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September 1987

Issue No 193

# CROQUET



**Inside:**  
Championship Results  
The Croquet Classic  
News & Views  
Coaches Corner

## Editorial

### THE PACE QUICKENS

The Lassale Croquet Classic has opened up new horizons for the Croquet Association. Until the first Regional final, I had never met anyone who had actually won a match in the competition - all the people I met told me they had played and lost, in many cases, badly; but how much they had enjoyed the game!

For the first time they had found out what the rules really were, and now they knew, they were keen to have another go next year. The enthusiasm of those who reached the Regional finals was also impressive, both players and spectators.

I shall not quickly forget the scene at Blickling Hall, where the morning rounds were played in 3 hours of continuous torrential rain. Players and spectators alike, though poorly protected from the weather, stuck it out, with a long line of umbrellas on the

terrace and cheers of encouragement for the players as they battled on.

Many of those who entered the competition have now joined the Association, and I wish them well as they try out their skills at their local club. Before very long, I suspect that a number of them will be winning our tournaments, because the talent is there and it has only to be developed.

Encouraging also is our success in another area, the Schools, where Peter Dorke and his School Secretaries have done a magnificent job this year in expanding the Schools tournament with the help of The Royal Bank of Scotland. Already the list of those chosen for the Invitation events includes the names of several schoolboys who started playing in the Schools and Junior Championships only a few years ago. Let's hope that very shortly the competition generates some potential lady champions!

CHRIS HUDSON.

### Stockey Furzen Cricket & Croquet Club

Observant readers who reach the small print of our 'Official Business' columns will notice that there are a considerable number of new members listed as coming from Stockey Furzen.

Paul Henderson, Club President-for-Life, developed his interest in croquet earlier this year when he and his wife Kay took a beginners' course coached by Peter Danks, Leonard Mills and Pat Tunmer at Budleigh.

After the course, they thought it would be fun to get some of the local clients of their restaurant to come out on Saturdays to play on their croquet lawn (a pretty good one by the sound of it) and this was so enjoyable that they decided to form a proper club, recruiting some more of their friends and regular hotel clients.

Membership now stands at 52 and rising. 39 are British (14 local), 2 Australian, and 11 American (which accounts for the large number of overseas members recruited since our last issue). Their subscription of £20 per year includes membership of the Croquet Association and Paul expects to add another 50 members every year.

The scene at Blickling Hall, where the morning rounds were played in 3 hours of continuous torrential rain, was fantastic. Players and spectators alike, though poorly protected from the weather, stuck it out, with a long line of umbrellas on the terrace and cheers of encouragement for the players as they battled on.

Many of those who entered the competition have now joined the Association, and by now they will be trying out their skills at their local clubs. Before very long, I suspect that a number of them will be winning CA tournaments: the talent is there and it has only to be developed.

Paul and Kay have set out to make Gidleigh Park a place where they themselves would like to stay and eat, so even if your croquet is not too good, you should find your visit well worth while!



Paul Henderson after being thrashed 14-0 in the Observer/Lassale Croquet Classic!

**Photographs in this issue by: Derek Rowe (Photos) Ltd., Dorothy Rush, Deborah Latham, Eric Harrison, Barry Keen, John Williams, Syd Jones, Andrew Bennet, Chris Hudson, Mary Cook, Chris Chapman, and Granada TV.**

#### Front Cover:

Paul and Kay Henderson on the lawn at Stockey Furzen Croquet Club, Gidleigh Park, Chagford, Devon.

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## INDEX

Championships:	
Home Internationals .....	5
Western Championships .....	6,7
Inter-Counties .....	8,9
South West Championships .....	9,28
Men's & Women's .....	10,11
National Tournaments .....	11
Tournament Reports .....	14,15,18,19
.....	22,23,27,28
Contacts .....	4
Short Story .....	13
Carlsberg Croquet .....	3
Granada TV International .....	3
Lassale Croquet Classic .....	16,17
Indoor Croquet .....	3
Townswomens Guilds .....	3
Club News .....	21
Coaches Corner .....	29,30
Your Letters .....	12,24,25
Official Business .....	30,31
Schools & Universities .....	26
History: 80 Years Ago .....	20
Book Review .....	20

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

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## News

### TWG 'Taster' Days



TWG members try Golf Croquet at Bowdon.



Jean Short (right), Chairman of the TWG's National Sport & Creative Leisure Committee, shares a joke with Joyce Ball of Timperley, who won the Short Croquet tournament.

Two full-day Regional 'taster' sessions have been held recently for the Townswomens Guild. The first, held at Bath Croquet Club, was ruined by rain, but even so, a third of the 27 ladies played right through from 10 o'clock until 4pm. Bowdon had better weather, and a larger group, 40. Eight ladies played a Short Croquet tournament and the others tried their hands at Golf Croquet. A most enjoyable day.

### Granada TV: International Croquet

Granada TV are following up their 1986 TV Croquet presentation with another International Short Croquet match, to be filmed indoors at Stage 1, Manchester.

The match will be filmed on Friday 30 October to Sunday 1st November inclusive and two players each from New Zealand, Australia, the United States, and Great Britain are to be invited to take part. The governing body in each of these countries has been asked to nominate its top four players from whom the final selection will be made according to availability.



Nigel Aspinall in play in last year's TV International.

It is hoped to stage 6 games on the Friday and Saturday (3 in the afternoon and 3 in the evening). It will be a round robin competition, culminating in two semi-finals and a final on the Sunday afternoon.

The matches will be recorded and it is intended to edit them to give 5 45-minute programmes. Seating will be installed around the court for 600 spectators, so players and their families and friends in the North West (and perhaps further afield) should have an opportunity of seeing some of the world's top players in action at close range.

The event will be advertised to the public, so if you want to watch it 'live', make certain that you book your seat early!

### Carlsberg Croquet: Development Drive in Hotels

Carlsberg are to assist the Croquet Association to develop the playing of Croquet in hotels.

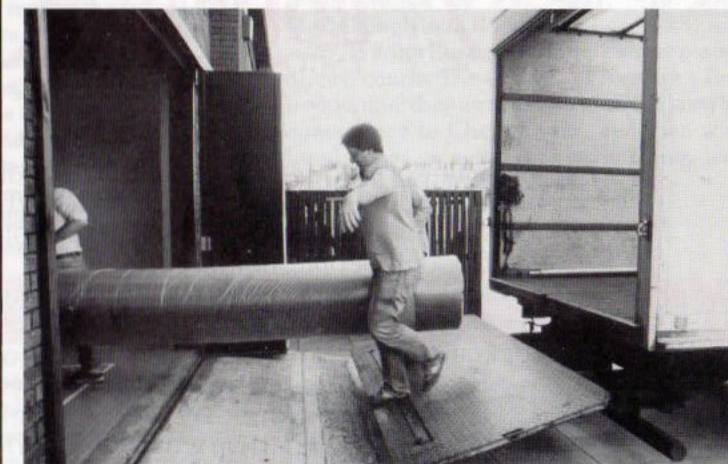
During the winter, 2000 hotels will be circulated with details of a special offer of the 'Carlsberg' Croquet Set - a high quality set which will come complete with a handbook explaining the game, a set of Rules encapsulated in plastic to protect them against the weather, a wallchart explaining the basic shots and the tactics of the game, and a plastic leaflet dispenser which will be stocked on a regular basis with CA leaflets.



Croquet being played at The Royal Berkshire Hotel, Ascot.

The special offer will include affiliation to the CA, entitling each hotel to reduced rates for advertising in the magazine and helping to establish links between the hotel and the CA so that we can work together in developing the game.

### Croquet Goes Indoors



The first length of carpet goes into Chorley Sports Centre for trials.

We shall soon take delivery of two indoor carpets in preparation for our first-ever winter indoor programme. Each carpet measures 26yds by 18yds and is divided into 5 strips lengthwise, giving a 1-yard border all round the standard Short Croquet court.

One carpet will be used in Stage 1 for the Granada TV International Croquet presentation. After that, the two carpets go on tour round the country, visiting some 10 venues during the winter to enable us to carry out a programme of coaching, demonstrations, and 'taster' sessions.

At the same time, a National Inter-Regional team tournament will be organised, with the 'home' Region playing matches against neighbouring Regions on the Saturday and Sunday afternoons at each venue.

Venue dates that have already been tentatively fixed are as follows:

7/8 November	Clacton
21/22 November	Loughborough
5/6 December	Bristol
19/20 December	Crawley

Details of the programme at each venue will be circulated to local clubs.

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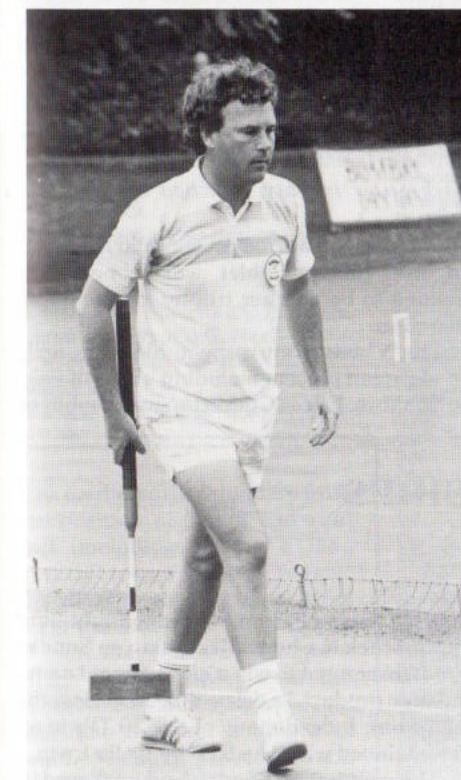
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## Home Internationals

### Budleigh Salterton: 6-7 June England Home In on Championship again

Report by Peter Danks

This year, for the fourth time, Budleigh Salterton was happy to welcome old and new friends in the four teams contesting the Home International Championship. Had the Club had prior notice of who was coming, the media would have been able to inform the public which scintillating stars would be on view. Perhaps next year the respective captains will remember this.



Phil Cordingley - a convincing win for England in the final.

On the Thursday before the off, the hoops were all firmly placed exactly the regulation 323/32 wide. A Nippy telephone call after this had been done was to order President's Cup hoops (3 11/16 inches wide) to be used. Six sets duly arrived on the Friday and Charles Smith, the Lawns Manager, set them on Friday afternoon. He was not too happy as it rained Datsun Cogs the whole time. On the Saturday morning last year's Test Match score boards arrived. Unfortunately some name plates had no players and some players had no name plates. An innovation this year was the provision of balls by the CA. They arrived after the Club's ten sets of new and nearly new balls had been laboriously bounce tested and graded for size. Now for the good news. I will re-word that. Now for the less bad news. Saturday was a pig of a day. A leaden sky and a strong south-westerly. Very cold.

England were again the favourites. They took no risks against Wales whom they beat 5-0 without losing a game. Nigel Aspinall beat William Prichard by +17, +26TP. David Openshaw had a comfortable win against David Croker by +13, +26. Mark Avery started strongly against Robert Prichard, winning the first game +26. The second was harder and he won by +13. Eric Solomon and Colin Prichard demonstrated to the locals how to play expert croquet on an indifferent court. The locals now realise that the skill of man can overcome the slings and arrows of outrageous slopes and bumps! Eric won +18, +18. Philip Cordingley and Danny Palmer had a close first game which Philip won by +8. He won the second +23.

Scotland beat Ireland decisively by 4-1. The most intriguing game was between Martin Murray and Simon Williams. Martin lost the first game -17 and won the second +22TP.

In the third game Simon was well ahead. He missed the peg with his forward ball and pegged out the other. Martin had one on peg and the other nowhere. He hit in. We all watched a tantalising three ball ending. Slowly Martin progressed as far as 4-back. At last Simon hit in. He took off for the peg and - you're right. He missed it! Martin gave him no second chance.

Now for the better news. On Sunday the weather was more relaxed. So were the players, refreshed by the Club's party for them on Saturday evening, followed by the teams' annual dinner. Players and spectators could actually enjoy themselves.

England met tougher opposition from Scotland. Nigel Aspinall had a lengthy game with Keith Aiton. He eventually won by -22TP, +6, +25TP. David Openshaw met the in-form Martin Murray. Martin narrowly lost the first game by -3. That was enough. He stormed home by +26TP, +26TP. Mark Avery beat Ian Bond +20, +15. Eric Solomon and Stephen Wright had a ding-donger which Eric won by the odd game -12, +25, +13. Geoffrey Roy must have thought he had Philip Cordingley in the bag when he won the first game +17. Not so. Philip gave no quarter, winning the next two games +26, +26. England 4, Scotland 1.

Ireland and Wales fought hard to avoid winning the wooden spoon. David Croker narrowly beat Simon Williams +3, +7. Ian Vincent beat Colin Prichard +20, +15. Colin Irwin got his revenge for last year's defeat by William Prichard. He won after another hard struggle by +9, -5TP, +16. John McCullough beat Robert Prichard +23, -8, +25TP. John Rose and Danny Palmer played on two courts. The first with President's Cup hoops, until they were whipped off the lawn for conveyance to Cheltenham, and then with local hoops on a different lawn. Danny won +13, -3, +7. Ireland 3, Wales 2.

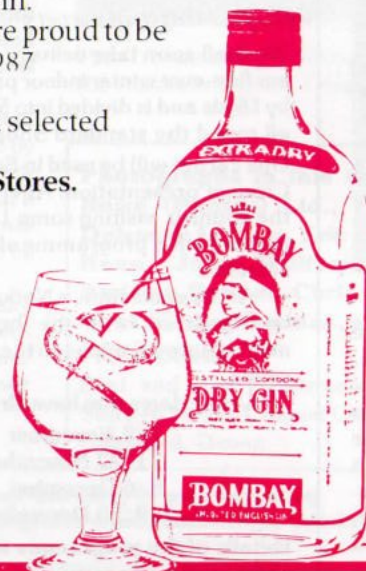
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## News

### EXCLUSIVE 'Dolly' Rush traced to Brentwood, Essex Identity exposed: A Special Report

The letter from Peter Dorke in our last issue has led through a chain of mysterious circumstances to the tracing of 'Dolly' Rush, the well-known writer of short stories.

Acting on a tip-off, our reporters tracked Mrs Rush down to a house in Shrewsbury, only to find that she had packed and left in a hurry due, it was alleged by neighbours, to her husband's promotion to a job at Head Office.

Further painstaking work has taken our team to Pilgrim's Hatch, near Brentwood, Essex, where we have been given an exclusive interview by Mrs Rush herself. We have now established beyond doubt the true facts of her identity, and are proud to be the first national magazine to reveal the full story to our readers.

Dorothy Jones was born of Welsh parents

in Southwick, where she not only played no croquet but was completely unaware of the existence of either the game or the local clubs. It was not until she went up to Cambridge in the early sixties that she was introduced to the sport in the most casual way. She still has a photograph of her first faltering strokes, taken in West Road.

The photo shows her playing in bare feet, a practice she now regards with disapproval, but soon she progressed to serious croquet and became part of the 'Great Croquet Revival' that took place in Cambridge in the 60's. Not a star player, she still won the odd game against Geoff or Robert.

It was not until much later that her handicap fell to a respectable level and she began to understand the game a little. Work in advertising took her to many parts of the country and to many croquet clubs, large and small, but marriage and croquet were incompatible and she had to hang up her old Solomon and become a reformed woman.

Now settled in her new home in Essex, Dorothy (no one has ever called her 'Dolly' except her Uncle George) hopes to take



The first faltering steps...

advantage of the proximity of the local croquet clubs and play the occasional game with her husband Goronwy.

## Championships

### Cheltenham: 17-25 May THE WESTERN CHAMPIONSHIPS Mark Suter excels in new Regional Championships

Report by Deborah Latham

The class, handicap and doubles events were played during a week of very changeable weather when waterproofs were worn as often for warmth as they were for protection from rain.

The co-managers for this first part of the Westerns were Laurence and Deborah Latham, making their first attempt at managing a week-long tournament and emerging from the experience having enjoyed themselves whilst garnering ideas for improvement next time. A relatively small entry, about a quarter of which was made up of visitors, meant that double-banking was less frequent than usual, and most games were finished within the precautionary time limit imposed.

Circumstances led to the draw for the classes being done by Mr Jan Kusmirek, the Managing Director of Natural Assets Ltd. The two 'A' class blocks both produced three players with two wins each; Bernard Neal and Laurence Latham were the victims of Tournament Regulation 15. Mark Suter had only been promoted to the 'A' class about a week previously and could therefore have been considered an outsider, but with only Carol Smith beating him and with triple peels against Bernard Neal in the qualifying block and David Cairns in the final he eventually won with little difficulty.

The 'B' group were the biggest class,



Kismet Whittall, winner of the Reckitt Challenge Cup.

necessitating three blocks; here the 'Latham Innovation' was employed to ensure the 'best' block winners had the most favourable draws in the play-offs. In the event the two finalists turned out to be from the same block, and, as happened in their first encounter, Bob Race beat Peter Darby to win the trophy.

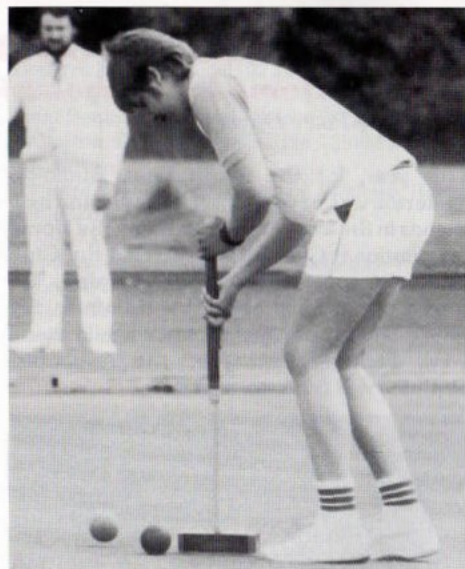
The 'C' class had an entry of very good players, but only Marjorie Warren and Kismet Whittall won all their qualifying games to meet in the final, where Kismet once again put Marjorie in the role of bridesmaid rather than bride in a very closely contested game.

The 'D' had a very small entry, and it was somewhat surprising that more long bisquers did not avail themselves of the opportunity to play for the handsome Stevenson Cup. The two top players in the block who were to play off for the cup proved to be husband and wife Leslie and Millicent James, who coincidentally both qualified with two wins, +4! They played a full untimed game - an arrangement which was met with appreciation - with

Millicent notching up a convincing victory.

The managers were pleased to see only three of the doubles games going to time; the thirty-two players produced a number of strong pairings. Not least of these were the Bath combination of Bob Race and Kay Yeoman, who were eventual victors over Carol Smith and Deborah Latham. It was something of a surprise to find such partnerships as John MacLaren and Bo Harris and David Cairns and Marjorie Warren in the 'Y' doubles, but a pleasure to see Sue Waterston partnering Mark Suter to a successful conclusion therein, even though it was at the expense of Ron and Beryl Gosden.

From a field of thirty-four in the big handicap, those worthy of mention include Jean Paddon, whose very respectable wins were not quite sufficient to see her to the final stages, and John Exell who progressed to the semi-finals. John MacLaren had a good tournament, too, reaching the semi-finals in this as well as the semi-final of the 'Y' doubles and the class play-offs. He also shared with Bo Harris the distinction of constraining Mark



Mark Suter in play, watched by Laurence Latham.

Suter to his two narrowest winning margins, but the Gilbey Goblet was nonetheless destined to be another trophy for the Suter collection.

The 'Y' was a very respectable event, with the eighteen players including some of very high calibre. Eileen Cheverton was doubtless

### THE WESTERN CHAMPIONSHIPS Mulliner wins the Coles Trophy

Report by Richard Hilditch

The movement of the COLES to the second May bank holiday brought out a strong entry, strong play and naturally some indifferent weather. Indeed the weather on the first day, which comprised persistent rain, would have graced the earliest of events in the calendar. This rain may have contributed to the demise of the seeds lost in the first two rounds, with Martin Murray narrowly losing to a re-found Dayal Gunasekera, Mark Avery losing comfortably to Laurence Latham and Ian Maugham (playing very well as a fairly late substitute in the draw) disposing of Colin Irwin. However the sharp-eyed soon pointed out the bad effect that the Great Britain jackets had had on Mark and Colin.

With their customary efficiency Eric Solomon and Steve Mulliner managed to finish off the first quarter final on the Saturday. Steve won this match convincingly although Eric had played well in the previous rounds disposing quickly of two strong opponents.

In the second quarter, Keith Aiton met Dayal Gunasekera, both fresh from TPs. Keith won the first quickly and Dayal then tried to obtain some sort of psychological advantage by holding back the second game until the next morning. However Keith proved the fitter, and Dayal failed after making a token hoop, going down -51. All this while Keith was wearing a dreaded GB jacket. Dayal continued to play well although he lost a delicate 'grudge' match in his first SWIZ game with an imposter from the bottom of the rankings (your reporter substituting for Eric Solomon).

In the third quarter Simon Williams came through to play John McCullough. The first game proved to be a traditional Irish slow game with the manager reaching for his

pegging down clips on Saturday night until Simon stuck in a hoop. Resuming on Sunday Simon managed to win a close Riggall game and then produced a delayed TP to get into the semi-final. Indeed many of the 20 TPs in all were delayed with one STP by Colin Irwin.

The weather on Sunday had improved (it was bitterly cold but at least dry, only Irish men were wearing shorts), and the modest group of spectators were able to venture out of the hut occasionally. The match between Mulliner and Aiton proved to be of variable standard with some awful patches, however Mulliner's hitting in proved to be decisive.

In the other semi-final the two unseeded players put up an exciting match for the spectators. Simon won the first game with a TP from being somewhat behind and looked to be in control in the second game when he was going round with his second ball to the peg. With Paul on 4-back and peg, Simon peeled partner through 4-back but was unable to do more straight peels. He made rover off Paul's backward ball and left it near rover going down to his peel ball at penult. He played a strong peel shot (which looked a little dangerous), rolling down to the peg to peg out both balls. Taking the lift Paul hit the ball in penult, peeling it down to near 3-back, he took off but was only able to gain position at 4-back. Simon took what looked to the spectators to be a difficult hoop position (about 45 degrees at 4 feet), and Paul made 4-back but failed position at penult (20 degrees and a yard to the side). Possibly unable to get a wire Simon confidently ran rover hard and had a shot back at the peg to the north boundary, narrowly missing both peg and ball. Paul was in a crunch position, he hit the

pleased with her win over Paddy Paddon, as was Iris Dwerryhouse with beating Carol Smith. However, it was Deborah Latham who kept up her collection of 'Y' wins against such players as David Cairns at the semi-final stage and Bob Race in the final, both of whose performances in the rest of the tournament raised the question of what they were doing in the 'Y' at all!

Only three of the entrants went on into the Coles as the fourth event of the Championships, but the players on the whole seemed happy with the first running of the tournament - and, generally speaking, if the players are happy, the managers lead a much more peaceful existence!

#### RESULTS

##### Roehampton Challenge Cup (Advanced Play)

###### Block A

2 wins: M. Suter +25; Mrs C.A. Smith +20; Prof B.G. Neal -3.  
0 wins: Dr B.G.F. Weitz.

###### Block B

2 wins: Dr D.S. Cairns +221; W.E.

Lamb +8; L.V. Latham -3  
0 wins: G.E.P. Jackson

##### Play-Off

###### Semi-Finals

Suter bt Lamb +9; Dr Cairns bt Mrs Smith +22.

###### Final

Suter bt Dr Cairns +8(TP)

##### Trevor Williams Cup (Advanced Play)

###### Block A

3 wins: R. Race  
2 wins: P.A. Darby  
1 win: Dr R.F. Wheeler  
0 wins: F.J. Exell

###### Block B

3 wins: Mrs G.D. Harris  
1 win: Mrs D.A. Wheeler (runner-up); Mrs L.V. Latham; R.A. Gosden

###### Block C

3 wins: J. MacLaren  
2 wins: Mrs B.G. Weitz  
1 win: Lady Bazley  
0 wins: Mrs K. Yeoman



Co-Manager Deborah Latham (right) with doubles partner Carol Smith.

ball on the north boundary from his position at penult and went out (including hitting a long return roquet after rover). Needless to say the match then went to Paul.

On the final day we had a much better display from the meteorological boys, with real sunshine and not a breath of wind. Mulliner proved far too strong for Hands, and regained the trophy comfortably. Aiton had a good tussle with Williams in which they both had TPs with Aiton's being the decisive one.

Meanwhile the SWIZ was proving interesting. Overnight the key game between the two hapless players on 0 wins (Jan MacLeod and Bernard Neal) had been pegged down. The game resumed despite a marker having demonstrated quantum mechanical tunneling to the next lawn and Bernard laid up and produced a neat TP. He then cunningly retired when on top (not of the SWIZ) to let another super-sub in to the event.

David Goacher notched up his first tournament TP against Robert Prichard. All your reporter heard of this was Prichard moaning about how many people had done their first tournament triples against him; surely there is excellent scope for some detective work here (Keith, John, David and Robert to investigate perhaps).

The almost mystical prize for the first sextuple in the COLES was remembered by some, but a

fat lot of good it did, with no close efforts this year.

The SWIZ was won by Mark Avery by beating a succession of strong players including John McCullough in the last game.

It is really good to end a tournament on a note of good weather, it may help to con the players into suffering again the agonies of the wet first day. Note how the really skilful players obtain a grading so low as to allow them to just watch the first day's play and make a glorious entry and exit in the SWIZ, mentioning no names. There were indeed many excellent entries for spectator of the year at this year's COLES, including the elusive Brain Sykes out to get some more blood samples it seemed.

David Goacher notched up his first tournament TP against Robert Prichard. All your reporter heard of this was Prichard moaning about how many people had done their first tournament triples against him; surely there is excellent scope for some detective work here (Keith, John, David and Robert to investigate perhaps).

The almost mystical prize for the first sextuple in the COLES was remembered by some, but a

#### Play-Off

##### 1st Round

Darby bt Mrs Weitz +12; Race bt Mrs Wheeler +23.

##### Semi-Finals

Darby bt Mrs Harris +17; Race bt MacLaren +5.

##### Final

Race bt Darby +21.

##### The Reckitt Challenge Cup (Level Play)

###### Block A

3 wins: Mrs A. Warren  
1 win: Mrs M.E. Langley -3; P.A. Dwerryhouse -6; Mrs M. Murray -25.

###### Block B

3 wins: Mrs K.M. Whittall.  
2 wins: Mrs R.A. Gosden.  
1 win: Mrs P.A. Dwerryhouse.  
0 wins: Mrs B.G. Neal.

##### Play-Off

Mrs Whittall bt Mrs Warren.

##### Stevenson Cup (Level Play)

2 wins: Mrs L.W.R. James +4; L.W.R. James +4.  
1 win: Miss E. Cheverton; Miss S. Waterston.

##### Play-Off

Mrs James bt James.

##### Handicap Doubles

###### 2nd Round

Race & Mrs Yeoman (8½) bt Dr Wheeler & Mrs Whittall (12½) +8; Prof & Mrs Neal (6½) bt Latham & Mrs James (14) +6; Mrs Wheeler & James (18) bt Dr Weitz & Mrs Murray (8); Mrs Smith & Mrs Latham (6½) bt Lamb & Mrs Langley (9½) +14.

###### Semi-Finals

Race & Mrs Yeoman bt Prof & Mrs Neal +14; Mrs Smith & Mrs Latham bt Mrs Wheeler & James +5(T).

###### Final

Race & Mrs Yeoman bt Mrs Smith & Mrs Latham.

##### Handicap Doubles 'Y'

###### Semi-Finals

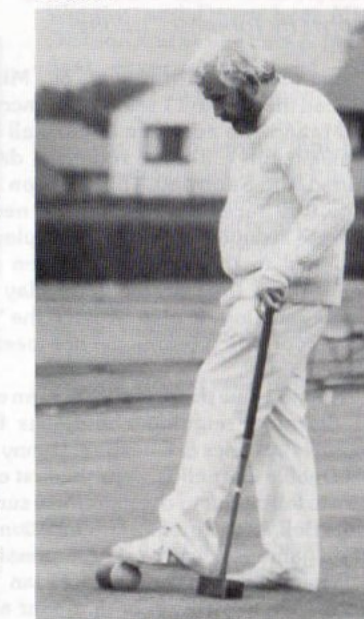
Suter & Miss Waterston (16) bt Lady

## Championships

Bazley & Exell (9) +18; Mr & Mrs Gosden (12) bt MacLaren & Mrs Harris (8½) +3.

##### Final

Suter & Miss Waterston bt Mr & Mrs Gosden.



Trevor Williams Cup Finalist Peter Darby.

### PERSONAL COLUMN

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Aiton bt Gunasekera +26, +25; Williams bt McCullough -13, +3, +9(TP); Hands bt Maugham +16, +26(TP).

##### Semi-Finals

Mulliner bt Aiton +25(TP), -14, +14; Hands bt Williams -8(TP), +1, +12.

##### Final

Mulliner bt Hands +17, +26.

\* Seeded Player.

##### SWIZ

(Advanced Play)

6 wins: M. Avery.

5 wins: C.J. Irwin, A.J. Mrozinski, J.R. McCullough, D.L. Gunasekera.  
4 wins: E.J. Davis, L.V. Latham, F.I. Maugham, P.L. Smith, W.O. Aldridge, D.R. Foulser, D.L. Gaunt, D.J. Goacher.

3 wins: M. Murray, D. Cairns, P. Cordingley, N.G. Hyne, P.M. Johnson, J.E. Guest.

2 wins: J.O. Walters, A.B. Hope, K.F. Wylie, R.D.C. Prichard, J. Rose, G.K. Taylor.

1 win: B.G. Neal.

0 wins: Miss MacLeod.

## Championships

### THE ANCHOR INTER-COUNTIES CHAMPIONSHIP

Southwick: 28-31 May  
Surprise Win For Avon

Report by John McCullough

A last-minute withdrawal by Middlesex reduced the field to 11 teams and encouraged the Manager to adopt an all-play-all format, involving three 3-hour rounds a day from Thursday to Saturday. This decision seemed to be well received, despite the necessary increase in double-banking. Most players are hardened to this now, even when playing doubles and they prefer more play to less double-banking. It also avoided the 'lottery' element of which teams did not meet which other teams.

Round 1 saw the first surprise, an opening 2-1 defeat of reigning champions Eastern Counties by Lancs & Cheshire. Danny Palmer and Debbie Cornelius were the first of many pairs to fall victim to the extremely successful Eddie Bell/Alan Sutcliffe combination, losing a tight game -3 on time. The impressive form of 'new boys' Sutcliffe and Brian Storey enabled the Northerners to mount a strong challenge for the title.

In Round 2 the even more successful, and ultimately unbeaten, pairing of Keith Aiton and Nick Hyne showed their mettle with a +21 against Avon's John McCullough and Roger Tribe. Unfortunately the Midlands lacked strength in depth and lost this match, like many others, 2-1.

Round 3 saw another 2-1 defeat for Eastern, by a menacingly in-form Surrey squad. Jerry Guest was the star of this encounter, playing a break from 6 to the peg just before time to secure a win by +2 on time for partner George Noble and himself against Martin French and Tim Harrison.

Thus Thursday ended with only three unbeaten teams, Avon, Lancs & Cheshire and Surrey. Everyone, not least the disconsolate non-playing captain Sarah Hampson, seemed surprised that Eastern's challenge had apparently disintegrated. The home fans must



Avon's winning team. Back (left to right): John Mann, Bob Race, Roger Tribe and Ray Ransom. Front: David Goacher, John McCullough and Frances Ransom.

have been similarly depressed that Sussex had already gravitated to the bottom of the table, alone registering three defeats. The duck was to prove unbreakable. Consolation was at hand however, not only in the bar, but in the form of natty Anchor golfing umbrellas, (a gift to each player by our sponsors that, needless to say, ensured a dry tournament) and in the form of the camaraderie of this, the most social of all Croquet events.

The vital clash in Round 4 produced a 2-1 win for Surrey against Lancs & Cheshire. Meanwhile dark horses Avon notched up a third successive 2-1 score, against fancied contenders Berks & Oxon. With two defeats in three matches, the Thames Valley side became another whose challenge appeared to be over before it had begun. With a good 3-0 win over Midlands (Aiton & Hyne separated), Gloucestershire was still in the hunt with only one defeat but they had an ominously tough programme ahead.

Sure enough Surrey proved too powerful for Gloucestershire in Round 5, which saw Avon collect its win against Sussex, and Lancs & Cheshire pick up an important 3-0 against Bedfordshire to keep in the hunt and improve their 'games for' total, which would be the deciding factor in the event of the tie. Freddie Reynold and Tommy Vale scored a notable consolation win for Sussex in this round by the large margin of +15 on time, against the otherwise unbeatable third Avon pairing of Bob Race and Ray Ransom.

Round 6 witnessed one of the most exciting games of the tournament as Eastern clashed with Avon. Double-banking on a fast lawn 3, McCullough made use of a fourth-corner cannon to start his early break to 4-back. John Walters hit the lift and got to 3-back before very honestly admitting to a fault in front of the vicious 'hill'. After a few more turns Palmer gained the innings and went to rover where he blobbed the hoop off McCullough's ball. The Avon pair gambled for the big prize but Tribe missed the lift. Palmer tried the hoop again but could only find the jaws. McCullough joined Tribe on the North boundary, allowing Palmer to make the hoop. This he did but his adventurous shot at Walters' ball on the East boundary missed. McCullough took advantage, going to the peg and pegging Palmer out. That left three-quarters of an hour for the pegged-out game.

Walters was allowed a number of 30+ yard shots, all of which he missed, although he made a couple of hoops as McCullough and Tribe separated following lifts. With three minutes remaining it was peg and rover v penult. Walters had just missed another 35-yarder but Tribe failed to get a good rush to rover so instead retreated to the North boundary. With his last shot Walters eventually hit (33 yards) to large cheers from the gallery and made penultimate to win +1 on time, McCullough failing to hit his last shot at the peg from corner 4. This secured a 2-1 win for Eastern and was a particularly bitter disappointment for Race and Ransom, who had staged a spectacular recovery in the last 45 minutes against Gaunt and Lewis to win +2 on time. Meanwhile Surrey had notched up their sixth successive victory with a 2-1 win over Midlands.

Thus, by Friday evening, Surrey had established a commanding lead with 6/6, followed by Avon and Lancs & Cheshire, both on 4/5 and a revived Eastern on 4/6. The weekend reinforcements were starting to arrive, but what effect would they have?

Round 7 belonged to Bedfordshire. They opened up the event with the surprise of the week, a 2-1 win over Surrey. The key game here was the +1 on time win of Jon Watson and John Wheeler against Bernard Neal and Tony Mrozinski. A late break to the peg, giving contact, by Mrozinski appeared to have rescued Surrey. Unfortunately skipper Neal had miscounted the score. He thought they had established a 2-point lead and so told Mrozinski not to peg out. In fact the lead was only 1 point and Jon Watson played an excellent last turn to make 2-back and 3-back and win the game and match.

Avon nearly suffered a similar fate. In their deciding game against Yorkshire, time was called with Race and Ransom 2 points up against John Maude and Martin Kolbuszewski. Worried about Kolbuszewski's ball on hoop 3, Ransom tried to croquet it to corner 1 but an underhit shot saw it finish within a foot of Maude's 2-back hoop. With all the balls split up, Maude hit the 25-yarder after time, made 2-back but missed a three-yarder at the ball in corner 4 to the great relief of the Avon team.

With Surrey sitting out Round 8, the other three contenders notched up wins to pile on the pressure. In the game against David Croker and Bernard Weitz of Berks & Oxon, Tim Harrison of Eastern made the best attempt of the week at a triple by completing two peels only to see the rover peel stick in the jaws, with a subsequent jump-shot that failed to move the peeler.

In Round 9 Lancs & Cheshire lost 2-1 at the hands of a strengthened Berks & Oxon team but, with their injection of new blood for the weekend, Surrey definitely seemed to have adversely affected the balance of their team, for they were convincingly beaten 3-0 by an Avon team growing in confidence with each match.

Day three concluded with Avon on 7/8, Eastern on 7/9 and Lancs & Cheshire and Surrey on 6/8. Seemingly all would hinge on the Sunday morning clash of Avon and Lancs & Cheshire. In what other sport but Croquet would the main contenders be seen disappearing into the sunset on a night out together?

And so to the controversy. With Race and Tribe beating Tim Haste and Chris Hudson +8, McCullough and Ransom were settling for a 2pt win on time against the unbeaten Bell and Sutcliffe when, with (as they thought) three minutes to go, the message came round that there was a 3½ hour and not, even as shown on the programme, a 3 hour time limit for the Sunday sessions. The consternation caused here, as on a number of other lawns, was intense but the Manager remained firm and so the tension had another thirty minutes in which to escalate. In fact what probably would have been a 2-1 win to Avon turned into a 3-0 win, as David Goacher played a marvellous break after time so that he and partner John Mann could beat the unlucky John Rose and Storey by yet another +1 on time.

Eastern did what they had to do in Round 11, beating Yorkshire 3-0 to keep up the pressure on Avon but in the end they had to settle for second place, as Avon notched up their fourth consecutive 3-0 with a win against the team that had done them such a good favour earlier, Bedfordshire.

And so the newcomers drove home with the Cup, engraved glasses, champagne, cake, butter, cheese and cream, not to mention their umbrellas and fruit syrup. It is certainly a tournament worth entering, but not just for the generous and welcome sponsorship by Anchor Foods. The hospitality of the Southwick members, a sighting of one of Veronica Carlisle's hats, the tension of all those +1's on time, but above all the great social nature of the occasion, make this for many the highlight of the Croquet Calendar.



John Wheeler, Bedfordshire's captain, helps team mate Jon Watson to a glass of Anchor's Fruit Syrup.

### SOUTH WEST CHAMPIONSHIP Budleigh Salterton: 29 June - 4 July Bearded Pirate Regains His Loot

Report by Peter Danks

With the exception of the war years, the Budleigh Salterton July Tournament has been played every year since 1896. Old and new faces have always been welcomed. One of the more interesting winners was little Lily Gower playing in her first tournament. It was the first time she had played on a full-sized lawn, and the first time she had seen first class played. She learned her croquet from a book. As long as we keep reading, there is hope for us all!

Last year an unknown (to us) bearded pirate from Bristol scooped the loot. This year we recognised him as David Goacher. He was permitted to retain his loot.

We still missed the players from the Universities, although we had one from Cambridge - Fiona McCoig. She delighted all with her easy style and speedy play. After her first game, her handicap was reduced from 8 to 7. This enabled her to play in the advanced 'B' class singles.

The weather is always worthy of note. On the first day, it was indifferent. Banks of fret rolled across the slow lawns, making it difficult at times to see from one end of the court to the other. The experienced chose black and blue. In misty weather they are hard to see in the distance, but you can always see yellow! The rest of the week was glorious baking sunshine. By Saturday the lawns were very fast.

The Championship of the South West of England was played as two American Blocks. David Goacher won all his five games (+93) and Susan Wiggins won four of her's + (82). In the final Susan got off to a good start and got black to 4-back. Later David hit in and got red to 4-back. The lift was missed. Yellow went round to peg. David cross-wired Susan at the peg, but Susan managed to hit in. The lawn was straight but the wiring was not! Susan lay up with a rush on hoop 2, but red hit in and made the last three hoops and pegged out, winning by +15.

In the Open Handicap knockout event, the final was between the graceful Alice Dawson (who had beaten Susan Wiggins +26 en route) and David Goacher. It was an equal struggle which David won by +3.

The 'B' advanced singles was played as a Swiss event. The locals who had never played this



David Goacher (Bristol), this year's Champion of the South West.

form before had trouble working out who was winning. Peter Howell with 4 wins (+31) won with W. Broad-Thomas with 3 wins (+42) runner-up.

In the 'C' class event, Maurice Boardman won with 4 wins (+36) from T. Bower, who only started playing in April, with 3 wins

## Championships

(+50).

The Handicap Doubles had many close fights. Griffith and Wickham won their semi-final against West and Boardman by +1(T). In the other half, Mrs Wiggins and Davey beat Miss Dawson and Drake by +1. In the final, experience showed. The Wiggins/Davey combination won by +9.

It is worth noting that last year's winners of the Championship, the Open Handicap Singles and the Doubles all retained their trophies. If you think you can beat them, come along next year and try.

So ended the 83rd July Tournament. Long may it continue, See you all next year. Remember to book early.

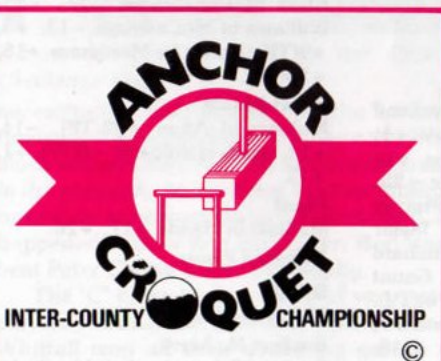
### RESULTS

#### The Le Mesurier Cups Semi-Finals

N. Griffin & Lt Cdr Wickham (15) bt Dr West & M. Boardman (13½) +1(T); Dr Davey & Mrs Wiggins (8½) bt Drake & Miss Dawson (12½) +1


**Final**  
Davey & Mrs Wiggins bt Griffin & Wickham +9

(The rest of the results are given on Page 28.)



### RESULTS

	Matches	Games	Position
Avon	9	23	1
Eastern Counties	8	21	2
Surrey	8	20	3
Lancs & Cheshire	7	20	4
Gloucestershire	5	16	5
Berks & Oxon	5	15	6
Yorkshire	4	12	7
Midland Counties	3	13	8
Devon & Dorset	3	11	9
Bedfordshire	3	9	10
Sussex	0	5	11



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## Championships

### MEN'S & WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIPS Cheltenham: 14-20 June

#### Men's & Women's Players in Drug Sensation!

Report by John Walters

Experimental wonder-drug 'Brufen' was being used by Pat Hague and John Walters to help muscle injuries and thus build up resistance against dour play, the so-called 'grey plague'. Later, when statisticians were pondering the possibility of the number of TPs achieved in the Men's exceeding the number of OTs 'achieved' in the Women's, Bryan (well-oiled winning machine) Sykes suggested we might approach 'Mogadon' to sponsor the next Women's Championship. Mary Collin confirmed that although Generic Nitrazepam was more widely used these days, Mogadon still had the 'higher commercial profile'.

Of the conditions imposed by the old (and now defunct) CA tournament committee, seeding was not observed (everyone was told but the Manager, who wouldn't have known who to seed anyway); Southport balls were not used for the Women's or the Du Pre; President's Cup hoops (or rather, 'narrow' hoops) were used only from the Men's semi-finals; William pointed out that we could not use the former name as this was not the President's Cup!

The mixed doubles got under way on Sunday with the big clash Aspinall/Cornelius vs Aiton/Collin. Although Mary was soon round to 4-back, Keith found himself lacking and a failure at sixth gave their opponents the initiative. Nigel swiftly followed Debbie's ball round for a clinical win, the last we were to see of Britain's most esteemed player until Saturday. McCullough/Ransom vs Hope/Hague produced the thriller of the early round games. Hope stuck in 4-back after peel one of the STP, John went round from first - peeling and pegging out Andrew in two turns. Pat made penultimate off the contact but hit in only once after that (when Frances stuck in the fourth). Sadly, a double-tap on the half-roll gave Frances a 3-ball break, off which she made 5 hoops and later took the game.

At 10 o'clock on Monday morning Bryan Sykes was already in the quarter-finals of the Men's and semi-finals of the 'Y' mixed-doubles. The first of the Main events saw the 'Battle of the Northern belles' - Collin vs Hague, the honours going to Mary this year with two solid breaks in the second game following on from half an hour of near inactivity. Aiton vs McCullough went all Keith's way after John failed to progress



Debbie Cornelius partnered Nigel Aspinall to win the Mixed Doubles Championship.

beyond hoop 6 on the break given him by Keith sticking in 1st. A whitewash second game produced the first TP of the week. Thus John became the first entrant for the Du Pre. William Prichard began his bid in impressive style, dropping only 1 point to Eddie Bell in a brilliant display with two TPs. Lawn 6 had a very busy day by hosting the closest match ever, a -1(T), +1(T), +1(T) win for Dab Wheeler against Frances Ransom which included some spectacular after-time breaks by Dab.

Aiton continued his quest with an easy win over Martin French, who had chalked up a good win against Andrew Hope in their three-game first-round match. However Keith was to encounter more resistance in the following quarter-final against Danny Palmer. Keith took control of the third game after Danny stuck in second, but managed only two peels of a delayed TP when the straight Irish peel at penultimate took too much wire and ended yards from rover. A poor leave stopped Keith from joining up, Danny missed the lift but then gained a break by hitting a 7-yard roquet. At this time, the rain was pouring down, but nevertheless Keith shot with the ball at peg to Danny's rush on the 'old standard leave' position. This missed, giving away the triple. The TP disintegrated at hoop 4, causing a foot-tapping and frustrated Palmer to walk over towards the hut housing Keith and say 'Really good concentration - you're about to win the game by the way!'. A missed scatter on partner brought this histrionically delivered prophesy to fruition, with the strains of Danny's Celtic poetry recitation wafting across the lawn!

In other quarter-finals the Oxbridge clash between Robert Prichard and Bryan Sykes saw the 'winning machine' home again and heading towards a semi clash with Paul Smith. Paul had followed up his win against Paul Hands with the defeat of another Cheltenham club-mate, the defending Champion, David Foulser.

It was a pleasure to see Paul Hands return to croquet, even though he has failed to reproduce the old form. So long has been his absence that he laid a 'new standard leave' before being told that these were unfashionable. Indeed the 'old standard leave' is becoming *de rigueur* in some places, thus demonstrating the cyclic nature of life - and croquet - or alternatively its fickle nature.

Wednesday was the day the Du Pre got under way with a bang. Having been Rigalled (= pegged out, Sheila) by Martin French, Carmen Bazley ran an impossible looking 3-back by a yard, ran 4-back (!), hit double on North boundary and finished. It was noticed that this occurred a day early, since Thursday was to be the anniversary of the battle of Waterloo - when the French were annihilated. Indeed, this proved to be a very good day for the ladies. Patty Hague beat Dennis after an exciting pegged-out game; Dab Wheeler lost to Bernard Weitz by one after achieving the peels of a double peel on opponent. Despite failing the peg-out and having



Keith Aiton - 1987 Men's Champion.

Bernard 'do the dirty on her', Dab still caught up from 5th to miss a shot at the peg before going down; Frances Ransom was on a finishing turn against Danny Palmer following a hit in after a Rigall, but with a 3-ball break ahead she stuck in 4-back and lost the game. With all this success (and more to come, with both Carmen and Patty achieving impressive wins in later rounds) I began to wonder whether in the event of a woman winning the Du Pre we should give the Ladies Plate to the top male player!

Back in the main events, Mary Collin defeated Susan Wiggins surprisingly easily in a clash of styles which brought her a place in the final. Debbie Cornelius (the only quarter-finalist not a past holder of the title) had to overcome Veronica Carlisle. This she did with some break construction that showed much promise for the future, although her take-off from the end of B-baulk through the back of 5th as approach for that hoop was less conventional!

The semi-finals of the mixed doubles produced another cracker for Lawn 8 with Palmer/Wiggins vs French/Wheeler. Seconds before time Susan was for peg, Danny 4-back, Dab penult and Martin peg. Danny laid a rush in 4th corner but Martin hit from 2nd corner, separated the opposition and pegged out his own ball. Faced with a 2-point deficit after time, Danny hit Dab's ball in 2nd corner from near 3rd hoop, took off to a poor position at 4-back which was scored nevertheless; he again hit Dab in 2nd and took off to position at penult, scored the levelling point and retired to Susan's ball in 4th corner. Dab was faced with the longest shot on the lawn which she missed, enabling Susan to peg out her own ball for a win +1 on time.

Now I could try to make the Men's final sound exciting... but not for the money I'm being paid. Aiton won +26(TP), +26(TP), thus bringing his triple count for the week to 6, following the record 8 he had in last year's President's Cup (not a mere 7 as I previously reported). It is also interesting to note that there was only one professional in the tournament and he won it; surely this demonstrates the argument that the true amateur is at a disadvantage when competing against the professional!



Mary Collin - 1987 Women's Champion.

The Women's final produced a marginally less certain match. The first game was close, with Debbie catching up from 1st and 1st vs 1-back and 4-back to 4-back and 4-back vs 4-back and penult. Later Debbie looked to be going out but failed an angled rover which proved to be fatal with Mary on 4-back and peg (but the dreaded 'on time' was avoided by a good 10 minutes). Mary always looked comfortable in the second game; Debbie looked increasingly dejected, but she will certainly have many more opportunities to take this title.

The first game of the mixed doubles final saw Debbie to 4-back after faltering initially. A few leaves later, Nigel went to peg with 2 peels of the STP (including a 3/4 yard angled, split roll clean through penult!). Although opponents showed typical Bristolic determination by hitting in twice and thus stretching the game a bit further, they failed to take advantage of the chances which they played so well to set up. In the second game, Nigel soon went to 3-back with 2 peels on Debbie, leaving her for 4th hoop where she then stuck; Frances' shot bounced off 5th leaving a good pioneer that sent Debbie to the peg. Nigel finished in the next turn.

In closing, Martin French won the Du Pre swiss after a play-off with Robert Prichard whom he had already beaten by +1 about 4 hours previously! Robert chalked up a good win against John McCullough (who completely vanished from the swiss at one point and probably regretted it when the Manager made him reappear). However, Robert forgot how to peg out against Martin - peg and peg for half an hour wasn't good enough to take the game. Patty won the play-off against Carmen Bazley for the Ladies' Plate. Both had managed 4 wins in the swiss. Engraved on the back of the Women's Locket are the words 'Derelict fifty years'. Perhaps after this week's play those fifty years are almost over!

## RESULTS

### Men's Championship

#### 1st Round

D. Palmer bt Prof B.G. Neal (w/o); D. Peterson bt J.O. Walters +15, +23; M. French bt A.B. Hope -9, +9, +11; K.M.H. Aiton bt J.R. McCullough +21, +26(TP); R. Ransom bt Dr B.G.F. Weitz +19, -8, +9; P.L. Smith bt P. Hands -5, +16, +24.

#### 2nd Round

E. Bell bt J.R. Hilditch +8, +18; W. Prichard bt J.E. Guest +25, +25(TP); Palmer bt Peterson +20, +19(TP); Aiton bt French +20, +24(TP); Smith bt Ransom +10, -10, +20; D.R. Foulser bt W.O. Aldridge -11, +14, +12; Dr B.C. Sykes bt D. Openshaw (w/o); R.D.C. Prichard bt D.H. Moorcraft -4, +4, +19.

#### 3rd Round

W. Prichard bt Bell +25(TP), +26(TP); Aiton bt Palmer +15, -17(TP), +13; Smith bt Foulser -5, +16, +10; Sykes bt R. Prichard -4, +16, +17.

#### Semi-Finals

Aiton bt W. Prichard +15(TP), +17; Smith bt Sykes +11, +21.

#### Final

Aiton bt Smith +26(TP), +26(TP).

### Women's Championship

#### 1st Round

Lady Bazley bt Mrs E. Weitz +9, +10; Mrs S. Wiggins bt Mrs G.D. Harris +11, +17; Mrs D.A. Wheeler bt Mrs F. Ransom -1(T), +1(T), +1(T).

#### 2nd Round

Mrs M.P. Collin bt Mrs P. Hague +5, +22; Mrs Wiggins bt Lady Bazley -12, +24, +5(T); Miss D.A. Cornelius bt Mrs Wheeler +24, +8; Mrs V. Carlisle bt Mrs E. Asa-Thomas +22, +11.

#### Semi-Finals

Mrs Collin bt Mrs Wiggins +16, +16; Miss Cornelius bt Mrs Carlisle +11, +9.

#### Final

Mrs Collin bt Miss Cornelius +2, +15.

### The Mixed Doubles Championship

#### 1st Round

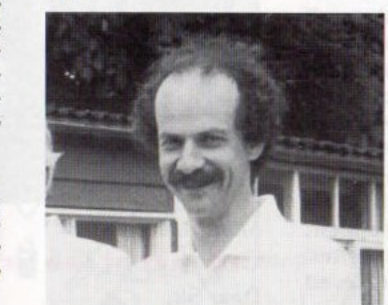
A.B. Hope & Mrs P. Hague bt D.H.

## Championships

Moorcraft & Mrs G.D. Harris +17; J.R. McCullough & Mrs F. Ransom bt Dr & Mrs B.G.F. Weitz +18; W.O. Aldridge & Mrs V. Carlisle bt P.L. Smith & Lady Bazley +16; D. Palmer & Mrs S. Wiggins bt Dr B.G. Sykes & Dr S. Foden +10.

#### 2nd Round

G.N. Aspinall & Miss D.A. Cornelius bt K. Aiton & Mrs M.P. Collin +12; McCullough & Mrs Ransom bt Hope & Mrs Hague +2; Palmer & Mrs Wiggins bt Aldridge & Mrs Carlisle +23; M. French & Mrs D.A. Wheeler bt J.O. Walters & Mrs E. Asa-Thomas +11.



Paul Smith, Men's runner-up.

#### Semi-Finals

Aspinall & Miss Cornelius bt McCullough & Mrs Ransom +21, +26; Palmer & Mrs Wiggins bt French & Mrs Wheeler +1(T).

#### Final

Aspinall & Miss Cornelius bt Palmer & Mrs Wiggins (w/o).

### Mixed Doubles 'Y'

#### Final

Aiton & Mrs Collin bt Sykes & Dr Foden +21.

### Du Pre Cup (Advanced Play)

#### 7 wins: M. French

6 wins: R. Prichard; D. Foulser

5 wins: J.R. McCullough

4 wins: R. Ransom; Lady Bazley;

D. Palmer; P. Hands; Mrs P. Hague;

D.H. Moorcraft

3 wins: J. Walters; D. Peterson; Dr

B.G.F. Weitz; Mrs E. Weitz

2 wins: Mrs V. Carlisle

1 win: Mrs E. Asa-Thomas; Mrs R.F.

Wheeler; J.R. Hilditch

### Ladies Plate

#### Play-Off

Mrs P. Hague bt Lady Bazley +3

## National Results

### INTER CLUB

#### 1st Round

Bowdon bt Ipswich

#### 2nd Round

Bowdon bt Harrow Oak  
Cheltenham bt Surbiton  
Hurlingham bt Worcester (w/o)  
Nottingham bt Roehampton

### MARY ROSE

#### 1st Round

Worcester bt Budleigh  
Hurlingham bt Ryde  
Cheltenham 'B' bt Chelt'ham 'A'  
Surbiton bt Southport

#### 2nd Round

Hurlingham bt Worcester  
Bowdon bt Glasgow  
Roehampton bt West Park  
Colchester bt Parsons Green  
Woking bt Bristol  
Parkstone bt Colworth  
Edgbaston bt Edinburgh (w/o)

#### 3rd Round

Bowdon bt Hurlingham (w/o)  
Roehampton bt Colchester  
Woking bt Parkstone  
Cheltenham 'B' bt Edgbaston

### LONGMAN CUP

#### 1st Round

Compton bt Ramsgate  
Hurlingham bt Crawley  
Harrow Oak bt Surbiton  
Ryde bt Southwick  
Reigate bt Roehampton  
Reading bt Oxford University  
High Wycombe bt Harwell  
Nailsea bt Sidmouth  
Bath bt Bristol  
Bowdon bt Southport  
Tyneside bt Norton Hall  
Edgbaston bt Stourbridge  
Himley bt Walsall (w/o)  
Ipswich bt Hunstanton  
Bretby bt Thos Cook (w/o)

#### 2nd Round

Hurlingham bt Compton  
Parsons Green bt Caterham  
Woking bt Harrow Oak  
Reigate bt Ryde  
Reading bt High Wycombe  
West Park bt Colworth  
Bath bt Nailsea  
Cheltenham bt Parkstone  
Bowdon v. Ellesmere \*  
Glasgow bt Edinburgh (w/o)  
Tyneside bt East Riding  
Nottingham bt Ashby  
Himley bt Edgbaston  
Worcester bt Dyffryn  
Ipswich bt Bretby  
Colchester bt Loughborough

#### 3rd Round

Hurlingham bt Parsons Green  
Woking bt Reigate  
Reading bt West Park  
Cheltenham bt Bath  
Glasgow w/o  
Nottingham bt Tyneside  
Worcester bt Himley  
Colchester bt Ipswich

#### 5th Round

Cheltenham bt Reading  
Glasgow bt Nottingham  
Colchester bt Worcester  
\*Both teams scratched by  
Manager as result not reported.



Carmen Bazley had some impressive wins during the Championships.

## Your Letters (1)

### The 'Latham Innovation'

Dear Sir,  
I would like to draw attention to a phrase mentioned in my tournament report of the Western Championships, to wit, the 'Latham Innovation'. Whether it really is an innovation I would not care to say, but I do feel it is worth mentioning; it relates to the system whereby the top two players from American Blocks of four or five qualify for the play-offs, normally producing four, six, or eight players. Of these, obviously the number six produces an 'uneven' draw.

It has been the (possibly somewhat limited) experience of my husband and myself that in such situations the six players are re-drawn at random, excepting that players from the same block do not meet in the quarter-final. This can often lead to a player who may have won all his or her matches finding that it is the player who has finished in a less favourable position who receives the bye. We have felt, where we have seen this happen, that it has not been very fair on the 'better' qualifier, and that the person who achieved the best record deserves to have the bye.

When this circumstance arose in Group 2 of the Western Championships therefore, we determined the play-offs in the following manner:

First Round:  
(Top half) Runner-up to Winner 2 plays Runner-up to Winner 3; (Bottom half) Winner 3 plays Runner-up to Winner 1.

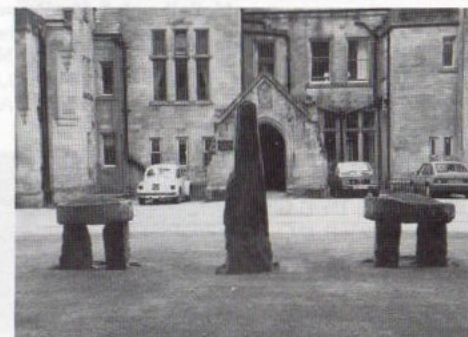
Semi-Finals:  
Winner 1 ('Best' winner) plays winner of top half of 1st Round; Winner 2 (2nd 'Best' winner) plays winner of bottom half of 1st Round.

This meant that the 'best' block winners received the byes, whilst the runners-up had to prove their mettle by playing each other or the third 'best' winner. It is also designed to ensure that two players qualifying from the

same block cannot meet unless they both reach the final.

This brief explanation of the 'Latham Innovation' may prove interesting to those who encounter this situation, and hopefully render the tournament report of the Western Championships a little more intelligible!

Deborah Latham,  
Taunton.



Stone Age Croquet?

### Croquet at the Grinkle

Dear Sir,  
In the beauty of North Yorkshire, between the Cleveland Hills and the Whitby coastline, the impressive Grinkle Park Hotel has now got organised for Croquet, both for visitors and local players, and we hope that there will be enough local interest to form a club eventually.

The purchase of the best equipment and a day's coaching by the Croquet Association's Northern Region launched the game to the management and staff in the middle of May, and the full facilities are now available to guests.

The photo shows ornamental stonework outside the Hall, which perhaps indicates that croquet started well before we thought possible.

For intending visitors, the address is:

Grinkle Park Hotel, Easington, Saltburn-by-the-Sea, Cleveland, TS13 4UB.

Syd Jones,  
Whitley Bay.

### Bryan Lloyd-Pratt

Dear Sir,  
May I crave your indulgence by making some observations on John Walter's sentiments that 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 during his year as Editor.

I am the last to denigrate the work of volunteers who give unsparingly of their time, but the plain fact is that Bryan wantonly and irresponsibly abused his stewardship by flouting the decisions of Council both in the matter of finance and in the expressions of views in his editorials which ran completely counter to Council decisions.

A matter of particular embarrassment was that, immediately under the then masthead 'Official Organ of the Croquet Association', Bryan, in what proved to be his last editorial, launched a bitter attack against the Sports Council Grant which had been warmly welcomed by the Council of which Bryan was himself a member. Members of the Sports Council must have recoiled in disbelief on reading this, and I hastily arranged for Vandeleur Robinson, then the CA Secretary, to write to the Sports Council making it abundantly clear that the editorial in no way reflected the views of the CA, adding that the Editor had been relieved of his post.

Bryan's correct action, if he wished so publicly to disapprove of the Council's decision, was to resign from the Council, an action which Roger Wheeler courageously took a few years ago when voicing his disagreement with the Council's intention to televise Golf Croquet in a Motion at the AGM. Jim Townsend, Westward Hol, Devon.

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### Revenge

A Short Story

by Brian Bucknall

One of the pleasures obtained from playing in croquet tournaments is that of meeting and talking to old friends. While one is not playing, time is often spent watching one's fellow competitors and making appropriate comments in undertones to one's neighbours and when the day's play is finished, in talking over past games and personalities.

During the Saltwich tournament last year, I had dinner one evening with David Galt, an old friend and a member of the Club, and I demonstrated, with the aid of the table-ware, how my opponent had missed a golden opportunity which had lost him the game. Later, whilst we were taking our coffee, he said that the demonstration had reminded him of an amusing incident at his club a few years previously.

There was at this club a member of many years standing, whom he called Paul, so as not to publicise his real name. Paul had a deep understanding of the game and served on the committee with particular responsibilities for coaching and managing tournaments. He was an excellent teacher who with his extrovert manner and his careful and patient explanation of tactics, successfully managed to encourage golf croquet players to take up association croquet and high-bisquers to become low-bisquers.

He also loved to talk about the game. When he was not playing he could be found either talking about his last game or more likely talking about somebody else's game and what they should have or should not have done.

But while his knowledge of the game was profound, he himself was not a particularly good player. His handicap had remained at +5 for many years. His problem was that he did not have any eye for the ball and he was prone to losing concentration.

Because of his tactical knowledge he could, for example, conjure up four-ball breaks out of almost nothing, but, after having made three or four hoops, he would frequently misplay a simple roquet or miss an easy approach to a hoop. The result was a four-ball break set up for the opposition and a lost game. Although he recognised this deficiency and often took steps to minimise it, sooner or later he would invariably break down. It

was perhaps unfortunate that such an enthusiastic player was unable to improve matters. This did not deter him though and after a game was over he would discuss every aspect with his opponent or with anyone else prepared to listen. It was generally felt at the club that his talkative manner was in part compensation and relief for the frustration he must frequently have felt.



He also had a captive audience in the shape of his wife, usually at the lunch table . . .

He also had a captive audience in the shape of his wife, usually at the lunch table after a morning's game. At the table, napkin rings became hoops 1 and 2, the tumblers 3 and 4, and hoops 5 and 6 were represented by the salt and pepper pots respectively.

Repeat this performance at the table at least once a week for many years. The outcome was that his wife developed a good understanding of the game without actually ever having played it!

His wife was an intelligent woman who had been a hockey player in her younger days. She had given up sport following the arrival of their children. There simply wasn't sufficient time for it.

There came a time though when the children had grown up and left home. At Easter, when Paul had re-commenced his table dissertations following the opening of the croquet season, an idea suddenly occurred to her. She would take up croquet too - and she wouldn't tell her husband, at least not yet.

She therefore joined another croquet club fifteen miles away and swore the members there to secrecy. She was welcomed at that club, because of her sportsmanship and her knowledge of the game. With plenty of mid-week coaching and practising whilst her husband was at

business she soon became a proficient player and by August her handicap was down to 10. In particular, she knew how to use her bisques.

In September her husband complained at the lunch table that one or two people had dropped out of the forthcoming week-end tournament and that he would have to re-work the order of play unless he could find some substitutes at short notice.

His wife practised every day during the week preceding the tournament and by the week-end she felt on top form although a little nervous at having to play in her first competition.

In fact, she played very well. By using her bisques properly she won four out of her five games and ended up winning her block competition.

Her husband also played rather better than usual and it may have been that the presence of his wife concentrated his mind. The outcome was that he won his block as well.

Husband and wife therefore had to play each other in the final play-off.

Here he was faced with a dilemma. Should he play the gentleman and let her win or should he put marital feelings aside and play to win himself. In the latter case his wife, he thought, might then become upset and discouraged and he could then be accused of being unsporting by the other players. These were the thoughts that went through his mind and he recognised that he was in a classic 'no win' situation.

This is exactly what happened. He lost by quite a margin which he put down to the difficulties of the situation upsetting his concentration.

When they had their evening meal his wife demonstrated what he should have done with the aid of the table-ware.

### Invitation Events 1987

The following have accepted invitations to compete:

**President's Cup**  
K.M.H. Aiton; G.N. Aspinall; R. Bamford; R. Fulford; C.J. Irwin; J.R. McCullough; S.N. Mulliner; E.W. Solomon. Reserve: P. Cordingley

**Chairman's Salver**  
D.R. Foulser; G.W. Noble; N.G. Hyne; I.G. Vincent; S. Williams; P.L. Smith; M. Suter; J.W.H. Carlisle.

**Spencer-Elk Cup**  
J.E. Guest; M. French; D.J. Goacher; D.L. Gunasekera; W.O. Aldridge; J. Rose; J.O. Walters; C.D. Clarke.

**Ladies Field (Barlow Bowl)**  
J. Anderson; E. Asa-Thomas; C. Bazley; P. Hague; F. Ramsom; D. Wheeler.

**Longman Bowl**  
K. Yeoman; C. van Griethuysen; W.J. Browne; P. Macdonald; C. Irwin; F. McCoig.

### TO ALL CLUB SECRETARIES

Any clubs who have NOT advertised in the 1987 Fixture Book and would like to advertise their competitions in 1988 please write to me as soon as possible for an official form. Clubs who are in the 1987 Book will be sent the forms automatically.

Jan MacLeod,  
Chairman,  
Tournaments Committee,  
Flat 3, 1 Sterndale Road,  
Brook Green,  
London, W14 0HT.

### Selectors' Weekend

D. Cairns; Miss D.A. Cornelius; J.P. Dawson; D.L. Gaunt; B.G. Hallam; J.R. Hilditch; B.A. Keen; Miss J. MacLeod; A.J. Mrozinski; R.W. Ramsom; M.A. Saurin; R.J. Smith; A.F. Sutcliffe; G.A. Vince; D.C.D. Wiggins; S.J.H. Wright.

## Short Story









## 80 Years Ago

## Pegging Out

By Allen Parker (Parkstone)

If you peg out your opponent in the present day either-ball game it is by no means certain that you will win the game. It was very much otherwise in the old sequence game, for the balls had to be played in sequence even after one of them had been pegged out. Thus suppose that Blue had pegged out Red (ie the next player), then Blue could happily lay up Black with Yellow at Black's hoop and then go himself to Black's next hoop but one, thus laying Black a 3-ball break. This was possible because at the end of Blue's turn it was Black to play (Red having been pegged out). In other words Blue and Black got two consecutive turns for every one of Yellow's.

There was a further complication in the old pegged-out sequence game. There were in fact two kinds of pegged out game for which the tactics were quite different. The second type resulted when Blue pegged out Yellow (ie the dead ball). He could no longer lay up Black with the enemy ball because the enemy ball was now Red, which

was the next player. However, Blue and Black still got two turns to every one of Red and were therefore much more likely to win than they would be in the present day either-ball game. This explains the great concern of the Mr E\*\*\*\* referred to in the following correspondence which appeared in the 1909 volume of the Gazette.

To the Editor

I have kept the correspondence appearing in your columns on the above subjects by me since the publication of Mr E\*\*\*\*'s letter in the hope that some player of higher standing and greater experience than myself would point out and deal with what I consider the fallacy underlying his suggestions.

Mr E\*\*\*\* writes: 'I presume that underlying all attempts at rule-making are two broad principles: (1) That the better player, ie., the man who has played better than his opponent in a particular game, should win. (2) That both players except in the matter of personal skill, should be on an absolutely equal footing. The present law relative to pegging out and wiring violates both these principles.'

Mr E\*\*\*\* then gives a soul-harrowing example. 'A 3-bisquer obtains first innings and advances one of his balls to 3-back, where he breaks down badly and lets in the minus player. The latter, now playing perfect croquet, makes two all-round breaks, and lays to go out.'

Then comes the debacle. The 3-bisquer actually has the effrontery to make the long and probably very difficult shot with his advanced ball, pegs out his adversary's rover and ultimately wins. 'Hinc illae lacrimae!'

Let us now consider this fearsome example 'which violates', so we are told, 'the principles which should underlie all attempts at rule-making'. The 3-bisquer's one and only sin is that he broke down badly at 3-back and let in the minus player. Surely a sufficiently heavy penalty. But up to that fatal moment he must have played well; for he had either retained or obtained the first innings. Not an altogether contemptible performance against a minus player, and I trust when I have the pleasure of meeting Mr E\*\*\*\* I may play as badly.

Now mark! The minus player has an easy entree, for the 3-bisquer has broken down badly at 3-back, probably on his opponent! But the former, although going round in perfect style with both balls, plays the timid game. He does not attempt to triple-peel his own advanced ball, but overtakes it, making the ball 'in play' a rover. He then 'lays to go out', taking the risk of the inferior player shooting in. He 'stakes his head' and loses, and is to my mind rightfully punished. His sin is wilful and premeditated, while the inferior player's breakdown at 3-back was a misfortune, which I have seen occur again and again - not alone to 3-bisquers.

In other words the minus player has not played or attempted to play the best croquet and he obtained his innings easily; and to reward his want of courage and strategy, Mr E\*\*\*\* proposes to take from the 3-bisquer his only chance of winning, because forsooth! he made one bad and costly stroke at 3-back.

Mr E\*\*\*\*'s example has only to be examined and stated clearly to show up the rank absurdity and injustice of his suggestion, viz., that the 3-bisquer should be precluded from pegging out his adversary's rover ball until his own backward ball is at 4-back.

If, Sir, the Committee should, in an evil hour, be tempted to adopt Mr E\*\*\*\*'s suggestion, or

## Book Review

'The World of Croquet' by John McCullough and Stephen Mulliner

Reviewed by Chris Hudson

I have been fortunate to see the proof pages of this new book on Croquet which is due to be published on 24th August.

It is well laid out, with 224 pages and 234 photos and diagrams, and covers topics that will be of interest to croquet players at all levels, from beginner to expert.

The book falls into four main sections. The first, 'Croquet Past and Present', describes the development of Croquet and the modern game. The second, 'Basic Croquet', tells players how to get started, concentrating on the basic strokes, typical turns, attacking and defensive play, and finishing with a description of some forms of alternative croquet games.

The third section is aimed at more advanced players and covers tactical play in more detail, with information on lift leaves, triple peels, the pegged out game and other more advanced aspects of the game. The book is the first one to my knowledge to discuss 'Inner Croquet' and the application of psychology and mental training to the game.

The fourth section is a summary of the 'World Croquet Scene', listing countries where croquet is played. This is followed by biographical details of three croquet 'Stars', and a description of the 1986 MacRobertson Shield Test Series, with a detailed analysis of one of the matches: Nigel Aspinall & Colin Irwin (Great Britain) against Joseph Hogan & Roger Murfitt (New Zealand), played at Cheltenham on 14 June 1986.

As Andrew Hope says in his Foreword, a problem that confronts every sports author is deciding what level of competence to assume in his readership. The authors are to be congratulated on cheerfully avoiding the problem by providing something for everybody.

The book is priced at £14.95.

the variations of those mainly in agreement with him, the fine calculation, combined with skill, which provides the real charm of the game to both players and onlookers, will have disappeared.

I am Sir,  
Yours faithfully,  
Arthur R. Murphy.

## Croquet in Pendle . . . Off to a Good Start!

Report by John Beech

At West Hills House, south of Birmingham, a form of croquet is played which differs little from that played when the Cadbury family were in residence in the last century. Its development owes more to Aunt Emma than Chris Hudson. Nevertheless its croquet lawn proved to be the place where the first croquet club in the mid-Pennines was conceived. Sent on an advanced course for Education Officers by his Authority, a senior member of staff of a Metropolitan Borough got hooked on croquet at this outpost of the University of Birmingham. Back home in Barnoldswick, the place which put the 'B' into the Rolls Royce RB211 engine, he discovered that his near neighbour had played a similar, though different, form of croquet during a Church holiday at a Christian Centre in Capernwray.

Before long, garden croquet was established and friends and neighbours were getting bitten with the croquet bug. Information from the CA Office brought news of a development officer in Cheshire who subsequently encouraged the group to form a club.

Croquet in Pendle - the idea - soon became 'Croquet in Pendle' - the Club. Founded in December 1985 with 13 members, the Club registered with the CA in January 1986 and became a member of the Federation of Northern Croquet Clubs at the same time. The infant croquet club was fortunate in securing the use of two full sized lawns at Nelson and Colne College by kind permission of the Lancashire Education Authority. There was no club house or pavilion, but a start was made. The responsibility and discipline of mowing and marking lawns was shared by members and encouraged a healthy corporate spirit.

Chris Hudson had quite a task coaching about twenty raw beginners, all ham-fisted but eager to learn. His training and encouragement proved to be a vital spur to the club's early development and soon the club grew to 27 members. The new short game was played regularly and players slowly gained confidence. A tournament for members attracted 20 entries, the finals of which were held on a glorious summer day in mid-August.

Pat Hague had also given

advice and guidance in the early days and subsequently Ellesmere Club 'fostered' the young Pendle squad by playing a couple of friendly matches - home and away. The new club owes a lot to that practical help.

Two members were pressed, somewhat reluctantly, to enter a beginners tournament at Southport and they found themselves as opponents in the final! Such initial success led five members to enter the Bowdon long-bisquers short tournament in the autumn and again Pendle won the day with first and second prizes. By this time some members began to understand 4-ball breaks, even if they still couldn't execute them effectively, and so bit by bit the early influence of Aunt Emma at West Hills was replaced with the sound teaching of Chris Hudson.

Such small success went to the head! The club took the

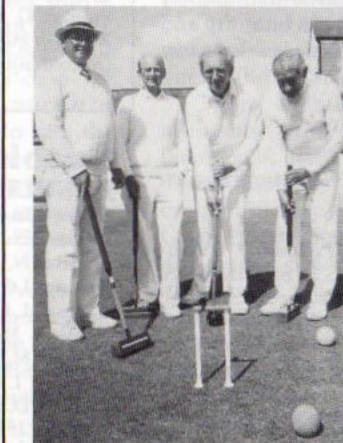
## Short Croquet introduced at Sidmouth

Report by Paul Dwerryhouse

The Sidmouth Club mounted a Short Croquet Tournament on May 27th and 28th at the request of the Committee of the South Western Federation.

The event was the first open croquet tournament at Sidmouth for 32 years. Three full size lawns, each divided into two, were allocated to the twenty four players, representing clubs from Bristol, Nailsea, Bath, Tracy Park, Wellington, and Exeter, with six players from the host club.

Play was organised in four blocks of six; two blocks with handicaps 1½ to 6, and two with



The Four Finalists at Sidmouth (Left to right): Maurice Boardman (Bath), Ken Bright (Tracy Park), Leslie Toye (Sidmouth) and Dr Jim Davey (Bath).



John Beech (back right) with the Pendle team and Andrew Bennet and his QEGS 'Bandits'.

initiated and arranged further friendly matches with other new clubs - Ripon (Pendle won) - 'Bennet's Bandits', Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School (Pendle got slaughtered) - and Fylde.

Tim Haste and Andrew Bennet pushed the coaching further and one member

attended the Summer School at Loughborough.

All members were encouraged to join the CA and by the end of the year, 12 had paid up. Delight was the response when the CA announced that Pendle had won the £100 second prize in the CA recruiting competition. Elation was soon to follow with the announcement that Pendle had also won the Apps Heley Award for 1986. Five members paid their first visit to Hurlingham to receive the award which took the club into its second season on the crest of a wave.

With some trepidation, Pendle entered the FNCC League and the new North West Short Croquet League for the 1987 season. Such presumption! Most members play off 18, a couple on 16 and just two are middle-bisquers! The first opponents to tread the coarse Pendle turf were Bowdon in the first short league match. Fear shuddered through the Pendle team as Bowdon stars Colin Irwin and Chris Hudson led the formidable opposition on to the lawns. The delight and elation of former days was evaporating fast, and the glory of honours administratively secured faded with the spectre of actually playing competitive croquet! Readers will blink; Pendle succeeded again! - this time on the lawns - by winning 9 games to 7. Rumour has it that the honeymoon is over. No mercy for Pendle now, with Northern league clubs plotting to annihilate these Pendle upstarts! But Pendle will press on, using its meagre developing talents, its dozens of bisques, and at home, the slow coarse lawns and Walker balls!

Further objectives are membership growth, improvement of facilities, development of skills and strategy, and taking a full part in the CA and the Northern croquet scene.

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## Club News

**Cheltenham: 4-7 June****Roger Jenkins shines – And a welcome return by Sue Foden**

Report by Bill Lamb

This unique event, the Cheltenham 'B' Levels, draws its faithful contingent of regulars every year, and one can understand why. The format, an eight round Swiss, played over four days, allows the tournament to proceed at a leisurely pace, with time in the evenings to practise, play friendlies or just engage in pleasant conversation in congenial surroundings. As an innovation this year a one-ball competition was arranged in the evenings for those who were still feeling sufficiently competitive.

Sue Foden chose this event to make her return to competitive play after an absence of some years. Her many friends were pleased to see her and hope that she will continue. Sue was a little rusty at first, but improved rapidly and would have been well in contention, had she been able to play all eight rounds.

As usual, the Cheltenham cognoscenti had marked their cards before the event began. However, this event has a habit of producing a dark horse and on this occasion it was Roger Jenkins of Bristol, whose good shooting and methodical approach caused one or two upsets to the form book.

Last year's winner, Paddy Paddon, was going strongly until he was disconcerted by the theft of the cash box and the previous day's bar takings. During his game against Roger, Paddy, who runs the bar, emerged from the pavilion after deep discussions about the crime, failed to realise that he had a lift, shot at his own ball in 'B' baulk from the centre of the court, hit and obtained a rush to 6. Only after he had made his approach to 6 did he realise that his clip was on 2-back! Paddy merely shrugged and came off the court with his usual smile. Fortunately some smart police work enabled the miscreants to be apprehended, much to Paddy's relief.

Amongst 'B' class players the talk is not so much of triple peels, cannons and intricate trick shots. Amusing incidents are more the order of the day. Bevis Sanford claims to be studying Alzheimer's disease so that he will be able to recognize the symptoms in himself; in others it is more advanced. In several games the forward ball was pegged out accidentally. In one game a player who shall be nameless, to spare my blushes, carefully considered whether to take an eight-yard shot with yellow offering good break possibilities or a safer five-yard shot with blue, oblivious to the fact that blue and yellow are not partner balls. Needless to say, he selected the coward's shot with the wrong ball!

The result was in doubt until the final game to finish. At the start of the last round three players, Roger Jenkins, Bill Lamb and Bob Smith, were clear of the field with six wins out of seven, each having one win and one loss to the other two. Bill was the first to finish with a comfortable win but Bob fell at the final hurdle to Bernard Weitz, leaving Roger needing to beat Lady Bazley to win the event. At first, he seemed well in command with both clips on penult against opponent's 1 and 6. However, distracted at one stage by the tea bell, and increasingly attacked by nerves, Roger completely missed a dolly rush to penult and then was unable to hit anything,



Paddy Paddon – going strongly until the cash box was stolen.

as Carmen began a worthy fight-back which only came to an end when she missed a longish rover off her partner peg ball to leave the two frustratingly wired. Roger took his opportunity and gained a narrow and decisive win, leaving Bill the runner-up with the consolation of recording the first triple-peel in the history of the 'B' Levels.

Those who remember the Cheltenham lawns of two years ago will be amazed at the improvement which has been made in so short a time. It is a tribute to the hard work of Wilf Handley and the lawns committee that the magnificent condition of the lawns, combined with rather generous hoop settings, made good break play the rule in most games.

Finally, thanks are due to Betty Weitz, whose creation this event is, for her quiet and efficient management and to Roger and Dab Wheeler for organising a tournament dinner in the clubhouse, consisting of a quantity and variety of food from a local Chinese take-away at a very reasonable price.

**RESULTS**

(Advanced Play: 2 bisques or over)

**7 wins:** R.S. Jenkins (Winner); W.E. Lamb (Runner-up)  
**6 wins:** R.J. Smith  
**5 wins:** Dr B.G.F. Weitz; M.T. Paddon; P. Darby  
**4 wins:** Lady Bazley; M. Finn; C.B. Sanford; Dr S. Foden; Mrs K. Whittall; Dr C. Snowdon; R.S. Eades; Mrs M. Langley  
**3 wins:** Dr R. Wheeler; Mrs D.A. Wheeler; J. Exell  
**2 wins:** Mrs J. Neville-Rolfe; L. Greenbury  
**1 win:** Mrs E. Weitz  
**0 wins:** Mrs E. Neal; Mrs J. Cima

**Ipswich: 6-7 June  
Walters Wrists Off!**

Seven games were had by all at a tournament which had surprisingly fine weather. John Walters was unlucky, he had to retire after his third game with an injured wrist.

The tournament was won by Martin French, playing without the Hilditch Testimonial which was ill.

The most notable efforts of the week were by Don Gaunt and Lewis Palmer. Don, who was also managing the tournament, was not put off by his duties and had his first TPO as well as ordinary triple. Lewis was not put off either by three close defeats and finished Day One with his first triple peel during tournament play. Clap! Clap! Clap! Clap! Clap! (Ipswich clapping codes; 1 clap per ball pegged out and one clap for each peel in that turn. Therefore, Triple Peel = 5 claps).

Other players didn't fare so well. Debbie Cornelius' concentration was obviously shattered following a vicious attack by a cherry tomato and a cup of coffee. At one point David Ruscombe-King found himself temporarily triple-banking with the ducks – they seemed to observe the rules of double-banking etiquette better than most croquet players.

David Beatty's game suffered disastrously due to severe alcohol deficiency; he complained of feeling sober in the afternoon. In an attempt to revive his flagging fortunes he started whistling tunelessly, thus evoking rude comments from the crowd.

The tournament dinner (a catastrophe – there was no Garlic bread!) finished up at Robert Divot-Jones's house for a game of Contract Whist. This was won by Andrew Gregory, who nearly lost his place to stay for the night as a result.

Food was good as always but the highlight from the catering staff (Cathy French, Celia Steward and Celia Pearce) was the first and second colour Battenburgs.

Signing off now! Debbert Jonelius.

**RESULTS**

(Advanced Play: 7-round Swiss)

**6 wins:** M. French  
**5 wins:** A. Gregory (Runner-up), R. Jones  
**4 wins:** D. Gaunt, P. Elliott  
**3 wins:** D. Beatty, Dr R. Sutherland, P. Dorke, L. Palmer, D. Ruscombe-King  
**2 wins:** Miss D. Cornelius, R. Deacon; J. Walters (retired injured during Round 3)

**Surbiton: 13-14 June  
RESULTS****Open Singles**

(7-round Swiss)

**6 wins:** N.G. Hyne; S.N. Mulliner  
**5 wins:** I.G. Vincent; D. Peterson  
**4 wins:** J. Dawson; A. Mrozinski; R. Prichard; G. Noble; J. Meads  
**3 wins:** M. Ormerod; G. Brightwell; R. Hilditch; J. Guest; I. Bond  
**2 wins:** D. Beatty; M. Stevens; J. Straw  
**0 wins:** J. Gosden

**Edgbaston: 19-21 June****Midsummer Mayhem at Edgbaston: Packer's Revenge**

Report by Peter Dorke

Not only did Ken Jones fail to achieve his third consecutive victory in the Edgbaston Open Weekend, but he did so badly that fellow-players felt it would be kinder if this report did not mention him at all. So I shall not mention Ken Jones again.

This was Stuart Packer's weekend. Totally unfancied for this event – after all, he was refused entry to last year's tournament – Packer took a fiendish revenge on the mandarins of Edgbaston by losing only one game and rounding off a fine, sustained performance with a cruel annihilation of Manager Ray Jones.

The infamous Packer petulance was brought out as a crowd-pleaser during his Sunday game with the ineffable Bill Lamb . . . well, we thought he was ineffable until young Packer dipped into his store of adjectives, several of which began with eff. This was the game that your reporter had booked in as Match of the Tournament, expecting to see Lamb repeat the devastating precision he showed on Friday and Saturday, with Packer bringing off a match-winning charge at the last moment.

In the event, it all happened in reverse, with Bill Lamb's charge failing to do the trick and Packer, repeatedly unable to do anything with red, which was in any case for peg, and after a good deal of pointless ranting with just a soupçon of raving, took a lift with yellow, hitting in at last to finish the game off tidily.

Lamb had played a little too much precision croquet and not enough Monte Carlo croquet in the crucial middle game. Perhaps he should now burn his copy of Keith Wylie's book, whose beneficial influence he had demonstrated so admirably on Saturday in a delightful and fascinating triple-peel against Martin Grainger-Brown. Lamb had another moment of glory later that day when he became the third player to beat Ken Jones (whom I shall not mention again), while Grainger-Brown, after crushing Mark Suter in the first round, had been pipped at the peg by Chris Clarke in round two.

The two last mentioned were probably the most fancied runners (after Ken Jones, that is, though I shall not mention him again). Neither fulfilled the promise of his fearsome reputation and in Chris Clarke's case the origin of his Nemesis can be easily traced: he has agreed that I may attribute to him the heartfelt expletive (not deleted), 'Bugger Ludlow!' Your reporter would modestly like to take some of the credit for this unwanted melting of the Clarke sang-froid. The other culprit was, of course, Mr Packer.

Who then, did beat the young Pretender? Certainly not Mark Suter, who ended Saturday with a Bye and a Bye-Bye, unable, it is rumoured to face another helping of Edgbaston's Cold Colation – provided by Tournament Caterer Ken Jones (this is positively the last mention of Ken Jones).

Nor was it David 'Swiftly' Goacher, though he beat Potter, Lamb, Hallam, Dorke, Jones (Ray, not the unmentionable Ken) and even the Amazing Gregg. I shall come back to Paul Gregg, so don't go away: this lad wants watching! But first, Goacher, the man with a

black belt in croquet. To give you some idea of the care which this fine player takes over every shot, let me tell you only that in our game – on Edgbaston's lawn three (a cheeky little lawn, full bodied and with a delicate hint of squirrel droppings) – I was able to go in for lunch as David was lining up his approach to 3 and get back, after three courses and coffee, in time to see him run the hoop. And if you think his croquet is painstaking, just watch him eat his lunch! Ah, but he played well, too well for most.

And so we come – glad you did not go away – to the Amazing Gregg. Watching his play inspires his opponent with the utmost confidence. Chortle, Chortle, he's going to break down any minute, where's my mallet, blimey! He's through the hoop! Perhaps he was using the balls in the other game as well but the cold fact is that Paul Gregg may have had the highest handicap in the tournament but he got round to 4-back more rapidly than, say, well . . . dare I mention Ken Jones? What he did with the balls afterwards did not seem to concern him greatly but this lack of care did not prevent his winning half his matches and collecting a few notable scalps, including that of Him Who Shall Not Be Mentioned Again and – at last it can be told – Stuart Packer. Moreover, it was Paul Gregg who with Goacher provided the most entertaining denouement that you could wish for in a tournament.

In a double-banked spectacle on lawn one – Brian Hallam and yes, Ken Jones (positively his last appearance) being the other pair – these two did everything but peg out. A succession of what Alan Girling would undoubtedly want to call absurdities led to failure after failure to finish it off. As the possibility (see Girling A.J. above) of seeing all eight clips on the peg at once became ever likelier, Gregg prolonged the agony further by failing to peg out either of his balls from a distance of two inches, with three referees in close attendance and six clips now on the peg.

Hallam now spoiled everything by pegging out while K-- J---- was penult and penult. The unconsolableness of A.J. Girling was terrific but he and the packed gallery clapped, whistled and cheered as David Goacher at last put the lid on an excellent weekend.

There were other heroes, other great moments: Jim Potter, though not his usual fluent self, featured in a five-balls-in-one-corner incident which should go down in croquet history as Potter's Cannon. Andrew Gregory was clearly suffering from train-lag and came into his own only as an active member of the last match crowd. Andrew Sweeney had the honour of being Suter's One Victim. The Gregory's, with Gladys McLean and Jessica, kept most of the superb catering safely out of the hands of Ken Jones.

Ken Jones (Himself) wanted me to tell you that he pegged out the first ball in all his games but, as I said, I'm not mentioning Ken Jones again.

Ever.

**RESULTS****The Edgbaston Trophy**

(Advanced Play: Swiss)  
**6 wins:** S. Packer (Winner); D.J. Goacher (Runner-up)  
**5 wins:** P.J. Dorke; C.D. Clarke;  
**4 wins:** P. Gregg; Dr R.C. Jones; B. Hallam;  
**3 wins:** W.E. Lamb; A.J. Girling; K.E. Jones;  
 J. Potter; M. Granger-Brown  
**2 wins:** A. Gregory; M. Suter  
**1 win:** A. Sweeney

**Nottingham: 26-28 June**

Report by George Noble

David Goacher romped away to win the Nottingham Open Weekend with 8 wins from 9 games. Only Ian Vincent was able to provide appropriate resistance; beating him +26 early on Saturday morning. If he were a race horse, his pedigree would be described as by John McCullough, out of Spencer Buck.

After a week of heavy rain, the lawns were in a very easy condition such that nine rounds were played, compared with seven the previous year, and the manager was able to award above the average number of mars bars for triple peels. But the most important peeling feat did not formally take place. Keith Aiton, standing in for an absent player in the first round, pulled off a tidy sextuple on lawn 1, to the delight of the gallery and the chagrin of the manager, who had to hand over the promised litre of gin.

In block B of the tournament, Bevis Sanford demolished the opposition to emerge calm and undefeated with 7 wins. He was closely challenged by John Portwood and, as luck would have it, the result was decided in a final round game on the front lawn on Sunday afternoon.

As ever, a friendly and agreeable tournament, the only blemish being that the beer ran out on the final morning.



Keith Aiton sextupled for a litre of gin.

**RESULTS**

(Swiss: Advanced Play)

**8/9 wins:** D.J. Goacher  
**6/9 wins:** B. Hallam, I.G. Vincent, W.E. Lamb  
**5/9 wins:** G. Noble, M. French, J. Davis, J. Walters, M. Stevens, R. Prichard, P. Hands  
**4/8 wins:** J. Straw  
**4/9 wins:** P. Death, T. Harrison  
**2/8 wins:** R. Jones  
**2/9 wins:** Miss J. MacLeod  
**1/8 wins:** A.J. Girling  
**1/9 wins:** R. Hilditch  
**American Block**  
**7 wins:** C.B. Sanford  
**5 wins:** J. Portwood (runner-up), M.R.L. Cowan  
**4 wins:** R. Davis, J.J. Death  
**2 wins:** Mrs K. Cotterell  
**1 win:** G.H. Henshaw  
**0 wins:** Mrs E. Chamberlain

## Your Letters (2)

### Three Cheers for Croquet!

Dear Sir,  
I am a disabled person, having a partially paralysed right arm and leg (hemiplegia) as a result of a car accident. Naturally I was a little perplexed as to which sport, if any, I could participate in, but croquet was suggested to me.

At that time Alresford, Hants, was forming a Croquet Club under the leadership of Mr Les Chapman, who coached me with other beginners. Nowadays, however, I must admit I spend more time at the Winchester Tennis & Squash Club, when more mature Courts are available. Here unprecedented coaching is given by a very patient and understanding player, Harry Harrington.

Three cheers for Croquet! It gives me much pleasure; especially trying to beat Harry. It will come!

Roy C Brett-Smith,  
Alresford.

### The Development of Croquet

Dear Sir,  
In almost all sports that people can play at home, there are three types of enthusiasts. You have Spectators, Home Players and Club Players. There is considerable mobility between these three groups. So someone may become interested when seeing the sport on television and decide to try it out either at home or at a club. An improving home player may graduate on to a club. Club players may enjoy watching the sport, and may also play at home.

Croquet, however, is not like that. Croquet does have Club players and Garden players. However, although they play to the same rules, their tactics and the whole nature of their game is different. The third group of enthusiast, the Spectator, is almost non-existent in Croquet. This means that Croquet does not have people continually moving from spectator to garden player and garden player to club player. So the clubs are isolated and cannot draw strength from the other areas. This considerably hampers the development of Croquet.

To see why Croquet is different from other sports the three groups of enthusiast, Spectator, Garden player and Club Player need to be examined in more detail.

#### SPECTATORS

People often say that Croquet is not a spectator sport and give as an example the very few spectators at the Open Champion-

ships. On examining the obstacles to spectators at the Open Championships it is not surprising that few come. Firstly the spectators need to know that the Championship is on. It is not advertised in the papers, indeed it is probably only the club players who know of its existence. Secondly, it is not signposted and the entrance to Hurlingham is not the easiest place to find. Thirdly, on arrival at the gate the spectator is met with a barrier and a uniformed guard asking if he is a member. There is no notice saying if members of the public are admitted. The impression is of a private club with outsiders not allowed in. If the spectator gets through all that, he will see people playing. Unless he asks someone, he is unlikely to find out who is playing who, what round is being played or who has won. The games he watches will be characterised by complicated positional play, punctuated by breaks lasting maybe twenty minutes. Unless he is a player or has someone to explain the game to him, it is unlikely he will be able to understand what is going on.

This is a very forbidding picture. But it is not always like this. Croquet has been a spectator sport in the past; in Col Prichard's 'The History of Croquet' he says that at a tournament in 1871 'spectators were four or five deep around the ground' and when Keith IZARD was scratched from a tournament appearing late in 1908, he apparently retorted 'Scratch me, what about your gate money?'

To become a spectator sport again, Croquet needs two things. Firstly, the tournaments need to be better publicised and more informative when the spectator arrives; secondly, a new variation of Croquet needs to be developed that reduces the length of breaks and makes the game easier to understand. This new variation would be an addition to the four variations of Croquet currently played: Golf Croquet, Association Croquet, Advanced play and Short Croquet.

#### GARDEN PLAYERS

Although most garden players roughly follow the rules of Association Croquet, they adapt it to suit what they want. It is curious that most garden players adapt Association Croquet in the same way. Typically in a garden game the balls proceed in pairs. So one side's balls, say red and yellow, will be on one hoop while the other side's blue and black balls will be on another. Occasionally one side will play a take off towards their opponents, split them up by knocking one of



A Short Croquet competition in progress at the WI's Denman College.

their balls off the court before returning to their partner. Turns do not end if balls are struck off the court on the Croquet stroke.

Talking to Garden Croquet players, it quickly becomes evident that knocking their opponents off the court is the aspect of the game they enjoy the most.

This almost universal adaptation of the rules suggests that the laws of Association Croquet are failing this group of players. They want to play a slightly different game - a game where knocking one's opponent away is a valid tactic.

Garden Croquet players represent by far the largest group of Croquet enthusiasts. Bringing them and club players close together represents the most important source of new club players.

#### CLUB PLAYERS

Most club players play almost exclusively Association Croquet or advanced play. They normally only play Short Croquet and Golf Croquet in a small number of selected competitions.

#### CONCLUSION

If Croquet is to develop to its full potential it needs to develop Croquet as a spectator sport and to bridge the gap between Garden and Club players.

To do this Croquet tournaments should be better publicised and more welcoming. The Observer-Lassale Croquet Classic is helping bridge the gap

between garden and club players and should be expanded and grown as fast as possible.

The evidence also suggests that a new variation of Croquet needs to be added to the present four variations. This new variation needs to reduce the length of breaks, make the game easier to understand and be similar to the way Croquet is played by garden players. This could be done as follows:

- (1) Players would be allowed to roquet each ball only once per turn, irrespective of whether they run hoops during that turn.
- (2) The turn does not end if balls are hit off the court on a Croquet stroke.
- (3) The game would be played on a short court to 14 points.

Club players would undoubtedly continue to play principally Association Croquet and Advanced play. The new rules, as with Short Croquet and Golf Croquet, being played in a small number of selected competitions.

With these new rules garden players would no longer need to adapt Association Croquet. If they came to a club, they would know a game familiar to the other club members. The new game would shorten the length of breaks and be much easier to understand than Association Croquet, and so be a much better spectator sport.

If Croquet is to develop to its full potential, it must have the

enthusiasts that other sports enjoy, spectators, garden players and club players. To do this, it must develop a form of the game that meets the needs of spectators and garden players. If this does not happen, Croquet will remain a minority sport, with the club and garden players playing very different games.

Charles Townsend,  
Harwich.

### Croquet in Salisbury

Dear Sir,  
I sympathise with Margaret Barnett in her plea for a croquet club in Salisbury.

Having admired for many years what must surely be England's most beautiful greensward, I wish for her sake it were possible for croquet to be elevated from the vicarage garden to the cathedral close.

Bill Bawden,  
Cheltenham.

### The 1984 Debate

Dear Sir,  
I have just watched Barbara Cartland versus Jackie Collins on Terry Wogan's programme, when it was not obvious that 'the game is the thing'.

Having absorbed the 1984? Debate in Issue 192, I am moved to hope that the 'M.. C.. C.' team and Mulliner will shake hands over a cup of tea laced with Irish whiskey.

Robert Ponsonby,  
Hurlingham.

### Double Banking Law

Dear Sir,  
During a double-banked game one of the players had occasion to move one of the balls of the other game, and owing to a breakdown in communication, the striker in the other game took off to the moved ball in its incorrect position. At this stage it was moved to its correct position where it was significantly further away from the striker's ball. Two referees were consulted and both maintained that the striker should take the shot again, and invoked the Emergency Law 51 to justify this decision.

Fair though this may seem, I believe that this was the wrong decision. Law 51 cannot be invoked to deal with a situation that is already covered by the Laws, and this particular situation is so covered. Law 29 (Playing when any ball is misplaced - General Rule) specifically quotes the relevant instances, the last of which is: '(f) all other cases except those dealt with in Law 30' (Law 30 is

not relevant to this situation). Law 5(b) of the Appendix on Double Banking covers the interference DURING A STROKE, but not interference before the stroke is played.

Now we have always been taught that it is the duty of a referee to interpret the laws as they are written, and not as he thinks they ought to be. For this reason, I think that the above decision was wrong.

So, should an additional law be formulated to cover this situation, i.e. to allow the striker to replay the shot? One's first reaction is to say 'Yes': but consider this. Suppose the striker had taken a long shot at the misplaced ball, and had hit it. Must he play the shot again? Or take the case of enemy balls joined on the yard-line, with one of them misplaced by a player in the other game. The striker now plays a long take-off to these balls, and either stops very short, or runs over the boundary. Should he be allowed a second chance at his take-off, having now gauged the strength required?

It is important to clear up this question because double banking is on the increase and the situation is likely to occur quite frequently.

C A Parker,  
Parkstone.



Submitted from Tenerife by Roy Wallis.

### Professionalism in Croquet

Dear Sir,  
When I read Mr Cotterell's letter in the CA Gazette on the possible coming of professionalism, I thought; perhaps, but not in my day. And so I wrote a column in our local club bulletin citing parts of his letter.

However, not long after and to my utter amazement I received a California publication from one of their northern scribes which

stated categorically that the first world croquet goes pro in the west. And apparently it is the sad truth.

This sudden and regrettable change has been brought about by an Australian who calls himself the Pro at the Meadowood Club in the wine country of the famous wine growing area known as the Napa Valley. And the sponsors of this professionalism is one of the french champagne growers who have moved to California to take advantage of the climate and excellent wine growing conditions.

I am enclosing a copy of the Newsletter publication which I quoted.

F. Tucker, Capt. USN (ret),  
Santa Barbara, USA.

#### WESTERN CROQUET NEWSLETTER

Volume 3 Number 1.  
Spring, 1987

Croquet Goes Pro in West

\$15K Purse is World First

Domaine Mumm will sponsor Croquet Classic

By Tom Lufkin

Damon Bidencope, croquet pro, has announced that the Meadowood Inn and Country Club will host the first large money tournament for croquet in the United States, September 3, 4, 5 and 6, 1987. He advised that Domaine Mumm, a premiere champagne producer in the Napa Valley, will sponsor the event and is offering a \$15,000 purse.

Within the croquet community this money tournament is causing a great deal of excitement. Already top players from the East Coast and abroad have signed up. Beside the record breaking purse, the fact that players from anywhere in the world may participate makes the potential cross section of competitors challenging.

The purse will be distributed to a minimum of 30 per cent of the players with the top doubles team receiving \$5,000. Because Domaine Mumm visualizes this as an annual affair, the competition for playing berths for this premiere should be brisk. The Croquet Classic has all the ingredients to score another grand slam for croquet in the West!

The two new courts at Meadowood make it possible to expand the number of players this year. In addition to many of last year's players returning this year, the Associations of Australia, New Zealand and Great Britain are each nominating their five best players.

Spectators for the entire week are encouraged. A tournament pin, which admits the bearer to all events, luncheons, dinners and parties, can be obtained by becoming a Patron of the Tournament. Patrons are asked to make a \$500 donation to the National Down Syndrome Foundation. Patron's packages include the Monday champagne reception and dinner at Meadowood, admission to all matches, courtside luncheons and beverages, Friday evening's barbecue with a western theme, and Saturday evening's gala dinner and dance.

Benefactor's packages are available for a donation of \$1,000 per person. They include above benefits plus round-trip airfare on Continental Airlines from any city in the US served by Continental, three nights free rooming (double occupancy) at Meadowood, Sonoma Mission Inn or Vintner's Inn (depending on availability), a Friday luncheon with a participating winery proprietor or winemaker, and a special croquet clinic on Sunday.

**Editor's Note:** Great Britain has been allocated three extra places in this tournament and the eight players representing us are: Keith Aiton, Mark Avery, Michael Heap, Andrew Hope, John McCullough, Steve Mulliner, Martin Murray and Keith Wylie.

Dear Sir,  
I read with interest the article by Bernard Neal in the July copy of 'Croquet' on the motions passed in Council on 'professionalism in croquet' and I note that comments from members will be welcomed.

In company with Ken Cotterell and many others, I do not wish to see croquet follow the path of many sports following their adoption of professionalism. The prospect of high monetary rewards seems inevitably to lead to gamesmanship, ill-feeling, time-wasting, arguing with the referee, etc (as so often seen in tennis).

At present, members of all abilities are welcomed into a friendly atmosphere and they can enjoy the game at any level. The prospect of big prize money would attract people to the game for what they could get out of it; not, as at present, for what they can put into it. I fear that Steve Mulliner, in speaking of the 'reasonably refined and intelligent' people who are not likely to change in a hurry, is falling into the same trap that many well-intentioned people have done

Continued on page 26

## Your Letters (3)





