

Editorial

SUMMER REVIEW

This issue contains much thoughtful comment on the way croquet is developing and views on how we should proceed in future. All this is most opportune, because we are preparing our second 3-year plan in collaboration with the Sports Council and thus defining our objectives for the years 1988

Council is elected by Members of the Association to define future policy and to make sure that the CA progresses in accordance with the wishes of the majority of its members. Feedback at this stage of our planning is therefore very helpful, and further additions to the debate will be most welcome.

Meanwhile, the much increased publicity that croquet has been receiving recently has resulted in a large increase in the numbers of people wishing to take up the game. Many of the clubs who ran a coaching or recruitment course at the start of the season have found themselves almost overwhelmed by the response. There have been frequent calls for help in providing extra equipment to cope with the numbers involved, and club coaches have responded magnificently to the extra demands on their time.

We heard recently that the Sports Council has generously offered us considerable Grant Aid towards the purchase of two indoor surfaces. After trials during the summer, these surfaces will be used at Regional venues next winter to stage a national indoor tournament. coaching, 'come and try it' sessions, and demonstrations. In this way, we hope to extend the season for those who wish to play

or be coached outside the period covered by our existing croquet season.

The CA's early-season courses for coaches and players have proved very popular, and the first Grade III coaches have now been appointed. A great deal of experience has been gained by those involved in the coaching side in the 2 short years since the National Coaching Scheme was introduced. We are beginning to realise how little we knew about coaching when we started out, and how valuable has been the help we have received from the National Coaching Foundation. We still have some way to go before we can truly claim to have a comprehensive coaching

A major news item this issue is that Carlsberg have decided to sponsor the British Opens. They are active in sponsorship in many areas, and we are particularly pleased that, like our other sponsors, they have decided that croquet is worth their support. We extend a very warm welcome to them and look forward to our future collaboration in developing the game.

At the same time, we would like to thank Anchor Foods Limited for their generous support of our Inter-Counties Championship over the past three years, coupling with their name their PR consultants, Granard Communications Ltd. We have had a very happy working relationship with both organisations throughout the sponsorship, and thanks to their support, the Inter-Counties has flourished and grown considerably over the past three years.

CHRIS HUDSON.



The Regional Short Croquet Tournament held at Nottingham last year, open to anyone who had attended a 'Come and Try It' course in the East Midlands during the season. The numbers attending East Midlands courses this season are considerably up on last year and reflect a national trend.

WANTED URGENTLY Can you help!!

Wanted: Photographs of croquet being played. It doesn't matter where (it can be in private gardens or in Clubs) or by whom (children, families, top players, or beginners). They can be black & white, coloured photographs, or transparencies. I am constantly being asked for all types of

photographs to back up publicity we get with magazines, but now my supply has dwindled so I am appealing to members to help me

If you do have any, please send them to me at the CA Office.

Brian Macmillan. Administration Secretary.

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INDEX

١	Tournament Reports 6,7,14,15,22,23
١	Contacts
١	Short Story 8,5
ı	Feature: Roquets 10,11
ı	Lassale Croquet Classic 16,17
ı	Club History:
ı	Worthing 19
١	Sponsorship:
ı	Carlsberg Brewery Ltd 21
ı	Professionalism
ı	Coaches Corner 28
١	Your Letters 5,18
١	Debate 12,13,24
ı	USCA Challenge Cup 24,25
ı	Official Business 29,30,31
ı	Schools & Universities 20
ı	Leeds Castle 27
ı	History: The Gazette 26,27
	Puzzle Corner
1	

'CROQUET'

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Front Cover:

Annual Subscription Rate

Mark Avery on the attack at Budleigh Salterton. He first represented Great Britain at the age of 20.

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Professionalism in Croquet

By Bernard Neal

The Editorial under this heading in the November 1986 issue drew attention to the need to consider two issues; our attitude towards paid coaches, and the possibility of large prize money being offered by sponsors, especially for televised events.

The March 1987 issue contained a thought provoking letter from Ken Cotterell and a reply from the Chairman of Council. Andrew Hope, pointing out that a small Committee had been set up to look into all aspects of professionalism. A report from that Committee was discussed by Council on 14 March, when it was agreed that the topic of professionalism would be raised again at the next meeting of Council on 25th April. I was asked by Andrew Hope to propose a motion for that meeting which took into account the earlier discussion in Council. This motion, which was passed, was in three parts, as follows.

1. That a professional croquet player be defined as one who receives in a calendar year prize money and appearance money (as defined in Regulation 2) which in aggregate exceeds an amount to be determined from time to time by Council and published in the CA Calendar.

All other sources of income related to croquet should be excluded from this aggregate; for example fees for coaching, managing tournaments or commentary work, book royalties and profits from sales of croquet equipment.

- 2. That the Regulations for Tournaments be amended to encompass this definition and to enable the CA and/or clubs to exclude professional croquet players from some calendar fixtures or events if this becomes
- 3. That if the above motions be passed, appropriate means should be found for consulting Clubs and Associates to seek their approval for these changes.

The purpose of this article is two-fold; to explain the thinking which underlines 1 and 2, and also to outline what is involved in implementing these changes.

The present position is that eligibility to compete in calendar fixtures is governed by Regulation 2, as follows.

2(a) A person who accepts

- (i) prize money which exceeds the prize limit (see Regulation 18c)), whether in a calendar fixture or in any other croquet event; or
- (ii) appearance money; or
- (iii) fees for coaching or managing a tournament without the prior approval of the Council is automatically disqualified from competing in calendar fixtures until the Council removes the disqualification.
- 2 (b) The references to money and fees in (a) above include payments in kind but do not include reimbursements of expenses actually incurred. The prize limit referred to in Reg 2(a) (i) is at present £25.

The purpose of this Regulation is to keep croquet as an amateur sport. However, a strictly amateur code would forbid the acceptance of any prize money, no matter how

small, and this principle has been breached for many years. Setting quite a small limit on prize money has seemed to most Associates to be a reasonable compromise, avoiding the problem of providing token prizes in nonmonetary form.

With the advent of televised croquet, pressure from sponsors to provide larger prizes than the current £25 limit will inevitably grow. Already there have been events with larger prizes, both in this country and abroad, and the recipients have only complied with Reg. 2 by undertaking to hand over the prize money in excess of the prize limit to their club or local federation.

future), commentary work, writing articles and books, manufacturing equipment, etc. may benefit the individuals bank balance but scarcely enhances his croquet prowess.

The definition of a professional croquet player proposed in Motion 1 therefore concentrates only on income derived from actually playing, whether in the form of prize money or appearance money. It is concerned with the total of such earnings in a calendar year; if this total were to exceed an amount to be specified from time to time by Council the player concerned would become a professional. This amount might be set initially at around £1,000, well below a living wage but



Bernard Neal pictured at Hurlingham with six other winners of the British Opens (L to R): Michael Heap, William Prichard, Bernard Neal, Joe Hogan, John Solomon, Nigel Aspinall, and David Openshaw.

What harm would be done if the prize limit were increased considerably? The underlying fear of some Associates, ably expressed by Ken Cotterell, is that if events with large amounts of prize money proliferated, and the players were allowed to retain their prizes, a top class player could then actually set out to earn his livelihood by competing in such events, and so a new group of professional croquet players might emerge who would have no other occupation. Such players, by practising for many hours with the same dedication as tennis and snooker stars would, it is felt, become so proficient that our present top players would be eclipsed. If this were to happen, so the argument runs, the game as we know it would be spoilt; who would wish to enter events in which the professionals were competing?

There are differing views as to the likelihood of such a development, and personally I do not see it is a strong probability. Nevertheless, it is sensible to be prepared so as to avoid hasty and ill thought out legislation. The main purpose of Motions 1 and 2 was therefore to enable Council, if it felt that events had made such an action desirable, to exclude professionals from certain calendar fixtures. Clubs could, of course, impose a similar exclusion on their tournaments.

While it is possible that many hours of dedicated practice each day might raise playing standards well above the present levels achieved by (say) our Test Team, I cannot believe that a coach benefits similarly from hours spent teaching on the court. There seems therefore no need to legislate for the exclusion of paid coaches, whether full or part-time. Further, earning money from nonplaying activities connected with croquet, such as managing tournaments (managers are not paid at present but may be in the still a substantial sum. Although the Motion does not make this clear, the subsequent restoration of amateur status would have to be at the discretion of Council.

How does this compare with the existing situation under Regulation 2? There are two major changes, one of which is to remove any restriction on fees for coaching or managing tournaments. At present, prior approval of Council has to be sought before such fees are accepted; I am not aware that such permission has ever been sought, and if it had been it would be astonishing if it was refused. The other change is to lump together prize money and appearance money, and to place a limit on the aggregate over a calendar year rather than on individual sums. I hope that on reflection Associates will feel that these are very reasonable changes.

The second Motion merely calls for an amendment to the Regulations for Tournaments to enable professionals to be excluded from tournaments, whether run by the CA or by Clubs. This exclusion would not be mandatory, but it seems prudent to build this power into the Regulations well before it might need to be used.

As to the implementation of these motions, the appropriate changes to the Regulations will need to be drafted during the summer. These will be then considered by Council at its October meeting, and if passed published in 'Croquet'. There would then be reconsideration at a further Council meeting, and if ratified the new Regulations would be effective in the 1988 season. Meanwhile, this article gives Associates the opportunity of commenting either in 'Croquet' or by talking to Council members.

As a footnote, the Australian Croquet Council have just informed us that croquet in Australia is now fully open!

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

Dear Sir,

Mr Crane's letter in the May number deploring the urge to promote croquet takes me back to 1970, the year when, largely through the initiative of Bernard Neal, the CA first obtained a grant from the Sports Council, and when one particularly vocal Associate condemned the grant as carrying the prospect of croquet being subject to, as he put it, an invasion of the unwashed. I recall the somewhat acrimonious correspondence which ensued in the Times between Bryan Lloyd-Pratt and myself as CA Chairman at the

Mr Crane's fears do not, of course, extend to this exaggerated concept, but he will I am sure agree that one laudable outcome of the Development Scheme is that the hours of enjoyment which he and others have had from croquet should now be within the reach of many who have hitherto thought of croquet as a closed book.

On a more vital point, it is arguable that without the Sports Council grant, competitive croquet as we know it would have gradually fallen apart. In the 1960's the bulk of Associates were still pre-war surviving players, with only a trickle of new blood coming into the game. Attempts by clubs to recruit members were usually desultory and a number went to wall, Bedford, Buxton and Exmouth to name only three once thriving clubs. I recall an Editorial which I wrote in 1960 quoting Thomas Gray's lines 'Regardless of their doom the little victims play'. adding that although the poet had in mind a different generation from that of croquet players the words had a real significance for a club which was gradually folding because of dwindling membership.

An equally important practical point was the tenuous financial position of the CA and the constant worry of how long we could go on retaining a secretary at a salary which was a mere pittance. Alan Oldham, Treasurer in 1970 then as now, will recall his relief at the Sports Council providing a life-line.

In the early years after 1970 development proceeded at a somewhat slow pace and made relatively little headway until 3 years ago when it came to full fruition in the shape of a full-time Development Officer whose efforts have proved such a resounding success.

My earlier mention of Alan

Oldham reminds me that in 1971, following his promotion to be the Manager of the substantial section of his Company's Head Office at High Wycombe, he made disturbing noises to me that his office commitments would make it difficult to continue his CA Treasurership. Somewhat selfishly I persuaded him at least to see out my term of office as CA Chairman, and yet here he is today still in harness, doing a job which with the ramification of the Sports Council Grant, Sponsorship and now, to cap it all, the intricacies of VAT has become more and more demanding. There can be few if any over the years to whom the CA is in greater indebtedness.

Jim Townsend, Devon.

Dear Sir,

After nearly a lifetime of playing 'garden' croquet, this is no longer possible since we moved south and our garden is on a steep slope. Mr Crane says (Your Letters May '87) '... there are enough clubs round the country now to cater for everyone who wants to play croquet ...'

Sadly this is not so. The nearest club to me is in the Winchester area, a round trip of some seventy miles. It is strange that there does not appear to be a club in the Cathedral City of Salisbury (all those lovely lawns) which is a mere twelve miles from my home. My dearest wish is to play croquet again. What am I to do? Please don't suggest that we should move house again!

Margaret Barnett, Shipton Bellinger.

Dear Sir.

Many I speak to wonder whether the world of Croquet is trying to over-develop itself. One gets the impression that some members of the Council want to encourage anything which happens to call itself croquet apparently regardless of the good or ill it may do established Clubs or players.

There are writers who compare our game with chess. That maybe so, but chess doesn't set out to encourage all those games which use similar settings. With 64 squares and moveable pieces, besides chess one can play a simpler game – Draughts; or a simpler game still – Fox & Geese. Yet the chess world doesn't think it necessary to encourage Fox & Geese to get

The game depicted on the cover of the current Croquet No. 191 is as little like our game as Fox & Geese is to chess.

its recruits



Nailsea's team that won last year's S.W. Federation League (L to R): John Mann, John Jeffrey, Peter Dyke and Bob Mann. (See Letters, Page 18).

Perhaps it is the word Croquet which is leading us astray. Is it clear thinking to expect devotees of Association Croquet to be keen to support, even to encourage by increased fees and levy, Fox & Geese croquet, television croquet, golf croquet or any other game which chooses to include the word croquet in its name?

Edgar Jackson, Cheltenham.

Is the analogy correct? Surely Association Croquet and Garden Croquet relate to each other in the same way as chess played with 4" Staunton pieces and chess played with cheap plastic pieces – the rules of both games are the same – Ed.

Dear Sir,

I was sorry to read RFA Crane's letter in the May issue of 'Croquet'.

It is essential that we promote the game. Firstly to obtain finance to support existing clubs and improve their facilities, particularly those we use for Internationals and major tournaments. Most clubs have heavy overheads and lack funds to make improvements. Secondly, we must look forward to our International future and introduce more young people to the game. For this we need more clubs all over Britain. Although Mr Crane states that there are plenty of clubs - far from it. There are areas where no clubs exist and people wishing to play have to travel many miles.

Too long has the game been regarded as 'Alice in Wonderland' and vicarage lawns. Surely you don't want it to remain this way. Let's tell everyone what an excellent, skilful game it is for all people of all ages.

Of course, we haven't enough clubs. I would like to see croquet lawns in every town, croquet on the curriculum of all Senior Schools and more International

matches.

So 'Publicity and Development', bang the drum. Let's get more clubs opened, more people playing, improve facilities and ensure the future of the game.

Brian Macmillan. (A forward-looking old fogey). Hurlingham.

Designing Carrots for Hoops

Dear Sir.

As an amateur metalworker who has tried his hand at making hoops I found Alan Parker's historical review interesting but not comprehensive. He deals at some length with the width of the hoops but the carrot only gets one mention. Who invented the

carrot?
Are its dimensions fixed (no mention in the rules)? Why are the uprights off-set and not in the centre of the carrot?

It is relatively easy to make hoops of 5/8" diameter metal where the uprights can be pushed straight into virgin turf. Problems arise when the hoops are needed for a lawn that has holes in it made by carrots. It would be much easier and cheaper to make hoops if the uprights were central in the

It has been suggested to me that there is less interference to the turf between the hoops if the uprights are off-set but what happens when hoops for advanced play are used (width 3 11/16", Rule 50(d))? These must disturb the turf between the hoops if they are used in the same holes as standard hoops.

Would it not be better to make standard hoops with uprights central in the carrots and make the holes in the lawn with their centres 3 11/16" apart? Any desired variations from the standard width of 334" could be catered for with hoops with the uprights off-set.

R.T. Jackman, Farnham Common.

Cheltenham: 18-20 April Two wins for the Potters

Report by Deborah Latham

This year's Easter tournament at Cheltenham was, as ever, full of people trying to remember after the long winter months which end of the mallet to hold, and other small details which help to make life more easy. It was certainly a well supported event, with fifty-six players distributed between eight blocks. Attempting to keep this buzzing throng in order, with a very high degree of success, was Mike Finn, whose greatest personal triumph over the weekend was taking only thirty-five minutes to beat Colin Irwin by what he claimed was +27(!), explained as being by virtue of peeling one of Colin's balls in the midst of this flurry of activity.

Many of the block results were either influenced or accounted for by the large contingent of visitors from Oxford, who were designated 'the Oxford Gangsters' (an extremely illdeserved epithet!); Jonathan Calver and Paul Goldberg came second in their respective blocks, and Mark Wormald and Nick Luff won theirs. Mark with a clean sweep of six wins. Geoffrey Taylor's and Robert Prichard's block-winning form prompted the latter to make a remark to the effect that the Cambridge fraternity of twenty years ago were definitely a match for the current Oxford fraternity! Roger Jenkins was another who swept home with six wins, and Debbie Cornelius won her block while parrying enquiries about her ankles, as seen in the 'Challenge to Sport' programme shown over. the weekend. Probably the most pleased household in the tournament consisted of Jim and Hazel Potter, both winning their blocks at Cheltenham for the first time.

Apart from the aforementioned group from Oxford there were visitors from venues all over the country almost too numerous to mention. Those who had furthest to travel were Alan Ramsay from Edinburgh and Corla van Griethuysen from Glasgow, who had to spend much of her time explaining to people either how to spell her name or how to pronounce it! At his first tournament, Maurice Boardman from Bath showed he has great potential and will probably become a force to be reckoned with in future years.

Despite the foregoing, is it possible that the most notable event of the entire weekend was the virtually instantaneous and

certainly unanimous agreement of a group of about six referees when Paul Smith bounded up and recounted circumstances which they could not actually pinpoint under a specific individual law?! Briefly, Red-and-Yellow comes on to play on a court which is double-banked. He sees his yellow ball in the jaws of a hoop, assumes his opponent put it there, and plays his red into baulk. When he is about to claim his lift, Black-and-Blue suddenly informs him that yellow is not in the jaws but has been put there by the double-bankers and not replaced. What happens now? The six or so referees - in the absence of the ROT (Referee Of the Tournament, for those who wish to add to their vocabulary of croquet terminology) - all pronounced that the red and yellow should go back to their correct positions and play start again from that point. Observations from the Laws Committee (et al) are expected to follow shortly!

The manager had visions of a torch-lit finish when he was unable to put on the last game of the weekend before 5.30pm, with a 31/4 hr time limit. However, in a splendidly attacking game, with both players going for the breaks, Carmen Bazley (giving 6½ bisques) beat Jonathan Calver of Oxford by 13 points in under 11/2 hours, and the flag was duly struck at 7pm.

RESULTS Cheltenham: 18-20 April Block A

6 wins: R.S. Jenkins (5).

4 wins: M.G. Tompkinson (2); P.L. Smith $\left(-\frac{1}{2}\right)$

2 wins: F.J. Exell (51/2); Mrs J. Neville-Rolfe (31/2); Mrs M.E. Langley

1 win: D.R. Marsh (15).

Block B

5 wins: J.W. Potter (2). wins: J.M. Calver (10); S.G.

Cornelius (41/2).

3 wins: D. Moorcraft (1).

wins: Mrs L.V. Latham (51/2); M. Boardman (16).

1 win: Lady C. Bazley (31/2).

Block C

5 wins: Dr G.K. Taylor (0); P.W. Goldberg (10).

3 wins: C.J. Ross (6); Mrs C.E. Irwin (61/2); T.W. Anderson (11/2).

2 wins: D.R. Appleton. wins: Mrs B.G.F. Weitz (4).

4 wins: Mrs H.D. Potter (8) (Block winner); C.B. Snowden (3); Dr R.C. Jones (21/2): Prof. B.G. Neal (-11/2). 3 wins: Mrs J.M. Anderson (41/2). 2 wins: P.F. Leach (5).

Ryde: 10-12 April **Ipswich Sweep** the Board

Report by Neil Griffin

April is the cruel month. Certainly the eighteen entrants at Ryde thought so. Weeks of heavy rain had waterlogged the courts, preventing any mowing, and so the games were played in marshy conditions. At least the weather kept dry for the tournament itself - we only had to contend with the cold and the winds.

Croquet under such conditions was different from the usual game. Rushing was difficult, and - for many - split shots impossible. Accuracy and break-making suffered.

Robert Jones (12), undeterred, began as he meant to continue, beating Brian Hallam (1) by 26. Brian had three shots in the whole game. Brought down to 9, Robert continued to beat low-bisquers by 26 so that by Sunday Danny Palmer gave up and set the bisques in front of the clubhouse bar so that he could take his ease with a pint or two.



He did not take croquet as Robert scored another 26. Robert was the clear winner of the Tournament and left with a handicap

Ipswich Club sent a large contingent and walked off with all the prizes, as Don Gaunt and Lewis Palmer won the others. John Walters was his usual elegant self, and was unlucky not to do better.

Ryde always has a friendly atmosphere. We particularly appreciated the catering, organized by Arthur Rowlands. The hot lunches were most welcome. Arthur also deserves our thanks for getting up early each day to mow a lawn with his own lightweight lawnmower before play. Roy Newnham managed the tournament with his customary friendliness and efficiency and ensured an enjoyable weekend.

RESULTS

Handicap Swiss

6 wins: R.P. Jones (10). 5 wins: D.L. Gaunt (1).

4 wins: L.J. Palmer (41/2); B. Hallam (1/2); J.O. Walters (-1); Mrs I.P.M.

Macdonald (5). 3 wins: D. Beatty (3); F.A. Rowlands (5); D.G. Palmer (1/2); P. Archer (10), H.B. Brownsdon (41/2) (5 games

2 wins: N.G. Williams (16): P.A. Watson (5); N.M. Griffin (6); R.W. Newnham (4); Mrs P.A. Watson

(14°)/E. Carleton. 1 win: I.P.M. Macdonald (3); Mrs M. Robinson (11).

Roehampton: 17-20 April RESULTS

Handicap Singles (Swiss)

(after 8 rounds) 8 wins: D.J. Croker.

6 wins: Mrs P. Healy, J.C. Straw, R.J.

5 wins: P. Archer; Mrs D.J. Croker; M.J.B. Haggerston; R. Pennant-Jones.

4 wins: Mrs W. Browne; Mrs P. Macdonald.

3 wins: Mrs W. Jones; I.P.M. Macdonald; D. Ruscombe-King; Mrs

K. Townsend 2 wins: Mrs A. Robillard, K.F.W. Townsend.

1 win: Mrs B. Mansfield; Mrs C.

David Croker, winner of the Roehampton Swiss tournament.

Block E

Block F

4 wins: M.J. Finn (4).

1 win: R. Noel-Smith (16).

0 wins: Mrs E.A. Neal (8).

5 wins: R.D.C. Prichard (0).

R. Race (3): A. Ramsav (6).

3 wins: Mrs M.A.L. Warren (7).

1 win: Dr I.R. Plummer (41/2).

0 wins: Mrs P.F. Leach (14).

4 wins: G.E.P. Jackson (11/2);

Block G 5 wins: Miss D.A. Cornelius (21/2) 6 wins: M.R. Wormald (21/2). (Block winner); F.I. Maugham (1).

5 wins: Mrs V.Y. Tompkinson (61/2). 4 wins: I V Latham (0)

3 wins: M.R.L. Cowan (5); C.J. Irwin 2 wins: Dr B.G.F. Weitz (1); Dr C. van Griethuysen (51/2); W.J. Sturdy (4).

0 wins: Mrs E. Chamberlain (13). Block H

6 wins: N.L. Luff (51/2).

5 wins: J.E. Ross (2). 3 wins: D.S. Cornelius (7); A.J.

Girling (1). 2 wins: Mrs G.D. Harris (41/2). 1 win: P.J. Dorke (31/2); Miss J.

Woking: 24-26 April **Players Revolt at Woking**

Report by Derek Caporn

The Friday dawned bright and sunny and so it continued throughout the weekend better than last summer and an infinite improvement on our Spring non-event last year which was 'washed out' before the court could even be laid out. Unfortunately due to the very wet March and early April all the Courts were very slow and on the tennis courts used for this tournament the grass was lush and beef was the order of the day. One player remarked of a lady competitor who was bashing her ball around in a lengthy break, that 'she must have had Weetabix for breakfast'!

The blocks were all hotly contested for the glass goblets and the outcome in all of them was open until the last game an example of good management! 3 players had 5 wins out of 6 in one block, Bob Smith eventually winning it by beating Brian Hallam but losing to David Ruscombe King in a Round Robin one baller. He scored more hoops than the other two, and so scraped home by a whisker! Gordon Vince in another block won 5 games out of 6, with Coutts, Barnes and Mrs Healey winning 4 each. Geof Dawson had 5 wins in his block, Sally Watson was the runner up - her handicap was 14 but is no longer!

Derek Caporn, the Manager, gave himself leave for the whole of the Saturday, not as was suggested to go to 'Lords' but to attend the CA AGM followed by the Council meeting which battled with the problem of professionalism. Bob Smith admirably deputised and coped with a 'revolt' about having to play in the 'cage' where the lawn was almost unplayable. On Sunday, Derek shortened the games on this lawn but allowed players bisques as for a full game.

However, he was hoist by his own petard when he played his last round game in the cage against Ray Hall, losing because Ray played well and had too many bisques! So Derek failed to win a glass goblet - serve him right!

The Manager discovered some half priced Easter Eggs which he bought and presented to the runner up who went happily home munching chocolate and, he hopes, thinking what a splendid manager he was, or rather is, unless he gets suspended for bending the rules, which it is rumoured he does from time to time, to make Croquet Fun. Croquet, as competitors will tell you, is always fun at Woking so why not try this best of all tonics?

RESULTS

(American Handicap Singles)

Block 1

5 wins: R.R. Smith (21/2) (Block winner); D.R.T. Ruscombe-King (6); B. Hallam (1/2).

2 wins: J. Haigh (4); R.E. Vincent (71/2); T. Vale (5).

Block 2

5 wins: G. Vince (21/2).

4 wins: J. Coutts (2): Mrs P.V. Healy (7): R.T.H. Barnes (8)

3 wins: J.C. Straw (3).

1 win: P.A. Watson (5).

0 wins: Mrs G. Vincent (10).

Block 3

5 wins: G. Dawson (21/2).

4 wins: Mrs S. Watson (14).

3 wins: B.P. Whitehouse (3).

2 wins: Mrs M. Vale (71/2). 1 win: R.H. Selmes (15).

Block 4

4 wins: R. Hall (71/2) (Block winner);

D.C. Caporn (3). 3 wins: Mrs J. McDiarmid (6).

2 wins: I. McDiarmid (8); C.B. Sanford (4).

0 wins: Miss P. Shine (8)

Southport: 25-26 April Croquet's difficult, for heaven's sake!

Report by Rod Williams

Winner of the main event was 15 year-old Chris Clarke, who last year won the Apps Trophy for the most improved player of the year, obviously intending to carry on where he left off.

His finish against Eddie Bell was typical of the Clarke style; he ran Rover from three yards, hit his partner ball ten vards away dead centre rushing it to the middle of the West boundary and promptly pegged it out with a roll which left his playing ball two yards from the peg.

He dominated the game against John Meads, being on 4-back and peg after six turns, finishing just a few turns later.

His only real competition came in the final against David Beatty, who took advantage of a temporary lapse of accuracy to take the first game +8. Clarke soon recovered, however, and although his accuracy was sometimes not up to its usual high standard, Beatty couldn't hold him off despite some excellent shots including a tremendous pass roll to hoop 1 from near hoop 2 followed, unfortunately, by a missed return

roquet.

Mark Saurin, who won the Swiss, is another of Southport's teenage prodigies. He was on 4-back in the third turn against his mentor, Andrew Bennet, and reached peg and out before allowing Bennet a consolation 3-ball break to make the score a little more respectable at +13.

Somebody should tell the Southport teenagers that croquet is really a difficult game. They clearly don't know they're not supposed to hit fifteen yard roquets and run four-yard hoops all the time.

For most of us the rustiness of early season tournaments was evident, with Paul Smith managing the only triple of the weekend while beating Richard Hilditch +26.

It was obviously early in the season for referees as well, as we saw no fewer than five referees clustered round a 4-ball group in corner four, refreshing their own dimmed memories of the rules while trying not to confuse the player. With all this attention the inevitable happened and the croqueted ball was eventually

Continued on page 9



Mark Saurin, winner of the Southport Swiss

Southwick: 18-20 April RESULTS:

Advanced Play

(Double-elimination knock-out) 1st Round

K.F. Wylie bt B.C. Sykes +9; A.J. Mrozinski bt C. Southern +7; J.E. Guest bt Mrs F. Ransom +20; I.D. Bond bt D.W. Shaw +23; D.L. Gaunt bt J.R. Hilditch +9; J.O. Walters bt N. Gale +13.

2nd Round

J.R. McCullough bt A. Bennet +10; Wulie bt P.J. Mansfield + 22: K M H Aiton bt Mrozinski +11; Guest bt D.M. Bull +21; Bond bt D.V. Beatty

+5; Gaunt bt D. Reeve +5; Walters bt R.W. Ransom +9; M. Murray bt Miss J. MacLeod +19. 3rd Round

McCullough bt Wylie +25; Aiton bt Guest +5: Bond bt Gaunt +13: Murray bt Walters +23.

Semi-Finals

Aiton bt McCullough +14, +26TP; Murray bt Bond +26, +26TP. Final

Aiton bt Murray +21, -14TP, +18. Second Life

1st Round Beatty bt Hilditch +9; Gale bt Miss MacLeod +21: Mrozinski bt Mrs Ransom +22; Reeve bt Shaw +23; Bennet bt Sykes +22; Southern bt Bull +7.

2nd Round

Beatty bt Mansfield +18; Mrozinski bt Gale +3; Reeve bt Bennet +26; Ransom bt Southern +4.

3rd Round

Beatty bt Walters +5; Mrozinski bt Gaunt +17; Guest bt Reeve +12; Wylie bt Ransom +9.

4th Round

5th Round

Mrozinski bt Beatty +14; Guest bt Wylie +18.

McCullough bt Mrozinski +19; Bond

Consolation Event

(Advanced Play)

McCullough bt Bond +23.

McCullough bt Murray +16

bt Guest +3.

Semi-Finals

PLAY OFF

Winner: A. Mrozinski. 7 wins, rate 2.31 hours per win.

McCullough bt Aiton +20, +14.

Runner-up: J.E. Guest. 6 wins, rate 2.32 hours per win.

Short Story

The Judge Pegs Out

Another short story by Dorothy Rush

'It was nice of you to come and see me, Charlie, very nice indeed.'

'Well I had to, Jack, didn't I. what with you being sent up North, like. I might not see you for . . . well . . . years.' The thin man's mouth parted in an embarrassed smile.

'Yeah, well, it's good to see you, anyway. I haven't clapped eyes on any of the boys since I got nicked in that bleedin' warehouse.' The soft-eyed man in the grey prison uniform shook his head sadly.

'Look, Jack, you've got to believe me - none of us knew we'd left you behind. Daly thought you were with me and I was certain you'd gone in the rain with him. In the dark, with all that shouting and those damn sirens, there was no way we could have known.

'That's alright Charlie.' The soft eyes were forgiving. 'You couldn't have known. No-one could possibly have imagined that I'd gone and locked myself in that meat-store, now, could they? Lot of fun the Judge had with that - lot of harmless amusement at my expense?

The eyes were suddenly no longer soft.

'Jack, the boys'll never forgive themselves for this. They told me to ask you if there's anything at

all, Jack, that they can do for you. Anything to cheer you up, like, before you go on your . . . er . . . travels. We'll be keeping an eye on Jenny, don't you go worrying about her and the kids'll never go short, Jack, but there must be something else we can do. A sort of going away present,

The thin man's face shone with hope as the softness returned to his friend Jack's big brown eyes.

'There is something Charlie. Something you can do personally. Something to cheer me up on cold Winter's nights, when you're down here in civilisation in front of a blazing fire and I'm all alone in a cold Yorkshire prison-cell. Something to make up for leaving me in that warehouse'.

'Jack, I've said I'm . . . '

'Of course, Charlie, I know, I know. And it's okay, really it is but there is just this one small

'Anything Jack, anything at

Charlie sat like a faithful dog, alert to his master's command, as Jack leaned forward, as far as he could, across the table towards him and whispered:

The judge that sent me down, Charlie, Mr Bleedin Justice

Mallets

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Equipment

Hawkins, may he rot in Hell quite a lot of the time, Charlie, you told me once that he played because the judge is a fanatic croquet, didn't you? Same as about croquet. what you do, though I can't see

what the flamin' hell you see in it.

Game for bleedin' ponces, I

reckon, but that's your business,

son, and I've never tried to

interfere with your simple

pleasures, have I? You want to

spend your afternoons playing

giant marbles, that's alright by

me, as long as you do the

business when it comes to the

nightwork. No, don't interrupt,

let me finish. You see, Charlie,

you're going to fix Mr Justice

Hawkins for me. Permanently. As

in 'dead'. And you're going to do

it at a croquet club, in broad

daylight, and in front of

stretched in a death-like grin of

horror. Gentle choking noises

came from his throat. Jack

smiled without humour and went

way of getting to him but there's

none of the usual methods that's

going to work. That mansion of

his is far too secure and he never

leaves it without a police escort.

He doesn't get in his car 'till the

fuzz have been over it with a

geiger counter and a pack of

sniffer dogs. In fact, the only time

he doesn't have a policeman

holding his hand is when he's

playing croquet at the Hurling-

ham Club. And I'm told that's

'I've been over every possible

Charlie's thin mouth was

witnesses'

on smoothly:

Now you'd know more about that than me, wouldn't you, my son, because you're a bleedin' fanatic yourself. I've been checking up on you an' all Charlie, and I find that you're quite a figure in the croquet world - tournament manager, referee, handicap of -11/2 and some very tasty connections. I'm surprised you haven't made some practical use of these advantages. We could have lifted the odd Rembrandt while you were playing croquet with its titled owner.

Charlie found his tongue: 'For God's sake, it's not like that. You surely don't think I play croquet on the off chance of an invitation to a well-fitted stately home? The croquet players I know are mostly ordinary blokes like me. They haven't got a Bill Tidy cartoon between 'em, let alone a flippin' Rembrandt. What the hell are you getting at, anyway? What's the judge got to do with me?"

'I've told you, Charlie,' said Jack, with the patience of one who sees a 14 year sentence stretch before him, 'You're going to kill him for me. Stone dead. Right there on the lawn at Hurlingham. You're perfect for it. Charlie. Never had a record, painfully respectable. And bent as a bloomin' hairpin!'.

'No, Jack, it's impossible. It's

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madness, it can't be done.'

'Just shut up and listen. I've spent the last two months doing nothing but reading books on croquet and planning the timely demise of that evil old man. I know exactly how you're going to do it.'

'Not me Jack, I can't . . . ' 'Charlie! He called me a 'piece of filth'. He said that if he had been able to, he would have me birched. Birched Charlie! And Charlie - don't forget, you

owe me! The thin man was silent now, stunned by his friend's words and certain that worse was to come. There was a long, tense moment as one of the duty officers passed slowly by and then the prisoner began to talk again urgently.

'Alright. Now listen and tell me I've got it worked out to a 't'. You and Hawkins are both playing at Hurlingham a week from today. A four-day tournament, right?

. . Am I right Charlie? 'Yes, yes, you're right. Get on

'Oh, I will . . . Now, after the first day's play you should know exactly who the Judge will be playing the following morning and on which lawn. Right?'

'What of it?'

with it'.

'What of it, Charlie? I'll tell you what of it. You are going to hang around after play ends. Till dark, in fact, just enjoying the Summer evening, and then you're going to stroll quietly across the lawn, where the Judge is due to play the next morning, and replace the centre peg with a new one, a peg specially constructed by an acquaintance of mine who does a lot of work for one or two terrorist organisa-

This peg, Charlie, will be identical in all respects to the one you take out, except for one small detail: it will have been hollowed out and filled with a very high explosive. And be very careful with it Charlie, because a sharp tap will detonate it immediately.'

'And you expect Judge Hawkins to stride briskly on to the lawn after breakfast and give the peg a good thump for luck, is that it?' Charlie could hardly contain his irritation.

'Well, that would be nice. very convenient indeed but I doubt if he'll be so obliging. No, you'll just have to wait patiently until the end of the game if you want to see old Hawkins peg out for the last time. And I mean 'peg out'! When his ball hits that stick, it's 'Goodbye Hawkins'. It's called 'going out with a bang'.

'Jack for Chrissake, that's

assuming he wins the game, or at least is first to peg a ball out. There's no guarantee of that. You could kill the wrong man.'

Jack allowed a small ray of satisfaction to gleam in his soft 'There's no 'could' about it

Charlie. He's a gonna anyway but so's the Judge and that's what matters. You see, I've done my research and I'm certain that Hawkins will not leave that game alive. In the first place, he's fancied strongly to win that tournament, so his chances of winning on the second day must be extremely high. Besides which, he is notorious, I'm told, for taking his first ball round and pegging out, whatever the position of the other balls'.

whatever you do, make sure you lose. The Judge has got to keep going until you've arranged his farewell match.'

'Yeah, sure. You're right Jack. As long as I'm nowhere near the lawn when that bomb goes off, I've got nothing to worry about. Sorry Jack, I panicked. It'll go like clockwork, you'll see.'

The first day of the Hurlingham tournament was blessed with glorious weather and at the end of play no-one was surprised when Charles Hadlee declined to join the throng in the bar, declaring that he was going to enjoy the evening breeze a little longer from a deck-chair near Lawn 1.

The very lawn where his Honour Judge Hawkins was to 'Charles! Hang on a sec!'

It was a perfect day for croquet and Charlie, in a winning mood, was setting off briskly to join his opponent at lawn six, when the voice of the Manager stopped him in his tracks. He turned round to find a harassed Bernard Neal bearing down on him with an apologetic air.

'Ah! Look Charles, don't go hairing off. There's been a change of plan. Colin's car has broken down in traffic at the other end of the Fulham Road and Nigel's gone down with one of his colds

So, I'm having to make a few adjustments: David will play Eric on lawn six and I'm putting you on lawn one with the Judge.

Is that all right?'

Southport: 25-26 April (Continued from page 7)

hammered off the lawn.

Both Jaques and Southport balls were in use during the tournament. This is the first time several of the entrants had played with Southport balls, and most found them quite comfortable to play with - somewhere between Jaques and Walker for bounciness. Some adjustment is necessary for split strokes, but they rush well. Second colours were rather disconcerting orange for pink is merely novel. but pale yellow for white caused more than one player problems with the other game on the lawn.



He burnt the centre peg on a small fire he had laid for the purpose.

'Even so, the other player could be the first to peg out. How you can be certain that . .

'It's very simple, Charlie; whoever pegs out first, both players get blown to smithereens as soon as the ball hits the stick. Don't forget that when one player pegs out he asks his opponent to stand by the peg to make certain that the hit has occurred. Whoever is in play and whoever is watching at the peg, neither will leave that lawn alive'.

'Good God! It could work, at that. But what about me? What if somebody sees me changing the pegs? What if I'm the one who has to play Hawkins that morning?' Charlie's voice was a hysterical whisper.

'Calm down! That screw's watching us like a hawk. There's no danger. In the first place, just make damn sure there's no-one else around when you swap the pegs. In the second, if you find he's your opponent for the morning, don't swap the pegs but wait for the next evening. And

meet Nigel Aspinall on the following morning. The light faded until only his vague outline could be seen. Not that there was anyone to see.

Just after ten o'clock, Charlie entered the Hurlingham bar. There were beads of sweat on his

That night, Charlie slept well. He had taken home the purloined centre peg in his kit bag and had burnt it on a small fire which he had laid for the purpose. There was nothing which could connect him to the imminent death of Judge Hawkins and he himself was due to play on a lawn well away from that on which the tragedy would occur.

Just as he dropped off, the thought passed through Charlie's mind, making him smile, that with Hawkins and Aspinall out of the way, he might just win this tournament himself. In his sleep, Charlie chuckled as he dreamt of beating Mulliner in the final.

RESULTS

(Advanced Play)

1st Round

A. Bennet bt E.E. Scott +6; P.L. Smith bt R. Collighan +21.

2nd Round

C. Clarke bt P. Stoker +21; E. Bell bt E.J. Davis +10; J.R. Hilditch bt Dr C. van Griethuvsen + 16: J.D. Meads bt Bennet +17; Smith bt R.A.W. Williams +12; D. Beatty bt A.F. Sutcliffe +10; W.E. Lamb bt C. Wild +10; M.A. Saurin bt Mrs C.E. Irwin +17.

3rd Round

Clarke bt Bell +11; Meads bt Hilditch +25: Beatty bt Smith +4: Saurin bt Lamb +10.

Semi-Finals

Clarke bt Meads +24; Beatty bt Saurin +7.

Final

Clarke bt Beatty -8, +14, +14.

Progressive Swiss

(Advanced Play)

5 wins: M.A. Saurin. 4 wins: A. Bennet, P.L. Smith. E. Bell, R.A.W. Williams.

3 wins: A.F. Sutcliffe, J.D. Meads, P. Stoker, E.J. Davis, R. Collighan.

2 wins: Dr C. van Griethuysen, W.E. Lamb, J.R. Hidlitch. 1 win: C. Wild.

0 wins: Mrs C.E. Irwin.

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Feature

The Long and Short of Roquets?

By Allen Parker (Parkstone)

Feature

I was most interested to read the article by Reginald Bamford ('A Scientific Approach to Hitting-In'. Gazette No.190, March, 1987) about the accuracy of long roquets and their dependence on the handicap of the player. His observations at the Rondebosch Croquet Club differ significantly from those made by Dr. Grundy in the Twenties and Thirties. I have some comments to make on these differences, but first I should like to suggest how Mr Bamford's method of dealing with his observations can be improved.

To derive a formula for calculating the probability of hitting in, Mr Bamford estimated what he calls the 'outer-limiting angle' by which a player deviates from the correct line of aim. (I assume that he persuaded a number of players to make a number of long shots, noting for each player the angle corresponding to the worst shots). He calculated the maximum angle corresponding to a hit, and divided this by the 'outer-limiting angle'. My objection to this is that most of the misses will be grouped much closer to the target than the outer-limiting angle. Indeed, the distribution of a large number of shots would look something like Figure 1, which indicates the number of shots falling within 0.5 degree increments of the true line of aim for a Normal distribution having a standard deviation of one degree. In contrast, Mr Bamford's formula gives values of % hits that are inversely proportional to the distance. This may be acceptable at long distances, but is certainly not true at shorter distances, and, as Mr Bamford himself admits, his formula breaks down completely at moderate distances and low handicaps.

If we assume a Normal distribution of errors (and there is evidence for this (See C.A. Parker, 'Shooting at Singles and Doubles', Gazette No.182, November, 1985), then theoretically there is no outer-limiting angle because there is always a very slight probability of missing by a large amount. (The Normal distribution never quite reaches zero.) In practice however these wide hits are so improbable that they can be neglected. So how should we interpret Mr Bamford's 'outer-limiting angle'? With a Normal distribution of errors there is a 68% probability of the shots falling within one standard deviation (i.e. one degree in our

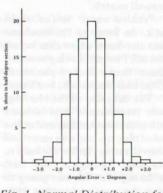


Fig. 1. Normal Distribution for Standard Deviation of 1 Degree.

chosen case shown in Figure 1),

95% will fall within two standard deviations, and over 99% will fall within three standard deviations. How many standard deviations should we assume for Mr Bamford's 'outer-limiting angle'? Two standard deviations seems reasonable. This would mean that only about one shot in twenty would fall outside his 'outerlimiting angle'. However, if the % Hits for the various handicaps are calculated on this basis the results (in the regions where Mr Bamford's method applies) are found to be about 11/2 times greater than those calculated by Mr Bamford's simple formula. In order to get results agreeing with his, it was necessary to assume that his outer-limiting angles correspond to only 1.3 standard deviations. (This would imply that 1 out of 5 shots fell outside his 'outer-limiting angle' on average.) On this basis his results would give the following standard deviations for the handicaps he observed, and these are compared with the values calculated from the results observed by Dr Grundy (to be further discussed below):

Handicap	Standard Deviation (degrees)	
-2	0.54	
2	1.00	
6	1.46	
10	1.85	
16	2.54	
24	3.38	
Grundy (up	to 12 yards) 1.09	
rundy (ov	er 12 vards) 0.95	

These standard deviations may be used to calculate the percentage hits to be expected from players of the indicated handicaps at various distances. The results of such calculations for some easily recognisable distances on the croquet court are shown in the Table 1, together with the results calculated by Mr Bamford's formula. As expected,

the latter gives nonsensical

TABLE 1 % Hits assuming a Normal Distribution§ and (in parentheses) % Hits by Bamford Formula

Handicap								
Yards	(Grundy)	-2	2	6	10	16	24	Typical Shot
3.0	92.2	100.0	94.5	81.2	70.2	55.1	43.0	Statement
		(269.8)	(149.9)	(103.8)	(79.3)	(58.6)	(43.5)	
6.0	62.2	92.6	66.4	48.9	39.7	29.5	22.4	Hoop to
		(134.9)	(74.9)	(51.9)	(39.7)	(29.3)	(21.8)	Yard Line
10.0	40.3	71.6	43.6	30.7	24.5	18.0	13.5	Tice
		(80.9)	(45.0)	(31.1)	(23.8)	(17.6)	(13.1)	
13.0	36.0	59.0	34.3	23.9	19.0	13.9	10.4	Balk to E or W
		(62.3)	(34.6)	(23.9)	(18.3)	(13.5)	(10.0)	Yard Line
16.5	28.7	48.4	27.3	18.9	15.0	11.0	8.2	Balk to
		(49.0)	(27.2)	(18.9)	(14.4)	(10.7)	(7.9)	Peg
18.4	25.9	44.0	24.6	17.0	13.5	9.8	7.4	Shoot
		(44.0)	(24.4)	(16.9)	(12.9)	(9.6)	(7.1)	at Peg*
21.0	22.8	39.0	21.6	14.9	11.8	8.6	6.5	Hoop 1 to
		(38.5)	(21.4)	(14.8)	(11.3)	(8.4)	(6.2)	Hoop 2
26.0	18.5	32.0	17.6	12.1	9.6	7.0	5.2	E to W
		(31.1)	(17.3)	(12.0)	(9.2)	(6.8)	(5.0)	Yard Line
33.0	14.6	25.5	13.9	9.5	7.5	5.5	4.1	N to S
		(24.5)	(13.6)	(9.4)	(7.2)	(5.3)	(4.0)	Yard Line
40.0	12.1	21.0	11.5	7.9	6.2	4.5	3.4	Diagonal from
		(20.2)	(11.2)	(7.8)	(6.0)	(4.4)	(3.3)	Near Corners

§Assuming 'outer-limiting angles' correspond to 1.3 times standard deviations. *The peg at 13 yards is equivalent to a ball at 18.4 yards.

values (greater than 100%) at short ranges and low handicaps.

Now let us consider the results observed by Dr Grundy. Dr G.B. Grundy was a distinguished Oxford don and an ardent student of croquet theory. For two separate periods, 1922-23 and 1934-38, he devoted most of his time at tournaments to meticulously recording statistics of shooting. He disregarded practice and friendly games because he considered that when the pressure is not on, the results are misleading. His observations included all classes of players and were reported in the current issues of the Croquet Gazette. We are indebted to the late Col. D.M.C. Prichard for an excellent analysis of the complete results (D.M.C. Prichard, 'Statistics of Shooting', Croquet Gazette No.144, 1977) from which I have presumed to draw freely in what follows.

Col. Prichard combined the results for players of all handicaps and presented them in a list giving the percentage hits at every yard between 6 yards and 28 yards, and also included combined percentages for 29-34 yards and 35-42 yards. With two exceptions the results were based on over 500 shots, and most represented well over 1000 shots (a total of over 29,000 shots altogether). These results fitted a Normal distribution with a standard deviation close to one

degree. (In fact the shots at distances under 13 yards appeared to be slightly less accurate than those over 13 yards, standard deviations 1.09 and 0.95 respectively, see C.A. Parker, Gazette No. 182, November, 1985). It may be argued that it is unfair to combine the results for all handicaps. I would agree, if it were not for the following averages reported by Col. Prichard (For comparison, the averages in parentheses were calculated with Bamford's angle A assumed to be 1.3 standard deviations): Yards Hcp: -51/2 to 0 Hcp: 1/2 to 5

	% Hits	%	Hits	
6- 9	53 (76)	52.	5 (56)	
10-15	35 (53)	30	(36)	
16-19	31 (39)	32	(26)	
20-28	24 (29)	22	(19)	
28-42	18 (20)	19	(13)	
Yards	Hcp: 6 & over			
	% Hits			
6- 9	45 (27)			
10-15	31 (17)			
16-19	24 (12)			
20-28	15 (9)			
28-42	4 (6)			

Col. Prichard commented as follows. It is true that the most consistent good shots are all in the minus class, but the table shows that in shooting pure and simple, the ½ to 5-bisquers are, as a class, little, if at all, inferior to the minus players whose superiority lies not in their shooting but in other departments of the game. In the class of 6 bisques and over there are naturally some beginners who have not learnt how

to shoot, and bence their average is lower (but note results at 10-15 yards).

Whatever method we choose to calculate Mr Bamford's results, it is quite clear that he finds much greater differences in the shooting capabilities of the different classes than did Dr Grundy, and we may enquire as to the reasons for this. I suggest that the following may contribute to the difference:

- (1) The courts at the Rondebosch Club may be much truer than those considered by Dr Grundy. Uneven courts will obviously tend to even out the differences between good and bad shots.
- (2) Dr Grundy's results were obtained under the pressure of tournament play. Mr Bamford's experiments were done under relaxed conditions.
- (3) The players in Mr Bamford's experiments may not be representative of the majority of players.
- (4) Shooting abilities today may have changed considerably from those pertaining in Dr Grundy's day.

It would be interesting to get more information on today's shooting accuracy. The only concrete evidence I can find is in John Solomon's book (p.103) where, in shooting at the peg from the side boundary, he hits in 50% of the shots on average. This compares with 26% by Grundy (for all handicaps, at least up to 5), and 44% by modified Bamford (For a handicap of -2: a handicap of -5 gives 85%).

To quote Col. Prichard again: 'We have no evidence to show whether the players of today are better or

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1-3/4 size court

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worse shots than their predecessors. One suspects that there is little difference but until some dedicated person emulates Dr Grundy, this cannot be proved. We may not be prepared to emulate Dr Grundy, but we could easily obtain an index of performance under relaxed conditions if a large number of readers reported their accuracy by shooting at the peg from the middle of the East and West yard lines. My own performance (slow, wet lawn) taking five lots of 24 shots on five different days was as follows: 6, 7, 5 10 and 6 out of 24, giving an overall average of 28% for a handicap of $2\frac{1}{2}$. Anyone else like to contribute their score?



Allen Parker

PUBLICITY

I am pleased to inform you that we have recently had excellent publicity as a result of various articles appearing in the press. However, I would like to bring to your attention once again the following point; that anyone who submits articles to or is being interviewed by the media should inform them that their readers/viewers can obtain free literature regarding the game and the Croquet Association, together with advice about equipment and their nearest club, by sending a large stamped (26p) addressed envelope to:

The Administration Secretary,

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

Recently we have received an enormous number of enquiries about the game (over 400 in the past three weeks). Unfortunately, very few stamped addressed envelopes were enclosed which, of course, was time consuming and costly for the Association.

I should appreciate it if you would assist me by pointing out the necessity for a large SAE to be sent, with a 26p stamp.

Brian Macmillan. Administration Secretary.

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1984?

By Denis Moorcraft

Recent letters from Ken Cotterell and Bobby Crane confirm what many of us have felt for some time that Croquet Association policy gives increasing grounds for disguiet, and that it is time we made our views known. What is it we are unhappy about? Let us

examine some statements by members of Council in the last issue of Croquet.

Our own Chairman, whom I would regard as one of the more moderate members of Council. says: 'During his two years as Chairman, Lionel (Wharrad) 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

Well, I for one do not want to be dragged anywhere and until now I have assumed that Council members preferred more democratic methods of changing policy. And I am getting very tired of hearing that croquet is one of the fastest growing sports in the country. I doubt if it is, but anyway why should it be? Too rapid growth can be worse than

no change at all; CA policies cannot be justified merely by saying 'Look how progressive we are'.

Let's look now at John McCullough's article about the proposed increase in Club Registration Fees. This really isn't good enough. If the CA want more money from Clubs (and therefore, indirectly, from members) they must make their case more persuasively than this. Hardly anything is said to justify the expenses which have been incurred, the way they have increased and the way in which the CA have overspent ordinary revenue. The whole tone of the article (and the same goes for the letter which Steve Mulliner sent recently to Clubs explaining this year's increases in Levy etc.) was: 'We must have more money, what is the least painful way, for the CA, of raising it?' Hasn't it occured to anyone that if the books don't balance the first thing is to consider ways of reducing expenses? I know that Council thinks that all their expenditure is necessary, but they ought perhaps to pay a bit more attention to convincing members of this before they demand more money.

John graciously says that he isn't in favour of a hefty increase in CA subscriptions. Good on you John. Unfortunately he makes it clear that this is not out of any concern for members, but because he knows that any substantial increase would have members leaving in droves. It doesn't seem to worry him that the more the CA demand from Clubs, the more Clubs have to demand from their own members. But John lets the cat out of the bag when he says: '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 subscription and automatically becomes a member of the National Association'. So he wants a closed shop. Is that what you want? Personally I regard that in the same way that I regard the Trade Union closed shop with disgust. I think that Council should reassure us at least that such an objective is not CA

policy. Another disquieting situation is that Clubs should send their membership lists to the CA. Cheltenham Club at least will do no such thing. Like many other Clubs our membership records are stored on a home computer. Under the Data Protection Act 1984 we are exempt from registration providing that our members do not object (and they do not) to our present use of the information, i.e. for producing our own club directory, handicap list etc. If the information is to be used more widely we should have to register (more expense and inconvenience) but in any case we should not be prepared to let the CA have the information unless every individual agreed to it, any more than we should send it to Littlewoods.

These may seem small matters, but they are signs of an attitude that the CA know better than we do what is good for us. Last year's heavy handed interference in club handicapping is another example.

I was glad to read in John McCullough's other letter that 'at this moment Council is in the process of restructuring itself to meet new challenges'. He says that a number of new committees have been formed and that non-Council members and Regional representatives will have a place on some of them. Which members and what committees? I for one would welcome more regional participation, but not if it is confined to coaching, new clubs etc.

What worries many of us (and not just me and Bobby Crane)

a) The question of expansion. We are not opposed to all expansion, just to too rapid expansion and some of the things that accompany it. Any expenditure on expansion must be within our means. And instead of trying to set new records in the number of new clubs, some of which will not be viable, how about more attention to strengthening existing clubs?

b) The circular argument that

we must expand; therefore we must get more sponsorship in order to pay for the expansion; therefore we must at all costs get on television so as to attract sponsors. Try the argument in reverse:- we do not want the nasty commercialism that television has brought to other sports; and if that means only a low level of sponsorship, so be it; and if that slows down expansion, that may not be a bad thing either. Big is not necessarily

c) Short Croquet arouses mixed feelings. I would guess that more croquet players are against than are for. It may be good for coaching; it may be a means of introducing people to the real thing. But it wasn't introduced for those reasons - it was seen as a way on to television. But please do not let it assume too much importance, otherwise some future Council may find that the interests of real croquet have been sacrificed to the imitation.

d) We appreciate the work that Council members do, and the time that they spend on our behalf, but they do have an obligation to ensure that it is on our behalf and not to pursue some personal hobby horse. The strength of croquet lies in the members clubs all over the country, and one way of finding out what croquet players want is to consult Clubs more.

e) Many players would like to see a tighter control on CA spending. £14 CA subscription, plus tournament levies is already quite high in relation to what players pay to their own clubs. Most clubs find it difficult to make ends meet and to pay for providing and maintaining lawns and club facilities. Their task is not made easier by demands from the CA for a greater share of their

Finally, we are all to blame if we do not make our views known. It's the old story that the activists make the running, so I hope that the supporters as well as the critics of these views will speak up. We have the expensive luxury

-Continued on page 13

1984? - A Reply

By Steve Mulliner: Chairman, Finance & General Purposes Committee

Dennis Moorcraft's principal criticisms are that the Council is expanding croquet too quickly, spending too much money and getting too big for its boots. I do not accept these criticisms and I doubt that they will be accepted by anyone who has read the annual reports by the Chairman of Council and the Treasurer in this magazine over the last three

The pace of development The pace of development and the attention paid to the subject in Council and in the magazine has increased since 1984 because of a fundamental change in Sports Council grants policy. The CA first received a grant from the Sports Council in 1970 and continued to receive one every year thereafter. The grant permitted the CA to employ a full-time Secretary at a reasonable salary and, by 1984, had risen to £8,450, 32% of total income. In 1983, the Sports Council announced that this form of grant aid would end at the end of 1984. Instead, governing bodies could apply for substantial short-term development grants intended to lead to financial self-sufficiency through growth. The CA was not going to be allowed to continue its indefinitely subsidised existence at the expense of the taxpayer. However, if it could put up a good enough case, it would receive a short, sharp injection of funds so that it could stand on its own feet and cease to be a burden on public funds

The Council could have rejected the opportunity and accepted the loss of one third of the CA's income. This would have required savage expenditure cuts and significant subscription increases. Membership services would have been severely reduced, development activity would have been virtually extinguished and significant membership losses would have probably followed. The Council did not believe that this would be the wish of the majority of

Continued from page 12 of a magazine (good fun, but we can't really afford it on its present scale) so let us at least use it as a means of expressing views from

the grass roots.

I was tempted to end this by a plea for old fogeys of the croquet world to unite. But I don't think that age has anything to do with it. If you love croquet, see that our game is not spoilt.

Associates or in the best interests of the game.

Accordingly, a 3-year

Forward Plan was submitted to the Sports Council as part of an application for a Development Grant. The Forward Plan and its implications were discussed in detail at the November 1984 Club Conference which was attended by 86 representatives of 35 clubs and thoroughly endorsed so there is no justification for suggesting that the Council behaved undemocratically. Our application was successful, not least because we recognised the importance of appointing a full-time National Development Officer to carry the plan into effect. Chris Hudson has proved to be highly effective, both through his direct efforts and through the support he has given to the Regional Development Officers, coaches and other volunteers. As a result, the pace of expansion is as rapid as resources and energy permit. The Sports Council grant is a purely temporary luxury and the Council would be failing in its responsibilities to Associates and to the taxpayer if it did not make the most of the opportunity.

The current prominence of development activity will not become permanent. When the CA reaches self-sufficiency, it will no longer qualify for grant aid and, even if sponsorship or ordinary income permits the employment of a National Development Officer, development work will probably continue at a more modest pace.

Expenditure

The Council is criticised for overspending ordinary revenue. This means that the CA's basic expenditure (general office overheads and publications but not development expenditure) exceeds ordinary income (all income less sponsorship and grant). However, on this basis the CA has overspent ordinary revenue every year since the first Sports Council grant in 1970 and in 1984 the overspend amounted to £6,500. This was justified because the grant was a reliable form of income and the Council was entitled to budget accordingly. Once the change in policy became known, the Council immediately accepted the need to balance ordinary income and expenditure so that essential membership services can be continued after the grant ends. Sponsorship is regarded as

essentially uncertain and cannot yet be prudently brought into account as a stable income source. We intend that the ordinary account will balance in two or three years time depending on the rate of membership increase

In 1985, the 'ordinary overspend' was reduced to £750 as a result of increases in the rates of subscriptions and levy and unexpectedly high literature sales, investment income and advertising. In 1986, the Forward plan activities moved into top gear and had two significant cost implications. The first was the greatly increased CA Office workload and VAT registration which caused overheads to rise by £4,000. The second was the expansion of the magazine to become the principal publicity tool at a total cost of £14,350. The combination increased the ordinary overspend to £10,800 but this takes no account of the large element of development investment in the magazine.

the Council will not hesitate to trim the magazine accordingly. A magazine tailored to a

stable membership of about 1200 would contain about 100 pages and would cost about £7,000 to print and distribute. Thus, if the development element of the magazine cost is stripped out, the 1986 ordinary overspend is reduced to about £3,500. In 1987, the unadjusted ordinary overspend is budgeted to be £7,800 but is reduced to about £2,500 after adjustment for magazine development. If membership rises as planned, we can maintain the magazine at its present high standard and remain on course for a gradual reduction and ultimate elimination of the ordinary overspend in the next three years.

Dennis Moorcraft specifically complained about the Council's intention to increase levy in 1988 and John McCullough's proposal to raise club registration fees. The levy increase will be implemented and John's private



Some of the players at the final of last year's National Short Croquet Team event at Edgbaston. More teams are competing this year, and 10 clubs have entered the new 'All England' Short Croquet individual competition.

The magazine would not be published at such a cost unless the CA was involved in a major development campaign and expected a significant increase in membership over the next few years. The new-look 'Croquet' looks good, it is sufficiently substantial to be a 'real' sports magazine and it is worth reading no matter what sort of player you are. It conveys an invaluable sense of vigour about the game. It is substantial because it is double the size of the old magazine and it is the number of pages printed that is the main determinant of cost followed by the size of the print run. If the development campaign ends without increasing membership to the level required to support the magazine in its present form,

proposal will be considered only after taking into account the views of clubs and Associates, the sponsorship position and the likely outcome of our applicatiom for further development aid from the Sports Council. We are well aware that the personal circumstances of Associates vary and this is why we believe that 'play and pay' principal is fairer than simply increasing subscriptions across the board.

I hope that this account gives reassurance that the Council is spending the income obtained from all sources thoughtfully and wisely. Alan Oldham and I regard control of expenditure as our principal joint responsibility and we prosecute it with vigour.

Continued on page 24



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Southwick: 1-4 May

6 wins: P. Leach (5) (winner); Mrs E.

5 wins: D. Bull (4); F. Newman (3);

F. Beard (71/2); D. Shaw (41/2); Mrs P.

4 wins: R. Newnham (4): R. Hall

(71/2); Miss J. Loveys (10); Mrs E.

3 wins: Mrs M. Newman (4); Mrs M.

Bressey (5); F. Reynold (2).

Mapletoft (5); P. Mansfield (9).

(Handicap Swiss)

RESULTS:

Hetherington (7).

0 wins: I. Hall (16).

Report by Robert Prichard

Eight of the sixteen players here had been at Hunstanton the previous weekend but were faced with a marked contrast when they arrived on Saturday. Under a lot of sun the lawns were truly fast. Only one player coped effectively with the conditions throughout the weekend, 17 year old Robert Fulford, who has played almost all his croquet at Colchester.

By lunch it was clear to Robin Hobbs that he was going to need universal 3-hour time limits to fit in six rounds of Swiss in the two days compared with eight last year. This did provide some taut timed finishes. With time called in his turn. Prichard left three balls on corners and the fourth on the boundary near the fourth. Vincent hit in and with four perfect shots set up a three-ball break, which should have taken him to the peg and victory but for a silly miss. Steven Cornelius made an all-round break after time, to go one ahead of sister Debbie. He forgot there was a lift but she did not hit a six yarder. Silly miss.

Fulford showed only one consistent fault: trying implausibly angled hoops, perhaps a sign that the Colchester hoops are not normally set as tightly as on this occasion. However his good shooting and touch made his victory seem inevitable. He had won last year's Junior Championship and the Selector's Weekend but this was his first cash prize. Other firsts were Guest playing balls into corners 1 & 3 as a lift approached (he claimed never to have been so defensive before) and the first tandoori for Walters (who lost two of his three games the following day, having been unbeaten)

It was good to see Gerard Healy on a rare 'business' trip from Ireland, putting up a solid showing on his former home lawns. Another rare sighting was Stephen Wright, who now seems to enter tournaments only every other year. Although several players were local members only one (Fulford) was a resident in Colchester. The troupe of itinerants who meet so often around the country are grateful for the efforts and enthusiasm of such clubs. Particular thanks go to Paul Elliot for setting out the hoops in fresh holes and to Pat

Hetherington for her intricate casseroles.

Results:

(6 rounds)

6 wins: Robert Fulford.

5 wins: Gerard Healy.

4 wins: John Walters; Robert Prichard.

3 wins: Stephen Wright; Jerry Guest; Steven Cornelius; Debbie Cornelius; Martin French; Ian Vincent; Don Gaunt; David Goacher. 2 wins: Bill Lamb.

1 win: Robin Hobbs; Richard Hilditch; Lewis Palmer.



Robin Hobbs, in action at Colchester and Hunstanton

Compton: 8-10 May

Report by Ralph Chappell

Bathed in sunshine, with lawns in excellent condition and with the ladies exercising their charms and skills in both hospitality and play, Compton had good grounds to be pleased with the success of its opening tournament.

The Manager, Dennis Shaw, showed his devotion to croquet by not only organising 63 games on the five lawns in three days but also as a competitor and the only referee.

Double-banking gives an overall air of activity with two figures moving sharply on each lawn throughout the games but spectators were glad that there was always at least one lawn with a single match to watch.

A time limit (3 hours) encouraged some good forward croquet from B, C and D bisquers alike and Mrs Irwin and Frank Beard, visitors from Southwick, were worthy finalists.

RESULTS:

(Handicap Play)

Block 1

5 wins: F. Beard (71/2) +92.

3 wins: D. Daintree (6½) (runner-up)

J. Ruddock (31/2) -54. Block 2

+40: Mrs E. Ross +1.

2 wins: W. Philp (7) -7.

5 wins: Mrs S. Davies (8) +34. 4 wins: D. Harris (31/2) +29.

3 wins: E. Salmon (10) +48. 1 win: D. Brown (6) -30; Mrs F.

1 win: Mrs M. Grout (7) -52;

Crank (11) -32; Miss D. Martin

Block 3

5 wins: Mrs K.B. Irwin (8) +47.

4 wins: D. Shaw (31/2) +55. 3 wins: P. Campion (5) +44.

2 wins: B. James (12) -18.

1 win: Mrs B. Salmon (12) -64. 0 wins: Mrs A. Millns (9) -64.

Block 4

3 wins: Miss B. Dennant (8) (Block winner) +16; R.F. Crane (4) (runnerup) +5; Miss J. Loveys (10) +5.

2 wins: D. Cornelius (7) +27; J. Kellaway (8) -6. 1 win: Mrs V. Tyrwhitt-Drake

(6) -52.

Play-Off Semi-finals:

F. Beard bt Mrs S. Davies +23; Mrs K.B. Irwin bt Miss B. Dennant +7.

Beard bt Mrs Irwin +12.

Hunstanton: 2-4 May Hot Contest in a Cold Wind

Report by Robert Prichard

In 1930 the local MP Lord Fermoy (he was an Irish peer) presented a cup. The event for which it has been awarded has had three incarnations. From 1930 to 1952, it was the 'A' Class at the lesser of Hunstanton's two weeks. Entries were always poor, averaging 4, but the final report in 1952 drew the consolation that this 'meant all the croquet competitors could want, without that rush - one hour for lunch, and tea by the courtside - two characteristics of many of the larger tournaments'. In 1967 it was revived as a Handicap Weekend (a format of which Hunstanton was the pioneer club, in 1956) and from 1980 as a Level Weekend with the Fermoy Cup

for the 'A' Block. This year there were twelve players in the 'A' Swiss: mostly beer-drinkers from SW London and pizza eaters from SE Anglia. By Sunday evening the latter looked safe, with Walters on 6/6 and only Prichard on 5/6 after several long battles. On Monday morning the beer-drinking Manager Noble (two TP's in the weekend) beat Walters while Prichard started to play well and beat Stevens. The final round matched Walters against Bond,

who had tested his theory that it is easier to do well in a Swiss if you lose early on but found three losses on the first day a testing advantage despite producing the weekend's third TP. Bond won, as Prichard was lining up a three yard peg-out against Hilditch. The front ball missed and Prichard had twenty shots as Hilditch lunged from 2 & 4 to 4-b & 4-b. Rising enthusiasm amongst the pizza-eaters for more of the same was punctured when Prichard at last hit a 35 yarder to win the Cup. The other 14 players were

divided into two blocks. The 'B' block was won by Lewis Palmer, salvaging some success for Ipswich and the 'C' block by Roger Deacon from Bowdon. (Deacon won the unofficial playoff between these two, but the manager is rightly dubious about single-game play-offs between winners of blocks of different standards, a practice which unkindly robbed Stevens of the Fermov Cup in 1984). The prize for dogged tenacity should have gone to Nick Harris and John Gosden, who battled for 5hrs 50 mins, after a 3rd hoop start, in the worst of the weekend's wind and hail; though Celia Steward, four of whose games carried a margin of 5 or less, would have been runner-up.

Finally a coincidence which may shed some light on the type of person who enjoys croquet. The beer-drinkers had taken two cars to the pub one evening and the conversation turned to history. It became necessary to consult '1066 and All That'. What were the odds against both cars happening to have a copy in their boot?

RESULTS:

Block A (Advanced Play)

7 wins: R.D.C. Prichard.

6 wins: J.O. Walters; G. Noble.

5 wins: M. French; D.L. Gaunt; Miss

D. Cornelius. 3 wins: I.D. Bond; W.E. Lamb; M.S.

Stevens: R. Hobbs.

2 wins: J.R. Hilditch.

0 wins: M. Holford.

Block B

(Advanced Play) 5 wins: L. Palmer.

4 wins: P. Elliott.

3 wins: J. Reeve; Miss S. Hampson;

N. Harris. 2 wins: J. Gosden.

1 win: R.A. Gosden

Block C

(Level Play) 6 wins: R. Deacon.

4 wins: D. Cornelius. 3 wins: H. Barnett: Miss P.

Hampson: Mrs B. Gosden. 1 win: Miss C. Steward; B. Christ-

On the whole a very good tournament enjoyed by everyone with the exception of 'Mr Bye' who lost all of his games by 26. Many thanks to Brian Storey who managed very well despite getting only one hour of sleep in three days of the tournament. RESULTS:

(Handicap Play)

Block A

5 wins: D. Arthur (Block winner);

4 wins: W.O. Aldridge. 3 wins: Mrs B. Sutcliffe



Dan Kelly relaxes at Bowdon.

2 wins: Mrs B. Shotton. 1 win: J. Taylor; K. McCombe. Block B

6 wins: P. Goldberg. 5 wins: D. Watkins.

3 wins: B. Sanford; A.F. Sutcliffe. 2 wins: P. Trafford.

1 win: J. Shotton: Mrs A. Jones. Swiss

7 wins: D. Maugham. 6 wins: J. Haslam

5 wins: S. Packer; B.J. Storey. 4 wins: Mrs C. Lewis; Miss A.E. Dawson; R. Edwards.

3 wins: C.H. Wild: Mrs A. Rimmer. 1 win: P. Thomson; Mrs C.E. Irwin.

Leach (14). 2 wins: Mrs P. Asa-Thomas (3); P. Emery (7); R. Selmes (5).

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

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 July if they are to be included in the next issue.

Hurlingham: 2-4 May

Bowdon: 8-10 May

Report by David Maugham

For such an early tournament -

only three weeks into the season

- the conditions could not have

been better. The weather was

excellent and the lawns were fast

for four American blocks and too

many for only three, the format

was of two blocks of seven players

each and a Swiss of eleven

players (plus someone named

except on the lawn at Denzell

Gardens where it tended to be

slower. Block A was won by

David Arthur by virtue of his win

over Dan Kelly, and Paul

Goldberg won his block con-

vincingly after beating everyone

Maugham played very well.

losing none of his games (I know,

I was there). The final game was

a decider against Stuart Packer,

in which David had two all round

breaks and Stuart was unlucky

not to catch up after being given

a 'four balls round rover' leave (as

practised by the professionals),

but he clanged hoop 4 several

times (it annoyed him so much

that after losing he broke it).

In the Swiss, David

The play was generally good

As there were too few players

and true.

Bye!?).

else in it.

Report by Roger Clayton

The English are always optimistic about the weather when they see the sun. So three gentlemen appeared in shorts on the chilling first day of the Hurlingham May weekend tournament. Low temperatures, bitter winds, hail and rain contributed to some discomfort though most of us were well wrapped up. On Sunday the aeroplanes overhead were seen to move sideways into Heathrow but our balls generally went straight.

Hurlingham etiquette requires the wearing of white on the front lawns but as always wet weather gear displayed most colours of the rainbow.

Four blocks of seven competitors each confirmed the popularity of this opening of season event, people coming from as far as Huntingdonshire and Hampshire. The lawns still needed some work and were very heavy going in spite of their having heen cut low early the first morning.

Play was most enjoyable though there were no fireworks. We were often double banked but

uneventfully. Mr Denis Cross spent a lot of time in the big new windowed tent by lawn four moving about pieces of paper and scribbling lists of players. We had no doubt though of his organisational expertise.

RESULTS:

(Advanced Play)

Block 1

6 wins: G.N. Aspinall.

4 wins: C. Southern; J.D. Meads. 3 wins: Mrs W.R.D. Wiggins.

2 wins: J.E. Guest. 1 win: Dr W.R.D. Wiggins; R.P. Tribe.

Block 2 6 wins: D.C.D. Wiggins.

5 wins: G. Vince. 3 wins: N. Gale; R.J. Smith.

2 wins: J.D. Greenwood. 1 win: L. Wharrad; W.B. Denison.

Block 3 5 wins: D. Beatty (Block winner);

J.P.G. Watson. 4 wins: C.B. Sanford.

3 wins: M.J.B. Haggerston. 2 wins: J.C. Straw. 1 win: B.P. Whitehouse.

Block 4

5 wins: D.C. Cross. 4 wins: Mrs P.V. Healy (runner-up);

D.T. Ruscombe-King. 3 wins: Miss B. Duthie; Mrs B. **Mansfield**

2 wins: Mrs I.P.M. Macdonald.

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The Croquet Classic

The Croquet Classic

The Lassale Croquet Classic.

The build up

The Observer followed up their initial article launching the Croquet Classic with several more mentions of the competition, and they also ran three special croquet set offers. All their publicity helped us to obtain a most successful entry for the first year of what surely must become an annual event.

The closing date for entries was extended by 10 days in the hope that better weather would encourage even more people to have a go. In the end, 322 entry forms were received, and 572 people are due to play in the competition.

Some clubs, hotels and other groups are running preliminary 'blocks of 8', with the winner going on to the relevant regional final. We hope that this will prove to be a popular format and that next year more clubs and groups of neighbours will take the opportunity to arrange their own local tournament as a preliminary event for the national competition.

To enable us to cater for large numbers, entries have to be in to the organisers early in the croquet season. Consequently we are planning to accept group entries at the end of this season at a reduced rate for next year. This will enable clubs to plan ahead, and to offer all this year's new recruits the chance to shine in the 1988 competition.

The club or group will be able to run their preliminary tournament in whatever format they like, the only requirement being that it is played on half-size lawns and that the name of the group



Wendy Hardy and David Smith, who played the first match in this year's Croquet Classic

winner is forwarded to the organisers by mid-July in time for the Regional Final. The reduced rate for an early entry will enable group organisers to make a modest profit by charging players the normal rate. Alternatively, they could give the players the benefit of a reduced entry fee, or provide some refreshment on the day of the tournament.

The first match.

The first match of this year's Croquet Classic was played at The Royal Berkshire Hotel by kind permission of Robin Sheppard, son of Derek Sheppard, Chairman of the Bath Club. We were provided with an excellent buffet lunch and it was such a pleasant environment for croquet that we have decided to hold a Regional Final there later in the season.

The match itself was between Wendy Hardy, of Ascot, and David Smith from London. Wendy is a computer programmer from the Met Office at Bracknell who has played croquet since her schooldays. David is a journalist on the London Evening Standard and after a cat and mouse game, he lost to Wendy by 14 points to 4 in his first ever competitive game of croquet.

During the match, Wendy and David found time to pose for the Press whilst having a dingdong battle on court. In the end, it was Wendy's experience that got her through, but David left telling everyone that he would like to have another go — Wendy had shown him that there was much more to the game than he had previously realised.

Covering the event afterwards, the Slough Eton & Windsor Observer produced the banner headline 'Alice's game shakes off the vicarage lawn image', telling their readers of their introduction to the rudiments of the game 'by a typically English white haired gentleman, curiously nicknamed Smokey, a handle he earned by burning down the school gym as a 15-year old.'

a 15-year old.'
Also present at this first match were Geoff Capes (billed as 'the world's strongest man') and Suzanne Dando (former international gymnast), both there to demonstrate that even 'personalities' can play croquet. They had a tremendous time, gave the photographers a field day, and finally played a highly competitive game of croquet, the result of which was never quite



Lassale's David Innes with Suzanne Dando and Geoff Capes at The Royal Berkshire Hotel, Ascot, venue for the first match. Smokey Eades, partially hidden, gives advice and encouragement.

revealed. Suzanne commented afterwards that she thought croquet was terrific.

After lunch, club players captained by Smokey Eades and Derek Sheppard played a representative match on the hotel lawns. Smokey was rewarded for his efforts by winning a Lassale watch, a prize donated by the company for the first player to make a break of more than four hoops.

Press coverage.

Alan Pascoe's press office has obtained wide media coverage for the event. Besides the national press, news items have appeared in many regional newspapers, with photographs of local players practising on their lawns and getting ready for the 'off'.

The venues

Some of the venues for the regional finals have now been established, amd they have been chosen to give, as near as possible, the same number of players in each Region. All players will therefore have one or two, if not three, matches to play before they reach a Regional final. The Regional finals will be played during the last two weeks of July.

In the South West, the venue is to be Castle Drogo, at Drewsteighton. Perched on a crag overlooking the Teign Valley, the castle is a marvel of the ingenuity of the architect Sir Edward Lutyens. The house was built during the early part of this century and not fully completed until just before the Second World War. It contains much to fascinate the family: magnificent craftsmanship combining the grim splendours of a mediaeval castle with the opulent luxuries

required by the Drewe family, including the Castle's own telephone and hydro-electric system.

There are magnificent views from the Castle standing over 900ft above the wooded gorge of the Teign to Dartmoor. It has a beautiful, secluded garden, also designed by Sir Edward Lutyens, which contains a circular croquet lawn. Equipment may be hired from the Administrator.

The venue for East Anglia is

Blickling Hall, site of a croquet match last season in the Moet & Chandon Challenge series that was enjoyed so much by East Anglian Clubs. The Hall, rosered and pinnacled, is a nearperfect example of an historic English country house. The present building dates from the time of James I and was built by Sir Henry Hobart, his Chief Justice. The ornate staterooms are largely in late 18th-century styles and include a long gallery which houses an exceptional library.

The Blickling Estate was bequeathed to the National Trust on the death of Lord Lothian in 1940. He was then the British Ambassador in Washington. The Orangery, which contains a fine selection of plants and statuary, was probably designed by Humphry Repton and is late 18th-century.

The gardens are in the grand style and renowned for the great yew hedges and herbaceous borders. Included are a Doric Temple and a woodland garden, both of early 18th-century design: and a secret garden. The dry moat offers sheltered sites for a range of choice plants, and the old walled kitchen garden is now a free, spacious picnic area.

There are three access points to the Park, each with a map on which are shown the public and permitted rights of way which the visitor is welcome to follow. Features in the Park are a milelong lake, a pyramidal Mauso-

Hinton Ampner in Hampshire is another Regional final venue. It was Ralph Dutton (later the 8th Lord Sherborne) who set about the transformation of a haphazard Victorian/Edwardian garden into the gracious fascination of planes, walks, vistas and terraces that one sees today.

leum and a Gothic-style Tower.

Lord Sherborne died in 1985 at the age of 86 and left the entire Hinton Ampner Estate of 1640 acres to the National Trust, which has decided to retain the major part of the Estate including the house, garden and park, and the hamlet of Hinton Ampner. The Trust opened the garden to the public immediately it acquired the property and this year for the first time the five principal ground floor showrooms within the house will be open to view on Wednesday afternoons.

The house has been remodelled several times, but it needed complete restoration in 1962 after a major fire. The furnishing and decoration are representative of a strand of English country house taste between the wars.

The gardens comprise a walled kitchen garden of about one acre, an orchard that covers the site of the original Tudor house, a magnolia garden and the Dell, one of the first parts of the garden to be reclaimed after the war. The yew garden, the Long Walk (nearly 200 yards long), the sunken garden (a carpet of colour from its tulips in the late Spring), the Temple and the Bastion complete the design of a luxurious and colourful garden which wends and weaves, envelopes and surprises, and serves to link the house

comfortably to its splendid aspect over the Hampshire countryside.

In the North West, Speke Hall has been chosen to host the Regional final. This is an Elizabethan manor house 8 miles from the centre of Liverpool on the bank of the Mersey.

Built round a courtyard, this is one of the most remarkable half-timbered houses in the country. The great Hall evokes the communal living of Tudor times, the many smaller panelled rooms the Victorian preference for privacy and comfort. The Hall was built during the period from the late 15th to the early 17th centuries by members of the Norris family who were important landowners in South Lancashire and Cheshire. The Kitchen and the Servants' Hall. Jacobean plasterwork, priestholes, garden and woodland provide a fascinating glimpse of the life lived by wealthy families over a period of four centuries. It was accepted by the National Trust in 1943, and it is now supported by the National Museums and Galleries on Mersevside.

At each regional final, we are planning to have an extra lawn on which public demonstrations and coaching can be carried out. The best of luck to all those who are taking part — we hope that everyone has a most enjoyable time!

Regional Final Dates

Tuesday 21st July: Castle Drogo, Devon; Wednesday 22nd July: Royal Berkshire Hotel, Ascot: Friday 24th July: Hinton Ampner, Hampshire; Monday 27th July: Gleneagles Hotel, Perthshire: Tuesday 28th July: Speke Hall, Liverpool; Wednesday 29th July: Blickling Hall, Norwich: Friday 31st July: Castle Howard, Yorkshire.



Speke Hall, Merseyside. One of the venues for this year's Regional finals.

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Your Letters (2)

Channel 4 film

Dear Sir,

Congratulations to the producers of the Channel 4 video in 'Challenge to Sport'.

I deliberately did not read the script published in our magazine as I wanted to get a first reaction by seeing the video fresh. I admit I was non-plussed at seeing a young man in a red helmet on a motor cycle and muttered to myself, 'What the hell is he doing in a film about croquet?' but all was revealed – he was a newcomer to the game arriving at the local club – it certainly rivetted attention!

The contrasts between the characters portraved were also well thought out, revealing the whole spectrum from the 'Shires' to the 'Townies'. A briefidea of the game was conveyed with a few technical terms, there were references to the International and National competitions and some good humorous moments in particular at the end with the new recruit airing his 'knowledge' to another newcomer! All was delightfully done. It contrasted notably with the previous sport shown, 'Archery', in which I am mildly interested, which was dreadful and put me off com-

We, at Woking, were lucky in that Ian McDiarmid brought along his TV on the evening when it was shown which coincided with a recruiting day at the club, and therefore we were able to watch it with 20 people new to the game and get their reactions. All but one were very impressed — the one that was not said it didn't deal with the game at any length, to which I pointed out the film only lasted for 10 minutes!

I also asked people who came to the Open Days at Southwick on 16/17th May if any of them had seen the film — several had and all who had seen it were



Noel Dyson pegs out gracefully for Channel 4.

impressed.

Since the film was directed at people who had never played 'Association Croquet' their views are the most important, and on these grounds alone, the film was an unqualified success. In addition, the CA were receiving 50 letters a day for some time after the film was shown.

I hope we shall have an opportunity for making more of these films. Well done.

Derek Caporn, Woking.

Dear Sir,

Oh, by the way did you see the TV Channel 4 video on croquet. Pretty awful wasn't it? Actors playing croquet, can you imagine? No actors played water polo (same programme), you must have seen the elderly woman, who is a very well known TV character actress a hundred times, but playing croquet?

No pictures of a club with players on the lawns, no pictures even of a lawn, just a corner of a vicarage lawn.

No pictures of expert players doing a few shots to make it look serious.

Must have set croquet back a generation.

(Dr) Roger Clayton, Hurlingham.

The End of an Era

(or Blowing our own Trumpet Farewell)

Colworth Croquet Club was founded in 1963 and is a 'works' team of Unilever Food Research staff.

We have a flourishing Golf Croquet lunchtime membership and a few who play Association Croquet mainly on a 1/3 size lawn – played on by Sir Winston Churchill during the war. We play our home matches at Wrest Park and are indebted to them for their support and encouragement.

Since 1972 we have entered the Inter-Club competition and really enjoyed (almost) every minute of it. (We continued to support it when it was in the doldrums.) We have lost most of our matches, but have often made our opponents fight hard to beat us. We have beaten Southwick, Wrest Park and Bowdon and in 1977 reached the semi-finals. We have fielded only 7 different players and since 1980 always the same 4 players with handicaps then from 8 down to 1/2. (We were going to change the team this year!)

Our first pair always gave a good account of themselves in the Doubles, and our Handicap 6 beat $a - \frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ in one match,

and our No 4 has only lost 2 of the last 8 games played.

This Inter-Club play has done wonders for the standard of our match play – it certainly helped us to win the Longman Cup!

Now the Rules have been changed. We are sorry we are not allowed to enter both Inter-Club and Mary Rose competitions (Life would be very boring if you only entered competitions you were sure of winning.)

Greetings to all our exopponents, we have happy memories.

NJD, TWA, CC, JMA, AD, TW. Colworth.

The Dutch Championships

Dear Sir,

Your correspondent for the 1986 Dutch Championships mentioned what he described as the shot of the tournament. To be precise he wrote '... causing his ball to pass over fifth, through second and effect a roquet in the second corner'.

Lawn managers the world over might find the final development rather puzzling. I think it is indicative of much about Dutch Croquet, and goes a long way to explaining some of the first round results.

David Peterson, Oxford.

New Croquet Book

Dear Sir,

This is just to let you know that my book, 'Croquet – the Complete Guide' will be published by The Kingswood Press (the sports publication arm of Heinemann's) in the summer.

I should just like to avail myself of the courtesy of your letters page to thank all those members of the CA who helped me with it. They are acknowledged in the book, so I will not give their names here — that would make the letter too long! Anton Gill,

London.

Nailsea Croquet Club

Dear Sir,

For those clubs who have played and won or struggled and lost, on our lawns at Trendlewood Way, Nailsea, we have good news: Our lawns are no more! The bull-dozers have done their worst and we now have one large level site on which we are creating three and a half lawns, hopefully to be ready in mid-1988.

In the meantime, we have moved to The Grove Sports Centre, Old Church, Nailsea, where we have two lawns which are not quite as bad as the ones we have ploughed up!

We hope any visitors to the Nailsea area near Bristol will contact us and arrange a game. John Jeffrey,

Chairman: Nailsea C.C. (Tel: 0272-852508).

Accommodation during tournaments

Dear Sir,

The response has not been overwhelming to my letter in the May issue, suggesting the listing of accommodation offered to potential tournament entrants. Indeed, there have been no offers and no enquiries.

However, some clubs do already offer assistance to entrants by the inclusion of an 'accommodation secretary' in their entries in the fixture book; perhaps this could be extended for next year?

Jerry Guest, Richmond.

Nom-de-plume?

Dear Sir,

I hate to be so ungallant as to throw doubt upon the very existence of a lady but the name of "Croquet"'s latest authoress tempts one to surmise that the magazine's editor has taken that familiar road, down which many a hard-pressed journalist has stumbled: namely, the creation of a fictitious writer to whom to attribute some article or story penned by the editor himself.

Dorothy (Dolly?) Rush indeed! Pull the other one, sir, and you will hear a peel of belles. Lest your readers opine that my allegation is a mere shot in the dark, a vile, unsubstantiated calumny, let them consider, in all sobriety, that the letters of the name of "Croquet"'s revered editor - CHRIS HUDSON - may easily be rearranged to form the words: DO. RUSH IS C. H..... N. Proof positive, as any reasonable man or woman would agree.

Come along, sir. Own up and shame the devil.

Peter Dorke,

Ludlow.

P.S. But a fine tale, nevertheless, sir, and one of which you may be justly proud.

The editor replies: I wish I could write as well as Dorothy! As for her identity, all I can tell you is that 'Dolly' Rush sends me her stories from Shrewsbury (isn't that quite close to Ludlow?) and that there are more fine stories in the pipeline. So, Not Guilty! Honest! – Ed.

Club history

WORTHING CROQUET CLUB

By Pat Shine (Chairman: Worthing C.C.)

Worthing's first Croquet Club was established in May 1865, and I had hoped to re-establish it in 1975. I worked hard that year, looking for spare land and visiting Sports Clubs and wealthy landowners, all with little success. Finally I found that our own Borough Council was the most helpful and basically was in favour of Croquet in Worthing.

I was lent a small lawn, but it was not satisfactory, and after one season I decided to try for something better. I kept in touch with the Council, but not until March 1983 did I think of presenting a petition to them. I collected over 300 signatures from people who said they wanted croquet, and in this way we achieved the break through I had been looking for; we were given a full size lawn at Field Place.

Field Place is basically a Bowls Club, and in a very short time we had too many members for one lawn, so I had to start again and ask for more. I never thought it would take over ten years to get a reasonable Club together, but now I am writing to tell you of our achievements.

In March 1986 we were introduced to our future lawns - at that time a field - attached to the Worthing Municipal Golf Course. Known as Hill Barn, it has a most beautiful position on the edge of the Downs. After a great deal of negotiation, the Council agreed to lay us two lawns, and allow us the use of the Golf Club facilities, which are great. We have an excellent restaurant, with a bar, and meals are served from 7.30 am - 8 pm. We have a Club Room, cloakrooms with showers, and all this is well looked after and cleaned by Worthing Borough Council.

When we began our season we had nowhere for our equipment, notices, etc.; we had to make do with our cars and a cupboard! We knew we must have our own chalet/Club House, and it took time to buy and erect this, as we had to obtain the agreement of the Worthing Recreation & Leisure Department to have a building on its land. When we had achieved this we next had to get Planning Permission: once this was granted we soon had the Club House erected. It is not all that big, but it easily takes three stands built for mallets, chairs and the daily equipment. The walls are hung with purpose built notice boards and we have a

verandah where players can shelter from the wet and others can sit and watch the games or look at the countryside in this glorious setting. This Club House is perfect, and I enclose a photograph, but unfortunately you cannot see the many members watching me cut the tape on our opening day in August 1986.

Whilst waiting for the chalet, we were allowed to get vandal-proof seats erected. This helped us; they are much appreciated, they need no upkeep and are cemented into the ground. Some Croquet Clubs will be amazed to

cups that I have ever seen for our Singles Club Association Tournament - the Jellicorse Cup - given to us by the late Captain Jellicorse's granddaughter, who found it in her attic! Captain Jellicorse was one of the four Croquet enthusiasts who in 1901 bought land at Southwick and formed the Sussex County Croquet Club. His granddaughter is a player and usually presents the Jellicorse Cup to the winner at our Annual General Meeting. We have also started to play matches against other Clubs; we are affiliated to the Croquet Association and have entered the Longman Cup.

have one of the best solid silver

We reckon Worthing is a

with all of our members in the Winter, we meet twice a month; on the first Thursday at our own Club, having the Dining Room to ourselves, and on the third Wednesday at a Pub at a nearby village. An average of 30-40 players come and have coffee, drinks, lunch, all as they like, and future players, not yet members, are encouraged to come too. We really are a thriving Club and are recruiting new members all the time. The press are always willing to give us coverage.

As our members are for ever increasing, we now have been promised a 'Short Croquet' lawn for this coming season, for coaching as well as for this newer game. We are hoping that we



Pat Shine (centre, long coat) cuts the tape to open Worthing's new Club House.

hear that our two full size lawns are cut and marked three times a week. The lawns do slope a little, especially around one or two hoops, but the Groundsman in charge is very co-operative and is taking up turfs now where the lawn needs levelling most. The Council took some time to deliver the check fence surround. It seemed unable to understand what we wanted, and I had to meet one representative at Southwick to show him the check fence. So all is now nearly perfect, and our hoops are put out and taken in daily, except after hours.

Our Membership is over 70 – a fantastic number in so short a time. Some of the members at present confine themselves to Golf Croquet, but we are grateful to anyone who wishes to play. We

great help to Southwick, and when players become proficient and ready for CA Tournaments we encourage them to become members of the Sussex County Croquet Club as well; three players have in fact left Worthing altogether for Southwick! At least eight members belong to both Clubs; four of these help us with coaching, along with Dr David Higgs who comes regularly.

Worthing Leisure and Recreation Committee approached us in May, with a view to our putting on some form of croquet activity for 'Live Aid'. On one of the wettest days in memory we had 'fun on the lawn', a gymkhana to some, and we raised just under £200. The Worthing Mayor and Mayoress joined us.

As we like to keep in touch

shall be able to lure some of the 'Golf players to 'Short Croquet', and then to Association. We may well get another lawn elsewhere in the town, to help people who find Hill Barn a little far to reach. May Worthing in the distant future be known, not only for its Bowls, but for Croquet too.

1987 SUBSCRIPTIONS

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)

Sponsorship

The 1987 Royal Bank National **Schools Croquet Championship**

Latest News

Report by Peter Dorke

A healthy number of schools have taken up the game this year and some have even been so bold as to enter the Championship while still raw beginners. The final count is 29 schools entered, with 42 teams taking part.

This means that at least 126 young people will take part in a dozen or so day-long tournaments. Some, like Fettes College of Edinburgh, the only Scottish entry, will travel many miles to play but the majority will be catered for in their own region. Most will play at croquet clubs like Colchester or Southport, where they will get the full flavour of croquet, perhaps for the first time. A few may have to meet at a school venue but we hope that even there coaches and referees from local clubs will be on hand to help.

The winners of the regional tournaments will have the good fortune to play the National Final at Edgbaston, where the welcome for youngsters is always warm and the members roll up in droves to support such occasions.

Back in February, when over 1000 School Croquet leaflets were sent to schools throughout England, Wales and Scotland, we cherished the wild hope that a

hundred or more croquet-playing schools would appear like hibernating hedgehogs to greet the New Spring of Schools Croquet. Now we know that there were not, after all, quite as many secret croquet players in our schools as expected but there is still much cause for rejoicing. For of those 29 entries, 14 are new to the Championship. Moreover, 20 schools have now registered with the CA and another 24 have introduced croquet this year, with a view to entering the 1988 competition.

Sadly, 15 entrants from previous years have not been heard from this time but it is hoped that they are still playing and will have teams ready for next year, when the entry could easily rise to over 60 schools.

We must hope that each of the schools now playing will spread the word amongst its neighbours and that clubs will continue to help. Perhaps the most pleasing aspect of the Great Assault on Schools has been the willingness of club secretaries to get involved, distributing leaflets like confetti amongst their local schools. Many thanks to them and to the Regional School Secretaries, whose problems are just beginning.

Cheltenham: 11-12 April **Coaching Course for Teachers**

Report by Peter Dorke

In spite of expensive advertising in the Times Ed. Supp. and the Guardian, only 12 teachers applied for this course (Awful thought: do teachers read the Telegraph, perchance?) and, in the end, only 8 turned up. Jokes about truancy, notes from their mothers and similar witticisms may be taken as read.

The instructors' aim was to reach the 4 ball break by Sunday night. In the event some students got there by the end of Saturday's session while others were still struggling with the basic shots.

The warmth of Sunday made an enormous difference to progress and to tempers. By the time Bernard Neal turned, after lunch, to talk about the Laws, most of the teachers knew, at least, what they were supposed to bedoing. Nevertheless, Professor Neal's amazing prestidigitation on the lawns had Liz Meyland-Smith of Ealing (Ron Welch

please recruit) asking to 'see that again' - preferably in slow

The end-of-course tournament was won by Bryan Brown of New College, Telford, but only after his colleague Peter Juhev had beaten him in the semifinals, then made an excuse and left. The final, with Peter Longhurst, ended in a fittingly exciting duel for the first point after 'Time'.

Winner of the 'Losers' final was Julia Price, bravely carrying on, in spite of difficulties with her back, her hotel breakfast and the Parachute Regiment. (This is an in-joke: do not look for a croquet meaning.)

All the teachers departed in good spirits, with the avowed intention of joining a club and starting croquet in their schools.

The instructors just limped away quietly.

Roehampton: 19 May **Good Minds Need Food For Thought**

Report by Robert Prichard

Two postgraduates dragged two undergraduates from their final revision to face a team of two recent Oxford graduates and two

older locals in the match between Roehampton and Oxford University.

After the morning games,

Roehampton were 3-1 up, but then Oxford ate lunch. In the afternoon Oxford levelled the score at 4-4. A third round was ordained and Oxford ate tea. They cancelled only three hoops in the first three games to finish. Prichard saved Cambridge honour by remaining undefeated.

Luff had been trying triples all day, Wormald managed a double and Peterson ended with triple. At 7pm Oxford had to leave (to watch England draw 1-1 with Brazil) sparing Roehampton what, by extrapolation, would have been a stunning fourth round.

Oxford: 7 wins. N Luff bt IPM MacDonald +17 & T. Russell +5. DNS Peterson bt M Holford +6 & T Russell + 24(TP). I Plummer bt IPM MacDonald +14 & M Holford +26. M Wormald bt IPM MacDonald +25

Rochampton: 5 wins
RDC Prichard bt Peterson +15. Wormald +13 & Luff +8. M Holford bt Wormald +10. T Russell bt Plummer +5.





USCA Challenge Cup (Continued from page 25)

doubles (5 won by the US and 2 won by GB); 1 was Association rules doubles (won by GB); 1 was US rules singles (won by GB) and 1 was Association rules singles (won by US). Draw your own conclusions.

Finally, all the Great Britain team and I would like to pass on our thanks to the USCA for their hospitality. I hope when they visit Britain next year we can make their visit as enjoyable as ours

THE USCA CHALLENGE CUP Great Britain v United States Doubles (US Rules)

G.N. Aspinall & K.M.H. Aiton lost to R. Fleming & T. Arkley -6(T); lost to D. Prentis & D. Dribben -1(T); and beat J.C. Osborn & J.R. Osborn +9(T).

C.J. Irwin & M. Avery beat R. Fleming & T. Arkley +22; lost to D. Prentis & D. Dribben -1(T); and beat J.C. Osborn & J.R. Osborn +8(T). D.K. Openshaw & P. Cordingley lost to R. Fleming & T. Arkley -6(T); lost to D. Prentis & D. Dribben -5(T); and beat J.C. Osborn & J.R. Osborn +15.

Singles (US Rules) K.M.H. Aiton beat J.R. Osborn +24. G.N. Aspinall beat R. Fleming +5. M. Avery beat D. Dribben +16. P. Cordingley lost to T. Arkley -9 C.J. Irwin beat D. Prentis +17. D.K. Openshaw beat J.C. Osborn

Doubles (International Rules) K.M.H. Aiton & P. Cordingley beat R. Fleming & T. Arkley +9(T); beat D. Prentis & J.C. Osborn +26, and beat D. Dribben & J.R. Osborn +24. G.N. Aspinall & M. Avery beat R. Fleming & T. Arkley +20; beat D. Prentis & J.C. Osborn +24; and beat D. Dribben & J.R. Osborn

D.K. Openshaw & C.J. Irwin beat R. Fleming & T. Arkley +15; beat D. Prentis & J.C. Osborn +16; and beat D. Dribben & J.R. Osborn +16.

Singles (International Rules) K.M.H. Aiton beat J.R. Osborn

+26TP G.N. Aspinall beat R. Fleming +23. M. Avery beat T. Arkley +25. P. Cordingley beat D. Dribben +24. C.J. Irwin beat D. Prentis +17. D.K. Openshaw lost to J.C. Osborn -11(T).

QEGS Blackburn feature on television

The Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School croquet team were featured in a 5-minute slot on sport in 'It's wicked', BBC1's Saturday morning programme for youngsters.

(Top left) Mark Saurin with David English, the BBC's presenter.

(Bottom left) Chris Clarke being interviewed in front of the Southport pavilion.

An Ultra Modern Lager Brewery Carlsberg in Britain

Carlsberg Brewery in Northampton first started brewing its Danish lagers 12 years ago, and since that time has grown into a colossal enterprise, helping to make the county's name known throughout Britain because it appears on millions of bottle and can labels.

This modern £100m brewery. which stands in 20 acres in the middle of Northampton, is a modern landmark, and is helping to influence the major swing towards lager drinking in this country - some 40% of the beer market is now taken by lager and the figure is rising.

The Carlsberg Brewery at Northampton.

Carlsberg lagers from Den-

mark enjoy widespread distribu-

tion in Britain's hotels, and are in

fact among the lagers which

started the current swing towards

this bottom-fermented drink in

been imported by Britain since

1868, first coming into the

country via Leith in Scotland, and

the famous Carlsberg Special

Brew - the really strong one -

has reached its 35th anniversary

with us. Special Brew is

produced only in Britain and has

a tremendous following in all of

Hotels and leading restaur-

our major cities and big towns.

ants often stock Carlsberg's

draught brands, Export, Hof and

Pilsner, all of which are brewed

to Danish specification in

present in Britain's hotels and

leading restaurants gives

Carlsberg an advantage over

many other more recently intro-

duced lagers, but there are other

reasons why these Danish lagers

ing only lager - unlike other

breweries which brew beer, ales

and in some instances, stout, as

Carlsberg specialise in brew-

This long history of being

Northampton.

are so popular.

well as lagers.

This is because Carlsberg has

preference to ales and beers.

Carlsberg is pledged by an ancient bond to 'seek for all time to brew perfect lager'. This directive was laid down by the founder of Carlsberg, Jacob Christian Jacobsen, who created it when he gave his brewery away and, by doing so, made it one of the most remarkable businesses

The Carlsberg Foundation From that day in 1876, all the profits of Carlsberg have been directed towards art, science and medical research for the benefit of mankind and this must remain the situation forever.

lager', Carlsberg have taken

'quality control' to a new horizon

- 'perfection control'. Every day

taste panels sit at the

In seeking to 'brew perfect

in that time people of both the town and county have become proud of the fact that their 'local famous brand. The brewery employs some

Carlsberg, in their promotions, play an important role in the sporting world, sponsoring a variety of water sports including sailing, windsurfing, powerboat racing, water-skiing, and latterly undertaking the Trans-Atlantic



Director,

MacDonald.

chance,' says the UK Managing

This means every ingredient,

every item of packaging, and

every process is constantly

Carlsberg has been brewing in Northampton since 1973 and brew' is an internationally

1,000 people directly and indirectly with workers travelling in from outlying towns such as Daventry and Buckingham. Also, some 30,000 people are shown round the brewery every year, the standards and the interest in the product are so



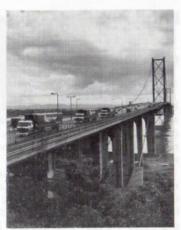
Carlsberg are major sponsors of windsurfing.

Northampton brewery to sample lagers to judge and assess them at 'blind' tastings, and information is wired back to Copenhagen by computer so that international standards can be maintained.

'When dealing with a drink which has the international popularity enjoyed by Carlsberg - brewed by Denmark's biggest company - nothing can be left to

Race in association with The Observer, as well as numerous other sporting activities.

'We like to support events which are competitive and offer a challenge, in sports and activities which link Carlsberg lagers with young and vigorous people,' says Mr MacDonald, UK head of this outstanding brewery.



Carlsberg delivery lorries crossing the Forth Bridge, Edinburgh.



The following text was issued at the Press Conference at the Carlsberg Brewery, Northampton on 8th June.

Carlsberg to Sponsor Croquet

Carlsberg, the Danish Lager Brewers, are to sponsor croquet at a national level in the UK.

Their entry into the growing sport which has an estimated 300,000 players in Britain, comes with the Brewery's backing for the 'Carlsberg British Open Championships' at The Hurlingham Club, London, on July 11th to 18th.

Familiarisation with the rules of Association Croquet shows it to be a game of skill, comparable with those of Chess or Snooker, with the result that some 150 Croquet Clubs are now established in this country and their number is increasing.

Mike Magee, Carlsberg's International Sponsorship manager, explained: 'We are delighted once again to be able to assist in the development of a really skilful sport, which is too often overlooked.'

Wimbledon, the world's hall of fame for tennis, started as a croquet club and croquet's popularity is growing fast. An international governing body is being set up to cope with the game's widespread growth in Australia, New Zealand and the USA and more recently, Japan.

To quote Chris Hudson, the Croquet Association's National Development Officer: 'The Croquet Association are delighted to have Carlsberg's backing - a Number 1 product with a Number 1 sport.'

More May Tournaments

Budleigh Salterton: 11-16 May Windy Budleigh

Report by Peter Danks

Last year I queried why the King of the Winds sent us his blustering sons instead of his gentle ones. Boreas blew strongly from the north nearly all the time. I promise never again to mention his name.

We were looking forward to the management of Paul Macdonald. He set the scene but unfortunately became indisposed the night before the off. Thereafter a committee of three organised the play with good, or less good. effect according to their previous experience. Let it be said though that the finish was on

Play was split by handicaps into 2 blocks of 8, and 4 blocks of 7.

The senior final was between Susan

Wiggins (-1/2) and Pat Hague (3). Both had averaged wins by +12 in their blocks. It was a cat and mouse sort of game. This way. That way, TIME, Equal, Very slight hiccough, Pat had 1/2 bisque left. A quibble of referees soon sorted that out! Pat ran the deciding hoop and won the Godfrey Turner Challenge Cup.

The intermediate final was between the local J. McBurnie Wood (6), whose wins averaged +14, and Angus Peterson (9) of Bowdon (last year's dark horse), whose wins averaged +17. It was an evenly matched game which Angus won +3 on time. Angus took home the J.K. Brown Memorial Bowl and a handicap cut - but will it stick? It didn't

Alan Harding won all his games averaging +7 per game and Leslie Toye (old block of the young chip John (0)) avaraged +8 in his block. In the final Leslie won the L G. Walters Long Handicap Challenge Trophy +6 on time. Sidmouth had to win it.

Chris Root, the excellent groundsman, had most of the courts in good nick. All were beautifully mown.

Pat Gosling and her team provided the usual super nosh. Some come to Budleigh to eat, others to play croquet. So long as visitors enjoy themselves, does it matter?

The waiting list gets longer. Book early and save disappointment.



Charles Smith, Lawns Manager, and Pat Hague, winner of the senior final.

RESULTS

American Handicap Singles

- Block A 6 wins: Mrs W.R.D. Wiggins (-1/2)
- 4 wins: S.J. Hare (11/2) +47.
- 3 wins: Col E.L.L. Vulliamy (3) -1;
- B.G. Perry (1) -7. 2 wins: F.H. Newman (3) -13; Mrs
- E. Asa-Thomas (3) 32.
- 1 win: Dr W.R.D. Wiggins (0) -68

Block B

- 6 wins: Mrs W. Hague (3) +38. 5 wins: Mrs I.P.M. Macdonald (5)
- 4 wins: D.M. Bull (4) +28; Mrs D.J.
- Croker (5) +14. 3 wins: W. Broad-Thomas (31/2) +20; Mrs W.J. Browne (41/2) -24.
- 2 wins: Dr C.L. Greenbury (5) -34. 1 win: Mrs F.H. Newman (4) -61.

Play Off

(Block A v. Block B)

Mrs Hague bt Mrs Wiggins +1(T).

Block C

- 5 wins: J. McBurnie Wood (6) +68. 4 wins: J.C. Hatherley (51/2) -1; Dr W.R. Bucknall (71/2) -2.
- 3 wins (out of 7): R.E. Vincent (71/2)
- -3: Mrs C. Bagnall (71/2) -4.
- 3 wins (out of 8): F.J. Exell (51/2)
- -4; D.M. Horne (5½) -43. 2 wins: P.A. Dwerryhouse (51/2) -11.

Block D

- 6 wins: Dr A.C. Peterson (9) +100. 4 wins: Mrs P.A. Dwerryhouse (61/2) +23; E.G. Kitchener (8) 0.
- 2 wins: G. Iredale (9) + 20; Mrs B.G. Perry (8) -2; Mrs E. Tunmer (8) -69; Mrs E. Grant (9) -72.

Play Off

(Block C v. Block D)

Dr Peterson bt McBurnie Wood

Block E

- 6 wins: A.W. Harding (10) +45. 4 wins: Miss M. Hardman (9) +17.
- 3 wins: Mrs H. Cruden (11) +1; Mrs
- J. Derges (18) -2.
- 2 wins: M.McF. Davis (10) +1. 1 win (out of 5): Mrs D. Iredale (10)

-24; Mrs R.E. Vincent (10) -38. Block F

- 5 wins: L.E. Toye (14) +39
- 4 wins: A.J. Wasdell (11) +33.

3 wins: R.H. Selmes (15) +15; Mrs

- D. Smith (13) +7; Miss K. Holroyde (12) - 12
- 2 wins: R. Ham (18) -46. 1 win: Miss J. Wraith (15) -36

Play Off

(Block E v. Block F) Toye bt Harding +7(T).

Handicap Doubles 1st Round

Dr W.R. Bucknall & A.J. Wasdell (171/2) bt Dr W.R.D. Wiggins & A.W. Harding (10) +1(T); J.C. Hatherley & Miss M. Hardman (141/2) bt Dr A.C. Peterson & Miss K. Holroyde (20) +8.

2nd Round

Mrs I.P.M. Macdonald & Mrs E. Grant (14) bt Dr C.L. Greenbury & Mrs C.W. Marshall (14) +13; Mr & Mrs P.L. Danks (191/2) bt Col E.L.L. Vulliamy & R.H. Selmes (17) + 5(T); F.J. Exell & Mrs E. Asa-Thomas (81/2) bt Mr & Mrs Iredale (19) +2(T); Hatherley & Miss Hardman bt Dr Bucknall & Wasdell +2; Mr & Mrs P.A. Dwerryhouse (13) bt Mr & Mrs R.E. Vincent (161/2) +7; S.J. Hare & R. Ham (151/2) bt Mrs W.R.D. Wiggins & Miss J. Wraith (121/2) +11: Mr & Mrs B.G. Perry (9) bt Mr & Mrs F.H. Newman (7) + 16; Mrs W. Hague & Mrs D.J. Croker (8) bt D.M. Bull & Mrs C. Bagnall (111/2) +5(T).

3rd Round

Mr & Mrs Danks bt Mrs Macdonald & Mrs Grant +11; Hatherley & Miss Hardman bt Exell & Mrs Asa-Thomas +2(T): Hare & Ham bt Mr & Mrs Dwerryhouse +16; Mrs Hague & Mrs Croker bt Mr & Mrs Perry +6(T).

Semi-Finals

Hatherley & Miss Hardman bt Mr & Mrs Danks +11; Mrs Hague & Mrs Croker bt Hare & Ham +17.

Mrs Hague & Mrs Croker bt Hatherley & Miss Hardman +14.

'Y' Handicap Doubles Semi-Finals

Col Vulliamy & Selmes bt Dr Peterson & Miss Holroyde +11; Mr & Mrs Vincent bt Bull & Mrs Bagnall

Mr & Mrs Vincent bt Col Vulliamy & Selmes +2(T).

Harrow: 16-17 May

Report by Richard Hilditch

With the Reporter doubling (or quadrupling) as Manager, Referee and Caterer, there are limits to things to praise at a tournament. Certainly the Harrow Council ground staff can be thanked for again providing an excellent surface to play on.

The two seeded players, Guest and Rose, failed to live up to expectation, with too many chances being given to their opponents. The eventual winner, Steve Wright, played quite well, recovering form from the previous week.

In the Swiz (thanks to Edgar Jackson) Jeff Dawson quietly came through to win outright. With an entry of aspiring players and has-beens there were many failed triples, but no games troubled the timekeeper (guess who).

Roger Tribe had a very dubious distinction of losing two games by just one point. In the second of these, Jerry Guest had only scored one hoop when Roger reached peg alone! It is interesting to note that the reserve list read more like an

Eight.

RESULTS: (Advanced Play)

1st Round

D. Beatty bt R.J. Hilditch +12: R. Tribe bt D. Wiggins +6; S. Wright bt M. Kolbuszewski +3; J. Guest bt S. Cornelius +17; D.T. Ruscombe-King bt Dr J. McMordie +7; J. Dawson bt Miss J. MacLeod +18; J. Meads bt G. Vince +5; J. Rose bt C. Southern +23.

2nd Round

Tribe bt Beatty +25; Wright bt Guest +15; Dawson bt Ruscombe-King +12: Meads bt Rose +3.

Semi-Finals

Wright bt Tribe +13; Meads bt Dawson +3.

Final

Wright bt Meads +19. Swiz (Advanced Play)

5 wins: J. Dawson.

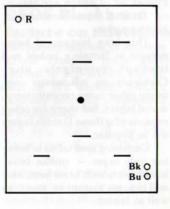
- 4 wins: J. Guest; J. Rose; C. Southern.
- 3 wins: J. McMordie; D. Beatty; G. Vince; R. Tribe.
- 2 wins (out of 5): Miss J. MacLeod; D. Wiggins.
- 2 wins: M. Kolbuszewski; D. Ruscombe-King.
- 1 win: R.J. Hilditch.
- 0 wins: S. Cornelius.

BREAK-BUILDER No 4

By Keith Aiton.

It is the fourth turn of the game and you are to play with Yellow. How would you set up a break using a maximum of two bisques?

(The solution is given on p.28.)



Wrest Park: 13-15 May A Subtle Leave

Report by Eric Audsley

Visitors to Wrest Park were able to help christen the new changing rooms which were put up during the Spring. Although not yet completely finished, they were fit for use for the first time at the tournament.

With the wind having come all the way from the Arctic it was perhaps understandable that it was too tired to bother going round people. It was thus fortunate that the manager had organised play so that everyone could play croquet continuously. That is of course on the assumption that they did not finish their game too quickly, but no-one could be accused of that.

However timed games did lead to some gripping endings. Twice in succession David Gillett managed to be tied with his opponent and go into sudden death. Both times he had the innings. Luckily for the watching experts criticising, his tactics did not succeed the second time - by two inches, being the distance by which Adrian Craxton managed to run the hoop from a foot in front!

The game between Heather Pritchard and Roy McCormick provided another feast for the watching experts. Heather built up a commanding lead with a four hoop break during which time was called and to choruses of oohs, hahs and 'I wouldn't do that', Roy managed to get to 3-back before failing, to a chorus of disappointment, leaving Heather a relieved winner.

The trials of double banking caught up with others. Tom Anderson was about to peg out his ball when a ball from the other game was about to pass through his feet. So he attempted to play a shot and jump at the same time. He failed! Fortunately half an hour later he did manage to peg the ball out.

Near neighbours caught out Malcolm Smith. Having hit in on his opponent and made the first hoop, he decided to retire to his partner ball only to discover that it was white as well as the one he was playing. He had picked it up from the next door lawn instead of his pink (and they hadn't noticed they had two pinks either!). The referee ruled that playing with an outside agency was not a fault and allowed pink to be swapped for the errant white - whereupon Malcolm put his white clip on the second hoop!

The quickest game of the tournament was George Anderson's 26-0 thrashing of John Wheeler. As it was carried out in the worst downpour of the weekend, John did not mind too much.

Prize for leave of the weekend must go to George Collin. Howard Bottomley had left George's blue ball in the jaws of the second hoop, but as black had the innings George decided to wire his opponent and leave black just outside baulk for his next turn on which he would lift blue. He was careful to ensure that black could see both red and vellow (see diagram). Unfortunately, yellow was just too close to the peg to be able to get a back swing to shoot at black and blue was just far enough into the hoop for yellow not to be able to hit all of it. So Howard was able to lift his yellow to the carefully placed black near baulk! Even so George managed to win in the end, inflicting one of the only two defeats on Howard who won the American block with six wins out of

The Swiss block was comprehensively won by Martin Ansell with nine wins out of nine. Colin McKenzie came nearest to beating him losing by only two on time, closely followed by Corla van Griethuysen who lost by three on time. It was generally agreed that a reduction from 16 to 12 was a just reward. Adrian Craxton who was careless enough to inflict another thrashing on the handicapper also had his handicap reduced, from 10 to 9, while finishing equal second with Eric Audsley and Paul Smith with six wins out of nine.

·O· Blue

OR



Arctic conditions at Wrest Park.

RESULTS: (Handicap Play)

Block 1 (American)

6 wins: H. Bottomley (1/2) (Block winner) +50; M. Coward (-11/2) +45.

5 wins: A. Ramsay (6) +26; H. Pritchard (16) +23.

4 wins: T.W. Anderson (11/2) +31. 3 wins: R. McCormick (9) +11; G. Collin (31/2)

2 wins: M. Smith (41/2) -66. 1 win: A. Dumont (71/2) -77.

Block 2 (Swiss)

9 wins: M. Ansell.

5 wins: H. Green; P. Gregg; J. Bevington; D. Gillett;

4 wins: Dr C. van Griethuysen; J. Wheeler; Mrs J. Anderson; C. McKenzie.

6 wins: A. Craxton; E. Audslev; P. Smith.

3 wins:P. Alvey.
1 win: D. Cornelius (withdrew).

0 wins: P. Simpson.

THE CARLSBERG **BRITISH OPEN CROQUET CHAMPIONSHIPS**

The Hurlingham Club Saturday 11-18 July inclusive

Why not come and enjoy a day's croquet in the delightful atmosphere of Hurlingham?

upon showing their 1987 membership cards.

Murray Mighty Again

Report by John McCullough

On the first day of this two-day event 'Mighty' Martin Murray displayed the kind of form that earned him his nickname. He notched up four wins in convincing style and comfortably disposed of his three main rivals for the trophy donated by sponsors Hill Samuel Investment Services. Easing up on Sunday he secured the title by the end of round six of this seven-round Swiss but was denied a clean sweep by the elegant but erratic Ian Bond.

Keith Wylie and John McCullough enthralled the Saturday lunchtime gallery with

a two-ball ending after time. John had pegged Keith out when three points behind with ten minutes to go but had to peg his own ball out in his last turn to level the scores. leaving the other two balls for 4-back. While Keith lurked on the side boundary, John tried three times to run the hoop from a six yard distance but eventually patience defeated aggression as Keith hit in and made the hoop to The Sunday lunchtime crowd

George Collin's

Leave of the

tournament'

enjoyed the only other time ending. David Goacher presented Roger Jenkins with the innings and all the balls in the middle of the lawn when three points ahead after time was called. Roger built a 3-ball break but miscounted, believing he was four points behind. He made 1-back to level the scores but had a poor pioneer at 2-back. Instead of just taking-off to his pioneer he tried a huge split shot to send a pioneer to 3-back and ended seven yards short of his poor 2-back pioneer. He just snicked the roquet, rolled up from six uards away and ran a long hoop but couldn't understand why the gallery were in such fits of laughter until his victory was explained to him. With two wins and three narrow defeats Roger acquitted himself very well in this advanced play tournament, being in the company of a field all rated between two and six bisques better than him.

O Black

Phil Cordingley had two triples, one a straight, Martin Murray had one and John McCullough confused the visit-

ing sponsors by doing three peels of a sextuple only to blob hoop 5 from one foot.

More than one person described Lawn 3 as 'a good lawn', a tribute to Ray Ransom's untiring efforts but the 'Champagne prize' for a triple on it remains unclaimed so fame-seekers who like good company and great food should get their applications in early next year.

RESULTS:

(7 Round Swiss: Advanced Play)

6 wins: Dr M. Murray. wins: P. Cordingley; J.R.

McCullough; K.F. Wylie. 3 wins: I.D. Bond; B.G. Hallam; R.W.

2 wins: D.J. Goacher; R.S. Jenkins. 1 win: J.R. Mann.

See the top players compete. Tickets £3.00 per day, obtaining from the Croquet Association Secretary. Members of the CA are admitted free

Bristol: 16-17 May

USCA Challenge Cup

1984? - A Reply (Continued from page 13)

Council's attitude towards Clubs and Associates

Dennis Moorcraft's comments about Council attitudes are the least temperate part of his letter and thus the most difficult to take seriously. He exhibits the same suspicions about the motives of Council members that many people have about career politicians. He refers to Andrew Hope as 'one of the more moderate members of Council'. Who are the immoderate members and what are they immoderate about? He impugns John McCullough's stated motives for opposing a large subscription increase and treads on very dangerous ground in comparing the CA's innocent wish to increase its membership with the emotive and political subject of the trade union closed shop and its implications for livelihoods and fundamental human freedoms. He implies that the CA cannot be trusted to use a club membership list honourably and describes the CA handicapping initiative as 'heavy-handed interference' when it was designed in response to widespread complaints from clubs and associates about the shortcomings of the existing handicap system. He 'guesses' that Short Croquet is disliked by a majority of players without producing the slightest evidence or argument in support.

The present Council works very hard for the CA and deserves more thanks from Dennis Moorcraft than the rather routine and immediately qualified acknowledgments in his letter. Many Council members travel considerable distances to attend Council or committee meetings and a spate of recent resignations has occurred because the time sacrifice is becoming too great for busy people with families and their own games to consider. The work-load now threatens to last all year round instead of ending in April and restarting in October and at the last Council election there were three fewer candidates than available places.

The Council certainly does not suffer from a sense of self-importance. Almost every meeting contains a contribution warning us of seeming 'London-biased' or high-handed. I agree fully that the Council must have good communications with the CA membership but this is surely a two-way responsibility. I believe Council discharges its responsibilities in this respect through the publication of the magazine and at Annual General Meetings and

Club Conferences.

Television

Dennis Moorcraft refers to a 'circular' argument involving expansion, sponsorship and television and attempts to shoot it down by assuming that television involves 'nasty commercialism' and would thereby spoil the game. Why? Televised bowls has had no adverse effect on life in bowls clubs and the players are as friendly and sportsmanlike as before. Why should Dennis, Ken Cotterell and Bobby Crane (see Letters, Issues 190 and 191) unflatteringly assume that televised sponsorship of the President's Cup, for instance, would adversely affect the manners and behaviour of players who do not compete in such events? Croquet's greatest safeguard is that the nature of the game determines the type of person who is attracted to it. It is essentially a reasonably refined game that appeals to reasonably refined and intelligent people from all walks of life. It is surely rather insulting to the game and its players to suggest that all this will change in a hurry.

Conclusion

religious sect nor a political party so it should be possible for it to cater amicably for a wide variety of tastes and aspirations. I believe that the underlying concern of Messrs Moorcraft, Cotterell and Crane is that the charming, slightly old-fashioned spirit of the game which is so dear to them is about to be lost. There is not one Council member who would wish that aspect of the game to disappear. However, that spirit will continue to flourish only for as long as players care to cherish it and that is the personal responsibility borne by each one of us. not a matter to be controlled by the Council. This spirit can coexist with the ambitions of championship players, sponsorship, television and development programmes because it depends only on personal behaviour. Bobby Crane will be able to continue to stop for tea, shake hands with his opponent and enjoy a drink with him for as long as he wishes. It is entirely up to

The croquet world is neither a

USCA Challenge Cup

April 5-11: Palm Beach, Florida GREAT BRITAIN v UNITED STATES

Report by Chris Irwin

In late March the Great Britain team travelled to Florida at the invitation of the United States Croquet Association to compete for the USCA Challenge Cup. The Great Britain team included 4 of last year's Test Team, Nigel Aspinall, Mark Avery, Colin Irwin and David Openshaw (Captain). The two new faces in the GB side were Keith Aiton and Phil Cordingley.

were planted (by 'trees' I mean the 20 foot high fully grown variety not 3 foot high saplings) followed by another truck loaded with shrubs in full bloom and then followed by 10 hardwood benches to be placed around the lawns. Meanwhile a team of carpenters were finishing the veranda and another team of workmen were erecting striped canvas awnings to provide shade



Great Britain's team keep the flag flying! (L to R): Back. Mark Avery, Nigel Aspinall and Colin Irwin. Front. Phil Cordingley, David Openshaw and Keith Aiton.

Despite overbooking by airlines, re-routing via New York and lost baggage we eventually all arrived at the USCA's new headquarters in Palm Beach. Here 5 full-sized lawns and the USCA offices are located in the grounds of the PGA National headquarters.

The PGA site follows the pattern of many similar 'resorts' in America where extensive sports facilities are linked to a hotel and to residential and holiday properties. As well as the croquet lawns the PGA boasts 2 golf courses and a tennis and squash conplex. The PGA see croquet as another facility which they can use to promote sales of their residential properties and attract people to the hotel and holiday properties.

The PGA management are making an effort to provide first class croquet facilities and when we arrived the clubhouse and landscaping around the lawns were still being finished. Coming from an underfunded English club, I was surprised when first a truck load of trees arrived and

from the sun.

The lawns themselves were laid last year. Overall they are flat (we were told that lasers were used to level the ground) and the quality of the turf is excellent but there is some local settlement as on all new lawns. Of course being in Florida there is a fully automatic watering system which comes on every night.

After a couple of days to settle in, the first duties of the team



Debbie Prentis.

were to coach in the USCA's 3 day summer school. This year 64 players had enrolled for the school and were divided into 5 classes according to ability with 2 or 3 coaches to each class. The other coaches were the US team members and Teddy Prentis and Peyton Ballinger (both experienced US coaches).

Most of the coaching course and its techniques were similar to coaching in Britain apart from the tactics needed for the American rules. In addition to the class coaching each player was taken out of the class and videoed for about 10 minutes playing a series of shots. They were then shown their video with Debbie Prentis commenting on their style, stance and stroke play. The players kept their video so they could look at it again at home.

It is difficult to know how useful these videos are but the players who commented all thought they were useful. From a coaches point of view they do take a lot of time and manpower — one person to operate the camera, a coach to direct the players (particularly the novices who need to have the shots explained to them in some detail) and another coach to do the commentary on each player's video. Altogether the 64 videos tied up 3 people for 3 days.

Once the coaching was over, the Challenge Cup matches began on Sunday 5th April. The format of the series was 30 games in all with 15 played under USCA rules (9 doubles and 6 singles) and 15 played under International (Association) rules – again 9 doubles and 6 singles. All games were time limited – one and a half hours for US rules games; two hours for Association rules games.

The planned order of play was amended because Keith Aiton was suffering from a stomach bug but in the games which were played Great Britain quickly proved their superiority. Nigel Aspinall completed a triple in his first game partnering Mark Avery

against Dana Dribben and Jack Osborn while David Openshaw and Colin Irwin had a comfortable win against the US doubles champions Reid Fleming and Tremaine Arkley. These games were followed by 2 US rules doubles where Debbie Prentis and Dana Dribben achieved the first US win by beating David Openshaw and Phil Cordingley while Colin Irwin and Mark Avery beat the father and son partnership of Jack and John Osborn. In the afternoon's 4 singles

games (2 to each set of rules) Colin, Phil and Nigel all had comfortable wins but David played the most exciting match of the day against John Osborn under US rules. David was for hoop 4 and was 7 points behind in his last turn after time had been called. Under US rules he was not allowed to roquet any other ball before he ran his hoop so with no other choice he succeeded in running the hoop from about 12 yards away, then he roqueted a ball on the East boundary without knocking it off the lawn (which would have ended his turn under US rules) established his break and went to the stick to win the game by 3 points on time. So the first day's play ended with Great Britain leading by 6 games to 1.

The team then had 4 days off to explore the sights of Florida while the lawns were taken over by the USCA'a National Club Team Championship. The Great Britain team filled in the days by some lazing on the beach, a trip to see the alligators in the Everglades, a round of golf at the Palm Beach Polo Club and even the odd business meeting. Monday evening was the highlight of the social calendar when the teams changed out of whites into dinner jackets and bow ties for the now famous Croquet Ball where the international teams were the guests of honour.

Play in the International matches started again on Friday after the finals of the Club Team Championship with Keith Aiton and Nigel Aspinall playing against Debbie Prentis and Dana Dribben in a US rules match. A tactical mistake by the GB pair prevented what would have been an easy win and despite a spectacular 15 yard hoop from Keith which tied the game, the American pair went on to record their second win.

On Saturday Keith proved that he was now fit and well again by partnering Phil to a win against Reid and Tremaine and followed this with a plus 26TP against Jack Osborn before lunch. Keith and the rest of the team all continued their winning form dropping only one game (to US rules) in the day. At the end of the day Great Britain had won 15 games in the series to the USA's 3 and so needing only 1 win on the final day victory in the series seemed assured.

On Sunday that victory was sealed with Great Britain winning 8 of the days games. They had won all of the Association rules games until in the last game to finish, John Osborn satisfied American honour by beating David Openshaw plus 11 on time.

For those reading this who have a penchant for facts and figures, the final score for the series was Great Britain 23; United States 7. Under Association rules, Great Britain won 9 doubles and 5 singles to the United States' 0 doubles and 1 singles. Under US rules, Great Britain won 4 doubles and 5 singles to the United States' 5 doubles and 1 singles.

The Americans often claim that their game is quicker. In this series 10 games of 30 went to time: 7 of these were US rules



David Openshaw setting up a peel.

Continued on page 20

EDNADD NEAL

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Aluminium Alloy Shafts Permali Heads

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Jack Osborn (left) and Dana Dribben.

The Gazette

By John Walters

Croquet's history seems to have as many twists and turns as a throwaway detective novel, charting its course for most of that time with a publication which has itself metamorphosed on more than one occasion in an often turbulent past. The magazine you are now reading is the latest offering; torn between radicalism and conservatism, it is the legacy of an institution which has seldom been freed from conflict between its factions, but well intentioned struggle forms much of the charm that croquet holds.

The lineage of our herald includes a change of nomenclature from 'The Croquet Gazette' to just 'Croquet', or back again, three times. Contrary to the era of post-modernism, we are currently in the reforming days of 'Croquet', with the compromise of inevitably being referred to as simply 'The Gazette'. The last editor to brave the tide of change was a very different character to our present MC. Bryan Loyd-Pratt was viewed curiously by those who did not know him but those who did needed only to point to his style and flair to support their contention that he was one of croquet's great assets. Never a 'wilting violet', Bryan blazed an editorial trail that leaves his heirs seemingly ashen faced. An aesthete who might have tripped off the pages of O'Flahertie's own manuscript, he set a pace that no-one has been able to maintain, or finance, since.

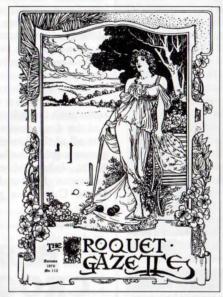
The first and three subsequent issues which marked Bryan Lloyd-Pratt's short reign over the re-christened 'Croquet Gazette' had their stiffened covers graced by the engraving 'The Rape of Roquetetta'. The style newly injected into the pages was characterised by the gothic lettering of the headlines, the thick black boundaries around obituaries and, often less impressively, by the staunch editorials. So after this long preamble here is our first delve into what has gone before, a taste of the gazette's finest, short, hours.

The editorial in which Bryan opened the batting for his vision set the tone for what was to follow, a philosophy which is the very antithesis of current CA and editorial policy, one which is now in abeyance, but still 'in opposition'. 'Just as chess is better than bingo, or bridge is better than whist; so is croquet better than, say, bowls' preached Bryan to his converted flock. 'This is not to say that that jejune and proletarian pastime is not more suitable for the majority of people - it is' conceded our prophet. 'People have been so brainwashed by sociologists, technocrats, and bureaucrats (gloriously horrid words for an unpleasant phenomenon) into believing that the greatest-good-for-the-greatestnumber (a byword of J.S. Mill who was a far worse philosopher than Bryan was a sophist - J.W.) is all important . . . Schemes for coaching, television and press coverage, and other similar ventures never produce any worth-while results, and often cheapen the

In the much referenced issue of the gazette which included what some might regard as a rather whimsical interview with the Lady Julian Parr, the editor began in 'The entirely non-political tradition of the gazette' (Editorial, issue 111) by condemning 'a

sport'.

political ban on the forthcoming cricket testmatches' (in South Africa). For the following issue guns were once again turned on the Association's popularity drive, but by now subplots were developing. In the letters page a controversy raged which would make current disputes over the TPO seem insignificant; the emotive subject was that of metrication in croquet. The Edgbaston metrication committee proposed the changes, an idea which was promptly rebuffed by Alan MacKensie Brown, a proponent of 'unit interconversion factors' in the imperial system which 'provide us with magnificent initial brain training'. R.B. Berry countered with the 'popular stigma of fustian and unadventurous outlook' ploy, but C.G. Hopewell took the practical point of view that a 26% change in differentials would



"The Rape of Roquetetta" – the cover of the Gazette during Bryan Lloyd-Pratt's spell as Editor.

By issue 112 the darkness was closing in around Bryan, the editorial page was becoming increasingly hectic. Directly under the title 'The Gazette - The Official Organ of the Croquet Association', appeared a disclaimer for its contents from Council. Under a heading 'Creme de la creme' our editor lamented the loss of younger croquet players, who had eagerly excelled in the confines of university life, to 'work, and what is usually worse, wives', sadly the hopeful words which ended his eulogy - 'They will return' - have generally been proven a mistake. The bottom line on this occasion was a vote of thanks from the President of the South African Association for sentiments previously expressed. Thus began the gazette, and this is how it ended - on the letters page:

'As a new Associate I have only read the last two issues of the Croquet Gazette, but I am fascinated to discover that Colonel Blimp still lives and edits this publication.'

John Soutter

'May I add that I find the sentiments expressed by the editor of the latest Gazette on the subject of South Africa regrettable, to say the least?'

Charles Townshend

'Such phrases as 'our halycon days before socialism and punitive taxation', attributed to you, Sir, contribute to my impression that a certain rightward bias is creeping into the editorial contents.'

J.N. Robinson

"... at least one Associate rejects utterly your partisan comments and, indeed, the whole tone of your provocative and gratuitous leader. Your motives may have been admirable, but your methods can only be deeply regretted. Chris Miller

Under his assumed title of 'Lieut-Col. the Honble. Oliver Blimp', the editor replied:

'If to say that croquet's being a quality sport is its greatest strength and not a weakness is 'arrogance', it could be urged that the opposite view ('Croquet-for-all-in-our-modern-democratic-world') is half-witted... Indeed, all of the correspondents above seem to share something of the woolly and petulant fatuity of the 'Angry young men' of two decades ago. Passé, and a little sad'.

Editor

Issue 113 was a worthy finale for this saga, the editorial entitled 'Croquet and the British tax payer' was once again setting the gazette against the CA. Criticising the subsidies given by the Central Council for Physical Recreation, towards lecture tours by Liz Neal and Barbara Meacham (accompanied by explanatory film strips) Bryan quoted Oscar Wilde's 'A woman of no importance' - 'Much good may be done' (for the poor) 'by means of a magic lantern, or a missionary, or some popular amusement of that kind.' Not, it appears, even a glimmer of approval for this ambitious enterprise was to be forthcoming from the periodical, but there's more; 'Croquet can never, by its very nature, become a popular sport. Its appeal is an esoteric one, and attempts at popularising (i.e. vulgarising) the game only dismay the faithful and do not bring in any worthwhile converts . . . The sort of people, to put the matter bluntly, whom it may be a pleasure to meet at tournaments.' Of course such rhetoric was a thorn in the side of the CA, but the seeds of destruction had been sown for this one man empire. Elsewhere in the publication Bryan wrote a short paragraph that hinted at what was to be his 'Gazette-gate'. 'At the Council meeting in October ugly words like 'cheaper paper', 'Offset lithography' and 'Cutting our coat according to our cloth' were rumbling forth in short, The Gazette was exceeding its budget. Now, the Association has had the splendid good fortune to find printers who are doing a really first-rate job at a very reasonable cost. They are producing a publication that tries to be worthy of croquet, and sets out to purvey a conviction of quality. The sum of money, derisorily small in any case, that would be saved by making the gazette nasty, would be lost ten times over through destroying our belief that Croquet itself deserves the best.' There lies the premature end to our story, save for the all important epilogue.

Issue 114 was in stark contrast to its predecessors, a flimsy two pages simply containing tournament results and law changes . . . and an 'explanation'. An anonymous article adorned the front cover,

Continued on page 27

Celebrities & Players to Compete at Leeds Castle

The photograph shows an aerial view of the magnificent Leeds Castle, a perfect setting for the special tournament to be held in the evenings of Friday 31st July, Saturday and Sunday, 1st and 2nd August, commencing at 5.30pm.

Personalities from stage and television will play with top croquet players in aid of The Mental Health Foundation, a very worthy cause that deserves our full support.

After the games, there will be a Dinner Dance in the Fairfax Hall; a jazz band will be playing.

The venue

Leeds Castle, Kent is named after Led, Chief Minister of Ethelbert IV, King of Kent in 857 AD. It lies about 4 miles east of Maidstone on the A20 London-Folkestone road, and is set amongst some of England's most beautiful countryside. The Castle itself was built on two islands in the middle of a lake within this wooded, rolling landscape. Originally a Norman stronghold, it was later converted into a Royal Palace by Henry VIII.

A Royal residence for over 300 years, the Castle was a favourite home for eight of

Continued from page 26

contesting Bryan's criticisms of CA policy, which had by now spread beyond the boundaries of gazette editorial into the hallowed pages of 'The Times'. S.S. Townsend, then Chairman, was also fighting the CA out of a tight corner into which Bryan had so gladly squeezed:

'Associates may have read a remark ascribed to me in the national press recently in which I appeared to infer that the degree of skill and intelligence required in croquet was beyond the abilities of the lower income groups. Needless to say, this is not my opinion and was the result of compression of two separate comments, as I was able to explain in the radio 4 news desk programme on 24th December and in a letter to *The Times* on 31st December.'

S.S. Townsend, Chairman.

Under a heading of 'The editorship' B.G. Neal, Chairman of the Editorial Board, refuted claims in 'The Times' and 'The Sunday Times' that Mr Lloyd-Pratt was dismissed from his post because of 'an editorial strongly critical of Council policy'. He went on to explain how the excess of expenditure after four issues, over budgeted expenditure for five issues, amounted to £263, despite previous and unheeded warnings. Thus it was with thanks for the great deal of effort which Mr Lloyd-Pratt had contributed, that the Board had no alternative but to relieve him of his post.

Here endeth an intriguing episode in the history of the CA's organ. In future recountings I doubt if we shall dwell so long on the vehicle rather than its contents, but I make no apologies in this case, for however much one may disagree with his views, one must surely admire the way that Bryan Lloyd-Pratt combined being the scourge of the establishment with the gazette to create an art form!

England's mediaeval Queens. Now lovingly restored and beautifully furnished, it contains a magnificent collection of mediaeval furnishings, tapestries and impressionist paintings.

Croquet will take place on two lawns laid out in front of the Castle within the moat.

A cash bar will be located in the Gatehouse throughout and conducted tours of the Castle will be available.

For those who wish to stay on to dine and dance in the 17th century Fairfax Hall, a superbly restored tithe barn, a limited number of tickets are available. The Celebrities and International Players will be present.

The Players

The CA's team is: John Solomon (Captain), David Openshaw, Jan MacLeod, Barry Keen, Debbie Cornelius and Stephen Hemsted.

The Celebrities

The Celebrities will be picked from amongst the following: Donald Sinden, Christopher Casenove, Ian Ogilvy, Jeremy Child, John Wells, Michael Hordern, Nigel Savers, Simon Cadell, and Michael Elphick, according to availability.

The Charity

The Mental Health Foundation aims to:

- Prevent mental disorders by encouraging research into the causes of mental illness and mental handicap.
- * Improve the quality of life for the mentally disordered by supporting pioneering and innovative care schemes.
- * Help rehabiliate those who have suffered from mental illness by encouraging new projects in the fields of employment, housing and self-help in the community.



Why not have a night out?

Come along and enjoy yourselves, and help others to enjoy life at the same time.

ckets:

(A) Croquet and guided tour of the Castle: £10.00 each.

(B) Croquet and Dinner Dance: £20.00 each. can be obtained from: Mrs Maggie Barnard, The Mental Health Foundation, 8 Hallam Street, London, W1N 6DH.

COURSES FOR REFEREES

The Laws Committee of the Croquet Association hopes to organise one or two courses for potential referees in the latter half of the season.

Anyone who would like to become a Referee should contact Martin Murray (Chairman of the Laws Committee) on 0272-20990, so that times and locations can be arranged to suit the applicants.

Puzzle Corner - By John Walters

Once upon a time there was a quaint little croquet club hidden away in a little known hamlet called central London. Everybody was happy and life passed peacefully until one day the club opened its doors to all manner of folk when it staged the Debenham, Tewson & Chinnocks opens. Hawthorne, Chestnut, Oak & various mongrel fauna, which would never have gotten passed the gatekeeper these days, spread their arms over the hallowed turf.

One lone woman appeared amongst the throng of players and solo Monica performed her ladylike manoeuvres on the lawn. Off the lawn her moves were less ladylike and viewed negatively by her aunty Dot, referred to irreverently as 'that hag aunty Dorothy' by Monica. But despite hushed scandal-mongering Tony, the club's playboy, had little peace. Seldom was the hour that Monica would fail to hog Anthony's company, encouraged perhaps by the rumour that a previous female acquaintance received a silver ring containing a large opal. 'Mercy me' thought Dot, 'how could a girl be so mercenary'.

Asked about the present she herself had received from the lad's father, a golden clasp, 'O, one really doesn't think of such things', would be her reply, she approves of 'affectionate' gifts. Bemused onlookers would suggest 'even if she chased him with a cleaver you wouldn't expect to see a response'.

The situation was made more comical by the crush Jack had on Monica. He was a down to earth chap Jack, so nobody paid him much

attention, his conversation rarely swayed from discussing bargains in the shop down the road – the % APR in Cecil's store, he would shop everywhere to get the best deal, judging the whole wisely and prudently rather than with Tony's capricious streak. People often said that talking to Tony was like watching the same ad's all the time and on meeting him nothing you saw alters that opinion.

But a mosaic of entertainment did gather at the club, food from France, players from around the globe, ale from Wales (where else? I did not partake being a beer-hater, and as such am berserk by the standards of the purveyer). All the top players were present, including Nigel who appears past his nadir, winning isn't everything though and he seemed to enjoy it. DKO was late as usual, he still seemed to bask in Leyland's reflected glory as Jaguar's new MD.

Richard H appeared in a T-shirt which miserably failed to fight the flab (Uck). At first we thought we had an alien competitor (as well as a female) – a smurf. It then transpired he had only come to watch. The greatest surprise was that a portly gentleman from Ireland reached the final, but the sun had beaten down all week and taken it's toll on the grass and just as he seemed set to win, a patch of lawn that was bald rid Gerald of any aspirations he held of victory. So a fine time was had by all, including the 22 players I didn't mention, or did I?

Coaches corner

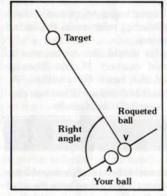
A Practice Routine

By Chris Hudson

The Thin Take-Off

The thin take-off is a croquet stroke where the player concentrates on getting his own ball to a specific position, whilst leaving the ball from which he has taken croquet more or less where it was. His only concern with the latter ball is to make certain that it moves or at the very least, shakes slightly. (If it doesn't, then of course his turn ends.)

Figure 1 shows how to place the balls in position before playing the croquet shot. Your own ball should be placed at the side of the ball it has just roqueted so that it forms a right angle with a line through the target. The actual shot can then be achieved in one of two ways. Some people prefer to concentrate on playing the shot so that the mallet is aimed slightly into the ball from which croquet is taken. Others prefer to stalk and aim at a point to the side of the target.



Placing the balls in the croquet stroke for a thin take-off.

BREAK-BUILDER No 4 Solution

Shoot at Black from A baulk. If you miss you take a bisque and rush Black to the fourth corner. You should be trying to set up a perfect four ball break, rather than simply making the first hoop, so no points for attempting to get a dolly rush on Blue to the first hoop.

Stop-shot Black as far towards the peg as possible, keeping Yellow close to Blue. Roquet Blue and then stop-shot Blue as near to the first hoop as possible. Shoot at Red. If you miss, take a second bisque and rush Red a few yards South so that a thick take-off will send Red to the second hoop, with Yellow either going to Black or to Blue at the first hoop.

You might ask how it is that you can almost guarantee to have a rush to the South boundary when you shoot at Black

I have been very impressed with the results achieved by players using the second method. To be successful and consistent, you have to work out your point of aim by trial and error. Set up a ball on the yardline on the North boundary and take off to it from a ball on the South yardline, aiming off say 5 feet to the relevant side (see Figure 2). If this produces a fine enough take off, then 5 feet is the distance for you. If too thick, then try a distance less than 5 feet, and vice versa.

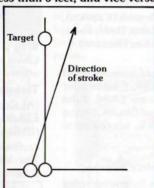


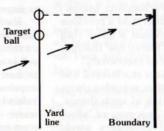
Fig. 2: Aiming off for a thin take-off.

Having established this distance for aiming off, then a knowledge of the dimensions of the court will enable you to pick a point of aim for targets at any distance. Assuming 5 feet is the distance for the full length, then for a shot across the width of the court you should aim off 4 feet. For a shot from the East boundary to the peg, the distance would be two feet (see Figure 3). Remember that you do not always want to aim at a particular ball - sometimes you want to get your ball to a point on either side of another ball or a hoop, or on to

with your first shot. Look at the diagram and you can see the answer.

If you shoot at a ball that is further north than your own ball. when you replace your ball on the vardline it must come on to the court north of the ball you were shooting at, unless you have a very bad miss to the south.

The same applies when you shoot at Red later on.



When shooting in a northerly direction, your ball will normally be replaced on the yardline north of the target ball unless you have a very bad miss. a rush line. So get clear in your mind exactly where you want your ball to be when it comes to rest, if necessary walking over to the target to identify the spot precisely and then, to give vourself more accuracy, stalk that particular point before playing your shot.

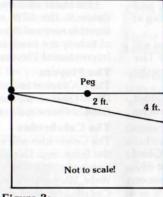


Figure 3: Effect of length of shot on distance to aim off.

Practising a thin take-off

To practise this shot, establish your aiming-off distance as above. Then place a target ball on the vardline at the mid-point of the South boundary. Set up your croquet shot from a point on the same yardline opposite Hoop 1. This is a 7-yard shot, so if you have established the distance to aim off across the length of the court, divide this by 5 to give you the amount to aim off on a 7-yard

If you were playing a serious game, in taking croquet you would probably place your ball on the boundary side of the roqueted ball (to avoid the possibility of the latter ball going off and ending your turn, or because you were trying to get it more into play). However, in this practice routine, play the croquet shot with your ball on the far side from the boundary. You will then be able to measure the amount the roqueted ball moves by its distance from the boundary. Should it go over the boundary, then you have played a poor shot if you were trying for a thin take-

Although one person can practise this routine on his own, it is more efficiently carried out by two players working together one player takes off to the target ball, and when he has played, then the other player takes croquet from the target ball back to the first player. Note that if the above procedure is followed, each player will take off from different sides of the roqueted ball, so the players should change ends every so often to get practice in taking croquet from both sides of the roqueted ball. (It is a great handicap if you

become addicted to taking croquet always from the same

The objective of the routine can be varied. First, try to get the ball that has taken off as close as possible to the target ball. Then, for a change, try to get the ball that has taken off to a position where it can rush the target ball to Hoop 4. Play this rush to find out how successful your take-off has been.

Putting it together

Here is a routine that will enable you to practise thin take-offs, rushes and hoop approaches with the minimum of effort. Set up your ball with an easy rush on ball 2 to Hoop 1; place ball 3 midway between Hoop 1 and Hoop 2, and the fourth ball near Hoop 2 (see Figure 4).

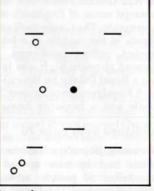


Figure 4: Setting up balls for practice routine

Now play your rush to Hoop to get a rush to Hoop 2 on the ball at Hoop 2. Run Hoop 2, play the in the reverse direction. Play a middle, and then another thin at Hoop 1.

Run Hoop 1 in the reverse direction, and make the return roquet after running this hoop. Then make Hoop 1 in the original direction, and repeat the sequence again. Your initial target, having set up the balls in the original position, is therefore to make Hoops 1 and 2 in both directions on two occasions without breaking down.

see if you can complete it consistently. If you can, then increase the number of circuits. then keep on trying and you will have a better understanding of the points I shall make in my next article, when I deal with selecting what shot to use in approaching a hoop, and how to analyse what has gone wrong.

Official Business

New Clubs Registered

Basingstoke Croquet Club Secretary: Neil Cole,

57 Trafalgar Court, Southcote Road, Reading, Berks.

Changes in Club Officials NEW SECRETARY:

Mike Gibson, 65 Gresley Wood Trent, Staffs, DE11 9QP. Tel: 0283-212289.

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1, run Hoop 1, and play a thin take-off from Hoop 1 to the ball in the middle. Then play another thin take-off from the middle ball return roquet, and make Hoop 2 thin take-off to the ball in the take-off to get a rush on the ball

Practise this sequence and If you cannot do it consistently,

Cheltenham: 18-20 April J.M. Calver 10 to 8 Miss D.A. Cornelius 21/2 to 2 S.G. Cornelius 41/2 to 4

P.W. Goldberg

M.R. Wormald

R.J. Collighan

Mrs S. Watson

P.J. Mansfield

D.J. Goacher

Mrs R. Gugan

G. Johnson

M. Suter

I.D. Bond

J. Reeve

Harwell

N. Williams

Before Play

After Play

D. Watkins

J. Haslam

D. Arthur

F.A. Beard

Mrs K.B. Irwin

J.C. Ruddock

Mrs W. Hague

A.W. Harding

R.H. Selmes

L.E. Tove

C.F. Moon

Before Play

C. Docherty

D. Ruscombe-King

R. Pennant-Jones

Mrs C. Steward

Mrs B. Carter

After Play

J. Collis

G. Budd

J. Short

J. McBurnie Wood

D. Ruscombe-King

Parkstone: 18 May

Dr A.C. Peterson

R. Fulford

P. Goldburg

D. Maughan

C. Wild

R. Hilditch

R.F. Deacon

Southwick Club

Bath Club

D. Beatty

C. Clarke

M. Saurin

Mrs V. Tompkinson 61/2 to 6

Southport: 25-26 April

Woking: 24-26 April

Cheltenham: 2-4 May

Cheltenham Club

Bowdon: 8-10 May

Compton: 8-10 May

Colchester: 9-10 May

Harrow Oak: 16-17 May

Colchester: 23-25 May

Budleigh Salterton: 11-16 May

Hunstanton: 2-4

D.G.P. Sheppard 18D16 to 17D15

10 to 8

21/2 to 2

11/2 to 1

10 to 71/2

14 to 13

11/2 to 1

31/2 to 3

3 to 2

-1 to $-\frac{1}{2}$

1/2 to 1

11 to 9

6 to 5

10 to 9

61/2 to 5

71/2 to 7

31/2 to 5

10 to 9

6 to 51/2

9 to 71/2

15 to 14

14 to 12

10 to 8

12 to 10

10 to 9D8

4 to 31/2

5 to 41/2

11 to 10

11 to 12

14 to 13

16 to 15

5 to 41/2

8 to 71/2

2 to 11/2

61/2 to 6

16D14 to 11

May

7 to 51/2

5 to 31/2

3 to 21/2

R.S. Jenkins 5 to 4 51/2 to 41/2 N.L. Luff F.I. Maugham 1 to 1/2 J.W. Potter 2 to 11/2 J.E. Ross 2 to 11/2

Bretby Croquet Club

Road, Swadlington, Burton-on-

New Associates

Dr S.E. Foden Cheltenhan Miss G.M. Hollida Cheltenham G. Budd Colchester A.E. Lawrance Colchester Cranbrook Schoo G.C. Punwani Ealing Antonia Punwani N.A.D. Stokes High Wycomb C. Davis Loughborough C. Hamilton-Miller

Norwich M. Woodward Mrs M. Howe South East Esse T.D. Turner H.J. Greatwood Thameside M.R. Greatwood Thameside

Mrs S.J. Lusher G.J. Barker Miss G.M. Harvey Mrs C. Bircumshaw

A.M. Chesney Mrs A. Dudley **B.B.** Galley W.G. Howell

Mrs P. Mason R.J. Payne J.D. Spiers

M.S.C. Thomas I.D.C. Tite

G.E. Tuck Comm. P. Tuke

A.P. Lampert (Total: 35)

Deaths

We regretfully have to announce the following death:

Mrs K.M.O. Wheeler

New Coaches

Grade II Grade III K.M.H. Aiton K.M.H. Aiton T.W. Anderson Dr T.J. Haste E. Bell C.J. Irwin E.J. Davis I.G. Vincent P.J. Dorke R.W. Ransom I.H. Wright

Handicap alterations Cheltenham Club Mrs J. Cima

Felixstowe Club R. Jones 12 to 10 L. Palmer **Bentley Club** V.R. Carter Mrs B.E. Carter F.H. Northcote J.A.T. Plummer W.L. Pulley G.T. Stone Mrs R. Stanley-Smith 6 **Roehampton Club**

I.P.M. Macdonald Ryde Club C.G. Pountney

Ryde: 10-12 April Mrs P.A. Watson R.P. Jones

Southport: 23-26 May D.R. Appleton 5 to 31/2 71/2 to 6 R. Collighan J.H. Haslam 15 to 14 J.B. Portwood 5 to 4 M.A. Saurin 31/2 to 2 Mrs L.J. Taylor 11 to 12 D.W. Trotman 7 to 6

Bath: 24 May 17D15 to 16D14 D. Sheppard Parkstone: 25 May Dr I.R. Plummer 41/2 to 3

Extracts from Minutes of the Council Meeting on 14th March 1987

1. GB v USA in Florida

Some of the players would be instructing in coaching courses with payment of 500 dollars towards their air fare. The requirements of Regulation 2 were waived.

2. REPORTS OF **COMMITTEES** etc.

(a) International. Prof. Neal presented the MacRobertson Shield 1986 report in retrospect and was congratulated on its review and recommendations for future tours.

He also reported that half of the GB v USA matches at Palm Beach, Florida would be played under USCA Rules and half under CA rules. In 1988 the first Solomon Trophy Match v USA would be played in England under CA Rules at Southwick and he hoped this event would be sponsored. In 1989 a Japanese team would visit us.

(b) Selection. Dr. Murray reported on the selection of teams for GB v USA and the Wine Country International Tournament, and action to be taken to prepare players for the 1990 Test series in NZ.

(c) Finance & General Purposes. Mr. Mulliner thanked Mr. Oldham for his successful negotiations over VAT with the Customs & Excise.

Mr. Oldham then went through the accounts after pointing out that administration changes often increased his work, that he spent one working week (not just the evenings) on preparing the accounts for audit and a further whole week on the first VAT return to Customs & Excise.

He stressed that claims for expenses must be submitted in good time and may be rejected if late, or if the VAT element and VAT vouchers were not submitted, they might not be paid in

Mr. Mulliner again thanked Mr. Oldham for his hard work on the accounts, which was greeted with applause. The accounts were passed unanimously.

Mr. Mulliner, in presenting the Budget for 1987, stressed that we had to exercise strict control over finance, that to keep the momentum going we may have to commit some of the CA's capital reserves, that the Budget was based on the poorest position

and was very conservative in its estimates. He pointed out that the amount of the Sports Council grant for 1988 onwards was not known, and that for 1987 he had estimated a figure of £26,000 to allow for inflation. This Grant was intended to give us time to become self-sufficient on normal expenditure as the governing body of the sport. We had been invited to submit proposals for the 2nd Forward Plan. The Budget was approved unanimously.

On subscriptions, the recommendation of the Committeee that there be no increase in the full subscription for 1988 but that the non-tournament players subscription be raised to £9 (£8) and the overseas rate to £30 for three years was agreed unanimously. Likewise the Junior membership should be split, with those between 18 and 21 paying £9 (£8) and those below 18 paying £6

On Levy, the Committee's recommendation of a new levy structure at 30% of each entry fee be paid to the CA, with a minimum of £1.50, was passed unanimously, subject to all clubs being circulated. If there was any substantial disagreement by clubs staging tournaments, then the Committee would consider them but if not amended, it would operate from 1988.



Brian Macmillan.

(d) Publicity & Development - presented by Mr. Hudson in the absence of Mr. Stoker

The Apps-Healey award had been won by the Pendle Club.

Mr C.P. Townsend had offered a new Development Award for the Club under 3 years old which had made most progress and he was thanked for his offer which was accepted.

The 'Membership Incentive Scheme' had been a great success and would be continued on a self-financing basis, the prizes being a refund of part of the subscriptions paid to the CA.

> Mr. Dorke reported that to date 11 schools had entered 18

> > continued overleaf.

Official Business

Council Minutes, 14th March (cont.)

teams for the Schools Competition.

Mr. Hudson also reported that he had applied to the Design Council for a grant towards the proposed CA Logo.

Mr McCullough appealed for information which could lead to the recovery of 8 coaching videos which were missing.

The report was approved.

(e) Handicap. Mr. Keen reported the following awards:

Apps-Healey - Mr. C. Clarke Steel Bowl - Miss D.A. Cornelius

Council agreed to the request that the temporary variation of CA handicaps of up to 18 be continued in 1987 and if this is to become permanent for 1988 onwards then a motion must be passed by Council later this year.

(f) Development Officer. Mr Hudson reported

(i) The Observer-Lassale Garden Croquet Competition would be launched on 22nd March 1987. Lassale are manufacturers of high quality watches and are based in Maidenhead.

The finals would be held in a Stately Home setting. The prizes for the winners would be watches with a substantial value. The tournament was open to all comers who had never had a CA Handicap (i.e. over 18). As the more successful of these entrants may well become interested in the game and join local clubs, Council agreed that should a winner be a CA member it would waive any disqualification under Regulation 2.

(ii) On 18th April Channel 4 will be screening the video on croquet in its 'Challenge to Sport' Series.

(iii) On 29th April the Sports Council will launch its 'What's Your Sport' campaign.

(iv) He expected that the Sports Council would shortly approve the grant for two indoor carpets. A lot of interest had been shown by potential sponsors and the carpets would be tried out during the coming summer.

(v) Advertising in the magazine was increasing.

He was thanked for his report.



Ryde 1986: The Newmans watch the Camroux' in play in the 'Y' Doubles Final.

(g) Administration.

Mr. Macmillan reported that he had ordered 2,500 copies of 'The Laws' and had already sold 1,500 of these.

He tabled a list of 67 new Associates who were all elected.

He reported that 2 new clubs and 5 new schools had registered.

He was congratulated on his efforts.

3. MOTION OF AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDERS

Mr. McCullough proposed and Mr. Dorke seconded the Motion which after a long discussion the Chairman suggested should be taken in parts. First, that which was recommended to the Council by the Publicity & Development Committee, namely that it ceased to be a single Main Committee of the Council and become two such Committees, i.e. the 'Publicity Committee' and the 'Development Committee'. Mr Caporn, after 45 minutes of discussion, moved that the question now be put, which being carried, the Chairman put the first part to the vote which was carried by 17 votes to 1.

Second, that there be established as Main Committees of the Council a 'Coaching Committee' and a 'Schools/Universities Committee'. This was passed by 8 votes to 6.

Third, that the 'International Committee' which had been in operation for some time be confirmed as a Main Committee. This was carried unanimously.

Fourth, that an 'Equipment Committee' be likewise set up as a Main Committee. This was also passed by 8 votes to 6.

The membership of these Committees would be as follows:-

(a) Publicity Committee - Members appointed by the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council from existing Council members (as currently).

(b) Development Committee. Two members of Council nominated by the Chairman, plus one Federation representative from each properly constituted Federation, or where a region has no such Federation, its Regional Development Officer: also that this Committee be exempt from the limit of 12 members per Committee.

(c) Coaching Committee. Two Council members nominated as above with one of these as Chairman plus the 10 Regional Coaching Officers. The same exemption as in (b) to apply.

(d) Schools/Universities Committee. The 4 Regional Schools and the Universities secretaries plus members of Council appointed by the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council. One of such latter members must be Chairman.

All the above decisions have to be submitted to the next meeting of the Council and passed by a majority of 6 votes to 4 otherwise any not so passed will fail.

4. 'OPEN' CROQUET

It was agreed merely to discuss this matter. Points raised included:-

(a) There are many ways that one can make money out of croquet. To regard someone as professional we should only reckon his financial rewards for playing the game. Do we want to exclude people who make their living from playing croquet from certain events? (Neal)

(b) Some people consider a professional player has more time to devote to improving his skills and therefore the 'amateur' is at an unfair disadvantage. (Townsend)

(c) We ought to seek the views of other sporting bodies who have similar problems, e.g. Rugby, Hockey and Badminton. (Caporn)

(d) Is it the amount of prize money that is in issue?(e) Should not a player who gives several

days towards promoting the game or coaching not be recompensed with a fee?

(f) The definition in Mr Hope's paper and the remarks by Professor Neal make sense - perhaps there should be some events for the genuine amateur only. (Sanford)

(g) If we go 'open' then low prize money will deter the professional. (Keen)

(h) Why do we disagree with professionalism? Is it merely a prejudice, the gentleman and the player? If we went 'open', the actual effect on the game as we know it would be negligible for many years. (Mulliner)

(i) What will professionalism do to the game? (Dorke)

(j) The prize limit of £25 is absurdly low. (Aspinall)

(k) We must refer the matter to the membership and to the clubs before we make any major decisions. (Caporn)

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman warmly thanked the members of Council who were retiring or not seeking reelection, namely Messrs. Sanford and Stoker and Mrs Hague.

Dr Murray was congratulated on his Chairmanship.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at The Hurlingham Club on Saturday 19 April 1987.

Present:

J W Solomon (President) R F Rothwell (Vice President) 55 Members of Council and Associates.

Apologies for absence:

S N Mulliner, L S Butler, Miss S Hampson, S S Townsend (Vice President)

1 Minutes of previous AGM

The Minutes of the AGM held on 19 April 1986 (copy in 'Croquet' No.186, page 30) were taken as read and adopted.

2 The President

Mr John Solomon welcomed everyone to the AGM and then asked the Chairman, Mr A.B. Hope, to read his report (copy in 'Croquet' No. 191, page 5).

3 Treasurer's Report

Mr A J Oldham, Hon. Treasurer, presented the Audited Accounts, a copy of which appears in 'Croquet' No. 191, pages 24/25. He then answered questions.

4 Election of Treasurer

Mr A J Oldham was re-elected unopposed and was warmly thanked by the President for all the devoted work he had put in over the years. Mr Oldham thanked the members for their confidence in him and stated that it was now 20 years he had been Honorary Treasurer.

5 Election of Vice-President

Richard Rothwell proposed Mr L Wharrad as Vice-President. He spoke of all the hard work Mr Wharrad had put in since he joined the Official Business

Council, his powers of persuasion and enthusiasm. Not only had he doubled the number of clubs, but also members. Mr Wharrad had also introduced small lawn croquet with the thought of television in mind. Mr D Caporn, who seconded the Motion, also spoke of Mr Wharrad's dynamic qualities, his enthusiasm and vision. Both the President and Chairman reiterated these remarks. Mr Wharrad was elected unanimously.

6 Election of Council Members

The Council Members applying for reelection, Messrs. G N Aspinall, Mrs W Hague, A B Hope, Professor B G Neal, Miss P Shine and C B Sanford were re-elected. The nominations of Messrs. C Irwin and K M H Aiton were unopposed and they were elected.

7 Election of Auditors

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

8 Development Officer

Mr C Hudson brought members up-to-date with the Lassale Garden Croquet Tournament and the proposed Granada Indoor Croquet Tournament.

9 Any Other Business

K F Wylie spoke about the cost of entering tournaments and said they were too cheap and entry fees should be increased considerably to help clubs with their finances. He said a lot of clubs had high overheads and needed money to improve facilities and lawns. This was discussed at length, the conclusion being that it was up to the individual clubs and not the CA to fix entry fees.

The President closed the meeting by informing members that the Club Conference gave them the opportunity to find out the views of Council and to make their own views known. He spoke of the success of the three year plan and thanked everyone involved for their help.

He concluded by presenting the Apps Heley Award to the Chairman of the Pendle Croquet Club, Mr Norman Hicks, who informed him how proud and delighted he was to receive the Award on behalf of the Pendle Club. He then presented the Steel Award to Miss Debbie Cornelius. Mr C Irwin accepted the Apps Trophy on behalf of Chris Clarke who was unable to attend.

Extract from Minutes of the Council Meeting on 25th April 1987.

WELCOME was given by the Chairman to the two new Members, Messrs Irwin and Aiton, elected at the AGM in the morning. It was agreed to co-opt Mr Gaunt to Council to replace Mr Sanford who had resigned, and the Chairman then welcomed him.

PROFESSIONALISM IN CROQUET

Professor Neal proposed and Dr Murray seconded:-

 That a professional croquet player be defined as one who receives in a calendar year prize money and appearance money (as defined in Regulation 2) which in aggregate exceeds an amount to be determined from time to time by Council and published in the CA Calendar.

All other sources of income related to croquet, for example, fees for coaching, managing tournaments or commentary work, book royalties and profits from sales of croquet equipment, should be excluded from this

(Ipswich) in play at Southwick, and now coopted on to Council.

Don Gaunt



aggregate.

2. That the Regulations for Tournaments be amended to encompass this definition and to enable the CA and/or clubs to exclude professional croquet players from some calendar fixtures or events if this becomes desirable.

3. That if the above motions be passed, appropriate means should be found for consulting Clubs and Associates to seek their approval for these changes.

A lengthy discussion followed including an amendment proposed by Mr Keen and seconded by Mr Gaunt that after 'who' shall be inserted 'receives appearance money or'. This was defeated by 10 votes to 8. Amongst points raised were that we should not get into a position where professionalism was operated under cover, that Council must govern although it must also be receptive to the views of the majority of Associates, that Council must bear in mind that it consists of a majority membership of low bisquers, whilst the majority of Associates are high bisquers with no chance of winning prize and appearance money and therefore Council must consult Associates on this matter, that almost certainly large prize and appearance money, if it came at all, would be by way of special tournaments promoted by TV and commercial companies and that prize money was paid partly to protect the promoting company's copyright.

Professor Neal said there should be an article in the magazine which he offered to write, and suggested the best approach was that Council wanted to clarify the position in anticipation of possible moves by sponsors in the future and with this in mind that an amendment to the Regulations would be the best way to do it. This could be done at the October meeting.

Other points were that we don't really need to consult Associates as Clubs already have power to exclude anyone entering for a Club Tournament published in the Calendar Fixture list.

After over an hour's discussion it was unanimously agreed that the Motion be accepted in principle, that it be fully reported in the Magazine with an article from Professor Neal including procedures to be followed with a view to amending Regulation 2 at the October Council meeting.

Mr Townsend then moved and seconded by Mr McCullough 'That in the proposed Granada Television Tournament all participants who were offered appearance and/or prize money would be exempt from Regulation 2'. The Chairman accepted the Motion as a matter of urgency under Standing Order 8, the necessary majority of members having agreed. Dr Murray stated that he opposed the Motion on the ground that we had just discussed that it was crucial to consult with our membership about the delicate issue of professionalism and this Motion proposed something completely contrary thereto. The Motion was defeated by 16 votes to 2. It was agreed to refer any problems arising out of any payment to players in this proposed Tournament to the Executive Committee.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ETC.

International – No report but in reply to a question from Mr McCullough regarding encouraging the playing of croquet worldwide, Professor Neal said his Committee would be doing what they could to encourage this. Mr Aspinall reported that GB had won the tournament in Florida against the USA by 24 matches to 6.

Development

Mr Hudson said that the Sports Council had agreed to fund 75% of the cost of two indoor carpets and 75% of the first year's operating costs. He would purchase one carpet for a trial run in the summer and the other in the autumn.

The Garden Tournament had attracted 143 entries to date. There was a lot of interest in possible sponsorship, particularly with regard to indoor croquet, and a World Individual Championship. There had been several enquiries from organisations wanting the CA to provide coaching courses, including one for American tourists. A white flat soled shoe is under trial for endorsement by the CA. John Jaques and the CA were jointly producing a coaching wall chart. It was planned to hold the Granada TV Indoor Tournament towards the end of October.

Administration

Mr MacMillan reported that 160 Associates had not yet paid their subscription, that 28 had resigned and that this was a similar figure to last year. The Hurlingham Club had offered the lawns free of charge for the Opens and President's Cup, and the Club was thanked for its kind offer. 15 Candidates for election as Associates were approved.

THE SELECTION COMMITTEE

The Selection Committee, consisting of Mr Aspinall, Mr Keen, Dr Murray and Professor Neal, were elected unanimously.