, to launch a big new club at **Plymouth**.

The **Dyffryn** club is thriving and we have since heard of Croquet being played at **Bridgend** and **Penarth**, with interest in a club at **Usk**.

The Croquet Association has formed a Welsh Croquet Association. Meanwhile we, as their neighbours, have promised to help with development in South Wales and the Publicity and Development Committee of the CA has given us a grant for this purpose.

By September last year, the following 27 clubs were paid-up members of the Federation: Badminton School, Bath, Bear of Rodborough (nr Stroud), Bournemouth, Bristol, Budleigh Salterton, Burmah Oil (Swindon), Cirencester, Cheltenham, Cranford (Exmouth), Dyffryn (Cardiff), Exeter, Glastonbury, House of Fraser (Swindon), Kington Langley (nr Chippenham), Lansdown (Bath), Millfield School, Nailsea, Parkstone (Bristol), Sidmouth, Stonehouse (Plymouth), Swindon, Taunton, Tracy Park (nr Bath), Wellington, Wells Priory, and Worcester.



Nailsea won both South West Federation League titles last year. Pictured, left to right, is the team that won the 'B' league: David Thatcher, Tony Brown, Veda Mann, Brian Thatcher and Alex Leggate

Puzzle Corner

Legal Department, by Carlmax von Schmieder

Imagine three 'hypothetical' cases, tournament matches, advanced singles:

1. Player A finishes his turn. His opponent B does not turn up for several minutes. A finds B in casual conversation in the clubhouse. The same thing happens repeatedly.
2. Player A is on what looks to become his final winning turn. He has just made 4-back, all that is left to do is Penult, Rover and the peg-out with all the balls in prime position. B, his opponent, at this point picks up his mallet plus the rest of his belongings and disappears towards the clubhouse, which is well out of sight. After a moment's hesitation A finishes the game without B showing up again.
3. Player A seems well in control of the match. It's the last day of the tournament and the adjoining court is free. Suddenly while A is going round, his opponent B starts to play in a friendly game next door.

West Midlands League, 1986

Report by Nancy Lenfestey

There were two Divisions, 1 and 2, in the West Midlands League for 1986, as in previous years. The second Division is restricted to players of handicap 8 or above, and provides valuable match experience for the newer clubs and players, as well as for the more established players who rarely have the opportunity to play in the Senior Division.

There were five clubs entered for Division 1, so that it was possible for each to play the other four both 'home' and 'away'. During the first half of the season, Wolverhampton and Edgbaston were neck and neck, each with 3 matches won out of 4 and each with 8 games won out of 12. During the second half, Edgbaston consolidated their position by winning all four remaining matches, perhaps aided by the greater availability of their better-class players, whilst Wolverhampton suffered the other way and only added one more match to their tally of wins, though still holding second place ahead of Stourbridge on their better score of games won.

Division 2 started with 10 entries (reduced to 8 before the season's play started), and so it was only possible for each team to play the rest once in the 1986 season, generally with 'home' and 'away' fixtures between any two teams alternating from year to year. School teams were entered from Ludlow College and Bishop Vesey's Grammar School, as well as teams from Shrewsbury and Shropshire to join the 4 older clubs in this Division. Early in the season, Ludlow had problems in assembling a team, and so conceded a match to Edgbaston A. This was to cost them dear, as it deprived them of the possibility of making a clean sweep and winning the Division 2 title for 1986. As it was, they tied with Edgbaston A on 6 wins out of 7 matches, but came behind them into second place on their lower games score.

Congratulations to Edgbaston upon winning both Divisions in 1986 - and may the coming season's matches be as keenly contested.

By the time A has finished his turn B has played several turns. (B did not ask the manager or A for permission).

What, if any action in the three cases is justified by:

- a. Player A
- b. The Manager

RESULTS

Division 1

(Teams of 4 players. First singles, Advanced Play. Second singles, Handicap Play, unless agreed otherwise. Handicap Doubles.)

1. **Edgbaston:** Matches W7; Games W17, L7. Points 14
2. **Wolverhampton:** Matches W4; Games W13, L11. Points 8.
3. **Stourbridge:** Matches W4; Games W11, L13. Points 8
4. **Walsall:** Matches W3; Games W12, L12. Points 6
5. **Ludlow:** Matches W2; Games W7, L17. Points 4.

Division 2

(H'caps 8 or over. Teams of 3 players. Three handicap singles, based on order of handicap in each team.)

1. **Edgbaston A:** Matches W6; Games W16, L5. Points 12.
2. **Ludlow:** Matches W6; Games W12, L9. Points 12.
3. **Stourbridge:** Matches W5; Games W16, L5. Points 10.
4. **Bishop Vesey's:** Matches W4; Games W13, L8. Points 8.
5. **Shrewsbury:** Matches W3; Games W11, L10. Points 6.
6. **South Shropshire:** Matches W2; Games W5, L16. Points 4.
7. **Wolverhampton:** Matches W1½; Games W6½, L14½. Points 3.
8. **Edgbaston B:** Matches W½; Games W4½, L16½. Points 1.

ADVERTISING IN 'CROQUET'

Every page of advertising we obtain for 'Croquet' enables us to publish an additional page of text. So, with the number of tournaments increasing, additional feature articles becoming available, and a whole host of other items we would like to cover, we are trying to increase the amount of advertising carried by the magazine.

We have to be realistic and recognise that with a relatively small circulation, we shall only be of interest to advertisers who have a product relevant to the croquet fraternity. However, if you can help us obtain more advertising, for example by recommending the magazine to a potential advertiser, or by using it to advertise the products of your own company, please contact Brian Bucknall (Tel: 0491-681746) to obtain an advertiser's leaflet and details of our advertising rates.

c. Player A being also the manager?

If, in case 3, Reg.12 (j) (iii) (disqualification for practice without the manager's permission) applies, please consider the case also, as if B did have the manager's permission.

Regional News (1)