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March 1988

Issue No. 196

CROQUET



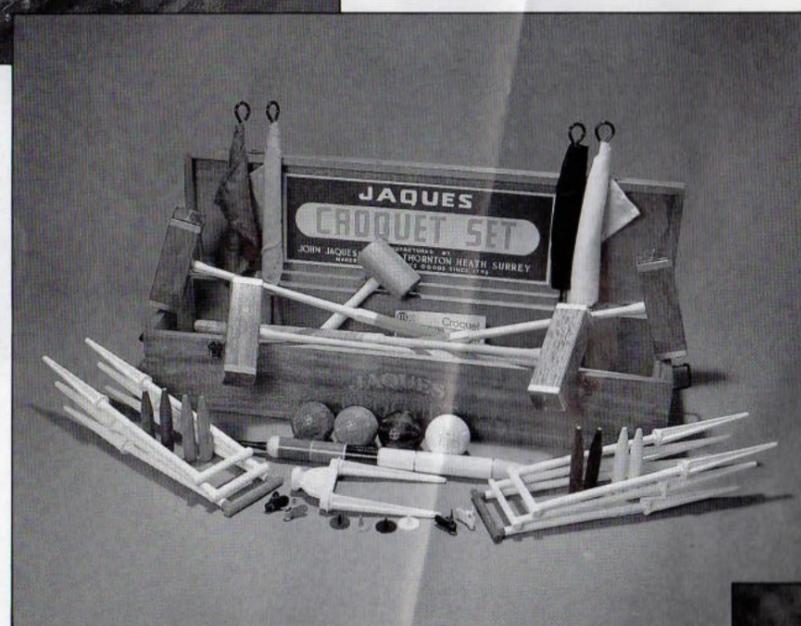
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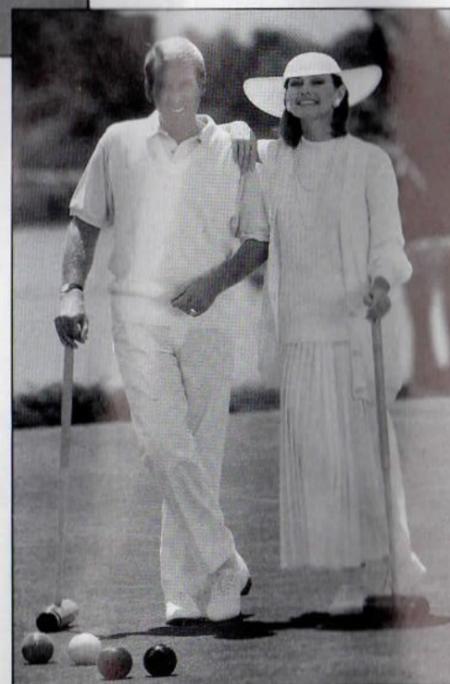
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'CROQUET'

Contact Addresses

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

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

Advertising: Brian Bucknall, Moonrakers, Goring Road, Woodcote, Reading, Berks, RG8 0QE. Tel: 0491-681746.

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

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

Editorial Team

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Coaching

Features

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Editorial

MORE SPORTS COUNCIL SUPPORT

The Sports Council has confirmed its intention to continue grant-aiding Croquet at the same level as previously, despite severe funding problems of its own. This is great news, and a tribute to all the effort everyone has put in to meet the targets outlined in our first 3-year Plan.

Elsewhere in this issue you will read of many exciting developments that are coming to fruition. News of the appointment of our National Junior Squads, the institution of Performance Awards, courses for Croquet Demonstrators and teaching staff; all indicate the progress we are making in many areas.

In the Schools, we are now established as an 'Information Provider' on the Times Network System, and able to communicate directly with 3000 secondary schools by computer link. The second Croquet Classic is about to be launched, and we have a mailing list of some 3000 people who have all made enthusiastic enquiries about croquet or bought a croquet set in the past 2 years. Group entries are coming in, both from clubs and from private individuals who want to run their own subsidiary tournament.

Enquiries are being received from members of Womens Institutes keen to set up their own croquet clubs. Television and sponsors are becoming more active as each month passes, and already, in January and February this year, membership recruitment is up 60% on last year and more than double the total for these two months in 1986.

Indoor Croquet provides yet another opportunity for clubs to recruit more members, and after April the carpets will be available to any Club or Federation that wants to use them. The only requirement is that any event must be self-financing and cover all the costs involved, including transport of the carpet. With the possibility of local sponsorship, this could be a way for Clubs and Federations to increase their income, both from the event itself and from any new members they may recruit as a result.

Through the efforts of the CA and its members, a whole range of promotional opportunities is opening up for Clubs and Federations. By using our imagination, we can capitalise on these possibilities.

NOTICES

1988 SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you enjoy this magazine, please make sure you have paid your 1988 subscription - otherwise this could be the last copy you receive.

We're told withdrawal symptoms can be quite horrid!

SOUTHWICK RESULTS

Congratulations to Dorothy Miller, who won the Sussex Vase at Southwick last August, and to David Appleton who won the Douglas Jones Cup!

The results were not recorded at the time (see page 12 of Issue 195), but the information has at last filtered through.

Dorothy attributes her success to attending one of last year's CA Coaching Courses - a sure-fire way of guaranteeing that the Editor will eventually publish the result!

Photographs in this issue by: Deborah Latham, John Walters, Eric Solomon, Jonathan Collis, Corla van Griethuysen, Liz Taylor-Webb, Chris Hudson, John Beech, Lancashire Evening Telegraph, Syd Jones, Miss Roy McCormick, Jim Kirby, and Tim Haste.

Front Cover: Hamish Hall (right) and his opponent reflect the friendly atmosphere of the Croquet Classic.

STOP PRESS

NEW SPONSOR

Green Brothers (Geebro) Limited, the Sussex based manufacturers of LISTER teak outdoor furniture, are to sponsor the Inter-Counties Croquet Championship at Southwick from 27th to 30th May.

The tournament will be known as 'The LISTER Inter-Counties Croquet Championship' and Lister plan to take full advantage of the current growth in interest in the sport by inviting major customers and trade and consumer press to the event as their guests.

FIXTURE BOOK
Corrections

Hunstanton
 May Weekend (Page 43) runs from 30th April to 2nd May (not 1st May). Entry Fee for doubles for members (Page 31) should be £3 (not £4).

Ramsgate
 3rd to 5th June: Tournament will be KO and Swiss for 2 trophies. Accommodation available at Royal Temple Yacht Club (£6, breakfast extra). Details from Tournament Secretary.

Croquet Classic
 Entries should be sent to The Croquet Classic, PO Box 55, Crewe, CW1 1WP, not the Hampshire address given in the Fixture Book.

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Obtaining Grants & Loans from the CA

By John McCullough; Chairman, Development Committee

Background

This article should be read in conjunction with two previous articles published in 'Croquet'. See page 12 of Issue 181 (September 1985) and page 18 of Issue 185 (May 1986). These give a complete picture of the policy current until November 1987 for the award of Grants and Loans by the CA.

New Grants Policy

The new Development Committee, at its first full meeting in November, agreed the following priorities (in order) for the receipt of future CA Grant aid:

1. £250 per year to Federations in their first 3 years of existence.
2. £50 Grants to Federations or Regional Development Officers towards the purchase of publicity materials for the launch of specified new Clubs (where sponsorship or a surplus of Federation funds are not available).
3. Substantial Grants (as and when sufficient funds have been accumulated) to major developments that create or enlarge a

Club so that it has 4 full-size lawns of Tournament quality.

Category (3) above represents a shift in emphasis from the former policy that concentrated on supporting the formation of new Clubs. The Development Committee, with the support of Council, now feel that we must consolidate the achievements of the past three years, represented by the creation of so many new Clubs. We must support the transformation of at least a few of these Clubs into major tournament venues, thereby not only enhancing the long-term futures of these Clubs, but also by helping to satisfy the growing demand by Associates for tournament play. We hope to be able to make occasional Grants of the order of £2000. Once such a sum is available, regions will be asked to submit competing schemes and to negotiate sponsorship and complementary Grants from outside bodies, the scheme managing to attract the most cash becoming the likely recipient of the CA Grant. The Grants will thus be used as major 'pump-priming' awards.

How to apply for a CA Grant

Thus, for the foreseeable future, no CA Grants to Clubs will be available, except as in (3) above. Where (3) above applies, the Club should contact its Federation Secretary or Regional Development Officer, through whom the application should be submitted to the Chairman of the Development Committee.

CA Loans Policy

The CA policy on awarding Loans to Clubs remains unchanged. Two CA Committees are empowered to award Loans:

The Finance and General Purpose Committee (F&GP) - for projects with a total cost in excess of £2500 that will result in the upgrading of courts and/or the provision of new off-lawn facilities (Clubhouse projects).

The Development Committee - Primarily for projects that involve the creation of new courts but any development project not covered by the ambit of F&GP Loans will be considered.

How to apply for a CA Loan

Contact the Chairman of the relevant committee (F&GP or Development), who will advise you on the information required for a written application to the committee.

For information about other sources of funds, see page 13.

NATIONAL JUNIOR SQUADS

Congratulations to the following members who have been selected for the National Junior Squads.

Under-21 Squad

James Carlisle (Hurlingham)
Chris Clarke (QEGS & Southport)
Russell Collighan (QEGS & Southport)
Robert Fulford (Colchester)
John Mann (Nailsea)
David Maugham (Cheltenham)
Mark Saurin (QEGS & Southport)
Mark Suter (Bristol)

Under-18 Squad

Andrew Grimaldeston (QEGS)
Richard Harding (QEGS)
Stuart Hemus (Bishop Vesey's)
Alex Leggate (Nailsea)
Christopher Ross (Cheltenham)
Andrew Saurin (QEGS)
Roland Sinker (QEGS)
David Thatcher (Nailsea)

(See article on page 12).

SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIP

Any reader who would like an entry form for the National Schools Croquet Championship should contact Ivor Brand for details. (Tel: 0905-358-304)

Loughborough: 21-22 November The Carpet at Loughborough

Report by Ian Vincent

Having retrieved my mallet from its winter storage I set off to Loughborough on a misty November morning. I arrived to find the carpet already down in one of the University sports halls. Closer inspection revealed that it was made up of five lengthways strips of a green, pileless fabric, on a foam backing. Hoops and other furniture were screwed into metal plates, about 15" square, covered with the same material, placed in corresponding holes in the carpet. The boundary was marked with white tape, giving a playing area of 16 x 24 yards, with a surround constructed from upturned plastic guttering.

A few shots confirmed the initial impression that it was fast, but not uncontrollably difficult; rather like many outdoor lawns in a dry summer. It was a joy to be able to shoot gently, though a few shots curved, possibly due to biased balls rather than a sloping floor. The only significant irregularities were caused by the edges of the plates in which the hoops were set; backwards takeoffs seemed particularly difficult in this respect. Croquet strokes tended towards stop shots rather than rolls, but I suspect this is no more than is characteristic of fast outdoor lawns. Sending the croqueted ball off seemed to be a frequent error; one player suggested that the verdant colour suggested a slow lawn to the unconscious mind. The hoops were wide, with double the normal 1/8' clearance, and felt loose if the top was pushed forwards, but proved difficult to run from an angle: the ball seemed to die on the wire, rather than spin through.

The first match was against the West Midlands on Saturday afternoon. History may have been made when the first game, a handicap doubles, ended with Gary Norman playing for a draw, refusing a speculative hoop off an opponents ball with the scores level about a minute before the one hour, sudden death, time limit. Time was kept on the sports

hall score board, together with current points score in lights, but there was little in the way of an audience to appreciate this. Indeed, the match was played in a cathedral-like silence: I suspect the possibility of echo reduced the few who were present to the barest whisper! (The atmosphere was better on Sunday, when a cricket net on the balcony above produced enough noise to release the inhibitions of the few dozen spectators).

This was the only draw, but only two games finished within the hour over the entire weekend, which suggests that the time limit



Chris Hudson 'mows' the lawn at Loughborough.

was too tight. The sudden death rule also robbed players of any hope of a comeback if they were a break down with time approaching. The West Midlands won the Advanced doubles, but the singles all went to the East. Double banking caused few problems, given an active ball marking policy by the referee.

A very successful 'Come and try it' session was held on Saturday night, with about 30 people being coached at various levels by more than half a dozen players: the lawn was positively crowded. Sunday morning was

Bristol: 5-6 December South West Master 'Whitchurch Hill'

Report by John McCullough

The South-West leg of the Indoor Croquet Roadshow took place at Whitchurch Sports Centre, Bristol.

The first surprise for carpet-bringer Chris Hudson was the gruelling schedule arranged by manager John McCullough. Allowing two hours from 8am Saturday to lay down the carpet, continuous play was planned from 1000 to 2300 Saturday and 0900 to 2100 Sunday.

The Programme consisted of four events, the two National League matches on Saturday and Sunday afternoon, a two-hour public 'come-and-try-it' session on Sunday morning and a 12-team regional tournament. In the latter the teams were split into blocks of three with semi-finals for the block winners and the final at 2000 Sunday.

The second surprise was the discovery by

solidly booked by players from clubs in the region, who generally enjoyed the experience. Chris Hudson 'mowed' the lawn at lunchtime, removing fluff with a vacuum cleaner and tightening the hoops with an Allen key!

The North-West fielded two ladies in an experienced team, who won the handicap doubles after a good break from 2 to the peg by Liz Taylor. East Midlands levelled by winning the Advanced Doubles, despite some ambitious peeling attempts; then the men got their revenge in the handicap singles, leaving the home side two up with two to play. Keith Aiton looked to have a well controlled double peel (the lift hoops were 2-Back and Penult, with a fifth hoop start), but had to settle for a win on time. The other game, between Rick Davis and Mike Wilkins was closer, with Rick coming from behind to score the winning point with seconds to spare.

The weekend was not yet over, for the carpet had to be rolled up and loaded into Chris's lorry. We were sustained for the task by an enormous tea (Loughborough University catering seems to be geared for Rugby teams!), but even with ten of us it took an hour and not inconsiderable effort. Enjoyable as the weekend was, I fear a permanent home is a more practical proposition for this particular roadshow!

REGIONAL MATCH RESULTS

East Midlands bt West Midlands by 4½ games to 1½.

East Midlands bt North West by 5 games to 1.



Pat Hague, Ladies Field Champion (front) with left to right, Manager Tim Haste, Dab Wheeler and Pat Asa-Thomas.

APOLOGY

DDS Colour Printers wish to apologise for any embarrassment or distress they may have caused to friends and relatives of the late Jane Neville-Rolfe by printing the wrong photograph on page 15 of the last issue.

Unfortunately the photograph was transposed after the proof stage, and the wrong half was printed. The photograph that should have appeared with the Ladies Field Cup report is shown above.

(Continued on Page 22)

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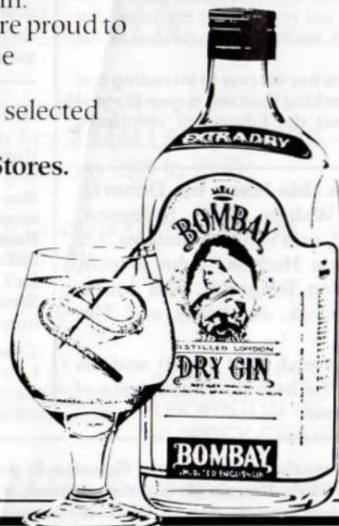
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Andrew Bennet – 'Coach of the Year'

By Pat Hague

It has been said that the most difficult thing about Croquet is actually discovering it. Andrew Bennet discovered it in 1970 whilst at Corpus with John Meads, Martin Kolbuszewski and Jonathon Wolf, (where they insist, the real croquet is played and not at Sydney Sussex, as some misguided people believe).

Anyone who has played at a tournament where 'Bucket', 'Meads', 'Elk' and 'Wollof' have been together will have become all the richer for witnessing the great fun they have shared - and still do - tho' I am still eager to learn why Andrew's nickname is 'Bucket'. They proved that Croquet was fun long before the CA Development Committee introduced the slogans.

Andrew is also responsible for introducing a very exclusive set to the croquet world which is known as 'The Madeira Club'. One of the rules of membership is to be able to consume large amounts of 'Sercial' whilst at the same time enjoying the Queen of Games. I can personally recall a halcyon afternoon at Bowdon when I played Andrew in a round of the Silver Box. The tranquility of the scene was suddenly shattered by the arrival of Meads and Elk, armed with Sercial and intent on heckling! That was the day I

became a member of the Madeira Club. After exhausting the stocks of the local off-licence, Meads was dispatched to nearby Altrincham for further supplies. I seem to remember I managed to beat Bucket but had to get a taxi to take me home! I might add I am not the only person they introduced to Madeira - they also taught Peterson to drink properly.

In 1974 Andrew spent a year in Spain and then returned to Cambridge to do his Dip-Ed. He worked in a pub in Dorset for a while, was sacked, but called in the wages inspectors. He won his case but left anyway.

In 1977, with a handicap of 7, he joined the Southport Club, and became a very active member. He has served on the Southport Committee from 1983 until now. When he joined them, Southport, like many other clubs, was going through the doldrums. Along with Paul Stoker and Tim Haste, Andrew's enthusiasm and modus-operandi made Southport the flourishing and successful club it is today. Andrew has won their President's Cup, American Tournaments, is a regular member of their Mary Rose team and has twice played for the Northern Counties. Five years ago, following Brian

Sandiford's footsteps he became a referee, a Tournament Manager and coach.

At most of the Northern tournaments, not only does Andrew manage but he also accommodates several quests. Renowned for his cuisine, he will breakfast you on eggs, bacon, three different kinds of sausage, black pudding, kidneys, mushrooms and beans! One must agree all good ballast for the Madeira Club. On returning to his home in Blackburn, after a day's play, he will entertain you with his music. Andrew is an extremely accomplished Cellist. He also plays the Double bass and, I hear, has recently taken up the Tuba. But if music is not to be the theme of the evening he will entertain you by drawing pictures of elephants and frogs playing croquet; he is quite a gifted cartoonist!

Andrew teaches French and Spanish at the Queen Elizabeth Grammar School in Blackburn. Three years ago, on a patch of rough turf, he introduced some of his pupils to croquet. From thereon most of you know the story. 'Bucket's Bandits' had arrived!

He took them 'off peak' to Southport. They quickly mastered the full sized lawns and developed an insatiable appetite for the game. Last year young Chris Clarke staggered away from the Cheltenham week with the 'A' Class trophy (which, incidentally is nearly as big as



Andrew Bennet.

himself) and went on to come fourth in the Spencer Ell. Mark Saurin, a lad surely earmarked for stardom, only lost The Selectors' Weekend by the skin of his teeth. At Mark's first CA tournament in 1986 he had the audacity to do a TPO on me; at the time he was 14 years old with a handicap of 7! These are only two of Bucket's up and coming youths and there are many more in the pipeline.

But what makes a good coach? What is the secret charisma that galvanises Bucket into the kind of action which enables him to produce these junior stars? His basic teaching ability has helped to make him a truly successful croquet coach, but there has to be more. Patience, tolerance, a quiet and confident approach and a willing eagerness to help at any time. As his RCO, I know he possesses all these qualities. He is a very valued member of the Northern coaching team. After a busy day at QEGS he will drive off to do a coaching session on the Fylde coast and the next evening think nothing of crossing the Pennines to do a stint at Pendle. In fact I think 'Bucket, the coach' is summed up by something an elderly 'pupil' said to me at Pendle, 'You know Pattie, we like Andrew to come and coach us - he is such a dear boy'.

Congratulations Andrew on being the first to be awarded 'Coach of the Year' - nobody is more deserving.

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Please note that the above telephone number was not quoted correctly in our last issue. My apologies to all concerned - Ed.

A TALE OF TWO CLUBHOUSES Edgbaston: 22/23 August



Edgbaston under water, with all 3 lawns and the pavilion floor flooded: 10am Sunday 23rd August.

The Tilley Bowl Overflowed

Report by Ivor Meredith

This local two-day tournament is staged mainly for the benefit of Midlands Clubs and those individuals who happen to have a weekend free.

It is one of those competitions that usually produces an element of surprise, but this year was the exception.

Competitors arrived for the

second day of play in the quiet of the Sunday morning, to find the road outside the Club gate swirling deep with muddy water.

A flash storm in the early hours had been the cause, with the disastrous effect of three lawns under deep water and a flooded pavilion.

People stood around to savour the reaction of the latecomers and the black humour of the Ludlow contingent, but it was no recompense for a lost day.

Tunbridge Wells: 16th October When the Storm hit us

Report by Joan Grimley

Tunbridge Wells Croquet Club, in the grounds of a former country estate, typified the devastation caused by the hurricane of 16th October 1987. At the height of the storm, winds up to 100mph felled giant conifers, beeches and specimen trees, and left them in a tangled mass with branches intertwined. Vast root systems were upended and one tree trunk was perilously balanced across

the Club House.

We have to be thankful that in this case there was no loss of life. The task ahead is daunting since professional help is essential for the clearance of mature trees and we have to take our turn. Hopefully in the months ahead some order will be restored and croquet once again will be played.



The Club House at Tunbridge Wells: 16th October 1987.



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CONDITIONS OF THE 1988 CA MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT COMPETITION

We can now demonstrate some positive benefits in joining the CA. For tournament players, the enhanced tournament calendar listed in the Fixture Book; discounts on tournament fees; and access to closed tournaments. For social players, more Golf Croquet tournaments, the Croquet Classic, and the fun of Short Croquet. For both categories, discounts on croquet goods, a wider spread of articles in the new 'Croquet' magazine, and priority plus discounts on coaching courses.

Beside the benefits immediately apparent to any individual player, there are the hidden benefits. By obtaining more sponsorship, the CA has increased the money it can make available to clubs, through CA Grants and Loans, and through increased lawn hire fees paid to clubs that host CA tournaments.

The CA puts together and circulates the tournament calendar,

maintains and publishes the Laws and Regulations, appoints officials, and stages the national and international championships. Many of the 55 new clubs set up during the past 3 years would not be in existence had CA members not invested their time and money in development activities.

There are therefore a number of reasons why croquet players should want to join the CA, ranging from self-interest to a wish to support the Association in the work it is doing for croquet players of all standards and inclinations.

Consequently we are inviting club committees to help the CA increase its membership substantially during 1988 by encouraging three of their club's non-CA members to join the Association. In return for achieving this target, the CA will provide a free CA subscription for 1989 (at the full rate of £14) for

the 'best' beginner recruited by the club during 1988.

The criteria used for the selection of the 'best' beginner will be left to the club concerned but it could, for example, be the winner of an end-of-season beginners' competition, or the most-improved beginner, or any other method, as long as it is concerned with encouraging a beginner to play the game or to help the club's own recruitment drive.

The CA's recruitment target for 1988 is 520 new members, and help from all registered clubs in achieving this target would be most welcome. Those clubs that are willing to assist and would like to take part in this recruitment scheme should contact Chris Hudson for further details as soon as possible, as their date of entry will determine the date of membership eligibility.

Short Story

Ellicott and the Triple Peel

A Short Story by D.K. Holland

'I have long contended,' said my friend, Ellicott, 'that the triple peel, in all its forms, is the most gross manifestation of arrogance seen in croquet today.'

Ellicott pursed his lips, glared at me, and bit savagely into another of the cream eclairs which invariably accompanied his otherwise non-descript luncheon.

'But you will allow,' I responded tentatively, 'that the triple peel, performed well, is a most difficult manoeuvre?'

Ellicott's brows shot together. The eclair was dropped to the plate. 'Allow,' he thundered, 'I will allow no such thing. And as for being difficult, so is standing on your head. To quote the great Dr Johnson: for a dog to walk on its hind legs is difficult, but one should not consider whether it is done well, but more to the point of whether it should be done at all. The triple peel, my dear DK, is simply a circus trick, and has no more place on a croquet lawn than heckling spectators in hob-nailed boots.'

I should perhaps here explain a little about the general character of Ellicott. A fairly competent player of croquet, he was inclined to a relentless intimidation of his opponents via a long study of the Potter concept of One-upmanship. The Ellicott maxim was that if you were not One-up, you were, without question, One-down; and he pursued this philosophy come what may.

Ellicott's take-offs, for example, were notorious in that the ball from which he took croquet seldom shook, let alone moved; and his response to a questioning opponent was to swing his mallet menacingly and at the same time advance to within six inches of the questioner's nose. He would then tap his mallet a couple of times on the innocent turf and declare in loud voice:

'Moved! You question whether it moved. Are you blind, sir? Or are you so desperate to win that you would resort to chicanery to put me off this splendid game I am playing?'

To be fair to Ellicott, there is no doubt that he really believed his ball had moved, and for all his bluster and gamesmanship, he had an untiring love for croquet and played it in a

positive and spirited fashion. Not for Ellicott the game of Hide and Seek, and so-called 'Percentage' croquet was anathema to him.

I bit into my Huntley & Palmer biscuit and attempted to pursue the matter of the triple peel. I knew I had to be quick and countered while Ellicott was sampling another sticky eclair:

'Tell me, Ellicott, if the triple peel is such a bad thing, or as you say, an arrogant circus trick, why is it that so many of our up and coming players think it necessary to attain the required skills to perform it?'

'I will tell you why,' Ellicott retorted. 'It's because of the examples set by those who should know better. The few at the top set the standards, unfortunately, and they take delight in their childish High-Wire Act of proceeding to four-back, wiring you, and then sucking their thumbs while you miss the lift. They then take their second ball around, perform their wretched triple peels, and believe in their naivety that that is how croquet should be played.'

Ellicott drew in his breath, stifled the question hovering on my lips with an impatient wave of his hand, and continued with shoulders hunched forward confidentially:

'And, in any case, if they must show off, why not continue to Rover with their first ball? Four balls placed accurately, one in each corner, is an admirable leave. But they either lack courage or are too besotted with their precious triple peel.'

'You will agree that a triple peel can finish a game in a remarkably disciplined fashion,' I ventured cautiously.

Ellicott's eyes bulged at this, and his reply was typically intense:

'I can see, D.K., that you are yet another unwitting accomplice to the lunacy that is rapidly sounding the death knell of any Universal embracing of our game. And as for the triple peel finishing a game with discipline, a thump on the offending player's head with a heavy mallet would do just as well - and create a lot more spectator interest into the bargain.'

'Would you ban the triple peel?'

'The triple peel,' Ellicott responded flatly,

'must not be allowed to continue without the introduction of imaginative curbs on the player who attempts one. And there must also be revision of the rules to allow compensating strategies to the other player.'

Ellicott had finished his luncheon and now stared reflectively at his empty plate. 'Croquet is, after all,' he continued quietly, 'a contest between two people. In singles, anyway. And you will concede that a contest requires interaction?'

I nodded vigorously while stuffing myself with the last of the Huntley & Palmers. I knew that croquet was a game between two people. I had lost enough of them to know that I wasn't playing by myself.

'But where is the interaction,' Ellicott continued, poking a spoon aggressively into a cup of gold blend. 'The circus clown wins the toss; elects to go in; stops at four back; sneers when you miss the lift and goes out on a triple peel. Boring high wire stuff. Utterly boring.'

'I used to like seeing the odd circus or two' I responded excitedly. 'And I tell you what, Ellicott, I never thought the high wire acts were boring. Some of those buxom wenches in skimpy costumes don't half make a chap...'

Ellicott's glare and admonishing wave of his hand cut me off in mid-sentence. 'Take the American game,' he continued soberly. 'Lots of interaction there. They have their priorities right. They play to the spectators. They see croquet as a contest, not a one-sided exhibition by a computerised ghost in white.'

Ellicott had now risen to his feet and was busily swinging his mallet in preparation for the next round of what he saw to be the Game of Life.

I had never yet got the better of Ellicott in any dialectic. I now thought I saw a chance.

'Ellicott,' I yelled after him as he was half way through the door. 'Have you ever done a triple peel?'

Ellicott was stopped in his tracks. But I was mistaken if I thought that the calorie-filled eclairs had in any way diminished the quality of his repartee.

'No, I have not,' he responded affably. 'I have always been too busy playing Croquet.'

D.K. Holland lives in Australia at Wentworth Falls, New South Wales.

1987 SHORT STORY PRIZE COMPETITION

Congratulations to Dorothy Rush on winning the 1987 Short Story competition with her tale entitled 'Miss Marple and the 1-back leave'.

This was the story selected for the award by the Judges Panel, and a £10 cheque is on its way to Mrs Rush.

The Judges' were: Judy Anderson, Charles Townsend, Peter Dorke, Sheila Black, Mike Keen, David Appleton, Allen Parker, John Bowman, Corla van Griethuysen, Debbie Cornelius, Chris Clarke, David Goacher, Ross Gillespie, John Jeffrey, and Keith Aiton.

The overwhelming view of the judges was that these stories had enhanced the magazine, so in the hope that this reflects the view of all our readers, we shall continue to publish them.

If you have not yet tried your hand at writing a croquet-related Short Story, remember that there is another £10 prize to be won for the story judged to be the best in 1988 (Issues 196-201 inclusive).

Entries, which should be no more than 2000 words, should be sent to the Editor as soon as possible. Short stories already received but not yet published remain eligible for the 1988 award, and authors need not re-submit them.

Once more, the Editor would like to thank those who have submitted short stories for the pleasure they have given.

Compton: 19-24 September South of England Championships 1987

Report by John Walters

This year's Southern began as last year's Northern ended, with Aiton and his priceless croquet-playing cargo in a car accident. Although this excuse got them off the hook for being a couple of hours late, Keith ('no breaks!') Aiton wasn't so 'lucky' this year with the vehicle, which turned over - sustaining a broken windscreen and several dents. The incident left a garage mechanic unruffled though; when presented with a bent wheel arch still stuffed with turf he was heard to mutter 'What do they expect me to do - mow it?'. But this was just the first of several set-backs for 'Albatross' Aiton; illness and a broken finger were still to come.

Other players did get into the spirit of similar entertainments: Phil Cordingley got a puncture and dented his car mending it; Gordon Hopewell pulled a muscle in his leg (but played much better afterwards, until Tim Harrison broke the lock on his car boot); Nick Hyne had his wallet stolen; Tim lost his glasses (probably just to make Gordon feel better!)

Before boring you all with croquet, I must pay tribute to the catering - while you are still awake. This was managed brilliantly by Truda Tom, who not only provided hot meals every day, but enticed those with smaller appetites (and budgets to match) with the most delicious soup I have ever tasted.

So to the croquet, by route of the weather - which was very mild, much better than the icy blasts of May; if we can't move the season forward, I think we should at least lengthen it. The motley crew of travelling players, who have sometimes unkindly been known as 'The Brat Pack', were reduced to two. But joining Aiton and Walters were a contingent from Colchester Royal Grammar School, who may yet carry the banner for the next few years.

The handicap events at week tournaments are often characterised by the success of one player, and so it was this week. Carl Docherty (from CRGS) won the C-class and the 'X', but another +1(T) by the Parkers robbed her and Mrs Loveys of the handicap doubles (as they had Graham Budd and Fiona McCoig, in the previous round). Conceding 4 bisques in the 'X' final, Gordon Hopewell looked to face a

mammoth task, but he acquitted himself well and continued his run of good form to go down by a narrow margin.

The yelp of delight in the B-class final came from Martin Haggerston, thus allowing Fiona McCoig a hat trick of seconds - runner up in her class and the 'Y' (to Roger Wood) here, and winner of the Ladies' second six the previous week! The Open doubles saw John Walters attempting a doubles 'double' - seeking to be doubles champion of the South as well as the North of England. In fact defending champions Aiton/Walters went down 2-1 to the eventual winners Fulford/Hopewell, despite a 26 win in the first game.

The Open Singles started with a close match between Aiton and Walters, with Aiton finally winning by +8 when Walters failed at 2-back having completed two peels of a triple. The block was opened up by Fulford beating Aiton and Peterson beating Fulford, none of the top four dropping games to Hopewell or Wood. Walters knew that in his final game, against Fulford, victory would bring a play-off against Aiton. Despite a half-hour mid-game pause for the only rain of the week (which was torrential), the match was reconvened on a different lawn, where Walters hit the peg from the boundary to take the game, following an injudicious leave by Fulford.

The game between Peterson and Aiton remained pegged down for some days after Aiton attempted a short peg-out in pitch black. This questionable tactic was due to Aiton's growing ill-health, which he realised was likely to render him housebound from that evening. Thus Aiton's scratching made Walter's defence of the title successful, and brought the result which would have been achieved in any case, had the block been decided as is prescribed in the law book.

We thank Dennis Shaw for his management of the event, which was as relaxed and enjoyable as it always is.

Championship Reports (1)

RESULTS

Ionides Challenge Trophy

6 entries (Advanced Play)
Winner: J.O. Walters (4 wins).

Devonshire Park Salver

8 entries (Advanced Play; Draw & Process)

Play-Off

M. Haggerston bt Miss F.C. McCoig +5

Losing Finalists

D.W. Shaw, P. Howell.

Luard Cup

7 entries (Level Play; Draw & Process)

Outright winner

C.S. Docherty

Play-Off for 2nd Place

F. Beard bt J. Kellaway +1

Trevor Williams Cup

5 entries (Level Play; American Block).

Winner: Miss M.J. Loveys (3 wins).

Victor Vases

(Advanced Play; American Block). 3 pairs entered.

Winners: R. Fulford & C.G. Hopewell (2 wins)

Anna Millns Salver

12 pairs entered (Handicap Doubles).

Final

Dr & Mrs C.A. Parker bt Miss M. Loveys & C.S. Docherty +1(T)

Sussex Challenge Cup
27 entries (Handicap Singles).

Semi-Finals

C.S. Docherty (7) bt D.C. Caporn (3) +20; C.G. Hopewell (2) bt M. Haggerston (3½) +20.

Final

Docherty bt Hopewell +8

'Y' Final

Dr R. Wood (½) bt Miss F.C. McCoig (4) +11



The Welsh Dragon in full regalia at the Western Championships.

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Members in play at Dyffryn Croquet Club.

Championship Reports (2)

Compton: 25-27 September Mulliner romps home to take the Southern Championship

Report by John Walters

The Southern Championship began with several players feeling duly chastised, having just read a report of the President's Cup in the 'Financial Times'. The article spoke of declining standards, comparing us unfavourably with the US, plus a special mention for the sight of Phil Cordingley's belly through a wet T-shirt, John Walters' unshaven state, and Keith Aiton's boxing gear!

Unmoved by statements deriding croquet standards, Steve Mulliner always seemed dominating at this event. He continued with the error free performances he has given since losing the Opens, causing some to wonder whether the mental barrier which always denies him that event will ever be surmounted.

The withdrawal of Keith Aiton left Mulliner with no opponent in round one, but Graham Budd bravely stepped into the breach. Although Graham can play breaks with tidiness that belie his handicap, not even 12 bisques were enough to prevent Mulliner's first TP of the weekend.

The next victim was on equal terms - well, not quite. Mulliner dispensed with Martin French quite quickly. The other quarter-finalists were Fulford, Walters,

who beat Hynes for his place, Murray, who finally got the upper hand in a struggle against Debbie Cornelius, Peterson, Prichard, Wood, and Cordingley who now faced the unenviable task of playing Mulliner in best of three.

Although game two saw Cordingley get in with his second ball against Mulliner (after Mulliner tried an extraordinary 4ft roquet on a 90% wired escape ball), he soon misapproached third hoop. Mulliner was seldom seen off the lawn, apart from when he made a phone call in-between games. Prichard vs Wood was a long drawn out match which went to three, and took a day to finish. Murray won an appallingly bad first game against Peterson, and a more clinical second game next day. Walters won his first, fairly scrappy, game against Fulford, and then the second with a triple on the ninth turn.

In the Swiss, Debbie Cornelius followed up her first tournament triple (and when was the last tournament triple by a woman you may ask) with an attempted quadruple, which failed after three peels when she wired herself from penultimate pioneer.

When the Swiss became tied between Cordingley, Fulford and French, the manager opted for a

1-ball round robin to decide it. Predictably we had the 'A bt B, B bt C, C bt A' result, so nothing was achieved (although Cordingley's lift shot in which he ran penult to the peg, ran rover from there, and narrowly missed the peg, was an achievement!) This did allow us the traditional 'best of 5' shoot out at the peg (thus avoiding the even more traditional 'deciding-game-in-pitch-black-at-9 o'clock!'). Cordingley won this with a stunning 4 consecutive hit pegs, despite having Mulliner as ball boy.

Back in the semi-finals of the main event, the tenacity of Roger



The Mulliner twins being introduced to Croquet at the 1985 Inter-Counties at Southwick.

Wood clearly shook John Walters; Roger was facing penult and peg after just over half an hour and 6 turns. Undeterred he hit the last lift and fought back, finally losing by just +5. The second game was a scrappy affair which Walters finally took by +17.

Mulliner took the first game off Murray, with Martin showing the 'can't hit 4-yarders' side of his game. In the second Martin showed his other side, and with Mulliner's spectacular hitting finally deserting him, Murray won +26 no croquet. The third game was Steve's; he completed a straight triple in which the last two peels totalled about 6 yards (!), including a half-jump through rover in which he obtained a rush on the peel ball directly - by the strikers ball overtaking the peel ball while on the ground, thus making the escape ball unnecessary!

When Mulliner's three offspring (peg, rover and pen) arrived with him on the last day, comment was made on how much they look like their father. 'They take after their father in more ways than one,' said Gordon Hopewell. 'I've seen them lying on the ground a lot,' replied Keith Aiton. 'Waving their legs in the air,' mused Gordon.

Murray and Wood played a best of three for third place. Martin took this in straight games with a triple in the first, although the pressure seemed to be getting to him half-way

(continued on Page 19)

Then Jim Potter lost to David Beatty and Carmen Bazley beat Niall McInerney, setting the stage for the captains to decide the match in the final game of the competition. As darkness approached Ian Maugham hit a vital long last lift shot to save the game, only to fail later and leave both his balls for rover, with Carl von Schmieder for penultimate and peg.

Carl hit in, but in croquetting Ian's ball to the fourth corner was unfortunate to send it just off the lawn, leaving the scores level after time had been called. Ian positioned his other ball in the jaws of rover to give Carl a final chance to hit in. The last shot was missed, giving Ian a thrilling win in the final deciding match by the narrowest of margins.

After accepting the McWeeney Trophy on behalf of the England team, Ian Maugham thanked the Southport club for hosting the event, and the players showed their appreciation for the

excellent catering provided. This fixture with its fine trophy and good sporting and social atmosphere can be warmly recommended to all those thinking of taking part.

RESULTS

(English names first)

Doubles

F I Maugham and P A Darby lost to C von Schmieder and D Beatty +1T, -4T, -2T.

Potter and Lady Bazley lost to S Williams and A Brown +7, -2, -1T.

P L Smith and Mrs C Lewis bt N McInerney and P Thornton -3T, +13T, +19T.

Singles

P L Smith lost to S Williams -1, -5TP. F I Maugham bt C von Schmieder +16, -13, +1T.

J Potter lost to D Beatty +3, -7, -15. Lady Bazley bt N McInerney +7, -4T, +10T.

P A Darby bt A Brown +19, +18. Mrs C Lewis bt P Thornton +10, +13.

Match Result

C.A. beat Irish C.A. by 5 games to 4.

Southport: 12-13 September CA vs Irish CA

Report by Tim Haste

This year it was Southport's turn to stage this representative event which always an enjoyable occasion.

The first day saw the players coping well with wet conditions and a vigorous gale to produce some well-contested doubles



David Beatty, who played for the Irish CA.

matches. In the first to finish, Paul Smith and Carol Lewis, who was playing well in her first Advanced event, won their last two games convincingly after just losing the first to put England one up at the end of the afternoon. The other two matches were always closely fought, and the visitors gained a 2-1 advantage by taking the final game in each narrowly on time.

In the top singles on the second day, Simon Williams repeated his Chairman's Salver success against Paul Smith in two close games to put Ireland further in front, and in doing so, he completed the only triple of the weekend. England fought back with wins in straight games by Carol Lewis over Padraigh Thornton and by Peter Darby over Adrian Brown.

CROQUET

..... no longer
about vicarage
lawns and
cucumber
sandwiches.



The scene at Speke Hall, Liverpool, where the North West Regional Final was played.

'CROQUET CLASSIC' IS A WINNER

Last year's Croquet Classic attracted nearly 600 players, and was won by Robert Bawden, a doctor from Diss in Norfolk. It was great fun, and those who enjoy their garden croquet are already enquiring about this year's event.

Many garden players are planning group entries with their neighbours, running their own local tournaments. From these, the winners will go forward to the relevant round of the national competition.

Croquet clubs are organising qualifying rounds for their new recruits to have a go. Hotels are pampering their lawns ready for the fray, and Womens' Institutes and other organisations are ready to do battle.

For every tournament player there are hundreds who revel in the thrills and spills of garden croquet. They're going to enjoy this year's 'Classic' - the national croquet tournament for people who don't play in croquet tournaments!

Men and women, boys and girls, every age group - all are welcome. That's half the fun. Even if you feel you're far too inexperienced, there's no need to worry; anyone who has ever been handicapped at 18 or below is barred from competition - just to cut out the very serious types!

All competitors get a special booklet with the basic rules and technical hints designed to make life easier. Already that's how a lot of people have found out the truth about the rules! So there's never

been a better time to get out your set and practise your roquets and croquets!

Last year, as the competition progressed, successful players became local heroes and found themselves on television and reported in the local and national press. This year, we may even have our own TV series for the event, one of the first to bring sponsorship into the back garden!

You can decide whether or not you want to host a match, and the early rounds are contested leisurely in your own garden or a near neighbour's. It's a singles competition. Go on winning and you'll find yourself in Regional and

National Finals.

These will be staged at attractive venues, like stately homes, to give everyone a really memorable day out. One of last year's venues was Castle Howard and the national final was played at Braxted Park, the home of Mr & Mrs Clark, where 9 croquet lawns were laid out in the grounds. This year, as previously, there'll be friendly games and coaching for spectators and family friends.

So whether you're interested in pitting your skill against other garden players, want to make new friends, or simply just enjoy yourself, make sure you get your Entry Form in time to enter!



Regional Finalists at The Royal Berkshire Hotel, Ascot: Roger Dudley (left) and Julius Cary with their wives and Eleanor Cary.

Croquet round the World

A triangular series of Test Matches for the MacRobertson Shield between Australia, New Zealand and Great Britain takes place every four years and the last series was held in 1986, when New Zealand just beat Great Britain to take the title.

The MacRobertson Shield is a well established event, matches having been played since 1925, but the international game is expanding fast. An annual series of Test Matches has been instituted between Great Britain and the United States for the Solomon Trophy, and Japan is beginning to send representative teams abroad.

More international matches are planned, together with participation in the World Games. A World Croquet Championship will soon be a reality, with players from many countries competing.

Croquet is mostly played in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, the United States and Great Britain but 'The World of Croquet' lists another 26 countries where there are croquet clubs and groups of devotees.

In Bermuda there is only one club, based on three individually

owned courts - one at each end of the island and one in the middle. China took up the game in 1984, when a Japanese team visited Peking to give a demonstration. In Egypt, Golf Croquet is very popular in the Cairo area, where the players use wooden hoops and high-quality croquet balls made in Alexandria.

Garden Croquet is very popular in Sweden and Switzerland, and also in Finland where a commune championship was inaugurated some four years ago. In 1982, an 'Asian' Croquet Championship was held in Singapore and won by Jerry Brown from Indonesia.

Croquet has long been played in Russia, where Tolstoy had a court in his garden and today's cosmonauts are encouraged to play croquet on return to earth 'to calm their minds and bodies'.

It will take time for these countries to develop to a point where they can field full international teams, but given the enthusiasm there is for croquet today, it could well happen.

'The World of Croquet' by John McCullough and Stephen Mulliner. The Crowood Press.



Jonathan Cullis, Regional Final winner at Castle Drogo.

Sponsorship Increasing

Sponsors are finding many opportunities to make Croquet work for them as the game expands and attracts more media attention. Several attractive options have

already been taken up, but many more remain - more each year as the game's popularity grows.

Last year saw the first 'celebrity' tournament at Leeds

NATIONAL RANKINGS

The Top Twelve

	Club	Grade	Games
1.	Steve Mulliner	Roehampton	176 85
2.	Nigel Aspinall	Roehampton	173 23
3.	Mark Avery	Ipswich	164 62
4.	David Openshaw	Harrow Oak	164 25
5.	William Prichard	Cheltenham	150 16
6.	Phil Cordingley	Harrow Oak	149 72
7.	Michael Heap	Colchester	147 24
8.	Colin Irwin	Bowdon	147 68
9.	Steve Lewis	Bowdon	144 31
10.	Keith Aiton	Nottingham	139 118
11.	Bill Aldridge	Bowdon	138 48
12.	David Goacher	Bristol	138 72

NATIONAL JUNIOR SQUADS SELECTED

Two National Junior Squads have been selected for next year. Each squad has 8 members, one squad being 'Under-21' and the other 'Under-18'.

Keith Aiton (U-21) and John McCullough (U-18) have been appointed as the respective squad coaches and were responsible for squad selection.

The squads have been created for the following reasons:

- To give added prestige to the achievements of the best youngsters, thereby giving additional ammunition to those who are working hard to promote croquet in schools and universities.
- To give the squad members the opportunity to apply for local authority and other Grant-aid to help pay the expenses incurred by them in their efforts to become top class croquet players.
- To increase the number of players who reach the A-class in their teens.
- To provide the best young players with coaching and competition likely to make them contenders for Senior International Honours.



Members of the National Junior Squads from Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Blackburn. Front (L to R) Mark and Andrew Saurin. Back: Russell Collighan, Chris Clarke, Andrew Grimbaldeston and Richard Harding.

- Following on from (3) and (4) above, to improve our long-term prospects of winning the MacRobertson Shield and other major international team events.

Squad members will be encouraged to participate in Grade II and Grade III coaching weekends, as appropriate, and to enter suitable tournaments and the weekend squad sessions planned for

Castle, and the advent of the Croquet Classic. Now indoor croquet offers new opportunities. The expansion of the game into new areas can open up new markets for sponsors or provide them with a chance to offer their customers a new service.

Carlsberg, sponsors of the Open Championship, lead the way with their promotion of croquet in hotels.

The Royal Bank of Scotland sponsors Junior croquet through the Schools Championship, bringing enjoyment and challenge to one of their target markets.

Bombay Gin use their sponsorship of the President's Cup to emphasise the quality and atmosphere of their product.

Croquet is looking increasingly attractive to TV producers as well as sponsors. Plans are in hand to televise a 4-nations international contest indoors now that Granada TV have demonstrated croquet's potential with a series of televised international matches.

Cable and satellite TV have expanded the number of TV channels and the programme time available to sport. Croquet with its sponsors is well set to take advantage of this.

The squads will be re-selected each Autumn for the following year.

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Bristol, winners of the first National Short Croquet team event.

Obtaining Grants and Loans

By John McCullough

Background

The Croquet Association has only limited funds available for awarding grants and loans to clubs, so here are some ideas about other sources of funding. . . .

Your members

Whatever outside body you apply to for financial assistance (CA, Sports Council, Local Authority), they are likely to require evidence of a substantial contribution to the project by your own members.

Sponsorship

Write to local firms, building societies, estate agents, etc. You may get direct help towards a project but sponsors are more likely to sponsor special events such as tournaments, where banners and newspaper articles provide them with some publicity. Be persistent and you'll find a sponsor in the end.

Regional Sports Council

Each Region of the country has its own Regional Sports Council. Each of these has an officer responsible for one county and an officer responsible for each sport. Ask your Federation Secretary or Regional Development Officer for advice before contacting the relevant Sports Council Officer(s). Each Region has its own policy on grant and loan aid for capital projects. You will stand most chance if:

- You can show your project has been accurately costed and is viable.
- It will lead to increased participation (lots of new members to those who don't understand Sports Council jargon).
- Many of the new members will be in Sports Council target groups - in this respect Croquet is well placed, because two such groups are women and the over 50s.

- You have raised a lot of money already by your own efforts.
- You have a long-term lease of the land involved.

Don't expect more than 20% of the total cost as a grant, even if you submit the ideal application.

Clubs just starting up won't be in a position to meet (4) and (5) above in most cases and, anyway, their projects (e.g. purchase of garden shed, equipment etc) are likely to be below the lower limit for the capital projects mentioned above (check the current figure with your Regional Sports Council). However, the Sports Council Officers have their own budgets from which they can make more modest awards, provided the increased participation criteria are met.

Local Authorities

Most local authorities provide grants and loans to sports clubs but amounts available, application procedures, award priorities, etc, vary. Write to every relevant authority from the County Council down to the Parish Council and ask for details of the help available, plus application forms.

Others

Many other organisations may provide help; for example, did you know that the Ministry of Agriculture will shortly be providing grants to farmers to promote tourist and leisure facilities and to assist in the provision of certain recreational facilities? Other possibilities for help are The Tourist Board, The Development Commission, The Countryside Commission, The Manpower Services Commission, The Council for Small Industries in Rural Areas, and The Playing Fields Association.

The moral is to write to everyone you can think of for help; then write to a few more.

SPORTS COUNCIL BACKS CROQUET FOR FURTHER 3 YEARS

A Game with a Great Future

The Sports Council is to continue its Grant Aid for Croquet, following the excellent progress made during the CA's first 3-year plan.

The Sports Council's backing over the next 3 years will help the Association consolidate progress already made and enable it to move towards a position of financial self-sufficiency.

The major objectives over the period of the second 3-year Plan are:

- To fund the Development Officer for a further 3 years.
- To consolidate the clubs and groups of players that have been set up during the first 3 years.
- To bring croquet to a wider audience.

- To 'in-fill' croquet 'deserts'.
- To create more new clubs.
- To establish an Indoor Coaching Centre.
- To provide a network of Regional competition venues.
- To continue the development of the National Coaching Scheme.
- To assist with the development of International Croquet.
- To continue providing strong central support to existing clubs.
- To plan for the establishment of a permanent National Headquarters for the Association, with security of tenure.

REVIEW OF PROGRESS

By Chris Hudson, National Development Officer

The Croquet Association has sown the seeds for spectacular growth over the next decade, helped by Grant Aid from the Sports Council and increasing sponsorship.

The number of active players in the clubs has already increased to over 4000, and the introduction of the Croquet Classic has provided an estimated 300,000 garden croquet players with an opportunity to pit their skills against all comers.

The CA's National Coaching Scheme is well established, with over 100 active coaches. The tournament scene has been enhanced with the advent of Short Croquet, which now boasts its own national individual and team competitions. Golf Croquet is also expanding, with more regional tournaments and a larger entry for its own national championship.

Media interest continues to build up and hardly a week goes by without a major croquet article in the national press or a major magazine. The Channel 4 film of Croquet in their 'Challenge to Sport' series has been shown three times, attracting a lot of interest.

Everywhere the standard of play is rising - most notably amongst the Junior players coming into the game from the Schools and Universities. Evidence of this is the standard of our National Junior squads, formed recently as part of our plan to win back the MacRobertson Shield from New Zealand.

Development work initiated by

the CA has resulted in over 70 new clubs being formed in the past three years. During the same period, Regional Federations have been formed to help administer the game. The six Federations already in existence run local League fixtures, and provide coaching and general support for all the clubs in their Region.

Increasing sponsorship has enabled the CA to give 'pump-priming' grants to new clubs and federations to help them get started, and this, coupled with the enthusiasm and efforts of individual members, has been a tremendous help in spreading the network of clubs more evenly round the country.

A further development of great potential is the advent of the indoor carpet. This will enable croquet to be played in comfort right through the winter, with exciting possibilities for coaching and recruitment.



WI members take part in a Golf Croquet tournament.



The Cambridge University Croquet Committee. Jonathan Collis is on the right.

Croquet at Cambridge

By Jonathan Collis

Northcote Parkinson suggests that the more unsuitable the working environment, the more successful the undertaking. In a spirit of scholarly enquiry Cambridge University Croquet Club has been testing this theory to destruction; despite no lawns, no equipment and, most importantly, virtually no money, past alumni have graced the upper echelons of croquet - one might mention in passing Messrs Aiton, Hilditch and Gunasekera.

This contrasts with our sometime rival Oxford, whose lawns in the Parks, equipment and the like have allowed for much easier promotion of the game. Oxford too has tested Parkinson's theory, but then infuriatingly has failed to be ineffectual in matters such as the Varsity Match, in which a temporary series of successes has been notched up.

Out in Fenland however, there are signs of change. Tim Harrison, the doyen of Cambridge croquet, is moving into what some outside the leafy groves of Academe call the real world, after guiding the game safely through a difficult period. Continuity exists in the shapely forms of our captain, Longman Bowl winner Fiona McCoig and the dynamic long-bisquer James Hawkins, who like so many other great croquet players, is reading maths.

The intake of October 1987 will

go down in history as being the entry of the remarkable number of four croquet players to the University, injecting fresh blood into the Club Committee and raising hopes for the future. The best of them, reading Law at Downing, is James Carlisle (0), who played in the Chairman's Salver last year, and who is training hard for the croquet season by playing rugby, rowing, and the like - excellent preparation.

The other three were all members of the Colchester Royal Grammar School team that won the Schools Championship in 1986. Nigel Varndell (12) joins Fiona at Girton (could this replace Sidney Sussex as 'the' croquet college?). The other two may, dear reader, be better known to you as winners of the Parkstone Autumn Doubles Cup, Graham Budd (10) at Downing and Jonathan Collis (5) at Selwyn. Nigel and Graham are reading Natural Sciences, while Jonathan enjoys the delights of the Classical Tripos, such as they are.

But what, you may ask, do these aesthetes and scholars intend to do to put croquet firmly on the map? The first achievement, masterminded by James Hawkins, was to persuade Sidney Sussex, the college with the best croquet lawns, to allow the club to use them eventually as University lawns, thus opening up a myriad of

possibilities, from home matches, to regular coaching sessions, to a decent practice ground for all members.

Hitherto, each member, and the club, had to play on College lawns of truly appalling quality. After a while, once comes not to expect boundary lines, proper size courts and other luxuries, or even proper hoops/peg/balls but a statue in the middle of a lawn is really beyond the pale. On these lawns is played the 'Cuppers' competition, which is indisputably popular, and so is a prime way of luring undergraduates into the wonderful world of association croquet.

The means by which the club plans to boost its minute membership is in the time-honoured Cambridge way of holding a 'squash'. The basic idea is to hire a room in a central college, advertise the venue and the fact that not only will all be revealed about croquet but also that liquid refreshments will be available, then ply the punters with fizzy white wine and gently prise them away from their membership fee.

Once separated from his cash, the average student is determined to get his money's worth, and will so the plan continues, be desperately keen to take part in croquet activities. Thus the theory prophesies: the effectiveness remains to be seen.

Meanwhile, we are still appearing in that long-running farce 'Half Blue: an everyday story of prejudice', in which the croquet club seeks to persuade the Blues Committee, made up of rugby, cricket, rowing, hockey captains and other intellectuals, to believe that croquet is as skilful as golf, and as popular as real tennis. There is a sign of hope, inasmuch as Oxford and Cambridge are going to bring their blues sports into line, and as Oxford awards half-blues to croquet, Cambridge must surely follow, although it does go against the grain.

So Cambridge plots and lays its plans, and being ones with a ready eye for an appropriate phrase, we bear in mind the Latin tag 'amat curam victoria' - victory likes careful preparation.

History of the Glasgow Croquet Club

By Jack Morton and Rod Williams

How croquet began in Scotland is not known. It was, however, sufficiently well established in the 1870s to hold a National Championship which was to continue until the outbreak of the First World War.

It would appear that there was little trace of organised croquet in Scotland until 1921 with the formation of a Ladies Croquet Section at the Livlinds Bowling Club in Stirling.

It was after the Second World War that croquet started to revive in Scotland. Firstly in the North in 1948 at Monquitter and later in 1950 in Edinburgh.

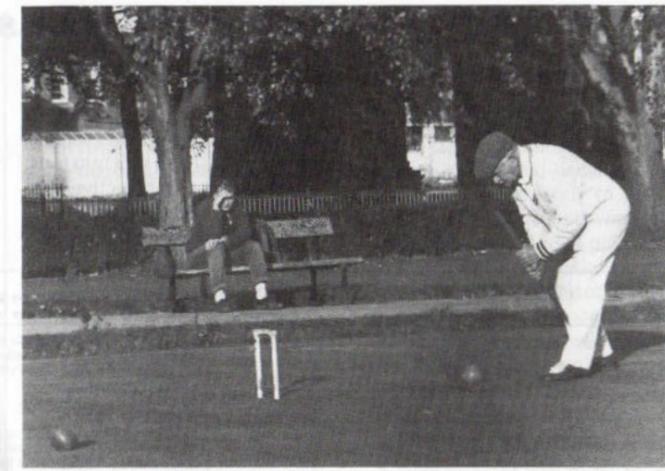
The Edinburgh Club was started in response to a number of letters by the author Moray McLaren to the 'Scotsman' newspaper and a dialogue on radio between Moray McLaren and Sir Compton MacKenzie entitled 'The Queen of

Lawn Games'.

Glasgow Croquet Club has the distinction of being founded in 1958 by a transistorised radio. Mr MacAlister Brown kicked the radio set with such force that he dislocated his ankle. This required him to spend some time in a hotel in Galloway where the only recreation available to him was a croquet lawn and an elderly croquet set.

This period of enforced recreation allowed him to discover the delights of the game of croquet and thus, duly converted, and with the advice and assistance of Edinburgh Croquet Club, he wrote an article to the Glasgow Herald where he invited those interested to form a croquet club in Glasgow.

The initial site for the Glasgow Croquet Club was in Pollok Estate on the South side of Glasgow close to the River Cart. For many years



Alan Ramsay (Bush CC) in play at Glasgow Green.

the members struggled to play on a lawn with a 1-in-3 slope. It was not unheard of for someone having run hoop 2 to run hoop 3 in the next stroke. Later the Club moved to a new site in Pollok Estate with four lawns and space to develop at least two more.

However, upkeep of the lawns, dependent as it was entirely on volunteer labour, proved too much for the few willing, able bodied enthusiasts, and in 1983, when the opportunity presented itself, the Club moved to new premises at Glasgow Green on two disused bowling greens.

This site, in a large park in the East End of Glasgow close to the city centre, has proved very popular with most club members and visiting teams. The lawns, though not perfect, are a great improvement on our Pollok lawns and the central location is very convenient with shops, transport and, more important, good pubs all close by. Since our move, the Club has thrived with the standard of play and players continuing to improve on the better quality lawns.

Glasgow District Council has been very helpful towards the Club and Scottish Croquet in general. With their help over the past few years, we have hosted matches against Australia and the USA, as

well as the regular SCA vs CA fixture.

One of the benefits of the present site is the exposure of croquet to passing visitors of all kinds, who stop and watch and sometimes ask to have a go.

Those who wonder about Glasgow's reputation, particularly the East End, as a rough city, will perhaps be surprised at how much this part of the City has changed even in the four years we have been there. Although the East End is still a depressed area with very high unemployment, the City Council has put a lot of effort into redevelopment projects.

Although we are constantly reminded of 'Inner City Problems' all around us we feel we have contributed in a small way to improving the amenities in the area. We are negotiating with the Council for yet another move: this time, to bowling greens at the Eastern end of Glasgow Green, with better lawns and a good pavilion. We hope that this will allow occasional use of four lawns to enable us to stage regular SCA and CA tournaments.

Glasgow Croquet Club won the Longman Cup competition last year. Forty seven club teams contested this National handicap event.

Successful Start for New Federation

by David Higgs

The South East Federation was inaugurated on 23 March. Some of the arrangements for our first year have necessarily been experimental, but the pattern of activities for future years has emerged, and all bodes well for a successful and influential Federation.

Membership:

15 clubs from London, Surrey, and Sussex have already joined the Federation.

One-day Tournaments:

These were arranged to bridge the gap between club and formal CA tournaments. An Association Croquet tournament was held at Compton and this had 12 entries, with 4 visitors. The three Golf Croquet events were highly successful and attracted a fair proportion of visitors, most of whom were from the Wellcome

Continued overleaf

HONOURS BOARD

Men's Championship
Keith Aiton (Nottingham)

Women's Championship
Mary Collin (Chester)

Open Championship
Mark Avery (Ipswich)

President's Cup
Stephen Mulliner (Roehampton)

Chairman's Salver
George Noble (Surbiton)

Spencer-Ell Cup
David Goacher (Bristol)

Ladies Field Cup
Pat Hague (Ellesmere)

Longman Bowl
Fiona McCoig (Colchester)



Keith Aiton, Mens Champion and Mary Collin, winner of the Women's Championship.

All England Handicap
David Goacher (Bristol)

Croquet Classic
Robert Bawden

Golf Croquet Championship
Geoff Roy (Phyllis Court)

Short Croquet Team Championship
Nailsea

Short Croquet Championship
Alex Leggate (Nailsea)

Northern Championship
Colin Irwin (Bowdon)

South Western Championship
David Goacher (Bristol)

Southern Championship
Stephen Mulliner (Roehampton)



Mark Avery, Open Champion



Pat Hague, Ladies Field Cup Winner, an invitation event for the top 6 ladies.

First Regional Schools Officers Appointed

The CA Schools Committee has appointed the first eight Regional Schools Officers to help administer the expanding National Schools Croquet Championship. Their task will be to organise Regional Finals and to arrange coaching courses for school teachers.

The competition is expanding rapidly, with 42 teams entered last year from 29 schools, and 80

schools playing croquet regularly. Members of school teams are already winning major CA tournaments and the standard of play in schools has risen dramatically, with several schools playing in League events.

But this year, a team of beginners could win the Schools Championship just as easily as anyone else, because it is a handicap event.



CA Standards Established for Equipment

A table of basic requirements is given below, showing how croquet equipment has been split into four user categories. Our objective is to help purchasers decide what type of equipment they should buy.

On the left is the new 'CA Classification' label. It is to be used by agreement with croquet equipment manufacturers to designate that equipment is suitable for the use specified.

Croquet Association Classification	Set Components	Weights	Sizes (Dimensions)	Court Sizes & Grass Level	Suitable for Use By:
Championship	MALLETS: Square or brass-bound round. Sight line	2¼-4lbs	34" to 38" shafts	35 yds x 28 yds or scaled down to 24 yds x 16 yds	1. Croquet Clubs, Sports Clubs, Tennis Clubs, -Hotels
	BALLS	1 lb	3 ¾" diam.	Putting green - smooth and level Grass flat to ¼" high	2. International matches, Championships & Tournaments if sets include CA approved hoops and balls.
	HOOPS: Cast iron or aluminium	Iron 6 lbs each	¾" diam. uprights span 3 ¾"		
	WINNING PEG		1½" diam.		
	RULES, CLIPS, CORNER FLAGS, CORNER PEGS IN WOODEN STORAGE BOX.				
Premier Garden	MALLETS: Square or brass-bound round	2¼"-3lbs	36"38" shafts	35 yds x 28 yds or scaled down to 24 yds x 16 yds	Country, Golf, Tennis & Sports Clubs, Hotels, private clubs, Schools and family play.
	BALLS	14oz - 1lb	3¾" diam.	Grass as flat and level as possible; not more than ¼" high	Family Garden Play
	HOOPS: Iron or bent steel	1¼lb - 2lb	¾"-7/16" diam. uprights 3¾"-4" span		
	WINNING PEG		1½" diam.		
	RULES, CLIPS IN WOODEN STORAGE BOX				
Family Garden	MALLETS: Round with plain, shaped shafts	1¼ lb-3lb	36"38" shafts	35 yds x 28 yds or scaled down proportionally to a minimum of 14 yds x 11 yds	Family Garden play and beginners
	BALLS	12oz - 15oz	3¾" diam.	Grass not more than 1" high	
	HOOPS: Iron or bent steel	12oz - 2lb	5/16" 7/16" diam. uprights 4" span		
	WINNING PEG		1"-1½" diam.		
	BOX OR BAG				
Lightweight Garden	MALLETS: Round head, plain shafts	1½ lb-2lb	32"36" shafts	Scaled down from full size to fit available area	Family Garden play and beginners
	BALLS	12oz - 15oz	3¾" diam.	Grass not more than 1" high	
	HOOPS: Iron or bent steel	4oz - 1lb	¼"5/16" diam. uprights 4" span		
	WINNING PEG		1" diam.		

New Federation (continued from page 15)

Club at Beckenham.

One-day Coaching Events

Events were held at Dulwich- 12 entries (4 visitors) - and Reigate Priory - 17 entries (8 visitors). These were intended primarily for the over-14 handicappers, and appear to have been successful. The South-East Regional Final of the National Schools Championship was also used to coach teams and school members at Ardingley College.

Coaching Courses:

A course was run at Vine Road, Barnes for Richmond-on-Thames Leisure Department, preceded by a 'Come & Try It' day at Old Deer Park. There were 15 on the course. A club has now been formed on this bowling green. The numbers are already increasing, and this should be a very successful Short Croquet centre. Two courses were also run at the Bank of England Sports Club involving 16 members.

It is hoped that a croquet section will be formed there early next year.

Equipment

Grants from the Regional Sports Council and Croquet Association were used to obtain three sets of hoops, 6 sets of balls, and 12 mallets. These have been used on the coaching courses and at Ardingley College. This equipment is available to clubs for a small charge for reasonably short periods.

Women's Institute & Town

Women's Guilds:

The Surrey Federation of WI had their 'Come & Try It' half days under the Federation umbrella at Caterham and Surbiton when 61 ladies enjoyed themselves. A follow-up half day at Caterham attracted 11, and interest from another 9. The mid-Surrey TWG had a full day at Surbiton and

attracted 21 ladies. Plans are in hand for further 'Come & Try It' days this year. Contact is being sought with other sections of these two bodies to enable county and regional tournaments to be held.

South-East League:

Wellcome (Beckenham) beat Ramsgate in a play-off. Both clubs had won all their matches. Parsons Green came third.

Preview of the coming season:

Seventeen clubs are expected to be federated. Coaching courses are arranged for Gillingham Leisure Department, as well as repeats of those this year. A Golf Croquet League is planned in addition to the Association one.

Thanks:

Thanks are due to all the coaches, referees, and others who helped to make the Federation's events so successful.

The South-East is the sixth Federation to be formed by the Croquet Association as part of its plan to encourage the growth of the game.

The Croquet Association

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

National Development Officer

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

Federation Secretaries

Northern

Angus Peterson, 9 Langham Road, Bowdon, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA14 2HT. Tel: 061-941-3579.

West Midlands

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

East Midlands

Shelagh Rastall, 9 Fairmount Drive, Loughborough, LE11 3JR. Tel: 0509-263954.

South Western

Ray Ransom, 36 Old Snead Avenue, Stoke Bishop, Bristol BS9 1SE. Tel: 0272-682255

South Eastern

David Higgs, 35 Shirley Avenue, Old Coulsdon, Surrey, CR3 1QY. Tel: 01-668-6525.

East Anglian

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

Regional Development Officers

North East Region

Syd Jones, 13 Kew Gardens, Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear, NE26 3LY. Tel: 091-252-2962.

Yorks & Humberside Region

Bill Lamb, 5 Bondyke Close, St Margarets Avenue, Cottingham, N. Humberside, HU16 5ND. Tel: 0482-840739.

Southern Region

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

CA Schools Committee

Ivor Brand, 54 Foxwell Street, Off London Road, Worcester, WR5 2ET. Tel: 0905-358-304.

THE MOST PROGRESSIVE CLUB



Norman Hicks, Chairman of Pendle Croquet Club, at Hurlingham after receiving the Apps-Heley Award for the most progressive club.

Croquet Demonstrators Awards

The Croquet Association has extended its National Coaching Scheme to include awards for 'Croquet Demonstrators'.

The object of this award - a Yellow badge similar to those for Coaches - is to give official recognition to 'Croquet Demonstrators' who are prepared to show others how to play Golf Croquet.

The one-day course which each Demonstrator is required to attend to qualify for the award, includes instruction on how to play and coach Golf Croquet, interspersed with practical sessions and friendly competitions. Those who attend are shown how to run Golf Croquet tournaments and given an

understanding of Association Croquet.

Assessment for the 'Croquet Demonstrator's' award is continuous throughout the course. To qualify, candidates have to demonstrate the necessary playing skills and the ability to coach other members of the course in practical revision sessions.

The new award should be of particular interest to Sports Activists from the Women's Institutes and Townswomen's Guilds, Action Sport and Sports Centre staff, and Trainee PE teachers and other teachers involved in organising school sport.

Coaches Corner: Tips for the absolute beginner

By Tommy Vale

One of the important first things a beginner has to learn is how to make a roquet - that is to aim and strike your own ball so as to cause it to hit the object ball. Most beginners - unless they are specially gifted - may find this a somewhat daunting prospect, and for someone who has never held a mallet before, it is by no means easy.

A successful roquet would appear to comprise 4 essential components, all beginning with the letter S, and by following these 4 straightforward principles it is surprising what progress can be made in a remarkably short time.

1. STALK

Approach your ball from a distance of some 6 or 7 yards behind it in the direction you wish it to travel. In this way you will be getting your feet and therefore your shoulders in the correct relationship to the line of aim. Any attempt to correct the aim by altering the mallet will lead to failure. If you think your aim is incorrect, then abort the action and stalk the ball again.

2. STANCE

It is of no real importance if in the stance one foot is forward of the other, or whether both feet are level, so long as the stance is well balanced, comfortable and steady. The feet should be neither too close to the call - if so it may bump at the start of its course - nor too far back - when it may wander off the straight line.

3. STARE

Stare at the back of your ball, and keep your eyes fixed there all the way through the stroke until you can see the spot on the grass where the ball lay. When you have bedded your feet into position and are satisfied with your stance it should not be necessary to look up to check your aim more than once.

4. SWING

Draw the mallet and arms back steadily and evenly along the line of aim with a reasonable back swing, and then carry the mallet through with a flat pendulum action. The body must be kept perfectly still and balanced, and a rhythmic flat swing from the shoulders, with the arms and mallet forming a single unit, will keep the ball on the required line. Any unsteadiness on the stroke, such as lifting the head to see where the ball has gone, or rising up on the toes, may be disastrous. Finally no amount of written words can ever be a substitute for practice. So go out onto the lawn, place another ball say half a dozen yards from your own, and, having the 4 S principles firmly on your mind, make your roquet. Very soon you will be lengthening the distance between the two balls, but remember that if you fail to roquet, it's because you have omitted to observe one or more of the 4 S components.

GOING FOR GOLD!

By John McCullough

The Croquet Association's National Merit Award Scheme has two aims - to encourage enterprising play and to raise overall skills.

Individual targets have been set for players of different standards, and there are awards of bronze, silver and gold badges for those who achieve target performance.

The Targets

Appropriate badges will be awarded to players on the first occasion they achieve the following:

Bronze - A break of 10 hoops or more, using bisques.

Silver - An all-round (12 hoop) break, without bisques.

Gold - A triple peel.

Special Conditions

The last condition mentioned above is included because these awards are meant to be a recognition of an improvement in someone's standard of play.

The following conditions, applicable only until the end of the 1990 season, are meant to prevent awards where no real achievement has been made - e.g. a scratch player making a 10-hoop break with bisques in a handicap game against a minus player:

7. Players of handicap 10 and below are only eligible for silver and gold awards.

8. Players of handicap 5 and below are only eligible for gold awards.

Getting your badge

If you think you are eligible for an award, report it to the Manager of the tournament at the same time as you report your score. Get your opponent to verify your achievement to the Manager. The Manager will report any such achievements in his tournament report and they will be recorded in a subsequent edition of 'Croquet'.

All badges will normally be awarded at the end of tournaments, but if circumstances prevent this your badge will be posted to your Club Secretary.

Concluding tips

1. Enter at least one CA Calendar fixture this year.
2. Practise your break play!
3. As you proudly sport your badge at your home Club, remind admirers that they should join the CA.

ANDREW BENNET 'COACH OF THE YEAR'

Andrew Bennet with two of his pupils.



A new 'Coach of the Year' award was inaugurated by the Coaching Committee at its October meeting. The award is to be made annually to the person who has made the most outstanding contribution to coaching during the previous season.

Any member of the Croquet Association can nominate a person for this award. Details of the nominating procedure and conditions will be given in the May edition of 'Croquet'.

The first 'Coach of the Year' was Andrew Bennet, chosen unanimously by the Coaching Committee for his outstanding work with the boys of Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Blackburn, and his contribution to coaching generally in the North-West.

Andrew is a Grade II coach and a member of the Southport Club. He will receive his award, an inscribed memento, at the Croquet Association's AGM in April.

Croquet on the move

CROQUET MOVES INDOORS....

The indoor carpet has now visited Clacton, Loughborough, Bristol, Crawley and Manchester, where it was installed in the gymnasium at Manchester Grammar School.

The Manchester venue was the first occasion on which the carpet had been laid on a wooden floor, and it was surprising how this made the carpet noticeably slower.

Our experience at MGS prompts the thought that a school gymnasium could be used during the half-term period or school holidays by a local Federation to organise a 'Croquet Week', with a full programme of coaching and competition for local schools, clubs and other interested parties.

During the weekend we also witnessed the first game of croquet played with a chess clock, each player having a time limit of 30 minutes. The clocks were switched



The carpet at Clacton Leisure Centre.

every time a player left the playing surface.

Obviously, if one player runs out of time when he is behind, he has lost the game, but what if he runs out of time when he is in front? We decided that in this case he would only be allowed one stroke every time his opponent broke down, which meant effectively that he had one shot with which he could play as defensively as possible.

Unfortunately, we never reached this position. Whether it was the effect of being timed we shall never know, but the fact is that Tim Haste pegged out in 28 minutes flat.

The carpet was manufactured by SCANA Leisure Surfaces Ltd, Unit 3, Chorley North Industrial Park, Drumhead Road, Chorley, Lancs PR6 7BX. Tel: 02572-69983. Sales Manager Elaine Brignall can supply technical details.

.....AND INTO HOTELS Gidleigh Park

The Croquet Association is actively promoting croquet in hotels with the help of Carlsberg, one of its major sponsors.

Hotels are being offered the 'Carlsberg' Croquet Set, a high-quality product that comes complete with affiliation to the CA, promotional literature, a croquet handbook, sets of encapsulated rules, a coaching wallchart, and display material.

The CA is offering to grade hotels



Gidleigh Park, home of Stockey Furzen Cricket and Croquet Club. The Croquet lawn can be seen bottom right.

according to their croquet facilities, in an attempt to avoid members being disappointed at finding lawns that are of poor quality or

equipment that is non-standard or in dis-repair.

The first hotel to be awarded '3 mallets' is Gidleigh Park, headquarters of the Stockey Furzen Cricket and Croquet Club.

Gidleigh Park boasts two good quality lawns; one half size and one 35yds by 20yds. In its first year of existence, the Club has already recruited some 75 croquet-playing members, all of whom have joined the Croquet Association.

Paul and Kay Henderson who own and run the hotel are very enthusiastic about the game and are looking forward to competing again in this year's Croquet Classic.

Several of the Stockey Furzen members are themselves hoteliers and they plan to set up an inter-hotel league, including matches against some of their hotel-owning overseas members.

Two more full-size lawns are being built at Gidleigh Park, and the club looks set to go from strength to strength.

The Gidleigh Park Hotel is at Chagford, Devon. Tel: 06473-2367.

SEVEN GOOD REASONS TO JOIN THE CA

1. **Free 'CROQUET' magazine:** 6 issues a year, packed with playing hints, lively tournament coverage, club news, equipment advice, even a gossip column!
2. **Fixture Book:** full details of all 120 annual tournaments, very useful even for spectators. Free to all full members.
3. **Discount-price croquet products and services:** valuable savings on quality mallets, coaching courses, and a wide range of croquet books and brochures.
4. **CA Tie and Brooch:** attractive 'emblems of belonging'.
5. **Access to courses,**

seminars, meetings: your chance to improve your game, meet your administrators, use your vote, air your views.

6. **Official handicap:** confirms your playing status - well worth having, even early in your career.

7. **Tournament Fee Discounts** - could be more relevant than you think; tournaments aren't just for good players and many people take the plunge in their first season.

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

Publications

Publications Available From the Croquet Association

(Prices in brackets are those to non-members of the CA).

Full Laws & Regulations: The full Laws of Association and Golf Croquet, and the Regulations for tournament play. Price: £2.00 (£3.00). p&p 20p.

Basic Laws Gives all the Laws necessary for beginners. Price: 75p (£1.50). p&p 20p.

Commentary on the Laws by Col. Prichard. Explains and amplifies the Laws. Price: £3.00 (£4.00). p&p 24p.

'Know the Game: Croquet' Straightforward guidance on how to play the game. Price: £1.25 (£1.50). p&p 24p.

'12 Hints for Beginners' A useful booklet for beginners. Price: 75p (£1.25). p&p 20p.

CA Coaching Handbook 50-pages, a mine of information, and a 'must' for club coaches and those who want to improve their play. Price: £6.00 (£7.00). p&p 50p.

'History of Croquet' By Col. Prichard. A well illustrated, complete, and interesting book on the history of the game. Price: £7.00 (£10.00). p&p £1.20

'The World of Croquet' By John McCullough & Steve Mulliner. A book by two top exponents of the game that will interest players at all levels. Price: £14.95 (£14.95). p&p £2.00.

'Croquet' By John Solomon. Fully comprehensive book on all aspects of the game. Reprinted in 1983 by public demand. Price: £6.00 (£9.00). p&p £1.20.

CA Ties Associates only. Price: £10.00 plus £1.50 VAT. P&P 20p.

CA Brooches Associates only. Price: £3.00 plus 45p VAT. p&p 20p.

CA Coaching Video Seven film strips on one video, with book giving details of each slide and commentary. Total run time: 105 mins. (Please state VHS or Beta when ordering.) Price: £25.00 (£30.00), inclusive of VAT. P&p 60p.

Channel 4 'Croquet' Video A 10-minute introduction to Croquet, produced by Channel 4 as part of their 'Challenge to Sport' series. Price: £12.00 (£15.00), inclusive of VAT. P&p 60p.

'Computer Croquet' A computer programme (supplied on tape) for a BBC Model B micro-computer, complete with operating instructions. Designed by Allen Parker, this programme enables you to simulate a game of croquet on a computer. Great fun! Price: £12.50 (£15.00), inclusive of VAT. P&p 60p.

SUPPORTED BY



Carrickmines: 3-8 August Fred Rogerson wins Irish Championship; Novices show promise

Report by Simon Williams

They came from the Glens and Loughs of their mysterious mountain-ringed land, out of the swirling mists of the icy North; their bristling beards and strange, outlandish language striking terror in the hearts of the sheltered Lowlanders.

The Scottish Croquet Association had penetrated even beyond Dublin before encountering any serious opposition. Then, on the fateful field of Carrickmines, the massed forces of Limerick, Herbert Park and local champions gave battle to save their precious silver vessels from the marauders.

Unhappily the efforts of both sides were hampered by internal strife - not, I hasten to add, in any way connected with the splendid catering of Doreen Langan, now sadly missed at Carrickmines. In the Scottish camp, Rod Williams won the handsome Steel Cup (for fallers at the First) from George Anderson. The Irish had the Green Cup and the new C-class Level Play competition to themselves, Reggie Leonard making a welcome return to the Honours Board by winning the latter over Michael O'Shaughnessy, some 65 years his junior!

Michael and Robert Barklie from Herbert Park were both appearing in only their second Tournament, but for Edel O'Donnell and Jane Shorten from Limerick Croquet Club it was their first, and they both showed very rapid improvement during the week as they profited from Match Experience (for which there is no substitute -

bashful beginners please note). Another player to catch the Handicapper's eye was Adrian Brown, who succumbed only to the many bisques of the O'Shaughnessy.

Simon Williams drew a hot doubles partner for himself in the shape of Michael O'Shaughnessy and they went on to win the Stonebrook Cups despite some tough opposition. The other finalists, the father and son team of Niall and Paul McInerney, had overcome the formidable Carl von Schmieder and Adrian Brown by the extraordinary margin of 24, and the standard of play in this year's Handicap Doubles meant that scarcely a game went to time.

Once again, the RJ Leonard Novice Trophy was held during this week and it saw the bleeding of many a promising new knight. There was an entry of 17 and they played 14-point games under the supervision of an experienced player. Adrian Brown, Niall McInerney and Pdraig Thornton, among others, generously assisted in this important task. Ann Wolfe Flanagan won from Stephen McAuley and such was their standard of play by the close of the event that they were both reduced to 15. We look forward to these and others, including the latest crop of young McInerneys, appearing in more Tournaments next year.

In the Championship itself, Carl von Schmieder went out to Simon Williams, who completed a TPO and finished the first game

in the next turn. In the second game, Simon defied the Rigall hypothesis again and, sure enough, this time he had to concede one long shot before his all-round 3-ball break to win. Simon went on to beat Gerard Healy, the reigning Champ by 22 and 1, Gerard unorthodoxly taking his shots at the peg from opposite corners. He had three, and such was the standard of his shooting that he missed by an unorthodox whisker on each occasion.

That was one semi-final of the Championship. In the other, Corla van Griethuysen put up a brave fight against Fred Rogerson, but he eventually won in two games by 13 and 12, thus ending the foreign threat to the Championship plate (officially the Duff Mathews Perpetual Trophy); the last visitor to win it was Roger Murfitt from New Zealand in 1981.

The final was a more protracted affair. Simon won the first game by 1, leaving Fred looking quite rattled as he had been a long way ahead but could not produce the decisive hit. Then it was Simon's turn to be indecisive as Fred took the second, rather dour, game. In the third, Simon quickly had a ball round, but Fred finally completed a triple to win the Championship to the delight of the crowd. It was fitting that he should have achieved his victory in the open, enterprising style which has always characterised his play.

John McAuley, still steadily improving, won the Green Cup, from Pdraig Thornton; and such was the standard of their play that the selectors picked them both for the match versus the Scottish Croquet Association the following day.

The former belligerents consorted openly with each other at a splendid Tournament dinner in



Simon Williams, losing finalist.

the Clubhouse at the end of the event. Prizes were presented (after dinner) by the Club President, Julian Drury-Byrne. Michael O'Shaughnessy, the outstanding improver of the week, walked off with one of the Doubles trophies (nicknamed the Flash Gordon Cups because they resemble fanciful spacecraft) and the Founders' Cup (Open Handicap Singles). Speeches, toasts and mutual compliments multiplied as the night drew on...

Carrickmines: 3-8 August RESULTS Championship of Ireland

1st Round: G.S. Williams bt D. Warhurst +12, +19; C. von Schmieder bt A.H. Adam +20, +24; T.O. Read bt R./A. Williams +18, +23

2nd Round: G. Healy bt M. McWeeney +17, +22; S. Williams bt von Schmieder +12(TPO), +13(TPO); Dr C. van Griethuysen bt Read +10, -15, +3; F. Rogerson bt G. Anderson +15, +21(TP)

Semi-Finals: Williams bt Healy +22, +1; Rogerson bt van Griethuysen +13, +12

Final: Rogerson bt Williams -1, +8, +11(TP)

Green Cup: 8 entries: (Level Play: 6 bisques or over) **Final:** J. McAuley bt P. Thornton +12

Event 3: 8 entries: (Level Play: 9 bisques or over) **Final:** R.J. Leonard bt M. O'Shaughnessy +9

Founders' Cup: 18 entries (Handicap Play) **Semi-Finals:** A. Brown (8) bt G. Healy (-1) +16; M. O'Shaughnessy (15) bt F. Rogerson (3) +25

Final: O'Shaughnessy bt Brown

Stonebrook Cups: 14 pairs entered (Handicap Doubles)

Semi-Finals: N. & P. McInerney (17½) bt C.M. von Schmieder & A. Brown (7) +24; S. Williams & M. O'Shaughnessy (12½) bt D. Warhurst & G. Anderson (8½) +9

Final: O'Shaughnessy & Williams bt N. & P. McInerney

As usual Roger Wood ably masterminded the whole affair, in his imperturbable fashion. The tournament remains a perfect way to end the season.

RESULTS The Southern Championship

(The O'Callaghan Gold Cup)
12 entries (Advanced Play).

1st Round
M.R. French bt A.J. Mrozinski +10;
S.N. Mulliner bt K.M.H. Aiton (wo);
N.G. Hyne bt D.W. Shaw +24; J.O.
Walters bt Dr C.A. Parker +8.

2nd Round
D.N.S. Peterson bt C.S. Docherty +5;
Dr M. Murray bt Miss D.A. Cornelius

+14; P. Cordingley bt Miss F.C. McCoig +21; Mulliner bt M. French +22(TP); Walters bt Hyne +16; R.I. Fulford bt C.G. Hopewell +10(TP); Dr R. Wood bt T.D. Harrison +14; R.D.C. Prichard bt L.J. Palmer +20.

3rd Round
Murray bt Peterson +10, +25;
Mulliner bt Cordingley +24,
+15(TP); Walters bt Fulford +11,
+17(TP); Wood bt Prichard +13, -7,
+21.

Semi-Finals
Mulliner bt Murray +20(TP), -26,
+17(STP); Walters bt Wood +5,
+17.

Final
Mulliner bt Walters +24(TP), +14.

3rd Place Play-Off
Murray bt Wood +25(TP), +9.

Southern Championship continued from Page 10.

through when he was heard singing about poisoning pigeons with cyanide! Other animals that cropped up were 'elephants being laughed at by hyenas', which Gordon Hopewell complained of hearing when he was trying to get to sleep one evening. In fact these were visitors learning a new card game.

The Championship final was characterised on one side by Walters' continual difficulties in a treacherous third corner - encouraging Mulliner to hide there; on the other side by Mulliner capitalising on every

opportunity. Mulliner took the first game with a delayed TP, his sixth TP of the weekend. In the second Mulliner completed 3 peels of a sextuple, but when Walters was finally given a chance which didn't involve getting a rush out of third corner, he capitalised with a shaky break to 4-back. Mulliner missed the lift and Walters set up a break, but all thoughts of a TP and subsequent third game were smashed when he failed to run fourth hoop. Mulliner hit the 10 yard shot and took the game and the Championship.

Your Letters

Signals for Umpires

Dear Sir,
Jonathan Collis has raised a matter of considerable importance. There is often a shortage of referees, so that referees themselves playing in tournaments are called out of their games to referee in another game. In such circumstances it is extremely irritating to be called away from one's game, only to find that only an umpire is needed, and that a spectator could have filled this role.

A suggestion made many years ago was that a referee should be called by raising the mallet with the head uppermost, and an umpire by raising it with the handle uppermost, but no official action was taken at that time.

However, I think the suggestion quoted by Mr Collis is better, as the difference if the mallet is raised horizontally, and held with both hands, is more noticeable.

I believe that this should be incorporated in the Regulations for Tournaments, as 9(c), and that the Manager or Referee of every tournament should request players, at the start of each tournament, to make the correct signals.

To solve the dilemma in which

Andrew Bennet was placed, off the cuff, was not easy. But it would appear that future similar cases could be dealt with under Regulation 8(e), to place the spectator referee in charge of the game, and then for the referee to discover the error whereby the pegged-out ball had not been removed from the court (Law 30(d)(i) and (ii)). It should be noted that dictionary definitions of the word 'discover' include 'to reveal', 'make known', 'expose', and 'to show (something unknown to others)', and the word is used in this sense continuously in the legal profession.

Leslie Riggall,
Kloof, South Africa.

Croquet Tiles

Dear Sir,
I was interested to see the letter, in Issue 195 about the 'Croquet tiles'. The tiles are in fact made in the Netherlands by a firm called Tichelaars Koninklijke Makkumer Aardewerk - en Tegelfabriek b.v., Postbus 11, 8754 ZN Makkum, The Netherlands.

The tiles are copies of very old designs, some of them over 300 years old. They are available in a large variety of designs, displaying many different sporting

scenes.

Although this particular tile looks like a croquet scene, in fact it is an old picture of Golf on Ice, a game which was played in the Netherlands a couple of centuries ago.



It's not Croquet!

The scene has also been painted by several old Dutch Masters, I believe as far back as around the 16th Century.

However, the tiles can still serve as a nice trophy for some Club Croquet tournaments. They cost, I believe, around £3 to £4. We will be using some of these tiles as prizes in some of our croquet events at the Glasgow Croquet Club.

Corla van Griethuysen,
Glasgow.

Professionalism

Dear Sir,
I am very concerned to read in the latest issue of Croquet (195) the report of the CA meeting in October, regarding Professionalism in Croquet, which resulted in the setting of the aggregate prize money at £2,000 plus expenses.

As stated previously in my letter in Croquet No. 193, I feel that professionalism will kill croquet as we know it. This is just the thin end of the wedge, and indeed it is already becoming wider. In Professor Neal's article in journal No. 192 the suggested amount was £1,000, so it has already doubled since July! Why stop at £2,000, why not have £20,000?

Croquet should be a game to be enjoyed for itself. It is attractive to see and participate in friendly games, played in a pleasant atmosphere. If people are getting so bored that they need a cash fillip, then it is time they gave up! At one time the pleasure of winning and perhaps, the receiving of a trophy, was sufficient. In the past these, plus the enjoyment of mastering the game and extending one's opponent, have been enough to generate real enthusiasm. Can anyone explain to me exactly why we need to adjust the amount to more than, say, £100 (to cover

items like engraving, etc)? After all, if people enjoy croquet, as others enjoy going on holiday for example, why should they be paid for it? Surely it is worth some sacrifice! In my opinion, money will definitely change the atmosphere, with unpleasant effects.

The argument that sponsors wish to offer prize money really does not make any difference, as this can be given to the CA as in the past. It can then be used to benefit all who play croquet and not the elite few who already have the advantages of talent and ability which enable them to reach a high standard. They are the ones who are privileged to be chosen to play in the invitation events and even to represent their country internationally. These are surely prizes worth having!

I would suggest that the money which could be handed to the CA would be well used to promote the interests of the game in a most worthwhile way. Clubs like Bowdon, for example, have spent an enormous amount of money in improving lawns and facilities and so we are still paying off loans, and this means that subscriptions have to be increased to a point where we find it difficult to recruit new members, even though they do have a half subscription for the first year. In addition, since we have to pay to maintain our own grounds, members have to do a considerable amount of work, such as putting down top dressing, hollow tining, scarifying, etc. Could not money from sponsorship be given as grants to clubs which are struggling to improve and maintain facilities? This would, in turn, enable subscriptions to be kept lower and help recruitment, thus introducing yet more people to the game. New clubs, also battling against financial hardships to get started, could receive assistance too.

Surely the wider development of the game and the preserving of croquet's unique atmosphere are more worthwhile targets than ever-increasing cash prizes for the few.

Sheila Black,
Bowdon.

Law Changes

Dear Sir,
The Laws Committee has asked for comments on the proposed alterations to the Laws & Regulations. Here are some. My numbering corresponds with the numbering of the proposals in the article in 'Croquet' No 195 (January 1988).

2(a) The proposed alteration does nothing to resolve the basic ambiguity of Reg 5, which is that there is no distinction made between a 'power' and a 'duty' of the Referee in charge. For example, Reg 5 (f): 'To state at his discretion or if appealed to what the law on any matter is'. To state the law at his discretion is obviously a 'power', but if appealed to, has he a duty, or may he still use his discretion? Reg 5 (e) is even more vague: 'To give information to any player.. at any time'. A duty? Or merely a power? Should the RIC act as a 'player' (see Law 45 (b)), or merely as an 'adversary'. An 'adversary' is not defined as a 'player' anywhere in the Laws!

This, however, is nit-picking. The tough situation comes when a Referee is summoned to decide a wiring lift on a court with crooked hoops! Can he, under the proposed Law, correct the hoops or peg AT HIS DISCRETION, or must he wait for a request to do so from a player, or MUST he do so immediately, or may he do so AT ANY TIME, at his discretion (ie after the position has ceased to be critical)?

If the amendment is adopted in its present form, I for one will hide to avoid being called to decide this sort of situation! Perhaps covering wording in Law 13(b), reading: 'any part of a correctly set hoop or peg' would make the Referee's job easier. The word 'must' is also useful! No mention is made of hoop (or peg) RIGIDITY. Should a Referee be allowed to correct this also, and if so, at any time, or only on request, or only when the position is not critical, etc, etc?

3. The reasoning behind this proposal is difficult to follow; it appears to be a snub of Rigall's Hypothesis! Just because a ball is pegged out, the game has not 'effectively ended'! Perhaps the amendment should apply only when a player has pegged out the SECOND ball of a side.

5. The last clause of Law 27(a) runs '...and the turn ends'. Whose turn? If 'a player' other than the Striker plays, he is obviously not entitled to do so. His play does not constitute a 'turn' (see Law 4(c)), and the only turn that exists is the Striker's, which would be thus ludicrously brought to an ultimately end!

Not only does this open up new horizons of cheating (all you have to do is hit a ball to halt your Oppo's routing TP. It is then your turn!) but it could easily happen by accident.

7. Forgive me for being obtuse, but does the proposed inclusion of the words 'by the mallet' in Law 32 (a)(xvi) mean that in future damaging the Court by kicking, jumping, stamping, falling over backwards (reader, do not giggle - I have seen all these and more) etc, during the Striking Period, are no longer to be Faults?

Lastly, allow me to petition the Laws Committee for a legal definition of 'about to run the wrong hoop' (Law 49(b)). I presume that this includes 'about to hit the Peg out of order', but what does 'about to' mean, exactly? A definition in terms of a number of strokes, or something along those lines, would be welcome.

As for the proposals I have not mentioned, they are admirable and necessary. Three cheers for the Laws Committee!

Hip-hip...
Simon Williams,
Dublin.

The Croquet Classic

Dear Sir,
It is good to know that the Croquet Classic is to be repeated this year, and we are proposing to field a Group Entry from our club. However, I hope that the Association will tighten up on the regulations.

I had an enjoyable game against John Wheelock in the walled garden of his wife's old family home at Monmouth in last year's Tournament. The setting was delightful, the evening tranquil, and few could argue that we were about to play garden croquet. The corners of the lawn were marked with bamboo canes and the East and West boundaries were garden paths. The North and South - by guess and by God!

I learnt that John had obtained the equipment from an antique shop and it most probably dated from the 19th Century. John had asked me to bring a set of Club balls, as his wooden ones were showing their age! Happily our Tournament Secretary accommodated my request. But the startling feature was that four of the original hoops were five and more inches wide. What was one to do? It would have been churlish to have travelled 30 odd miles and declined to play. Besides Jane had brought out drinks and had prepared an excellent supper.

Having had some expert coaching from Bristol coach, Donald Guban, I fancied my chances. But Donald had not introduced me (not surprisingly)

to the art of peeling, and that thought had not entered my head as I comfortably took my first ball to penultimate. John then commenced to shatter my composure by peeling both his balls through hoops 1 and 2.

It was at that stage that I informed him what I believed to be the law; i.e. that he could only peel 3 times in a game. He took my word on this point and the game continued excitingly with us both having one clip on the peg and the other on Rover. Happily I went on to peg out.



Colin Abrabams (left) and Robert Johnson after their game in the Croquet Classic's Speke Hall Regional Final.

Over supper we discussed the game and I mentioned the size of the hoops. John recognised that they were outside. What should one do? In some respects the situation could be likened to the conditions at Braxted Park where we played the finals. The rain over the previous week had caused floods 5 feet deep in the neighbouring countryside and the furrows and tyre marks left by the tractors attempting to cut the grass were sufficient to reduce all groundsmen to tears. But as Chris Hudson said - the conditions are the same for all the players. It was perhaps as well that at that time I had not been introduced to the Law on Substantial Damage!

And at Castle Drogo, my heart certainly went out to Simon Tuke. He was behind in his game against Anthony Paget when time was called. But he made rover and pegged his ball out even though his partner ball was not a Rover ball. As readers may know, the Classic is not a handicap game and an abbreviated rule book had been issued which dealt with pegging out. My reading of the appropriate section was that Simon's play entitled him to claim a win. The

referee differed and ruled that both a player's balls needed to be rover balls before he could peg out. My sympathies were with Simon, as his opponent eventually scored a point.

One recognises that Rules and Regulations need to be simplified for a Garden competition. But in the final rounds, where a magnificent prize can easily be within one's sights, 1988 competitors can be sure that they will benefit from the experiences encountered by the organisers in the maiden event of 1987.

I only hope that regional finals can be arranged sufficiently in advance to enable notice to be given of the dates and venues so that Associates may support this happy occasion.

Hamish Hall,
Bristol.

The Croquet Classic Handbook contains instructions for setting the pegs and hoops, and specifies that the hoops should be set so that their inner surfaces are not more than 4 1/4 inches apart.

Short Croquet is a bandicap game, played under the Laws of Handicap Singles Play. As no-one with a handicap of 18 or less can play in the Croquet Classic, all players would normally have the same number of bisques. However, to keep the rules as simple as possible, bisques are not used.

The limit on the number of peels refers to handicap doubles, where the striker may not peel his partner's ball through more than 4 hoops in a 26-point game. There is no such restriction on peels in a singles game.

The 1988 Handbook has been revised to explain more fully the conditions for pegging out a ball in a bandicap game - as Hamish says, we have learnt from our experience! As the referee concerned, I also felt sorry for Simon, but I hope he will be having another go this year.

Chris Hudson.

Coaching Articles

Dear Sir,
Having taken over responsibility for 'Coaches Corner' from John McCullough, I am keen to get views on what members would like to see in this part of the magazine.

Articles from anyone on coaching topics would be most welcome, and I would like to thank those volunteers who have already sent in material.

Richard Brand,
Bisbam Abbey.

Your Letters

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Indoor Croquet

(Bristol: Cont'd from page 5) against Bath). Admittedly Roger pegged out with only 7 seconds left and they had some good fortune, as when Edward rush-peeled Roger's ball through hoop 4 from a considerable distance, but nevertheless it was a tremendous achievement.

The use of instantaneous time-endings (all games limited to one hour) led to the first drawn game in the National League Match against the South of England on Saturday, Dave Foulser and John Toye (SW) and John Maude and Terry Wood (S) only managing 7 points each. Their second game was of a much higher standard, David quickly going to the peg and then Terry playing the best turn of the weekend so far by going from 2-back (advanced pairs played 18pt, 5th hoop start games) to the peg and pegging his ball out. He narrowly failed to peg Dave's call out, having extracted it magnificently from corner 2, but he gave his side a 1 point lead with three minutes to go. In a tense climax the South West just managed to score the two points required, attaining an 11-10 win. The South West took

the match 3½ to ½ as Peter Dyke and Leslie Toye beat Alan and Elizabeth O'Dair 6-3 on both occasions.

The Sunday match saw another win for the South West, this time 3-1 against East Anglia. Andrew Hope and Martin Murray opened up with an impressive 14-1 win against Don Gaunt and Jon Watson. Martin played a good opening break and produced the best leave of the weekend, an opponent ball on the wire behind penult, the other in corner two and Andrew with a rush to Hoop 5 from just North of corner 4. Andrew made a valiant attempt at the double peel finish, getting as far as rover and rover, with a spectacular 'death roll' that failed to get the penult peel but got perfect position on the ball at 2-back. Andrew and Martin won their second game 7-5 and Bob Race and John Brudenell (SW) beat John Bevington and Wally Wortley by the same score in their first game before the East Anglian pair gained a 7-4 consolation win to end the match.

A few players in the regional tournament failed to score a hoop

but some showed that breaks could be played, with David Goacher (Bristol), John Jeffrey (Nailsea) and Derek Sheppard (Bath) playing particularly nice turns.

In the semi-finals the good team play of John Brudenell and Dave Nicholls for the Bear of Rodborough kept them in control against Nailsea and erstwhile stars Duckworth and Jenkins (Bristol 1) had no answer to the Goacher (Bristol 2) strategy of having a good long-bisquer as a partner (Barbara Evans) and then taking her bisque himself. He was not the only one who worked out that, given a 1-hour time limit and a difficult surface, the usual strategy of getting the long-bisquer round first was inappropriate.

In the final David didn't have any bisques to help him and with 20 minutes left the score was 4-0 to the Bear pair, who looked deserving of a first-ever trophy for their Club. David did the

business, however, drawing level just before time and scoring the winning point in overtime.

Thus a good time was had by all. Some felt the second carpet should be made slower, others that, given a flat surface, it has a perfect speed. It was interesting that two members of the public took only 22 shots each to run 6 hoops and hit the peg with a single ball at their first attempt, not being used to any other speed and the Sports Hall staff commented that the indoor bowlers always struggle during their first week or so indoors in the Autumn.

REGIONAL MATCH RESULTS

South West bt South 3½-½.
South West bt East Anglia 3-1.

Regional Club Tournament Semi-Finals

Bear of Rodborough 8, Nailsea 6,
Bristol '13, Bristol '28

Final

Bear of Rodborough 4, Bristol '2' 5.

Obituary Miss I.M. Roe

It was a terrible shock to all at Cheltenham Club when we heard that Isabel Roe had been knocked off her bicycle and killed while on her way home from the Club.

She had been a member for over 30 years, but her experience of Croquet goes back even further. She once said she could remember playing in a tournament with her father over 60 years ago! But she was so reticent about her achievements that few of us knew until she was awarded the Alfred Lunn Trophy for Services to Winter Sports that she had been British Women's Ski Champion in 1938, 1939, 1947, 1948 and 1949 (and probably would have been in the intervening years but for the war). This is a sporting record never likely to be equalled. She also captained the British Women's Ski team in the Olympics. She was a first class tennis and



Soss Roe

squash player too, representing Buckinghamshire in both. Until quite recently she earned a living as a tennis instructor at Clubs and Schools and as a Ski instructor in Winter. As a Croquet player she became Women's Champion in 1961 and won the Caskets at Roehampton against the best players of the day. David Prichard said of her in his book that her form fluctuated as much as her style; she had several different stances and styles of play and could switch from one to another to correct any loss of form.

During her croquet life Soss gave a tremendous amount to the Club and to the game generally, in particular to long bisquers and beginners. She spent many hours every week in coaching and it is appropriate that her name will be remembered in the club by the Isabel Roe Trophy, awarded for a beginners' event which she started. She was Vice President of the Cheltenham Club and took her duties seriously, being full of ideas and practical common sense help.

In recent years she had her share of misfortunes, including a double hip operation. She bore it all with reserve and dignity and a rather sardonic sense of humour. You never heard her complain about her bad luck, her opponent's bisques or her aches and pains. She was a very positive person, loyal to her family and her many friends. We shall miss her. GEPJ; DHM

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Coaches Corner (1)

COACHES COLUMN

By John McCullough

This is the first of what I hope will become a regular feature, a column for coaches with tit-bits of information and advice about the National Coaching Scheme, Coaching literature, External courses, Coaching Theory etc.

Fees for coaching

Let's kick off with money. In the comments section of his Grade I report form for 1987, Nick Harris (Norwich) sought my advice about charges for coaching courses, a subject that often rears its ugly head.

My experience is that, within reason, the more you charge for a course, the more seriously your students take it. I used to coach for free but come a wet night and hardly anyone turned up. The next year I slapped on a £5 charge and, lo and behold, wet nights didn't unduly affect attendance - they weren't going to let rain interfere with something they had paid for.

At its AGM in October, the Coaching Committee considered the matter and we now recommend that you impose a minimum charge of £10 per person (£5 for Juniors) for a 10-hour beginners course. There is no reason, of course, why you can't deduct this from first year membership fees for those people who, at the end of the

course, decide to join your Club. In fact, if your membership fee is £30, they are more likely to join if they have already made a commitment of £10 and only have £20 to go, than if they only paid £5 for the course and have to pay five times as much again to join.

Naturally this doesn't apply in the case of Club members for whom you are doing improvers courses, as they should be fairly committed anyway. But you could nevertheless consider charging in such cases as part of a fund-raising programme, if your Club has a particular need.

NCF Courses

The National Coaching Foundation have added two new courses to their 1988 programme of day courses for coaches, namely 'Coaching Children' and 'Introduction to Communication Skills'. They bring to 15 the number of courses offered. Most regions have at least two centres where the courses are held. Each course costs £5, which includes tuition fees and an information resource pack. Typically courses are held from 10am to 3pm on a Sunday or over two midweek evenings.

For details of the courses and the venues in your region, write to: National Coaching Foundation, 4 College Close, Beckett Park, Leeds LS6 3QH. Tel: 0532-744802. Prestel Mailbox No. 0532-74480.

THE NATIONAL JUNIOR SQUADS

In addition to any grants obtained privately by members of the National Junior Squads (see article on page 12), the Coaching Committee hope to have a small budget to defray a few of the youngsters expenses. However, Clubs lucky enough to have any of the youngsters concerned as members could consider holding a fund-raising event to help them further. £18 would pay an entry fee to the Open Championships (recommended event for the U-21s) and £20-£30 would cover the cost of bed and breakfast for one of the squad weekends.

John McCullough.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Please note the following new addresses:

John McCullough has moved (or is about to move) to: 15 Geldof Road, Huntingdon, York.

Bill Lamb has moved to: 5 Bondyke Close, St Margaret's Avenue, Cottingham, North Humberside, HU16 5ND. Tel: 0482-840739.

EXPERT CROQUET TACTICS

Copies of Keith Wylie's book 'Expert Croquet Tactics' are available from Brian Macmillan at the CA Office. The price of £20-80 includes packing and postage.

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We are offering 2 FREE places on each of the 6 courses above.

See Issue 195 (page 28) for further information and how to apply for all the above courses.

COURSES FOR CROQUET DEMONSTRATORS

One-day Courses for those wishing to qualify for the Croquet Demonstrator's Award will be held on Sunday 24th April at Bristol, Ipswich, Roehampton and Wolverhampton. The course programme is outlined on page 17.

There is a maximum of 16 places on each course. All the courses will be run by two qualified CA instructors. Course fee £10. (Fee includes 'Know the Game' booklet and Course Notes.) More details from Chris Hudson.

COACHING COURSES FOR TEACHERS

These two-day weekend courses are designed specifically for teachers who want to progress beyond the Demonstrator stage and learn more about Association Croquet.

WORCESTER 26/27 March 1988
Further details from Ivor Brand, 54 Foxwell Street, Worcester, Worcestershire, WR5 2ET. Tel 0905-358304.

MILLFIELD SCHOOL
(Street, Somerset)
23/24 April, 1988

Further details from Peter Dyke, 23 Broom Farm Close, Nailsea, Avon, BS19 2YJ. Tel: 0272-854804.

Course Fee for both courses is £12.50. Similar courses may be arranged at other venues in response to local demand.

1988 LOUGHBOROUGH SUMMER SCHOOL

This year's Summer School Courses at Loughborough will be held between 30th July and 5th August.

Full details of the courses are given in the Summer School Brochure, obtainable from: Mrs Shirley Sandover, Loughborough Summer School, University of Technology, Loughborough, LE11 3TU. (Tel: 0509-222773).

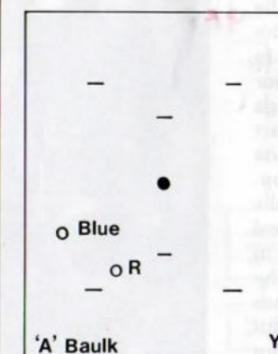
The Brochure is now available and bookings for the courses should be made through Mrs Sandover.

Course fees and dates are as follows:

Coaches
Grade I: 30th July - 5th August
Accommodation £60
Tuition £50 (CA members)
£60 (Non-members)

Personal performance
Beginners: 1st-5th August
Improvers: 1st-5th August
Accommodation £60
Tuition £65 (CA members)
£75 (Non-members)

BREAK-BUILDER No 7 - by Don Gaunt



This Break-Builder is for medium and high bisquers. Your opponent, playing Red and Yellow, put Yellow to corner 4 in the first turn, hit your tice in the third turn, and took off to hoop 1. However Red failed hoop 1 and landed in the position shown.

You shot with Black at the double and just hit Blue. Using only 1 bisque, construct a four-ball break.

Solution on Page 25

BASIC TACTICS FOR NOVICES

By Allen Parker (Parkstone)

This article is intended mainly for those beginners who have learnt the principles of the game, and the elementary mechanics of the strokes. They can make a roquet with reasonable accuracy, they know at least in theory how to take-off, approach a hoop, rush, etc. but find some difficulty in applying their knowledge correctly in an actual game. They end up, when they have the innings, by separating opponent's balls, possibly making an abortive attempt at their hoop, but always getting back to partner on the last shot (instead of the last shot but one), without a rush to anywhere useful. And so the game goes on for hour after hour with neither side making very much progress. I give in the diagram a scheme, which if it is conscientiously followed by both players, will result in constructive play and useful progress of the game.

In fact the diagram takes the tactics beyond the novice stage so that it may be used more fully as the player's ability and experience increases. It will also suggest to the reader what are the important routines which he needs to practise. (The 4-ball break is by no means the top priority for practice by the novice). In the following explanation, I have, at appropriate points, described the practice routines that are required, and I have given further explanation of those parts that may be beyond the requirements of the novice in the first instance.

Getting Started

The diagram consists of a series of rectangles and lozenges containing text, joined by arrowed lines. The rectangles contain instructions and the lozenges contain questions requiring a 'yes' or 'no' answer. You start at the rectangle containing the word 'start' (where else?) and follow the arrow to the first lozenge. If the answer to the question contained therein is 'yes' then you move downwards to the lozenge which asks 'Am I joined up?'. From there you proceed left or right according to the answer, and so you go on following the arrows according to the instructions. The instructions in the rectangles all look delightfully simple, but some of them require quite complicated manoeuvres and we now consider these in more detail.

Make Hoop

Suppose you have a rush to your hoop (middle of the three arrows) pointing down to the rectangle 'Make Hoop'. You have laid up in your previous turn and the rush is perhaps four or five yards away from the hoop. This brings us to our first set of practice routines. Start with four balls near a corner and, using one of them, rush each of the others to the hoop. Give yourself an easy rush with the two balls about 12 inches apart and pointing to the ideal position which is about 2 feet and exactly in front of the hoop. When you have done the three rushes, practise three hoop approaches from near the ideal position. Finally attempt to run the hoop from various angles and about 2 feet from the hoop.

Of course your rush will often end up far

from the ideal spot, and this brings us to the next practice routine. Imagine the hoops as the centre of a clock face: practise hoop approaches from every number on the clock, and at various distances from 2 feet to (say) 6 feet. From 6 o'clock you will have the straight approach, from 3 o'clock and 9 o'clock the right-angle approach, and from 12 o'clock the ('worse-than-death') take-off. I assume that your coach will have shown you how to do these, and all the other shots required - if not, ask him to do so. When you can approach the hoop with reasonable confidence from all angles, you can go back to the routine described in the previous paragraph and put the three shots together, viz., rush ball from corner to hoop; approach hoop from where the ball lies, and run hoop.

You are now in a position to execute the rectangle 'Make Hoop' when approaching it by the middle arrow. What about the other three arrows? First, if the opponent is actually at the hoop there is no problem; you take off to him, roquet him gently, and approach from there. (Or better still, take off to the fourth ball first and split to him, if this is possible and gives you a break.) The practice required is... accurate take-offs. One method is to practise take-offs from corner to corner along the long and short boundaries, and also from hoop to hoop.

The arrow coming in from the left (getting a rush on opponent to hoop) may involve various types of manoeuvre of which the simplest is to take off to the opponent when he is joined up, roquet one ball and take off behind the other for the rush. The little take-off to get the accurate rush is worth practising. Finally the arrow that comes in from the right (making the hoop after roqueting the opponent's ball). Again this may take various forms depending on the position of the balls, but note that in this situation you have not yet roqueted your partner ball, and it is best, if possible, to go to this ball last so that if you fail to rush it accurately to your hoop you can lay up for next time.

Separate Opponent and Lay Rush

If there is no reasonable chance of making a hoop then you must separate the opponent's balls (if they are within hitting distance of each



Bernard Neal coaching a Grade II course at Cheltenham

other) and lay up for next time. This is the manoeuvre that is required constantly in novices' games, and it is the one with which many novices find great difficulty. The secret is to get back to within a yard or so of your partner ball with your last shot but one (and NOT the last shot!). It is then fairly easy to lay an accurate rush to your hoop from a distance of a yard or less. How do you achieve this?

Here is the practice routine, which is best done on a half size lawn (or across the corner of a full size lawn) to avoid too much walking back and forth.... Place the opponent's balls on one side boundary, and your balls together on the opposite boundary. Take off from your partner ball to the opponent's balls; roquet one of them; with a little take-off, get a rush on the other to a spot well away from other balls (preferably to somewhere useful like your next hoop but one, but not essential), and rush the ball away, take off back to partner, and lay a dead rush to your hoop.

The shot with which many beginners have difficulty is the hard rush - if the balls are within a foot of one another this is best done with a firm stop shot. It might be as well to practise this rush first before carrying out the separation routine. If you have difficulty get your coach to demonstrate. Incidentally, if you can manage to roquet this first opponent ball so that it comes into contact with the other opponent ball when replaced on the yard line, then you can play a wafer cannon, instead of a rush - this is much easier. (See Gazette No. 184, March 1986, p22).

I have by-passed the rectangle 'play break'. This could take an article in itself, and is perhaps too advanced for novices to worry about in the first instance. One example is to place one opponent's ball at one of your hoops, and the other opponent's ball at your other hoop. You then retire to a far boundary making sure that your rush (not to your hoop) does not leave your opponent a double target.

Opponent is Joined up

Now let us move to the right hand half of the diagram in which you start your turn by NOT being joined up. We have already dealt with the situation in which you are close enough to opponent's ball to be sure of roqueting it. (You either make hoop or lay up.) If this does

not apply we move to the extreme right of the diagram where you are asked if your opponent is joined up. If he isn't, then of course you may join up yourself. The complications arise when the opponent IS joined up. The question then is 'Dare I shoot at something, and if not, dare I join up?' Again if no, the 'How wide should I join?' The answers to these questions depend very much on both your own abilities and those of your opponent. We shall deal with each of these questions in turn as we move down the diagram.

Guarding the Boundary

The next lozenge down the chart enquires whether the opponent has a rush to his hoop. If he has, then you are asked if he is guarding the boundary. What is meant by 'guarding the boundary'? It means that if you shoot and miss, your opponent can roquet your ball, croquet it into court, regain his rush to his hoop, and having your ball available in court, he has a better chance of making a break.

There are two arrangements in which he is NOT guarding the boundary. The first is obvious - he had laid his rush so far from the boundary that the shot at your ball (which should have been hit hard enough to go off the boundary) will be dangerously long. The second arrangement is not quite so obvious - if the rush is very close to the boundary he will not be able to croquet your ball very far into the lawn AND regain his rush. (The moral of this is that when you come to lay your own rush, lay it with the back ball about 3 to 4 yards from the boundary at which the opponent's ball will arrive if he does shoot. Of course this may not always be possible, if you have just returned after separating your opponent).

Thus, if he is not guarding the boundary it is safe for you to shoot at his rush. As indicated in the lozenge at the bottom of the chart, if he IS guarding the boundary then you must ask yourself a further question. If he has a good rush to his hoop then unless he is a complete beginner he will probably make that hoop, and if you have joined up at his next hoop but one (which has now become his next hoop) he has a good chance of making that hoop also. You must therefore 'join wide': but how wide? Against novices 2 to 3 yards is adequate, but against an A Class player, half a boundary away may not be enough. This is where

Break-Builder No. 7 Solution

With a little split shot, send Blue to the middle, getting a short rush on Red to hoop 1. Take off to Yellow and roquet it. Send Yellow about two-thirds of the way towards the peg. With your continuation shot, put Black near to Yellow.

Take a bisque, roquet Yellow and send it to hoop 2. Roquet Blue and take off for Red at hoop 1.

There are two temptations here that the beginner should avoid.

Do not run hoop 1 before picking up Yellow from corner 4. It is perfectly possible to get a four-ball break with one bisque if you do, but it's harder.

Do not send Yellow to hoop 2 straight away. You have got to take a bisque anyway, so do it in two simple shots rather than one difficult one.

Inter-Counties Team for Sussex & Hampshire

Dear Sir,
A Sussex team has competed regularly in the Inter-Counties Championship since it began in 1897, but it has never won. Hampshire, by contrast, were champions in 1924, 1929, 1938 and (jointly with Dorset) 1956, but have not entered a team for many years. Now, with the advent of lively sponsorship and the recent surge of support for the tournament, it occurred to us that there might well be enough hidden talent to:

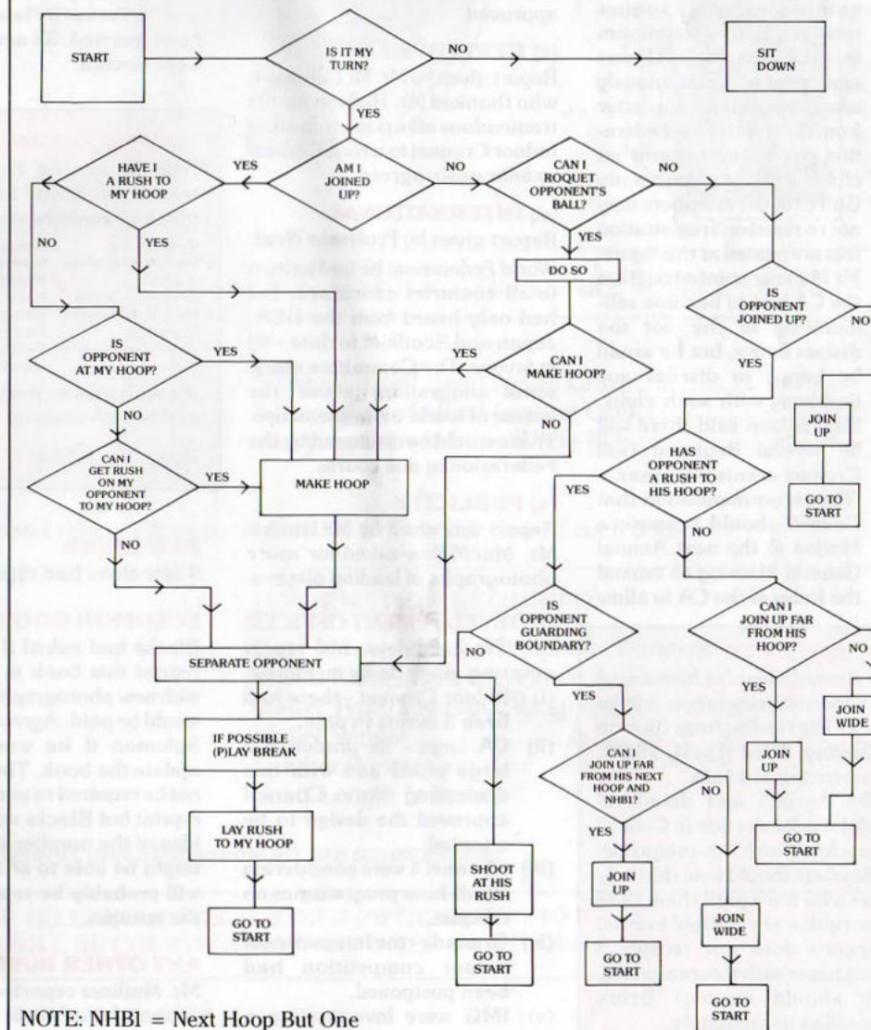
- (a) re-establish a Hampshire team;
- (b) inject new life into Sussex; or
- (c) combine forces to produce a stronger team.

We would be pleased to hear the view of those players who have the requisite qualifications to represent either Sussex or Hampshire, and would like to play in the Inter-Counties, this year or next. (The qualifications are briefly: birth in the county, present residence or former residence in the county, current membership of a club in the county - see the current Fixture List for full details).

Bob Smith (Hampshire born)
Tel: (0734) 478802
Roger Wood (Sussex resident)
(0424) 210632

BASIC TACTICS

Follow the Arrows to Play the Game



NOTE: NHBI = Next Hoop But One

Official Business

Extract from Minutes of the Council Meeting held at the Hurlingham Club on 12th December 1987.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Tabled by Mr L Wharrad: That the Council approves in principle the idea aired at the last Club Conference of eliminating the separate set of laws for Handicap play and asks the Laws Committee to make the necessary change in the Laws to bring this about.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

(a) FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES

Report given by Mr Mulliner.

(i) The recommendation that future additions in the Benefactors Book would be restricted to the names of donors of at least £500 instead of £100 was passed unanimously.

(ii) Likewise the recommendation that Club registration fees be increased from 60p (including VAT) for every croquet member of a club to £1 (including VAT) for every non-associate croquet member, with a minimum fee of £7 (including VAT) was also passed unanimously after discussion of a letter from the South East Federation expressing concern that clubs with predominantly Golf Croquet members may not re-register if registration fees are passed at this figure. Mr Mulliner pointed out that the CA had to become self-financing in the not too distant future, but he would be happy to discuss any problems with such clubs. Mr Hudson said there will be several Regional Golf Croquet events next year.

(iii) The recommendation that Council should propose a Motion at the next Annual General Meeting to amend the Rules of the CA to allow

postal voting for Motions at Annual General Meetings was passed with only one vote against.

(iv) Likewise the proposal of membership structure of the CA was also passed by similar vote.

Note: These will now consist of

(a) Tournament Members over 21 on 31st August, Juniors over 18 at the same date, and Youths below 18.

(b) Non-tournament members.

(c) Overseas members.

(d) Registered Clubs.

(e) Overseas Clubs and those in Scotland and Wales affiliated to the CA.

(f) Croquet Councils or Associations, hotels and bodies corporate who are affiliated to the CA.

(b) COACHING

Report given by Mr. McCullough. The National Performance Award Scheme and the 'Coach of the Year' Award Scheme were approved.

(c) DEVELOPMENT

Report given by Mr. McCullough, who thanked Mr. Hudson for his tremendous efforts in promoting Indoor Croquet to which Council unanimously agreed.

(d) INTERNATIONAL

Report given by Professor Neal. World Federation: he had written to all countries concerned, but had only heard from the USA, Japan and Scotland to date - all in favour. The Committee made some suggestions about the format of World Championships. These would be discussed by the Federation in due course.

(e) PUBLICITY

Report was given by Mr Danks. Mr. MacMillan asked for more photographs of leading players.

(f) DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Mr. Hudson gave his report covering many items including:

(i) Indoor Croquet - there had been 3 events to date.

(ii) CA Logo - he produced 2 large prints and with one dissenting vote Council approved the design to be adopted.

(iii) Channel 4 were considering 5 half-hour programmes on croquet.

(iv) Granada - the International indoor competition had been postponed.

(v) IMG were investigating a croquet pentathlon indoor

competition.

(vi) Women's Institutes and Townswomen's Guilds could perhaps provide coaches for beginners and schools during weekdays.

(vii) In view of the interest being shown by sponsors in 'Short' Croquet, Council agreed to ask the Laws Committee to examine the laws thereof to see if any alterations were desirable specifically for sponsored events.

(viii) Lassale had withdrawn from sponsorship of the Garden Croquet competition due to the cost, but there were 4 other possible sponsors.

(ix) Carlsberg would be assisting the CA with the promotion of croquet in hotels.

(x) There were possible sponsors for the Inter-Counties, Solomon Trophy and Students Championships.

MEMBERSHIP

CA membership was now 1553 and the Forward Plans target had been reached. 38 new members were elected.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Help in tracing the following members who have 'gone missing' would be very welcome.

Martyn Brand	Basingstoke
Mrs E.M. Macmillan	Bournemouth
G.J. Eddy	Whitley Bay
Mrs B.R. Saunders	Poole
Mrs E.H. Mallinson	Shoreham
Bruce Rigg	Farnborough
Miss D. Locks Latham	Budleigh
R. Weaver	Wolverhampton

Many thanks to those who have assisted previously.

Brian Macmillan

NEW CLUBS

3 new clubs had registered.

SOLOMON BOOK

Blacks had asked if they could reprint this book in paperback with new photographs. Royalties would be paid. Agreed to ask Mr. Solomon if he would like to update the book. The CA would not be required to underwrite the reprint but Blacks would like an idea of the number of copies we might be able to sell. The book will probably be republished in the autumn.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Mulliner reported that 2000 copies of the 'World of Croquet' had been sold.

New Associates

S.J. Hemus	Bishop Vesey's
Mrs K.J. Bleach	Bristol
Mrs R.M. Bright	Bristol
Mrs A.P. Sammons	Bristol
Mrs M. Purdon	Budleigh
M. Bithell	Cambridge Univ'y
Mrs K. Yonge	Caterham
J.N. Allanach	Cheltenham
K.G.F. Ham	Dyffryn
D. Langley	Kington Langley
M. Boyd	Loughborough
A.T.R. Leggate	Nailsea
D. Thatcher	Nailsea
Mrs M.E. Harland	Northampton
J.G. Reid	Norwich
J. Fraser	Oxford Univ'y
N. Smith	Glasgow
R. Sparrow	Glasgow
P.J. Harbord	Oxford Univ'y
J. Macdonald	Pendle
W. O'Dair	Phyllis Court
R.C.H. Harding	QEGS
A.P. Mitchell	Ramsgate
J.N.C. Shipton	Reigate
Ms J. Wilson	Reigate
S.C. Bean	South Shropshire
A.J. Saurin	Southport
Mrs N. Smith	Stockey Furzen
Mrs Spielman	Stockey Furzen
J. Zulver	Stockey Furzen
A.J. Jenkin	Tracey Park
Mrs H.M. Jenkin	Tracey Park
Mrs J.M. Butler	Tracey Park
C.G. Coker	Wellcome Found'n
K.M. Fennell	Wolverhampton
E.C. Dalley	
C.I. Hill	
M.D. Senior	
R. Sinker	
J.W. Walker	
H.C. Sissons	
T. Luckin	Canada
(Total: 42)	USA

Death

With regret, we have to report the death of Miss I.M. Roe (Cheltenham).

Handicap Alteration Edgbaston Club:

A.J. Girling - 1 to 2.

1987 MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT COMPETITION THE WINNERS

Congratulations to the 6 Clubs that recruited the most CA members in 1987. They were: Cheltenham, Bath, Sidmouth, Nottingham, Roehampton, and Worthing.

Cheques equal to the CA subscriptions of the members they have recruited are on the way to the Secretaries of these Clubs.

If your Club did not feature in the top 6 last year, see Page 6 for details of the 1988 CA Membership Recruitment Competition.

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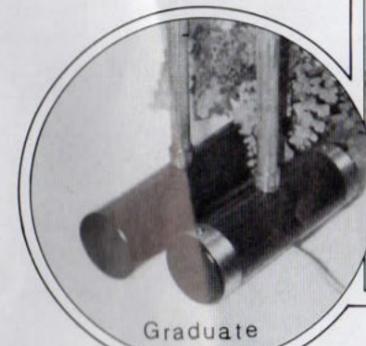
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Mallet Weight
Leather/Nylon Grip
Shaft Length in inches

All Weights and Measurements are approximate

IF REQUIRED, PLEASE TELEPHONE FOR FURTHER INFORMATION TO 036 42 218
YOUR ENQUIRIES WILL BE COURTEOUSLY WELCOMED — Geoffrey H. Day

* The Gremlin is only Half-Ringed, and is not available in weights of 3lbs.

NOTICE OF AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the Croquet Association will be held at The Hurlingham Club on **Saturday, 23rd April, 1988**, commencing at 11am.

The Agenda and details of candidates for election to Council are enclosed with this magazine.

Members should note that only those who have paid their 1988 subscription are entitled to vote. If anyone does not receive a voting paper with this magazine, they should contact Brian Macmillan immediately.