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Issue No. 200

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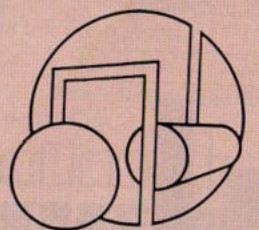


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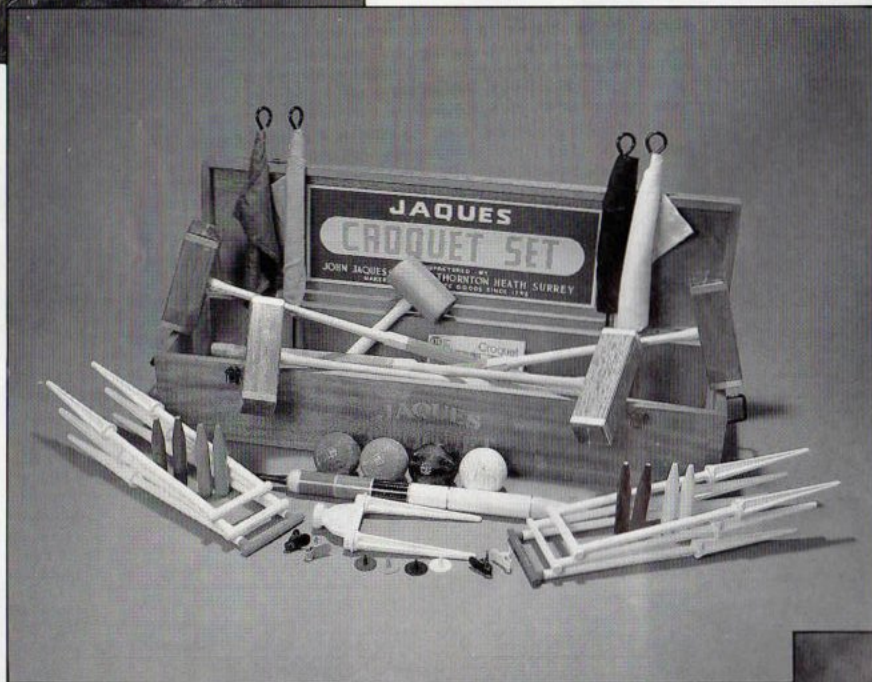
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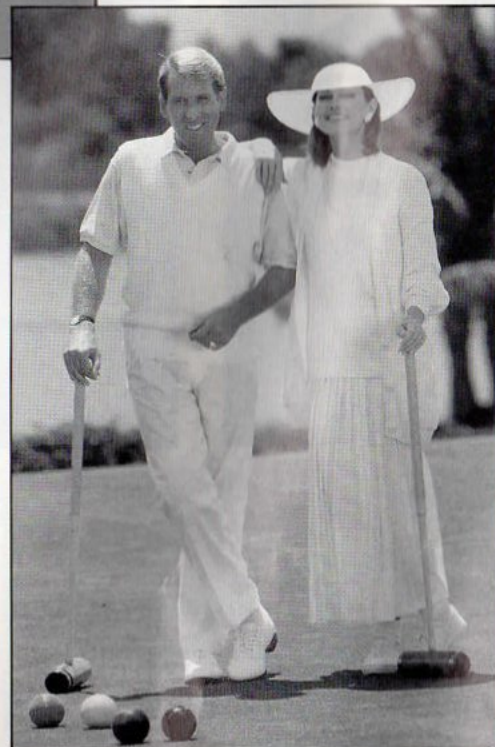
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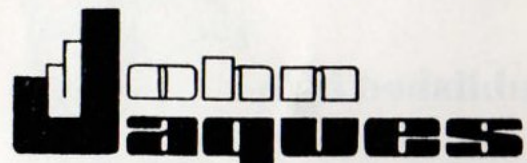


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'CROQUET'

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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Editorial Team

Editor Chris Hudson
 Tournaments Andrew Bennet
 Coaching Richard Brand
 Features Allen Parker
 John Walters
 Pictures Chris Hudson
 Advertising Brian Bucknall

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Editorial

A YEAR OF CONSOLIDATION

Many of the initiatives outlined in our first Forward Plan have come to fruition in 1988.

When we organised the first Schools Championship in 1984, our intention was to bring more young people into the game. Little did we realise that only four years later, these same youngsters would be walking off with our major championships. The short time in which this transformation has taken place is quite remarkable.

In 1985, we talked about forming a World Croquet Federation. Few probably gave the matter much thought, but that body is now in being, croquet is scheduled as a demonstration sport at the World Games in Karlsruhe next year, and the World Croquet Federation has applied to the International World Games Association for full participation in the 1993 World Games.

Our National Coaching Scheme has suc-

ceeded beyond all expectations, and every year more courses for both players and coaches are being held all round the country. New courses at Bisham Abbey and Ardingly School announced in this issue complement other courses that are already established as regular annual events.

The number of croquet tournaments has increased dramatically, and our aim to promote more Regional Championships received a boost this summer with the staging of the inaugural Eastern Championships. Similarly with the Regional Croquet Federations. We now have six of them, very actively helping to run Croquet in the Regions.

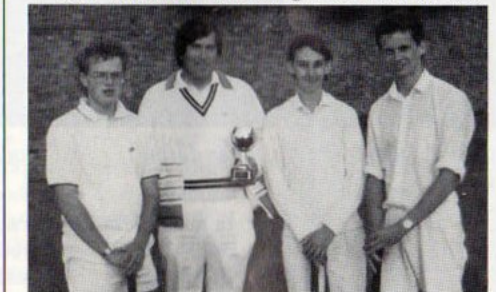
Following courses run this season, we now have 29 qualified Croquet Demonstrators in the Womens' Institutes. Reports in this and the previous issue testify that these WI ladies are achieving miracles with their slender resources. With encouragement and support from local clubs, they could be the spearhead in bringing new players to the game.

Membership of the Association has again increased this season and even more encouraging is the large reservoir of potential CA members waiting to be tapped in the Clubs. If every Club committed itself to introduce at least three new members to the CA, the CA's membership would increase by over 500.

There is still time for Clubs to do this in the current season and qualify for a fourth free membership. This could be attractive to some, as subscriptions paid after 1st August carry forward for the whole of the following year. But if you feel time has run out, then please remember that there will be another recruitment drive next year and that the same rules will apply. With judicious use of discounts available to CA members - on mallets, weathersuits, coaching courses, tournaments, books and literature - my suspicion is that nowadays new members can ensure that their first few years of membership are virtually free.

One lady told me recently that she felt joining the CA was not worth it - 'she could get all she needed from her local club'. Well, that's one point of view, but on reflection she must have realised that if it had not been for the efforts of the CA and its members, her club would never have come into existence. Perhaps we should all bear that in mind.

CHRIS HUDSON



Nailsea's team of (L to R) David Thatcher, Peter Dyke, Alex Leggate, and Paul Spiring retained their Short Croquet title at Worcester in September.

THE CROQUET CLASSIC

Eighteen clubs and affiliated organisations took advantage of the Croquet Classic this year to provide enjoyable competitions for their new members. If your club is thinking of running a recruitment drive next year, why not follow their example?

The Group Entry Fee for the Classic is £25 for a minimum of 8 players (handicaps must be greater than 18). Group competitions can be organised in any way to suit the players, provided the winner plays at least three games to win the competition. The winner then goes through to the relevant round of the national competition.

Clubs can add a supplement to their coaching fees for beginners to cover the Group Entry fee. Experience this year has shown that coaching followed by a competition works wonders in maintaining the enthusiasm of prospective club members.

Why not try it!

Details of next year's Croquet Classic and Group Entry Forms can be obtained from Chris Hudson. Tel: 0270-829296

Photographs in this issue by: Jean Nash, Dennis Ripp, Jeff Bowden, Andrew Bennet, Chris Hudson, Liz Taylor-Webb, Muriel Berry, Gary Norman, Deborah Latham, Elizabeth Coggins, Derek Rowe (Photos) Ltd, and Geoffrey Slack.

INDOOR CROQUET

A major Indoor Tournament will be held at Soham, near Ely, Cambridgeshire, on 14th and 15th January. Full details are given on page 30.

The North East Region beat the South East Region in the Final of the 1987/88 Regional Indoor Tournament. With three games each, the title was decided on net hoop points.

Front Cover: Chris Clarke, winner of the 1988 Bombay Gin President's Cup.

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International

Budleigh Salterton: 20-21 August GREAT BRITAIN v 'THE REST'

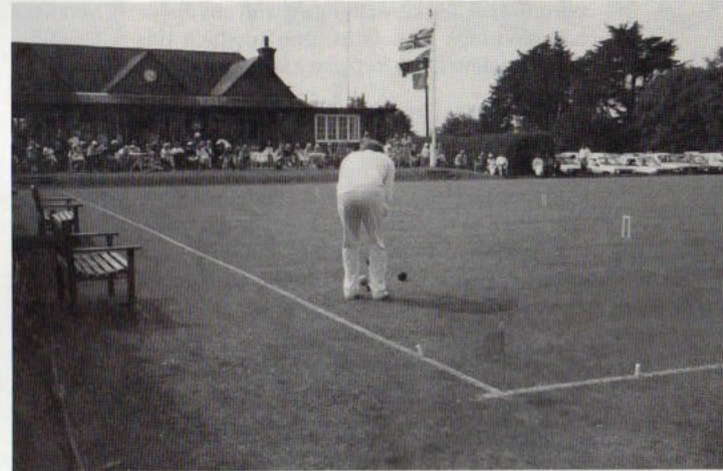
Report by Martin Murray

Last year this fixture was arranged at short notice right at the end of the season, but this year better planning arranged it in August, when faster lawns and better weather might have been expected. Although the Budleigh club were perfect hosts yet again, the weather was little better than last October, and the persistent rain in the weeks before the match meant that the lawns were too slow to provide a severe test.

Unfortunately the timing of the match still failed to attract all the top players, but this provided an opportunity for two of the young players who have made such an impact this season, Chris Clarke and Mark Saurin, to play for the GB team. This resulted in the demotion of Colin Irwin and Phil Cordingley, two members of the GB team that so convincingly defeated the USA at Cheltenham. Mark Avery, recently returned from the USA, joined David Openshaw, Nigel Aspinall, and Keith Aiton to complete the GB team, while The Rest had two regulars in George Noble and Martin Murray, and two newcomers in Simon Williams and Dayal Gunasekera.

The first day's play, three doubles matches, soon showed that the GB team were not going to have it all their own way. Avery was well below his Openshaw-winning form of last year, but he and Aiton still won comfortably enough. Aspinall and Saurin had more of a struggle, only just winning the first game after Williams stuck in rover, losing the second easily, but recovering in the third with a convincing triple from Aspinall. The third match was almost identical in score, but it was Gunasekera and Irwin who came

out on top, Gunasekera's triple in the third game being a very impressive display of controlled croquet.



General view of Budleigh Salterton, taken during the 1986 MacRobertson Shield Series.

Although the doubles results suggested that The Rest were capable of testing the GB team, Sunday morning provided a major upset when all six of the opening singles games were won by The Rest, four with triples, one with a TPO (by Murray against, appropriately, Aiton) and only Gunasekera failing to complete the set when his rover peel stuck, but he still won his game comfortably enough. The prospect of a heavy defeat must have stirred the GB team to fight back, and five of them managed to rescue the second game, Avery and Clarke with triples, Saurin with an easy +26, but Aspinall, unsure in front of hoops, and Openshaw, not shooting with his usual accuracy, both being very fortunate to be presented with opportunities to win. Only Aiton failed to take his

match to a third game, Murray following his TPO with a triple in the second which only failed at the peg-out.

In the third games, only Saurin of the GB team managed to maintain the momentum of his second game win, and went on to win an undis-

tinguished third game against Gunasekera. Irwin recovered to take his third game +26TP, making three triples in the match, and Noble took the third against Clarke, who missed more short lift shots than his description of them as 'incredibly short' might have suggested. This brought the score to 4-3 to The Rest, and in both the remaining matches The Rest appeared to have the upper hand. Williams, for the third time, looked on the way to a +26 against Openshaw, but missed the rush to penultimate in a straight triple attempt, and Openshaw took the opportunity to win with a typically deliberate triple. With the score at 4 all, attention now turned to the top singles, where Cordingley got to penultimate and peg before an error gave the innings to Aspinall.

the match by missing a three yard roquet after rover, having previously pegged out one of Colin's balls. At this stage, Colin was for 2-back, so he rolled two balls from the North boundary, getting a two yard straight rush on the ball at rover, from which he finished.

In a protracted struggle on lawn 4, David's Foulser and Maugham set new standards in test match croquet! On a freshly cut lawn, David F was soon presented with a take-off from corner 4 to the opposition in corner 2. As soon as the shot was struck, Martin Murray was heard to say 'That's off!'; the ball hit the peg, and was deflected just short of the North boundary - leaving David a 10 yard double target, which he hit. David got a rush to hoop one. As soon as he struck the shot, Martin Murray was

He was still having trouble with the hoops, which appeared to be tighter on their lawn than elsewhere, and got hooped at three, giving the innings and the match to Cordingley. The overall match score was therefore 5-4 to the Rest.

After an unexpected result of this nature, one is tempted to ask what it really means, and what information it gives the selectors. There can be no doubt that the GB team, without Mulliner, and Avery, Aspinall, and Openshaw not in peak form, was weakened, and the justification for the inclusion of Clarke and Saurin was experimental; they probably learned some lessons about team play in best of three matches. The main conclusion, which should come as little surprise to close observers of top-class croquet in Britain, is that we have very few world-class players who can dominate the much larger number of good players just below that standard. No-one at Budleigh looked world-class, and the fact that 11 triples were completed (7 by The Rest) says more about the easy conditions, such as are all too common in a poor English summer, than the brilliance of the players. As to clues to the Test team for 1990, this match merely proved how wide the field still is, and how few players can feel sure of selection.

RESULTS

Doubles

(GB names first)
Aspinall & Saurin bt Cordingley & Williams +2, -18, +24TP; Openshaw & Clarke lost to Irwin & Gunasekera -3, +16, -24TP; Aiton & Avery bt Murray & Noble +26, +6.

Singles

Aspinall lost to Cordingley -26TP, +16, -23; Avery lost to Irwin -25TP, +17TP, -26TP; Openshaw bt Williams -26TP, +5, +6TP; Aiton lost to Murray -13TPO, -26; Clarke lost to Noble -26TP, +10TP, -11; Saurin bt Gunasekera -22, +26, +11.

heard to say 'That's too hard'; the rushed ball went sailing off the South boundary. Next David approached the hoop. As soon as the shot was struck, Martin Murray was heard to say 'That's past the hoop'; the striker's ball went gliding into the jaws of the hoop.

The under-21 squad ended their first encounter with the GB team, having scored two victories: Saurin & Suter beating Irwin & Foulser, and Saurin beating Cordingley. Cordingley looked particularly vulnerable for the first time since his non-selection for the President's Cup. But the scoreline of 7-2 could quite easily have been closer (or indeed wider). Should one therefore draw the conclusion that croquet's youth are prodigious and an endorsement of the CA's policy toward juniors? I would suggest we

International

Continued from Page 27....

Final

Wild bt Bennet +13.

C Class Singles

(6 entries)

Final

(Draw & Process) C.J. Haslam bt J.H. Haslam +13.

D Class Singles

(6 entries)

Final

(Draw & Process) J.D. Hawkins bt Mrs S. Meadows +17.

Handicap Singles

(36 entries)

Semi-Finals

C.H. Wild (4) bt A.C. Peterson (7½) +14; C.J. Haslam (7) bt D.R. Appleton (1½) +26.

Final

Wild bt Haslam +19.

Handicap Doubles

(16 pairs)

Final

Mrs D. Williamson & M.A. Saurin (10) bt P.D. Hallett & Mrs D.C. Dennett (15) +8.

Reed Cup

(Handicap Singles: 31 entries)

Semi-Finals

Mrs D. Williamson (11) bt A.F. Sutcliffe (0) +26; A. Bennet (2) bt W.O. Aldridge (-½) +26.

Final

Mrs Williamson bt Bennet +21.

consider again the GB defeat by 'The Rest'. The truth is that the top 30 players are so close that any team selected from them can take the test team close; it is also indicative of the standard of our test team! However, the talent of Chris Clarke is undeniable, and it is a tribute to him that despite such success at 17, his feet remain on the ground. The sobering thought being that unless one believes there to be 'something in the water' at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, or has amazing faith in Andrew Bennet's coaching, it seems likely that if croquet was taught in schools in the same way as cricket or football, the number of brilliant youngsters to emerge would both subsume all else and reduce the game to a farce! Concerning the results of the CA's attitude of 'encouraging' youth; if a parent pandered to its young the way the CA has, the subsequent personality defects that developed in some would not be surprising!

Finally one must mention Keith Aiton, a most conscientious coach. The development and success of his squad have been uppermost in his mind throughout the season. Their croquetical well-being is most certainly safe in his hands, if not their moral welfare!

NATIONAL JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP

Southport: 29-31 July

Clarke stops Fulford's Triple

Report by Mark Saurin

Chris Clarke won the National Junior Championship at Southport this weekend for the first time and in doing so he stopped Robert Fulford from completing a 'triple' of successes.

On Friday morning, as some 'Bennet bandits' arrived at the club, the lawns were seen to contain small swimming pools but with buckets and scoops they were soon ready for action at two o'clock.

The original entry of 16 was cut to 15 with the news that Mark Suter had pulled out due to an eye infection but even without Mark's quality play, the standard remained high. Owing to the speed at which Juniors play their games, each competitor got three games on Friday afternoon, two first round matches and either a second round match or handicap swiss game.

Spare a thought now, for David Thatcher and Andrew Saurin who managed to draw Chris Clarke and Robert Fulford in the first rounds. Having said that though it needed Robert to hit his last lift shot against Andrew to win +5. David had a different day, losing to Robert by 26TP and to Chris by 26TP (Chris jumped from outside first corner through first hoop to start his second break).

In the second round matches, Chris beat Mark Saurin +26TP in a game where he had only one jump shot, Robert completed another triple and Russell Collighan did his second successive triple. So at the end of the first day six triples had been done, beating the total of four in the history of the competition.

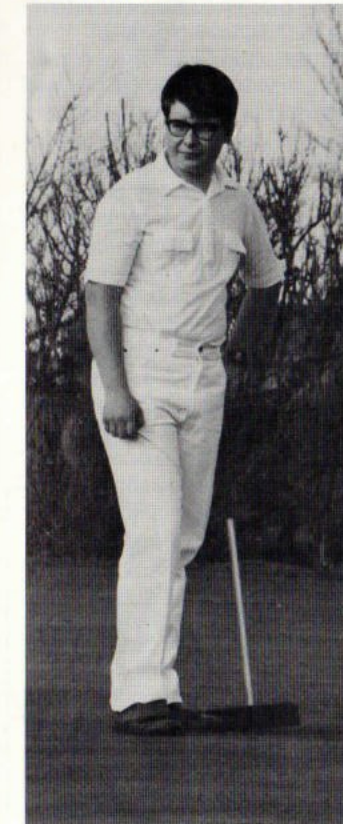
On the second day, conditions were a little windier and triples were blown away. Semi-finals of both draw and process were played which resulted in a Clarke versus Fulford grand final and a Collighan versus Saurin third and fourth place play-off.

And so to Sunday; with so much available time, it was decided that the final play-off would be best of five matches.

In the first game of the final Robert had a comfortable win +26. The second looked to be Chris's until he missed his peg out from the middle of the west boundary and ended up pegging just one out, when Robert was for one and 4-back. Robert got to one and peg leaving Chris's ball near third corner with his balls at first hoop and a guarded rush. The fact that the boundary was guarded didn't

make any difference to Chris, who took his suicide shot and hit to take the second +14.

In the third, both players showed a reluctance to finish until eventually Robert won +4. In the fourth, Robert had a ball to 4-back early on and it was at this stage Chris told the tournament reporter he was



Chris Clarke, 1988 Junior Champion.

going to shoot at anything whatever happened (I know, no comments!). Chris missed the lift and Robert broke down on his triple having done one peel. Chris then completed a double peel on the opponent and went on to win +8.

So the thrilling final game began, with both players showing early nerves. Chris got a ball to 4-back with a neat break (which saw him roll up to eight of the nine hoops from more than two yards). Robert's shooting which had been excellent all weekend then deserted him as he missed the lift. Chris then trundled around to 4-back and peg, Robert missed the lift, and Chris Clarke became National Junior Champion. Collighan took 3rd place beating M. Saurin 3-2 and Edward Duckworth won the consolation handicap swiss with 5 wins.

Championships

Many thanks should go to Carol Lewis, whose junior 'junk food' lunches went down extremely well, and especially to Andrew Bennet, who despite being very successful playing as Mark Suter to keep the swiss going, managed the tournament with his usual excellent and top class efficiency. So the end of another Junior Championship and there's now only one year left for some people to get their name on the trophy!

RESULTS

National Junior Championship

DRAW

1st Round

C.D. Clarke bt D. Thatcher +26TP; M.A. Saurin bt A. Griffiths +25; G. Pearson bt M. Suter (wo); E. Duckworth bt A. Leggate +16; R.I. Fulford bt A. Saurin +5; D.B. Maugham bt N. Ashcroft +16; C. Ross bt R.C. Harding +12; R. Collighan bt S. Hemus +15.

2nd Round

Clarke bt M. Saurin +26TP; Pearson bt Duckworth +18; Fulford bt Maugham +17; Collighan bt Ross +26TP.

Semi-Finals

Clarke bt Pearson +24; Fulford bt Collighan +8.

PROCESS

1st Round

Clarke bt A. Saurin +24; Ross bt Suter (wo); Griffiths bt Ashcroft +9; Collighan bt Duckworth +26; Fulford bt Harding +17TP; M. Saurin bt Maugham +24; Hemus bt Leggate +5.

2nd Round

Clarke bt Ross +16; Collighan bt Griffiths +26; Fulford bt Harding +17TP; M. Saurin bt Hemus +12.

Semi-Finals

Clarke bt Collighan +10; Fulford bt M. Saurin +26.

Marriage

Final

Clarke bt Fulford -26, +14, -4, +7, +26.

Play-Off for 3rd place

Collighan bt M. Saurin -24TP, +17, +13, -8, +26TP.

Handicap Swiss

Winner:

E. Duckworth (5 wins).

APOLOGIES

The recent postal strike has caused delays in publishing both this and the previous issue.

Now that things are back to normal, we hope to achieve our advertised publication dates for future issues.

Colchester: 3-4 September

GREAT BRITAIN v. UNDER-21 TEAM

Report by John Walters

This was the first match for Great Britain since defeat at the hands of the sinister sounding 'Rest' two weeks previously. However, since their inglorious collapse GB had undergone changes, with two members 'dropped' to the under-21 side and three of the team from 'The Rest' promoted to the GB team itself. Wily tactics which proved to be successful, when combined with the toll taken by the U21 manager's (Keith Aiton's) wild drink parties on Friday and Saturday night (both of which were thanks to the hospitality of croquet's increasingly infamous hostess, Debbie Cornelius). Croquet defeats frequently lead to an out-

pouring of emotions, but seldom are they so compelling as the social and psychological revelations which came from Keith's Kiddies!

Characteristically, Steve Mulliner made a small appearance - making a 6-hour visit to the match on Sunday. But Steve stayed just long enough to secure a 2-1 victory over Chris Clarke. An Open Champion 'stopping bisque' was necessary to prevent Chris from completing a second triple, which would have given him the match 2-0.

Mark Avery, American croquet professional, was back, and completed three triples in his four games. Mark Suter took a game from Colin Irwin, but failed to take

Championships

Colchester: 9-11 July THE EASTERN CHAMPIONSHIP Full of Eastern Promise

Report by John Walters

Croquet flourishes in the East. The Eastern Federation was founded three years ago by the efforts of such stalwarts as Judy Anderson and Don Gaunt. In that time it has fostered many fledgling clubs; several of these now compete in one of the Federation Leagues. In recognition of this worthy activity the C.A. Council bestowed the right to hold a Championship. The inaugural Easterns is hereunder reported.

Despite the event clashing with the Solomon Trophy, a strong field of sixteen gathered on Saturday morning. The lawns were up to Colchester's usual high standard, though having been under water earlier in the week, they were not quite fast enough to be 'testing'. This was compensated for by the stringency of the President's Cup hoops. Though ungenerous, the hoops were fair: if you blobbed, there was only yourself to blame, which is just as it should be. All players were appreciative of Richard Hilditch's enthusiasm in discharging his duties as Referee of Tournament, which entailed resetting the hoops not just every morning but in some cases over lunch also.

High-class play was evident in the first round as Simon Williams only allowed his opponent to make one mistake. Williams completed the first triple peel of the Championship (seventh turn), though Chris Clarke came close in his first game, just failing a combination peg-out. Clarke then did not take croquet as John Walters won the second game, but came back to take the third, making a triple successfully.

The most evenly-balanced first round match was that between Mark Suter and Richard Hilditch. The crucial moment came in the third game: Suter made a well-constructed leave, the opponent cross-wired at fifth hoop, himself having a rush out of third corner. No, he had not inadvertently conceded a wiring lift, but yes, he had run 4-back in that turn. Eighteen inches really is a short lift shot! Hilditch won the ensuing two-ball game in fine style, jumping over rover to peg out.

Elsewhere Duncan Reeve and Andrew Gregory failed to live up to their form in the week, Reeve by losing, Gregory by winning. Martin French and Robert Fulford won through in close matches, while the late-night entertainment was provided by Debbie Cornelius and

Paul Smith. The epic proportion of their match was ensured when on each of the last two games, both players had the 'clips of death' (i.e. 1-back and 4-back).

Some hours before the finish of this match, Clarke had won his place in the semi-finals, by completing two triples while his opponent could only manage two hoops. Martin French offered Clarke more resistance on Sunday, but still lost in two games.

In the other half of the draw, Fulford was determined to get better value for his money. In their deciding game, Williams' triple attempt foundered, allowing Fulford to peg out one of the opponent's balls, which he accidentally did with a rush shot. (For students of jargon, this is known as a grievous Riggall). Despite this, Fulford went on to meet Hilditch in the semi-finals. In the first game Robert compiled his first ever sixth-turn triple peel, but his apparent return to top form was belied by the next two games, when in each he failed to finish when for penult and peg. However Hilditch could not capitalize on the second lapse, and an all-junior final was set up. This rendered unfortunately superfluous the Shield for the best under-21 player, donated by the Eastern Federation. Perhaps, given the recent trend, there should be consolation prizes for the best player over 21.

Meanwhile, back in the Swiss, Duncan Reeve invented a new sextuple leave. He had appeared to be going round with black in normal fashion, when he stuck in the jaws of one-back. Red was at two-back, while yellow was directly between one-back and the blue ball, so that a careless opponent might foul either blue or black on the back-swing while attempting to roquet the other. Your reporter proved himself to be a careless opponent. To the despair of the crowd, Reeve then failed to appreciate the rare opportunity in the position, and played with black.

At the top of the Swiss, Simon Williams had thought himself to be the only player with maximum wins after beating Martin Murray in the fourth round. But at that stage the losing semi-finalists entered the fray also with four wins. Disconcerted by this, Williams was on the point of defeat by Hilditch; but what should have been the final turn became the penultimate turn when the latter blobbed 4-back. When French also suc-

cumbed, Williams was certain to win the Swiss despite a final round loss. Martin Murray was runner-up with the same score of six wins.

So to the Championship final. Clarke had been playing the more fluent croquet in the earlier rounds, but Fulford had had much the better of their previous encounters, and thus perhaps the psychological edge. Maybe it was this 'edge' that affected Clarke when, having taken black round to 4-back in the 4th turn of the first game, he effectively conceded the innings with his leave. He was lucky to regain control when Fulford sent a cross-court take-off into the jaws of a hoop. Clarke took his second ball round, but left too short a lift shot, which was duly hit. Fulford took a ball round, but Clarke hit the short lift with his backward ball. He was set up to go out, but was hampered after penult. Fulford missed an 11-yard shot, with all balls in the middle of the lawn, and Clarke finished.

After the fourth turn of the second game, all four balls were on the East boundary. Clarke set up a break nicely with a four-ball open cannon, but broke down at 2-back. Fulford took his first ball round, and after a missed long lift shot got the second as far as 4-back before breaking down. But Clarke uncharacteristically again stuck in a hoop, and Fulford levelled the match.

In the third game Clarke gained the early innings, but could only make one hoop before Fulford took yellow round to 4-back. He left black in the jaws of second hoop, in position to run it, and himself with a rush from the East boundary to blue at the peg. Clarke hit with blue, but failed to approach first hoop off red. He then put blue 2 yards east of hoop 3. Fulford, apparently sharing Clark's confidence that black would hit the 16-yarder at blue after running hoop 2, decided to shoot with red at black in the hoop. Perhaps the reasoning was that having been presented with a break Clarke would crack under the pressure. In fact Fulford had just three more shots, all missed. Chris Clarke thus spurned the opportunity of a runner-up's grand slam, having come second in last year's Northern and this year's Western.



Chris Clarke, winner of the inaugural Eastern Championship.

He is the first winner of the Cecil Strange Memorial, donated by Faith Gaunt in memory of her uncle. I shall here record that the consolation trophy is officially known as the Hetherington Salver, but it can only be called Pat's Plate.

So, a new Championship is forged. With Compton, Cheltenham and Bowdon, Colchester has formed the fourth boundary of the great croquet lawn that is England. Already Budleigh, in hosting the South Westerns has laid claim to the first corner. May we then look forward to new championships at Southport, Durham and Ramsgate?

RESULTS

Eastern Championship

(16 entries)

1st Round

J.R. Hilditch bt M. Suter +16, -6, +8; P. Smith bt Miss D. Cornelius -7, +5, +3; S. Williams bt T. Harrison +26TP, +17; R. Fulford bt D. Gaunt -4, +14, +17; A. Gregory bt J.E. Guest +11, +18; C. Clarke bt J.O. Walters +17, -26, +26TP; D. Palmer bt D.C. Reeve +9, +16; M. French bt M. Murray +26, -10, +15.

2nd Round

Hilditch bt Smith +3, +9; Fulford bt Williams -25, +20, +6; Clarke bt Gregory +26TP, +24TP; French bt Palmer +21, +18.

Semi-Finals

Fulford bt Hilditch +26TP, -3, +12; Clarke bt French +10, +15.

Final

Clarke bt Fulford +17, -16, +17.

Championships

Colchester: 3-8 July THE EASTERN CHAMPIONSHIPS President's Hoops at Colchester

Report by Steve Comish

On the first day the major talking point was the other tournament being played at Wimbledon. This allowed players to console themselves by switching on the television to find that there were parts of the country where it was raining even harder than at Colchester. When play finally got under way there seemed to be more interest in tennis than croquet, leading to a problem when someone inconsiderately requested a referee for a distant lawn during match point in the Men's Final. But after this excitement the weather improved and the tennis was soon forgotten as people got down to the business of playing croquet.

President's Cup hoops, which had arrived early for the Eastern Championships, were used throughout the A class event. As tournament referee, Richard Hilditch decided to make sure that players got the maximum enjoyment from the narrower hoops by gleefully tightening them prior to each game. Before Don Gaunt and Duncan Reeve played comments such as 'you can't watch this - you're a player' from Richard so worried Duncan that he checked that blue and black would actually fit through the hoops before choosing colours. After that Duncan stuck twice in 3-back and managed to win because Don missed two short roquets, so perhaps his concern was justified.

In the second life of the event, John Walters beat Chris Clarke and Duncan Reeve to earn a place in the final to play Duncan once more. John proved the earlier win was no fluke by winning the closely fought match. Playing with his normal passion for accuracy, John at one point carefully paced out the distances between various points on the lawn to work out exactly which option for the lift shot was the shortest. (Yes, he did hit it after all that.)

Paul Elliott was a deserving winner in the B class, finding time to play croquet in between his many duties as 'person in charge of the lawns' (he dislikes being called groundsman for some reason). All the players owe him thanks for his hard work to keep the lawns in their excellent condition.

A one-ball competition arranged for the Thursday afternoon was great fun for those who took part. Played as a large block and using only one lawn this resulted in some rather chaotic quintuple-banking. With strong hitters like Fulford and Clarke taking frequent aim at people (and occasionally balls) it also proved to be a rather danger-

National Publicity

Dear Sir,

Dorothy Rush packs a pretty punch, but I doubt the accuracy of her aim when it comes to publicity. Those who know something of the ways of the press recognise that lack of national press coverage cannot be blamed on the CA.

The fault, in my opinion, lies with the game itself. It is a minor sport, but that in itself is unimportant. What does matter to an editor is that the game lacks spectator appeal, mainly because the non-player (and quite a lot of players) find it very difficult to comprehend, and with the possible exception of Steve Mulliner (in the national press often enough), the top players lack the charisma for which an editor is looking. The best of reporters would be hard put to find a hero among our internationals, and it would be equally hard to find a 'super-brat' to make the headlines. As for photography, one good action shot, as Mulliner on the September issue of Croquet, and you have exhausted the repertoire, other than that of Mulliner prone.

Now the CA was extraordinarily successful in getting pre-publicity for the Solomon Cup against the USA at Cheltenham. It alerted the

ous adventure.

In the main handicap event Robert Fulford proved to be a worthy winner with some fine play, including a sextuple against John Walters. The doubles was won by Chris Clarke and Michael O'Shaughnessy after beating Andrew Gregory and Mary Clary in the final. Mary, appearing in her first tournament, played well with encouragement from her partner, although some of Andrew's more unusual tactical decisions brought a comment from the crowd that a suitable handicap for him might be something like 1D8.

The disappointing entry led in some cases to fewer games than might have been wished but nevertheless it was an enjoyable tournament, managed as always by Pat Hetherington. Maybe next year more people will turn out to give this event the support it deserves.

RESULTS

FINALS

A Class

(8 entries)

Draw: D.C. Reeve bt D.L. Gaunt.

Process: J.O. Walters bt C.D. Clarke.

PLAY-OFF: Walters bt Reeve +5.

B Class

(4 entries - American block)

Winner: P. Elliott

C Class

(4 entries - American block)

Winner: S. Comish (9)

Handicap Singles

(17 entries)

Final: R.I. Fulford (-½) bt J. Reeve (3½)

Handicap Doubles

(8 pairs)

Final: C.D. Clarke & M. O'Shaughnessy (10½) bt A. Gregory & Mrs M. Clary (15) +7.

Your Letters

nationals, radio and TV well before the event. In addition, the Cheltenham Club sent an information pack to regional, local and free newspapers. This included not only the official programme, but a potted history and notes on the competitive nature of the game today. The event could hardly have received better publicity, to an extent that found one Cheltenham member suggesting the advisability of hiring stands for the spectators. And what happened. Ask Derek Jameson. After his visit to us during the series with a camera crew for his feature programme 'People', in his radio programme the following morning he was heard to report that there were more players than spectators.

We have to face the fact that as far as the general public is concerned croquet is still a bit of a joke. It will take many years to convince the public that croquet is other than a doddle for oldies. This image is perpetuated by that most frequently published of all photographs - the foreshortened shot showing a player seen through a house-sized hoop (sheer Alice in Wonderland, minus the flaming-

oes, of course).

If a club is ailing, national press coverage of big croquet events will do little to stem the decline, but, unlike Dorothy Rush, I believe that local efforts will. Cheltenham Croquet Club regularly gets a few paragraphs in the local newspaper and one or other of the three free papers. I agree that we are not typical, being such a large club and holding so many tournaments, but I have a suggestion for visiting players, most of them from small clubs around the country, who leave Cheltenham with a happy smile and a trophy in the boot. Local editors love winners, particularly in a David and Goliath situation. So I say to winners like Cliff Cardis of Swindon and the Brand brothers of Worcester - don't hide your light under a bushel. Send a couple of paragraphs to the sports editor of your local paper. Publication will do more good for recruitment of new members than a report of a remote event in the nationals.

Bill Bawden,
Cheltenham.

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Hunstanton: 5-9 September
THE CHAIRMAN'S SALVER

Selectors Vindicated
Report by Richard Hilditch

As ever a fine band of experienced players was gathered together for the tournament for the 'not quite's', the Chairmans. Even the specification, 'the 2nd best 8 available' gives it an aura of a lack of quality. So experienced were the players that the only competitor under the age of 30 was in his 10th year of play. Further evidence of the experience showed in that there were 4 championship referees and 3 other referees among the 8, a better ratio than at certain other selection events.

To summarise, both the weather and Phil Cordingley were good throughout, even if he seemed to be in 3rd gear on occasion.

Day 1
I had turned up late on the previous night, so had the honour of reporting to our many faithful readers in this journal. However we were all on time for the start of the play to see the lawns cut magnificently just longing for the 3 11/16 inch hoops we had brought with us.

Things looked a bit professional when the first game ended quickly on the 6th turn with Richard Hilditch not allowing George Noble to take croquet. He was punished for such an unkind act by not winning again in the first series and ending comfortably bottom.

Meanwhile a more classical game was ending between John Walters and Steve Lewis who were both on 4 back and peg. Steve failed a peg out and had to peg one ball out since he left John a rush out of first corner. John managed to make his last 3 hoops but took off into penult when returned to his partner on the north boundary, he was fortunate in being able to get within 5 yards of partner ball. Steve trickled to the peg and John moved him laying up with a rush. Steve shot and missed bouncing off near penult. John managed to fail a peg out from 4 yards and then hit Steve's ball 7 yards away. After several more turns with John refusing to leave a proper rush and leaving Steve on the opposite side of the lawn (to prevent him shooting), John scraped home by 1.

By the end of the first day Phil was the only player on 3 wins, and the signs were ominous. Hopes that he had peaked too soon in the Olympic year by beating just about everyone who mattered in August, were being dashed.

Day 2
Tuesday dawned even hotter than Monday with the pattern of late arrival from the 5 players staying in the flat just 100 yards away. Their only excuse was the definitive breakfasts provided by Ian Vincent, reason enough for a Chairmans place for life perhaps? It was left to Bill Aldridge, Steve Lewis and Martin French to maintain the accurately set hoops.

The 4th round saw the last player Bill get off the mark with an easy win

against John. Meanwhile Martin was starting to show some of his good form from the previous week at Hunstanton (this is taking practising to extremes), where he had narrowly lost to the sadly unavailable Duncan Reeve. Richard had by this time started to resort to gamesmanship, he had dutifully watched the Ameri-



Phil Cordingley (left), winner of this year's Chairman's Salver, in conversation with Keith Aiton.

can football until 4.30 in the morning to try and keep Phil awake at great personal sacrifice, but to no avail.

After another definitive lunch of burgers from our manager cum caterer, Sarah Hampson, we were treated to Walters getting on the wrong end of a plus one score this time against Phil. John failed a peg out on a triple from 2 yards, he pegged one ball off and Phil was able to finish in two turns from 2nd and 4 back after two shots from John.

The 6th round of the day saw John involved in a refereeing incident against Ian (surprise you say!). After approaching a hoop, he stalked the ball only to see it start moving again down the hill. The rule is currently quite tricky to apply, in this case the ball was not replaced and John was still able to run the hoop. However a rework is urgently required, perhaps some form of time limit on a stationary ball, say 10 seconds?

Day 3
The breakfast delay was excessive on this day, with the last game starting at 10.40. This was due to problems with the scheduling of the kippers.

Many of the less experienced players will be comforted to hear that Steve and George started a game without the peg; they didn't get very far however.

With Phil starting to take charge of the field, Richard managed to win (or rather lose) the title of outright loser in the clubhouse at half way against John. The two closest chasers of the leader, Martin and Ian spun out a long match with extensive use of the corners (quite untypical of the play of the week as a whole), eventually Ian came out on top. He had done well to stay just one behind Phil who

had 100% in the first series.

After lunch came Ian's chance against Phil. After a couple of early hoops, Ian was laid up on the South boundary for hoop 1. Phil put his ball (for hoop 2) in 1st corner, a 7 yard tice; the other ball was close to the east boundary level with hoop 6. What would you do? Ian shot and missed and although Phil failed to make hoops in the next turn, Ian didn't take further croquet. Thus Phil went 2 games clear and looked uncatchable.

Day 4
The heat combined with freshly cut lawns to allow George to take a game off Phil. However the 10th round proved to be one for the underdogs, with each going to the player currently behind. The closest of these was Richard's very lucky +2 victory against Bill in which Bill missed the 'Mulliner' long return roquet after making rover with the second ball.

After lunch saw John playing Ian on the most tricky lawn three in the heat of the day. Ian managed to get penult and peg on the 6th turn, however John hit the lift and following some more hits from both sides started on a triple peel. The first peel was stuck at third, the second was stuck going to 4 back, John had a weak stop shot trying to put the peel ball to rover. However he made up for this with a good rush to a passable position. He stuck the third peel also (inevitable?) and came to rest only 8 inches in front of the peel ball, in front of rover. Much to John's dismay he achieved a full rather than half jump. Throwing caution to the wind John then executed a nice canon peel with a ball only about 30 degrees in front of rover but coming to rest parallel to the peel ball just beyond rover. John was able to get the peg out he needed from 7 yards to complete a good break in difficult and pressured circumstances.

The 12th round saw Steve playing Phil, with failed triples exchanged. However Steve then tried for a straight double peel and managed to

stick the peel with an impossible jump position. This 'Southern' (losing position with 1 useless stroke remaining) saw Phil clinch the title on the 4th day with 11 out of 12 (and his nearest rivals on 7).

The celebrations were constrained to the local Chinese takeaway, where everything took a long time and was covered in a sort of red slime but was very much to be recommended.

Day 5
The game between John and Ian saw the quite rare execution of the -20 handicap takeoff as John had failed to get a cross peg at the end of a break and had to take off back into one of the balls (which had already been roqueted) to put it into perfectly wired position.

We were also treated to some good mallet abuse by Bill who snapped his shaft after taking off the lawn. Your reporter did not witness the incident but they claimed it was a pure accident, honest guv.

In last round Ian was playing Martin, with a chance for outright 2nd place. In the event Martin won quite a close game to finish joint 2nd having had an even 4 and 4 in the two series. John won again to complete the winning of all 5 games on the last 2 days.

Phil lost an awful game with Bill, possibly not able to take it quite as seriously as earlier in the week. He finished with a statistically significant (so I am assured) 12 wins so fully justifying the selectors confidence in placing him top of this event.

Overall the lawns were tricky enough, with the pace and slopes to prevent approaches from ludicrous positions, to prove a very good test for this class of player. The fact that there were only 3 triple peels completed does not attest to bad or defensive play, but to the care required to play the tight breaks necessary. This looked to be a much better simulation of test match conditions than those being enjoyed at Hurlingham.

CHAIRMAN'S SALVER 1988	PC	IGV	MF	JOW	GWN	WOA	SEL	R.JH	GAMES WON			Final Order
									1st Series	2nd Series	Total	
P. Cordingley		+6 +25	+19 +15	+1 -17	+26 -17	+24 +9	+9 +6	+12 +17	7	5	12	1
I.G. Vincent	-6 -25		+16 -5	+5 -4	+2 -14	+1 +5	+26TP -3	+15 +26	6	2	8	2=
M. French	-19 -15	-16 +5		+4 -5	-17 +20	+25 -4	+15 +16	+25 +6	4	4	8	2=
J.O. Walters	-1 -18	-5 +1TP	-4 +5		-16 +13	-26 +15	+1 -14	+19 +13	2	5	7	4
G.W. Noble	-26 +17	-2 +14	+17 +16	+13 -13		+6 -9	+17 -22	-26 -4	4	2	6	5=
W.O. Aldridge	-24 +11	-4 -5	-25 +4	+26 -15	-6 +9		-7 +8	+16 -2	2	4	6	5=
S.E. Lewis	-9 -6	-26 +3	-15 -16	-1 +14	-17 +22	+7 -8		+5 +17	2	4	6	5=
R.J. Hilditch	-12 -17	-15 -26	-25 -6	-19 -13	+26TP +4	-16 +2	-5 -17		1	2	3	8

CLUB CONFERENCE

The Croquet Association's next Club Conference will be held in November 1989.

Please let Brian Macmillan know of any topics that your Club would like to see on the Agenda.

Early Days

THE START OF IT ALL

By Allen Parker (Parkstone)

The first issue of 'The Croquet Association Gazette' appeared on Wednesday, 27th April, 1904 and the 30 remaining parts of Volume 1 were published on 30 subsequent Wednesdays between then and 29th March, 1905. Each issue consisted of 16 numbered foolscap pages of fine print, with occasional photographs of celebrities, and 4 un-numbered pages of advertisements. The latter were mainly from croquet equipment manufacturers of which there were no less than five (John Jaques & Son, Benetfink & Co., Slazenger & Sons, F.H. Ayres, and Lillywhite, Frowd & Co).

Reading this early volume gives some idea of the events leading up to the commencement of publication, and the general state of croquet at that time, and in this and later articles I should like to illustrate these aspects with some abstracts. But before quoting any abstracts, it might be as well to give a very brief precis of the previous history of croquet organisations, because the Croquet Association was by no means the first.

Earlier Organisations

The formation of the first organisation devoted to the advancement of croquet and the regularisation of its laws, came about as a result of a letter by Dr R.C.A. Prior which, under the pseudonym Meliora Spero, appeared in the 'Field' of 30th May 1868, and proposed the formation of the All-England Croquet Club. The first meeting of the provisional committee of the AECC was held on 23rd July 1868, with Walter Jones Whitmore elected as secretary. Whitmore was ousted as secretary on 16 April 1869, and in July 1869 Whitmore and supporters founded the National Croquet Club. Both clubs held tournaments in that year. Finally Whitmore was ousted from the secretaryship of the NCC also, and the latter then requested amalgamation with the AECC, which was finally completed on 16th March 1871.

Meanwhile, Whitmore, still not to be outmanoeuvred, formed the Grand National Croquet Club and this held very successful tournaments at Oxford and Aldershot. By next year he was too ill to play and within 18 months he died. The GNCC became defunct in 1872. From 1875 croquet at Wimbledon declined and tennis became popular. In April 1877 the name was changed to the All England Croquet and Lawn Tennis Club. From 1880 additional space had been requisitioned for tennis and still more in 1881. On 1 July 1882 the committee agreed that the word 'croquet' be deleted from the club title and in 1887 croquet ceased at Wimbledon. 1894 marked the start of the revival and in 1895 B.C. Eveleigh persuaded the All England Lawn Tennis Club to set aside one lawn for croquet. In 1896 Walter Peel initiated the formation of the United All England Croquet Association (changed to 'Croquet Association' in 1900), and was elected first secretary.

Secretary

The Secretary in 1904 at the inception of the Croquet Association Gazette was Henry C. Needham, who was responsible for the weekly 'Official Notices'. The following appeared in the Official Notices of the first issue:

The Committee of the Croquet Association take the opportunity of the issue of this first number of their official organ to congratulate

Associates on the very marked advantage gained by them individually as well as collectively. Hitherto only Associates who chose to purchase the official organ (The croquet section of 'Lawn Tennis and Croquet') have been really in touch with the conduct of the affairs of the Association, and with the burning questions of the day in all matters concerned with Croquet. Now they all will have, as far as is in the power of the editorial staff, all information of importance first-hand. The 'Croquet Association Gazette' will include circulars hitherto sent at great expense separately and too often, it is feared, consigned unopened to the waste-paper basket. The extra 5/- subscription is necessary to cover the expense of publication, and thereby bring the official organ under the immediate control of the Association.

Further information was given under the heading 'The New Departures':

For the first time in its history - a history which, though brief, has been characterised by rapid and continual progress - the Croquet Association now possesses an official organ devoted exclusively to its own interests, and the interests of the game which it has rescued from oblivion. The original conception of the idea was due, we believe, to Col. Needham, the Hon. Sec. of the Association; but it was not till Mr Kenrick took the matter in hand last summer, and showed how it could be placed on a satisfactory business footing, without risk of any loss to the Association, that the scheme came within the range of practical politics. Certainly the hearty thanks of the Association are due to both these gentlemen, and to many others, including the Chairman, who have taken much trouble over the very complicated arrangements of details.

To meet the cost of the new Gazette, which is sent to every Associate free of charge, a small increase in the subscription to the Association was of course necessary. Members who may be inclined to grudge this at first will perhaps derive some consolation from the knowledge that at any rate they will obtain every week a three-penny paper post free, at a cost of two-pence to each member, an amount already paid in their annual subscriptions.



Walter H. Peel, first Hon Secretary of the Croquet Association, 1896-7.

The following record appeared under the photograph of Lt-Col Hon. H.C. Needham in the second issue of the Gazette:

At the end of January, 1898, three months after the death of Mr Peel, Col Needham, one of the members of the original Committee of the United All England Croquet Association, was elected Honorary Secretary, and still fills the post with distinction. For many years he carried out his duties without any assistance. The magnitude of the task may to some extent be guessed at; several hundreds of members to be circularised continually, committees even more frequently; minutes to be kept; subscriptions to be collected; the Croquet Association book to be edited; and all the other numberless duties which fall to the lot of an honorary secretary because no-one else is willing to undertake them. In addition to this Col Needham is an ex-officio member of every sub-committee, one of the Handicapping Committee, and one of the most sought after referees. It is hoped that the establishment of this Gazette will in some degree lighten his labours.

Notwithstanding these onerous duties he has found time to improve greatly as a player. It will not be long before he wins a big event. He is for migratory habits, changing his address usually at the precise moment when every Associate has managed to learn it by heart. The very latest, we believe, is (for official communications) somewhere in Fleet Street. But one never knows. As a contributor to the Gazette Colonel Needham will be at once the joy and the despair of editor and printer. He may always be relied on to send in something especially urgent at - or just after - the last possible moment. And it will usually want editing.

The first portrait shows our Hon Secretary as he appears in private life. In the second he may be seen in his official capacity, perhaps slightly out of focus, managing the Gold Medal Meeting at Roehampton last year.

Editor

The editor of the Gazette in 1904 was C.D. Locock (Author of 'Modern Croquet Tactics', published in 1907), who filled the post until 1915.

Chairman

A photo of Mr W.B. Jessop the then Chairman of the Croquet Association appeared over the following note:

Mr W.B. Jessop is one of our soundest players. Two years ago he was one of the 10 players selected to compete for the Champion Cup. He made a good fight with Miss Gower in the semi-final round of the Open Championship at Wimbledon. His legal knowledge is of the greatest assistance to the committee and is always at our disposal. One of his most cherished schemes is, we believe, the incorporation of the Association under the Companies' Act.

Walter Peel

The first issue of the Gazette also contained an obituary of Walter H. Peel, of which the following is an abstract:

As Croquet player and Champion, writer and inventor of the sliced mallet called after him, the name of Walter Peel is, or should be, familiar to all who read these lines. But it is to his invaluable work as founder and first Honorary Secretary of the Croquet Association that we wish here especially to call attention.

The conception of the foundation of a United All England Croquet Association appears to arise from some friction between the All England Club and other promoters of the now reviving game, presumably on the question of the code of Laws. Hence, no doubt, the occurrence of the word United in the original title of the Association. It would seem that the idea was first broached by Mr Peel and some others at Ascot, in the Spring or early Summer of 1896; but the Preliminary Notice dated June, 1896 and signed Walter H. Peel, Hon Sec U.A.E.C.A. (pro tem), must be regarded as the first definite step towards the foundation. This circular, which is headed by a list of a Committee of thirty, goes on to state that in forming a Society to be called the United All England Croquet Association, the object of the Committee is to encourage the game under recognised rules by promoting public tournaments, inter-county, inter-club, and private matches, rendering assistance to local clubs, by advice, augmentation of their prizes, and by providing, when possible, handicappers, referees etc., if desired. The establishment of Bronze and Silver medals is also a prominent feature of the programme, the intention evidently being that only Silver Medallists should be allowed to compete for the Gold Medal.... Meanwhile, the somewhat unwieldy numbers of the committee were reduced.... a sub-committee was appointed to frame Rules for the Constitution and Management of the Association, which at that time consisted of exactly 200 members.

At the end of the same month the Association sustained an irreparable loss by the sudden death of Mr Peel. He had lived to see his cherished scheme fairly established; but perhaps even he did not foresee to what dimensions the organisation which he had founded would grow in the course of the next seven years. The competitions for the Peel Memorial Challenge Bowls were instituted in his remembrance; but his best memorial among Croquet players will always be the Association itself.

Ladies' Subscriptions

In the report of the Special Meeting of the Croquet Association convened for the purpose of establishing an official organ of the Croquet Association, the following interesting snippet was noticed:

Mrs. Wilmot, in answer to an appeal from the chair that some lady should give her opinion as to the proposal for making a common subscription for the two sexes, said that she certainly could not approve of such a step for her experience was that in many cases it was the men who were called upon to pay the ladies' subscriptions. She also thought that if the ladies were to be asked to pay an equal subscription they should, in fairness, be allowed to have the privilege of sitting on the General Committee and of having a representative also on the Special Handicapping Committee - (laughter).



The Editor C.D. Locock (right) and the CA's Hon. Secretary, Lt-Col Hon. H.C. Needham, pictured compiling the first edition.

Arthur Lillie

The following reminiscences of Arthur Lillie in the issue of 25th May give another view of the development of croquet during the early years:

You have asked me for my experiences in Croquet. I am afraid they begin at a very early date. I have just come across an old advertisement of a tournament - my first. It took place in September 1868 under the auspices of the Torbay Archery and Croquet Society. The grounds were about the size of an ordinary billiard room. There was no boundary, and if you were sent flying across two or three of the grounds of your neighbours you had to shoot back over them. About this time I went to Cheltenham and came across Mr Peel, Mr Law and other Gloucestershire players, who, inspired by Mr Walter Jones Whitmore, were making the first serious attempt to change Croquet into a scientific game. With their aid I got up the Cheltenham Croquet Club, of which I became Hon Secretary. In those days a work on croquet tactics by Mr Whitmore was the great authority. He held that the secret of the game was to send away the player and work with the three remaining balls. Conceiving that this was a fallacy, I induced Mr Jaques of that day to bring out a little work that I wrote for him, which urged that a player ran much less peril if he utilised the live ball, as all strokes then became easy. Mr Hale's setting appeared about that time, and I at once showed that the four-ball break conquered that quite as easily as the earlier settings. In 1872 I became Champion of the Grand National Croquet Club. This club was started by Mr Walter Jones Whitmore, who also started the All England Croquet Club which had its head-

quarters at Wimbledon. From this, owing to a small quarrel, he quickly seceded. The Grand National was a travelling club, and it got up some excellent meetings at Oxford, York, Moreton-in-Marsh, Aldershot etc. Peel, Lee, Muntz, Whitmore Jones, Black (The Champion) and the Rev Mark Pattison were amongst its players. I remember a most amusing tournament at Aldershot. Mr Whitmore Jones and I were competing in the finals before a large crowd, enlivened by three military bands. The General commanding the division, Sir Hope Grant, would walk about on the ground that we were using, and nobody dared speak to him. Our strokes had in consequence to be aimed not so much to hit the balls as to miss General Officers.

Mr Walsh invented the 3/4in steel socketed hoop, and that killed croquet for a time. At Maidstone in 1896 I won the All-Comers. Then the committee of the All England Lawn Tennis Club asked me to become Hon Secretary for croquet. As some of the old members were still to be found in the club, it may be said that Croquet never really died there. The fact that several excellent full-sized croquet lawns were there available for Londoners much helped the revival. Without their aid it would have been difficult.

Wimbledon Lawns

Excellent lawns may have been provided at Wimbledon in the late nineties during the croquet revival referred to by Arthur Lillie, but by 1904 the wear and tear effected by the tennis players had become too much, as is indicated by the following two excerpts from the Gazette of August 24th 1904.

First some comments in the 'Notes' section:

The 23rd Open Championship meeting held at Wimbledon last week is not unlikely to be the end of the series so far as that historical venue is concerned. Universal dissatisfaction was expressed at the reduction in the number of lawns - eight courts are certainly insufficient for a championship meeting - and at the fiery, and in other respects inferior condition of those that were left. Some of them had large patches of absolutely bare earth; in addition, no attempt had been made to fill up holes in the ground, caused, presumably by some of the varied appliances of lawn tennis, or to obliterate the dazzling, and, to croquet players, exceedingly perplexing lines of the tennis courts.

We do not quite know what language would be used by our leading lawn tennis players if they found themselves expected to play for their championship on a court where they were liable to be tripped up by the boundary netting of croquet grounds - we are assuming that the hoops and pegs would be removed - or on grounds where the boundary lines of croquet were indistinguishable from those of their tennis courts. We say we do not know; but we think we can guess.

The All England Club have, of course, a perfect right to sacrifice croquet to lawn tennis or any other game that suits them; but it is not fair to continue to invite players to come to an Open Championship where the grounds are quite insufficient and are otherwise unsuitable. We are certainly not alone in hoping that some arrangement will be made by which the Championship next year will be held at Roehampton, or some other more suitable ground than that of the All England Lawn Tennis Club.

Continued overleaf

Short Story

Spanish Ladies

By Dorothy Rush

She called herself Maria de los Dolores Avellana y Alfarero and, it must be admitted, that was the name she had been born with. Her husband was Phil Glyndwr-Evans, which, Spanish custom being what it is, made her not just Mrs Glyndwr-Evans but Senora Dona Mana de los Dolores Avellana y Alfarero de Glyndwr-Evans, an incongruous combination.

She alone might well have been responsible for the good old croquet custom of using only first names: imagine the futility of forestalling this lady in the act of attempting a hampered shot - 'Er...excuse me, Mrs...er...Senora...er...'. Well, she'd be through the next 3 hoops before you got to Avellana. So we called her Lolly, plain and simple, and in time she learned to answer to it, though not without a fair amount of head-tossing and tongue-clicking. You could almost hear the castanets.

'We' were the members of Hamforth and Ditherington Sports and Leisure Centre Croquet Section - another mouthful, shortened, in all but the headed notepaper, to Hamforth Croquet Club. We were affiliated to the South West Federation but never one of its success stories - not what you'd call a fashionable club.

Why Lolly had joined us rather than say, Bristol, I was never sure. Phil's work was local, of course, and they lived close to the club, but Bristol was no more than half-an-

hour away, with its new club-house and its three immaculate lawns, while we made do with a garden shed and one slightly undersized, mossy court, whose West boundary slipped sharply away at the yard line. Not many tices were laid - or hit - at Hamforth. Having only one lawn, we played all our league matches away and were at a grave disadvantage on the well-kept lawns of our opponents. The theory that playing habitually on a rough court makes a good one seem easy was not borne out by the performance of Hamforth players, who became renowned for take-offs that sundered the stop-boards.

Still, we had a few lowish bisques. Phil Glyndwr-Evans being the lowest of all. Three, I think he was, while Lolly hovered around nine, up to ten one year, down to eight the next, never quite in command of the balls but never, ever, able to admit that her erratic play was the reason for a game lost. It was always the lawn that was at fault or the undeservedly high handicap of her opponent. Poor Phil went through the mill every time they played in the same match. He might be several lawns away but off she would go, head high and hands gesticulating furiously, to hiss at him, all too audibly.

'Pheel, thees man ees no' a fourteen!'

And Phil would be expected to make representations to the home club's handicapper to have unmerited damage done to 'thees man's' handicap. Sometimes, for the sake

of peace and quiet, a handicap would be lowered, too late, fortunately, to save Lolly's bacon, but mostly the reduction would be resisted - with dire consequences for the unhappy Phil, who was thus condemned to suffer a fusillade of Castilian on the journey home. It was his greater misfortune to be as fluent in Spanish as she herself, having spent long years with the British Council in Madrid, where they had met, and every sharp-edged word found its target.

Lolly possessed also the endearing trait of expecting every referee's decision to go her way. If it did not, her scorn knew no bounds, though she usually, but not always, stopped short of accusing the unfortunate wretch of cheating, contenting herself with a withering:

'Bueno, eet eess yoo who arr thee referee, no' I, before beating the well worn path to where Phil was trying desperately to ignore her behaviour and to concentrate on his own game. Our own club handicapper always insisted that Lolly was the principal reason why Phil's handicap had never gone below three: many a promising triple had broken down under the strain of that ever-complaining presence. We wondered how long it would be before he murdered her.

So when he did, no one was very surprised.

Inappropriately, Phil killed Lolly with a cricket bat, crushing her skull with repeated blows as she lay in bed. Then he wiped the blade of

the bat on the bedclothes and replaced it carefully in the corner of the bedroom where it had stood harmlessly for several years. Afterwards, he went down to the kitchen, where he made a pot of tea and rang the police.

At the trial of Philip Glyndwr-Evans it was stated that Lolly's last words had cast doubt upon her husband's masculinity. If she had spoken in English he might have shrugged it off but somehow all those years in Spain had given the Welshman a Spaniard's notion of honour and the Spanish words had triggered a violent reaction.

Nothing to do with croquet at all, then, but down at the club we assured each other that Phil's sudden and uncharacteristic violence was the result of all those interrupted breaks and all the relentless nagging on the journeys home.

Perhaps if we hadn't had to play so many away games, things would not have got to such a pitch.

I shall leave the last word to another Spanish lady. When Carmen Bazley - Lady Bazley, that is, of the Cheltenham Club - heard the news of her fellow-country-woman's death, she shook her head with a profound sadness and murmured.

'Colorin, colorado este cuento se ha acabado' which I am told translates, very freely, as

'Penult and Rover, This tale's over'.

And so it was.

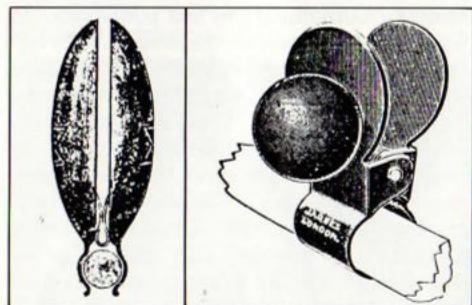
The Start of It All - continued from page 11.

This was followed by further criticism in the report of the Open Championships:

This tournament, held on the lawns of the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, at Wimbledon, during the week beginning August 15th, will long be remembered for the series of disasters which early befell many of the better players. It is no disparagement to the skill shown by their respective conquerors to say that this upsetting of form, on as large a scale, was chiefly due to the execrable state of the lawns. Players at this meeting in former years have had occasion to grumble at the condition of the lawns, when the tournament was held early in the croquet season, but this year, after a severe lawn tennis season, the lawns were not fit for a fourth rate provincial tournament. They were neither adequate in number nor decent in condition, and fully justified the largely signed protest which we hear has been sent to the committee of the club.

Advertisements

As regards advertisements, three, I think, are worth mentioning. There was one in the first issue, for the Fifth Annual Open Croquet Tournament of the West Worthing Club. This club must therefore have existed at least since 1900. It is not clear whether this is the same as the very first croquet club of which we read, established



Two early croquet clips. The 'Vivid' clip by Slazenger (left), and the 'Tell Tale' clip (Briant's Patent) by Jaques. The small metal ball fitted to one of the wings of the Tell-Tale clip 'renders the clip more visible by the light it reflects'.

at Worthing in May 1869. The other two advertisements of interest are both for equipment. The Slazenger advertisement included something called 'The Vivid Croquet Clip'. This was so constructed as to be plainly visible from any part of the lawn. The following week a Jaques advertisement appeared for the 'Eclipse Croquet Clips'...

In this new pattern of clip, whether seen from the side or front, a well-defined note of colour is always visible, showing at a glance the position of all the players.

This seems to be an idea worth resurrecting

- such clips would be a help to both players and spectators.

Conclusion

Finally a comment on the new gazette in a letter headed 'A Discontented Associate' in the February 1st 1905 issue:

There is another point I should like to mention. The Croquet Gazette is now a year old, and it cannot be denied that, taking the subscription into account, it is about the worst and most expensive paper known. If the Association is going to attract new members, and even keep old ones, they must provide something better than this; it would be far better not to subscribe to the tournaments, but to get a skilled reporter to attend and let us hear more about what goes on. Occasionally, it is true, we have a good account, to wit, Bideford last August, but as a rule the accounts are very poor. There might also be notes by some of our great players of close finishes (I could tell two myself), of difficulties overcome in commencing, etc., etc. Notes by Miss Gower would be worth going a long way to get hold of. We want someone to push the Gazette along. Then again, Croquet is hardly ever reported in the local papers, simply because there is no reporter...

The Gazette has come a long way since those days, but reports of tournaments have generally not changed to any great degree.

Short Croquet

Worcester: 3 September Nailsea retain Short Croquet title.

Report by Chris Hudson

Fourteen teams took part in this year's National Short Croquet team competition, including the welcome first appearance of Norwich who beat Thomas Cook 7-5 in the first round in a very close match.

The Area finals, held at Pendle, Ashby and Reading, resulted in wins for the hosts at the first two venues, and a win for Nailsea at Reading. These three teams travelled to Worcester for the National Final.

Three years ago, Worcester's ground at Norton Sports Club was a rough field.



The Short Croquet Final in progress at Worcester.

It was levelled, grass was sown, and the enthusiasm and financial generosity of the club's twenty members, with the help of a Grant and a Loan from the CA, has resulted today in two full-size lawns with excellent surfaces. It was a pleasure to play there, and to stage the first CA event at the Club.

Nailsea's young team, led by Peter Dyke, included Alex Leggate, last year's individual Short croquet Champion, David Thatcher, and Paul Spiring. Norman Hicks, John Beech, and Vincent George, from Pendle, were adjusting to the new handicaps they received recently when they ventured on to the CA tournament circuit. Norman perhaps suffered most severely, having made the mistake of beating Barry Keen and being reduced from 12 to 7 on the spot. Ashby, who have been in every final since this competition started three years ago, also fielded a team whose handicaps are gradually coming down.

After the first round, Pendle were leading, having won three games out of four, but they were perhaps a shade lucky insofar as Vincent George's game against Richard Wildblood went to time, and finished in the 'sudden death' stage when Richard roqueted one of Vincent's balls and inadvertently peeled it through its hoop. Nailsea kept in contention with a good win by Alex Leggate who, playing as though without being under any pressure at all, completed a 5-hoop break and pegged out to win after time had been called when he was way behind against Max Falconer of Ashby.

The second round of matches saw Alex come through successfully in another close finish, when he beat John Beech, and this in retrospect could have been the deciding game. Vincent George went round to the peg with one bisque in his game against Peter Dyke;

Peter retaliated by doing the same, but failed to peg Vincent out, whereupon Vincent used his other two bisques to wrap the game up. At the end of the second round, which had seen David Thatcher and Paul Spiring also winning for Nailsea against Ashby's Ken Hillier and Richard Wildblood, Nailsea were level with Pendle at 5 games all, with Ashby trailing on 2.

A brief break for a cup of tea in Norton's Sports Pavilion, (whose bar must date back to the days of the NAAFI and is certainly the largest on the

croquet circuit!) and then on to the third and final round. Key matches here were those between Nailsea and Pendle: Alex Leggate v. Norman Hicks, Paul Spiring v. Paul George (Vincent's brother). Paul and Alex both won, Alex pegging his last ball out from 15yds or so, and with that, Nailsea took the title.

Elsewhere, Graham Ensor went round to rove on the third turn against Vincent George to record his third win of the day and find his handicap reduced from 17 to 15. Ken Hillier pegged out John Beech's first ball but lost a close match in the end to leave Ashby with 4 wins, Pendle 6 and Nailsea 8. A good afternoon's croquet, and a fine win by Nailsea's young team.

RESULTS Round 1

A. Leggate (6) (Nailsea) bt M. Falconer (14) (Ashby) +5; N. Hicks (7) (Pendle) bt K. Hillier (14) (Ashby) +6; G. Ensor (17) (Ashby) bt P. Spiring (13) (Nailsea) +13; P. Dyke (8) (Nailsea) bt P. George (16*) (Pendle) +10; J. Beech (8) (Pendle) bt D. Thatcher (7) (Nailsea) +2(T); V. George (10) (Pendle) bt R. Wildblood (17) (Ashby) +1(T).

Round 2

N. Hicks bt M. Falconer +13; A. Leggate bt J. Beech +2(T); G. Ensor bt P. George +4(T); P. Spiring bt R. Wildblood +2(T); D. Thatcher bt K. Hillier +4; V. George bt P. Dyke +8.

Round 3

D. Thatcher bt M. Falconer +6; A. Leggate bt N. Hicks +6; P. Spiring bt P. George +2(T); G. Ensor bt V. George +7; J. Beech bt K. Hillier +3; R. Wildblood bt P. Dyke +8.

Team Result

Nailsea 8, Pendle 6, Ashby 4.

TOWNSEND'S CROQUET ALMANACK 1989

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PRIZE QUIZ

We are offering a brand new Aspinall Croquet Mallet as first prize in Townsend's Croquet Almanack quiz. All the answers can be found in the Almanack.

Townsend's Croquet Almanack Prize Quiz

1. Who remained 'peg doubt' though an entire tournament and how?
2. What was the maximum width of Stonehenge hoops?
3. Who was voted best player in the country but only ranked third?
4. What did Issac Newton, The Countess of Cavan and John Walters all do?

Answers should be sent to Townsend Croquet before 1 January 1989. In the event of more than one correct answer, there will be a draw for the winner. Townsend Croquet's say will be final in any question or dispute about the competition or its rules.

THE 1989 TOWNSEND CROQUET ALMANACK

A Preview

By Graham Budd

From the formidable pairing of Charles Townsend and John Walters is coming a publication more innovative than Covent Garden's new 'Ring' cycle, more absorbing than Kleenex double-ply and more of an 'ideal christmas present' than even 'The World of Croquet'!

Dear Reader, I write of nothing else than the 1989 Townsend Croquet Almanack, a new 'Wisden' style publication, sorely missed since the demise of The Croquet Association Year Book back in 1970. Having secretly obtained access to the Townsend Emporium, I have been able to peruse, albeit briefly, the proofs for what is surely going to be the hottest publication this year.

The Almanack is no mere record of this year's results, but a veritable cornucopia of statistics, records and articles. One of the most interesting of these is the International section, introduced by Test team captain David Openshaw, containing news and views from not only Great Britain, but also from Australia, New

Zealand and the United States, giving a rare insight into the machinations of their own respective Croquet Associations and top players. Balancing this necessarily somewhat thoughtful and retrospective section is an admirably concise guide to Association Croquet, designed for the novice and garden player, which passes smoothly from the basics to triple peeling and beyond in but a few sides. The guide is rounded off neatly with a useful glossary, in which John Walters inadvertently reveals a fundamental lack of confidence in his, or indeed anyone else's shooting, defining a 'hit-in' as a very long roquet - ten yards and over!

Even if all this does not send you hunting for your cheque book, the Almanack's tours de force are still to be described, the fascinating statistics and records departments. Firstly, an enormous quantity of historical results are included, giving all MacRobertson Shield results - so if you wish to know the result of the game between, say, Captain F.L. Hartnell and Sir F. Colchester

Wemyss in a First Test, second series match of the 1935 Challenge, this is the place to look. (Hartnell, in fact, won.) All other conceivable information on past championships and Eights are also due for inclusion, which will make the Almanack into what surely must be the most complete such collection of results ever published. The producers of this Almanack must no doubt be indebted to the now sadly departed D.M.C. Pritchard, who laid the groundwork for such a venture with his previous meticulous research.

As well as Tournament Results and Rankings for the present, the Almanack has a completely new idea to lay before its public - the Handicap Rankings list, on which all handicap players will be graded. No doubt this will give the Handicap Co-ordination Committee food for thought!

Even spicier than this are the projected 'Top Ten' players lists, rushed in from specially selected panels across the globe. Will New Zealand rank Mulliner above Aspinall? Will there be an agreed 'Number One?' Sorry, such details were firmly kept under lock and key. And I haven't even mentioned the already hotly controversial 'Records' section. So if you want to find out... - who finished from 1-back and peg in 3 turns, without taking croquet, - who took only 55 minutes to win a game by +1, and many many more fascinating snippets, it's all there in the Almanack, which, I am reliably informed, will 'have a nice dark blue cover', cost only £9.90 and is due out 'sometime in November'!



Alan Tunbridge gets his 'fix' from Brian Melody at Loughborough. But, in a more serious vein, Council is currently discussing Drug Testing Procedures and how they should be implemented to correspond with the Sports Council's recommendations.

THE INTERACTIVE HANDICAP SYSTEM

By Damon Bidencepe

(Director of Croquet, Meadowood, Napa Valley, USA)

This article reflects on the need for handicapping and proposes a different philosophy to the presently used systems.

The game of croquet is played in many forms under different rules throughout the world. Each of these games has a history of development and change that has necessitated an evolution of its rules and the subsequent rule changes have shaped the games we know. These rules exist to allow players to match themselves in competition. Players of differing skill levels often seek a handicapping system to provide a fair match with equal chance of success for both teams.

Currently, two major handicap systems operate:

1. The Association or Continuation Bisque, where the lesser player is given a predetermined number of bisques that allow him/her to begin a new turn when his turn has finished without the (better) player having a turn.
2. The USCA Take-over or Mulligan Bisque, where the lesser player is allowed to retake a shot by using one of his/her bisques.

Both of these systems attempt to give help to the weaker player to enable the playing of an even match. These players by the definition of their handicap standings are not masters of the non-handicap game of croquet. In fact, it is likely that the game and mechan-

ism of taking croquet and using these extra shots to greatest advantage still poses a significant challenge to their comprehension of croquet. They are then burdened by the additional, tactical decision of deciphering when to use this bisque device.

These present systems do function with some measure of success; however, neither encourages any increased interaction between players in a match. Improvements are always worth exploring, and I propose a system that would progressively handicap the better player, making the better player perform at a higher level rather than expecting the lesser player to ascend levels beyond his/her tactical horizons. This system would also address an area which is the most non-interactive element of the game - the break.

Although consistent and particularly complex break play may be the ultimate measure of a player's stroke-making ability, this very feature of the game disallows the interaction necessary for matching two players of unequal skill levels and some would argue also those of equal skill level in a match consisting of a single game.

Break play has for a long time been the source of revision in the Association game.

1. The change to the Willis Hoop Setting (6 hoops, 1 peg) from the Hale Setting (2 pegs, 6 hoops).

experience is the essence for successful refereeing but, paradoxically, so are the razor-sharp sense of inexperienced youth. Coupled, naturally with the memory of a Mastermind contestant and the computational processes of...well, of a computer.

Most players realise this and realise, too, that the referee is much better placed to make a judgment, intent as he is upon the consequences of the stroke, while the striker must concentrate on its execution. Most players accept with good grace the decision given. Most, but not all. And the most likely to complain, often bitterly, are those who should know better, those who are themselves referees. Moreover, amongst the well-l-beg-to-differers, the if-looks-could-killers and the mallet-throwers are not a few scratch and minus players whose behaviour should be an example to lesser mortals.

One final, beguiling thought: does anyone dare raise a dissenting voice when the referee's name happens to be Solomon?



Damon Bidencepe with the 1986 Australian MacRobertson Shield Team. Standing (L to R) Neil Spooner, Spencer Buck, Allan Cleland, and Damon Bidencepe. Seated: George Latham (left) and Barrie Chambers.

2. The introduction of lifts and contact to stop the break play of 12 and then 14 points.

The introduction of changes made playing the break more difficult, and in the second case imposed a limiting device on the break.

I propose that a more desirable system for handicapping is to progressively handicap the better player. This system would involve designating a handicap limit of points that can be scored by a player in any one turn. This obviously limits the break but greatly increases the importance of leaves (grooms), making the better player execute shorter turns and leave the lawn in a safe position. The impact of such a system is more pronounced on the American game where sequential play and deadness are governing factors. It is, however, applicable to both USCA and Association rules. In doubles, each player would carry their own respective point limit.

An excellent player would be assigned a handicap limit of 2 points per turn. This would therefore necessitate the playing of 13

turns at least to win a game thus allowing his opposition a minimum of 12 turns to engage his opposition. (This would be equivalent to a -2 English, -4, -5 Australia, and 0 USA present handicap ratings.)

An average player capable of making reasonable breaks of between 8 to 10 points would possibly be handicapped as a 6 point limit handicap. Therefore allowing his opposition a minimum of 5 turns to engage him if he were to play the perfect game. If he consistently plays the perfect game, his limit would obviously be reduced, therefore exposing more chances to his opposition.

This system adds a new dimension to the tactics of the leave (grooms) for the better player, forcing him to play to his level while allowing the beginner player the freedom of playing regular croquet until his level of skill rises to the point where he needs a point limit. It also increases the interaction of players within a game, which is fundamental to a game being a contest and an enjoyable exercise.

COMPARISON TABLE OF H'CAP SYSTEMS

Player Standard	H'cap	(Bisques)	New Limit of Points
	Assoc'n	USCA	
Excellent	-3	0	2 pts
Good	2	1	5 pts
Intermediate	7	3	8 pts
Beginner	16	19	14 pts

Chronological development

1902: Experimentation at Roehampton with the Willis setting.

1922: Willis setting adopted in England.

1928: One lift introduced (after 4-back).

1946: Two lifts and contact introduced - the Whithelo variation.

Invitation Events

Hurlingham: 6-10 September THE 1988 BOMBAY GIN PRESIDENT'S CUP Strong Finish by Chris Clarke

Report by David Peterson

The prospect of the 89-90 Test Tour loomed, like the Battersea Power Station, large on the horizon of a hurricane denuded Hurlingham. Irwin and Avery secured their places in the 1986 team largely on the basis of their performances in the preceding President's Cup. The Selectors' decision to enlarge the field to ten seemed to indicate that the team would be found therein, though Cordingley's phenomenal late season burst has now pushed him into contention.

Not only was the President's Cup bigger this year, but the feeling amongst experienced spectators was that it was better as well. There were 39 Triple Peels during the week. 24 games were won +26, and another 14 +17. Of the 39 triples 34 came from only five players (and not the top 5!) and 18 of them came in the first 25 games.

Conditions were easy, although the lawns are becoming 'unHurlinghamically' hilly. The notorious narrowness of the hoops was largely mitigated by the soft earth, and in any case is now less daunting a prospect because of their increased use in other events.

The pages of this organ (when it still was one) housed a debate on whether a top class play was intrinsically boring. My answer, after 90 of the best games I will probably ever see, is that the first two days when 26s and triples abounded were relatively tedious. However, the end of the week saw several fascinating games, and not because the standard of play dropped. There probably were a few more mistakes as the tension mounted, but there were two other reasons. The outplayers sought to stem the tide of TPs by taking more defensive lift shots, and so the ensuing delayed triples were less frequently completed. Also as the players became more keyed up their shooting improved. Mark Avery often seemed incapable of starting to play until two breaks down, but then seemed incapable of missing a final shot.

The first round saw quick and confident +26 TPs (henceforth 'TSTP') for Clarke and Foulser against Openshaw and Irwin. Saurin's scrappier win against Fulford meant that both the (new) boys had got off the mark. The next round was over by an earlyish lunchtime despite the efforts of Openshaw and Aiton. Throughout the week this thoughtful pair sought to prolong the proceedings and so to entertain any 'city-slickers' who might appear in the evenings. Aiton eventually realised that to do this more effectively he would have to score a point or two (which he had as yet failed to do). All the other players were behaving as though they had jobs to go to (or homework to do) and indeed Mulliner, that perennial white rabbit, and Clarke finished their fourth game on Wednesday by 4.30. Thus the prospective size of Eric Solomon's managerial task shrank as if it had consumed a cake labelled 'Eat me'.

The third round produced the best play of the day, and five triples. Only one was a boring old TSTP (henceforth BOTSTP), as the momentum of Mulliner and Irwin bore them in different directions. Fulford had a morale-boosting +17 TP against Avery, while Saurin and Foulser's failure to complete TPs was punished by successful ones from Openshaw and Aiton, the

former's starting at fifth hoop. Clarke meanwhile had TPO'd Aspinall, but for the contact leave could not get partner any safer West of hoop 4, and so felt obliged to also peg out his own ball. As it was Nigel made six hoops on the two-ball break which proved a comfortable enough cushion.



Steve Mulliner battles on as the title slips from his grasp.

The fourth round saw an Aspinall triple against Irwin (the fourth against him in succession) which ensured him 100% for the day, along with Mulliner. Saurin and Aiton both lost; their concentration seemed to be waning. All week I pestered the players to tell me that this was as a result of the extra round, but each in turn denied it. If croquet is ever to woo the media the players will have to become more adept at feeding the press controversy - the game needs a few Brian Cloughs. Foulser and Avery were both on two wins, and Clarke was making an impressive debut with three.

On Wednesday morning both Aiton and Avery came into form - each in typical fashion. Aiton saw off Clarke with a TPO, while Avery produced two triple peels (against Foulser and Saurin) in only 1¼ hours playing time. Aspinall and Mulliner, still unbeaten after a triple apiece for breakfast, met in the sixth round to produce a win for Steve and a clear leader. After this year's Opens final Mulliner seems to have reversed the psychological imbalance. He punished two Aspinall errors with another triple, his fifth in succession and was beginning to run away with the event (most would have been content to walk away with it). Meanwhile Openshaw was beginning to appreciate how Colin Irwin felt (still only seven points in six rounds) after Fulford had dealt him his third consecutive -26.

Clarke was playing rather scrappily, but still picking up wins, and Saurin might as well have not been present when losing to Mulliner (which indeed for much of the game he was not). Aiton completed two more triples, against Fulford and Saurin to complete a very satisfying day. Fulford was playing well but not completing triples regularly enough to dominate in this company, and seemed to have the knack of persuading his opponents to play even better. A case in point arose against Aiton when Fulford embarked on an STP with a delightful cannon peel through 4-back but got no more peels. Aiton lifted his ball for hoop one, where Fulford had thought it safe, and hit the long lift to finish with a triple. This

lift shot was symptomatic of a vein of 'macho' croquet which ran through the week. When Hogan adopted this tactic in the 1986 Opens it seemed unusual, but this week it became almost commonplace.

Avery emerged the victor from a spectacular game against Aspinall. It started when, with Avery poised to go out, Aspinall hit the long lift and took a break to 4-back. Avery hit back (again the long lift) but only with his peg-ball, and so laid up in second corner - as far from Nigel's ball for first as possible. This did not dissuade him from playing with it though, nor it from hitting, and three peels of an STP ensued. Aspinall could not finish and so pegged out one of his balls and Mark's ball for peg, leaving his partner by the peg. Avery duly hit it, smack in the middle, rushing it to the North boundary. Being for Penult, he then split into position putting the enemy ball to the South boundary, but could only grovel through the hoop and so guarded the peg. Nigel shot through at the peg to the North boundary, and Mark took position at rover. Again Nigel chose to shoot, again missing and enabling Avery to win +1.

Meanwhile Mulliner had lost his first game. He had had the first break, but Clarke hit and followed suit. Mulliner missed the defensive lift into first corner. It rewarded him with one more shot, but only one, after Clarke had done the peels of a delayed triple. All the games but one had finished by 5.30 and in that Irwin doubled his aggregate points, although losing by 14 to Openshaw.

Mulliner 7; Aspinall, Avery and Clarke 6. The third day saw Avery chasing Mulliner, catching him briefly and then falling behind again in an anti-climatic end to a run of eight consecutive wins. Mulliner hit back at aspersions that Avery was faster than him with a 34 minute BOTSTP against Aiton. Wylie would have been proud of Fulford's fourth turn break against Aspinall which included two peels on Aspinall's ball to complicate a possible triple. On the sixth turn Fulford went to the peg but without a peel. Aspinall hit and pegged out Fulford, conceding a contact which was promptly wasted. Moments later from fourth corner with Aspinall guarding second corner, Fulford ran his hoop (4-back!) and then hit Aspinall's balls to finish. Both the crowd then exited to Lawn 5 where Clarke and Avery were finishing. Avery had failed the rover peel of a triple (against peg and rover) and decided to peg out one of each side leaving his partner in front of rover two-thirds wired from Clarke's ball on A-baulk, but after running rover Avery could not see the peg and so took a position 4 yards from it, wired from Clarke on the North boundary. The latter then went for rover (little option) and hit the wire, spinning off behind the hoop. Avery decided to eschew the nervy 4-yard peg out or pick up and instead took another wired position right by the peg. Clarke jumped rover from less than a yard only to see his ball bounce over Avery's. MNA +2.

The best news of round 10 was Colin Irwin at last winning a game, against David Foulser. From personal experience (Spencer E11 1985) I know what he was going through, and that he would have loved to have gone home after the first series. His run of nine defeats signified little more than a loss of confidence caused by two or three early drubbings. Considering that he had a genuine wrist problem, he was brave not to drop out, and indeed recovered some credible

form in the second series. It is a failing of the grading system that it tends to overemphasise the significance of 'Eights' performance.

The second best news (pace SNM) was Avery's defeat of Mulliner. Again Avery was slow starting, only getting a ball to 4-back after Mulliner was for Penult and Peg. Mulliner then took the unusual but calculated decision to peg out his own ball, thus eschewing his lifts, but denying Avery a TP. Although Avery soon had a three-ball break, it appeared that Mulliner had gambled right when it collapsed at 3-back. Mulliner took off to the ball at 4-back, but missed the eight foot (cut?) rush to penultimate, and Avery soon completed a victorious sequence +1, +2, +3 against the three other leaders.

Round 11 saw brilliance, controversy, and rubbish. In order; the brilliance was an Avery STP against Irwin. The controversy was Mulliner scoring his one hundredth win in the President's Cup against Fulford, and not, as he had claimed, in an earlier round against Aiton. (He erroneously included a past win against someone who failed to complete the series and therefore had their results discounted). And the rubbish was Openshaw playing Aiton.

The final round of the third day saw Mulliner regain his lead over Avery who lost a close game to Fulford. Finally there was some play after 6.00 to watch, and Saurin decided to make it memorable. With Openshaw's balls widely separated Saurin missed a 2-yard peg out into a vacant corner but then thoughtlessly pegged out his backward ball denying himself a rush to the peg, the innings, and eventually the game. He admitted it was a brainstorm, but even that would not convince James Carlisle who, after a hard day at the office, and two gin and tonics, thought it was a perfectly reasonable thing to do. Mulliner 10; Avery 9; Clarke, Aspinall 8.

On Friday Clarke beat Fulford to maintain the pressure on Avery and Mulliner who were both struggling. Avery had been TPO'd by Aiton who was taking off to Avery, who was in long position at one-back, when he hilled on to the hoop and had to play away. Avery clanged the hoop, and Aiton trickled back to first, it still being his hoop. Then fate, years of correspondence in the Gazette, and two yards of hill intervened to cross wire Aiton's two balls at what was Avery's next hoop but one. The latter took good position, and Aiton felt the 'squeeze'. He could have played safe but instead decided to shoot at Avery. Again his shot drifted onto the wire and rested in the jaws, his third calamity in four strokes, and Avery

took full advantage of the gifted three-ball break. I thought I might never see another TPO from the 'Master', as Riggall's law finally seemed to have triumphed.

Meanwhile Openshaw was beating Mulliner on lawn 5. Openshaw was making a habit of breaking down on triples, and in so doing had persuaded Mulliner that he was playing badly. Thus when he had an aggressive leave when for Peg and 6, Mulliner gambled on him failing to finish, and so cornered. Inevitably Openshaw began to play properly and finished. He suffered more than most from the spectacular start to the week, his first four defeats were all by 26. Such ostentatious scores don't suit his gritty cerebral style, and he came into his own towards the end of the week as things became tenser, winning eight of his last eleven games.

Mark Saurin, who could have fallen out of a Lowry, was also starting to improve, and registered his first BOTSTP against Foulser. He continued in the 14th round by beating Avery whose concentration seemed to wane every time he caught Mulliner up. Mulliner thus restored his lead, but now Clarke and Aspinall had joined Avery just one behind.

After lunch (round 15) there were five relatively one-sided games. Avery, Clarke and Mulliner all won, the last beating Aspinall, and Irwin scored his third win against Aiton who was looking increasingly feeble.

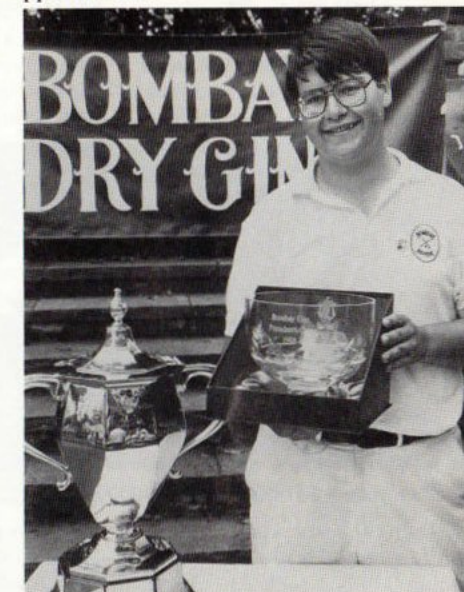
Avery and Clarke kept up the pace in the sixteenth round, while Mulliner was struggling against Saurin. The game was eventually pegged down, which seemed to do Steve some good as he emerged next morning to win +4 TP. Thus with two rounds left Mulliner still had his slender lead over Clarke and Avery (two decreasingly slender players). The crowds gathered to see the kill.

Clarke was to play Mulliner, and Avery-Aspinall. Clarke was first round, but Mulliner hit and embarked on a TPO (to your correspondent's profit - a small wager) only to misapproach fifth with one peel done (your correspondent lost his profit). Clarke made Penult and Rover, laid up, Mulliner missed after much soul-searching, and Clarke finished to draw level on 13 wins. A quick contrast to styles: Mulliner is energetic, thrives on adrenalin, and prowls when not in play; Clarke seems languid but is still fast without being careless, and noticeably slowed himself down in the latter stages. Avery was meanwhile struggling against Aspinall, who had a rush to the peg. Mark had one ball left (for the peg) and

Invitation Events

from the boundary south of 4 hit the straightest shot imaginable; the ball bounced straight back two yards off the peg, the appendage shattered.

So at the start of the final round Clarke, Mulliner and Avery were all level on 13 wins. Avery was to play Clarke, and so if Mulliner beat Aiton there would be a play-off. Each year Aiton's grading, confidence and reputation seem to be damaged in the Presidents. While in contention he had played excellently, but once he had fallen behind his concentration shattered. Now he was being pushed back into the limelight and given a chance to make up for his disappointments.



Chris Clarke with the President's Cup & the Bombay Gin Trophy.

Avery had had the first break against Clarke, and failed a chance with his second ball which allowed his opponent to equalise. Avery missed, Clarke made a long angled first hoop but missed his rush - his only mistake of the day. Avery joined up, and Clarke hit and completed a delayed triple to put all the pressure on Mulliner who needed to win to force a play off.

Mulliner went to 4-back, but Aiton hit and responded with a TPO, banishing the memory of his game against Avery on the same lawn. Thereafter his progress was painfully slow, and not without hiccups. Clarke sat anxiously by the next lawn, watching alone, waiting for the inevitable Mulliner surge, but it did not come. Agonisingly Aiton found himself hampered at Penult and had to play away. Mulliner missed the lift and Chris Clarke had won the President's Cup.

He won eight of his last nine games, beat Mulliner twice, suffered misfortune in losing to Avery in the first series, and thoroughly deserved his victory. If he can improve as much in the next 12 months as he has in the last, it will strike terror into the hearts of all Antipodeans. Whether he is the youngest ever winner of the President's Cup I have not yet determined. John Bolton was also 17 when winning it in 1965, and I have not yet been able to trace his date of birth.

TPs in the President's Cup			
Year	TPs	Year	TPs
1972	21	1981	15
1973	4	1982	22
1974	23	1983	6
1975	5	1984	12
1976	8	1985	11
1977	12	1986	16
1978	13	1987	16
1979	18	1988	39
1980	20		

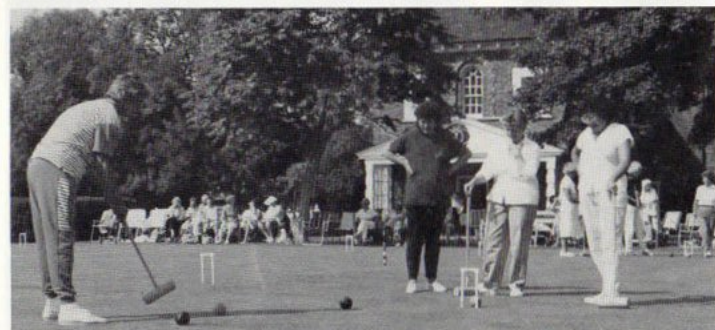
PRESIDENT'S CUP 1988	CDC	MNA	SNM	GNA	DKO	RIF	KMA	MAS	DRF	C.JI	GAMES WON			Final Order
											1st Series	2nd Series	Total	
C.D. Clarke		-2 +17TP	+17 +22	-5 -26	+26TP +17TP	+17 +26	-11 +10	+3 +26TP	+26TP +26TP	+21 +15	6	8	14	1
M.N. Avery	+2 -17		-17 +3	+1 +2	+17 +12	-17 -4	+10TP +14	+23TP -17	+26TP +25	+21TP +17ST	7	6	13	2=
S.N. Mulliner	-17 -22	+17 -3		+23TP +17	+26TP -4	+19TP -22	+26TP -12	+26TP +12TP	+26TP +17TP	+26TP +24TP	8	5	13	2=
G.N. Aspinall	+30TP +26TP	-1 -17	-23 -17		+26TP +2	-14 +22TP	+26TP -12	+26TP +12	+26TP +26	+26TP +21	6	6	12	4
D.K. Openshaw	-26 -17	-17 -12	-26 +4	-26 -2		-26 +26TP	-26 +17	+26TP +1	+17 +17	+21 +9	4	6	10	5
R.I. Fulford	-17 -26	+17TP +4	-19 -12	+14 -22	+26 -26		-4 +13TP	-11 +22	-26 +2	+26 -15	4	4	8	6
K.M.H. Aiton	+11TPO -10	-10 -14	-26 +12TPO	-26 +12TP	-26 -17	+4TP -13		+17TP -26	+5TP -15	+24 -20	5	2	7	7
M.A. Saurin	-3 -26	-23 +17	-26 -4TP	-26 -12	-4 -1	+11 -22	-17 +26		+26TP +26TP	+18 -16	2	3	5	8
D.R. Foulser	-26 -26	-26 -25	-24 -17	-26 -26	-17 -17	+26 -2	-5 +15	+26 -26		+26TP -17	3	1	4	9=
C.J. Irwin	-21 -15	-21 -17	-26 -24	-26 -21	-14 -9	-26 +15	-24 +20	-18 +16	-26 +17		0	4	4	9=

Your Letters

WI Croquet

Dear Sir,
Earlier this year I attended a training course for Croquet Demonstrators at Wolverhampton and thought you might like to hear about a tournament we have just completed with the Bucks Federation of Women's Institutes.

We first of all invited applicants from the members of the Bucks Federation of Women's Institutes to take part in the tournament with local rounds being held throughout the county. We had applications from 112 members who played at 6 different venues. The members had all applied to play with a partner (56 pairs).



One of the matches in progress at the WI Finals at High Wycombe Croquet Club.

At each venue they drew lots and then played three rounds of golf croquet (7 hoops) each. After each round the score for each pair was recorded on the master score sheet. At the end of the session the couples with the highest totals were invited to take part in the final. Where we had only 5 or 6

couples playing we had one winning couple, and where there were up to 14 couples we had the top two couples as winners. This gave us 10 couples for the finals.

The finals were again arranged with everyone playing three rounds but when we then had the two couples with the highest scores we played a final match of 12 hoops to give us our final winning pair.

The event caused a great deal of interest with the players, being well supported by their families and friends. Several institutes have already arranged to play croquet with each other on a regular basis and the two croquet clubs in Bucks, High Wycombe and Stony Strat-

ford, have gained new members. In fact members are having to be turned away at Wycombe! One of our regional venues was held at the National Trust property at Waddesdon Manor and they are investigating the possibility of setting up a lawn regularly. Another venue was Winslow Hall and the owners there

An Everlasting Mallet

Dear Sir,
The article by Dorothy Rush, explaining the disadvantages of various types of mallet, prompts me to describe the mallet which was made to my own design.

The problems with wooden heads are softening and deterioration when wet, chipping or splitting of the wood, and too much wear from the constant very hard blows. Binding with metal strips may hold the wood together longer, but as the wood wears the metal tends to damage the very expensive balls.

To avoid all these disadvantages I tried plates of plastic on each mallet face, but these become loose or even fall off. The logical solution seemed to be a mallet head of soft plastic, and my experimental mallets have shown that the best plastic material is the very tough nylon which is used for cog wheels, etc. in industrial machinery. It comes in either ivory-white, or black, but the former is a much more attractive colour.

The sides can be polished and bevelled for the sake of appearance

if desired, but the ends must be left rough-sawn or they will be too slippery. My supplier failed to carry out my instructions correctly, and polished the ends as well, and I had to correct this by making fine cuts on the ends with a hacksaw.

I increased the mallet weight to 3 pounds (1360 grams) by inserting four small lead plugs into the bottom of the head, and sealing them in with epoxy, but for those who prefer a lighter mallet, especially most ladies, this will not be necessary. The size of my head is 9 inches long, by 2 1/3 inches squared (228mm x 60mm squared) but of course this would be a matter of personal preference, and I give my quite normal size to indicate the ratio of size to weight.

I have a normal wooden shaft, split and spliced at the bottom-end, with a cork grip over the handle, as I find cork to be good in both hot weather or wet weather. After several years of frequent use there is no sign of wear on the head whatsoever, and it appears that it would last for several lifetimes.

Leslie Riggall,
Kloof, South Africa.

were fascinated by the whole event. When we played on common land at Amersham, members of the public stopped to watch saying that they had either never seen croquet played or certainly not for many years!

The members of the WI are now saying 'when can we do it again?' They seemed to thoroughly enjoy themselves. One lady of 84 took part and said she hadn't enjoyed herself so much in years!

Now I am not going to say that Bucks has the best croquet players of all times but if any skill was lacking it was made up for with enthusiasm. I hope the Croquet Association would approve of this. The eventual winners were Mrs P. Petrides and Mrs T. Nightingale from Chesham Bois, with Mrs C. King and Mrs K. Vines from Coleshill (Amersham) WI as runners up.

Incidentally, we played sometimes in brilliant sunshine, sometimes in typical grey, cloudy conditions and once in the teaming rain! Not even the bad weather dampened down the spirits. Mr Oldham supported us at one of the regional rounds and at the final.

After my lovely day at Wolverhampton, my only regret about the croquet is that I seem to spend so much time organising it for other people that I have not played myself since that Sunday!

Kay M. Bradley
Vice-Chairman,
Bucks Fed'n of Women's Inst.

National Club Tournaments

Dear Sir,
In 'Croquet' number 198 (July '88), Barry Keen reported on the early rounds of the Inter-Club, Mary Rose and Longman Cup. He expressed concern that so many first round matches were called off, and offered a possible reason for this; I offer an alternative cause.

The cut-off dates by which each round must be played are simply too early in the year. In all of the last four years, we (Ipswich) have had to play first round matches of the Mary Rose and Inter-Club before our own season has opened! This can result in a poor standard of play, and means that we have never been able to play at home in these early rounds.

Talking to players from other clubs reveals that this is a common problem. Only the larger clubs that own their own facilities are likely to have a practice lawn available all winter or in the early spring. The same clubs often have an April to October season. However, the smaller clubs that rent their facilities from local authorities



THE
LEFT HANDED
COMPANY

Left-handed players

Dear Sir,
I am carrying out some research into left-handedness for a forthcoming book on the subject.

I would be interested to receive observations, positive or negative, anecdotes/case histories from left handed croquet players.

Diane Paul
The Left Handed Company,
The Bell Suite, Mayfair Mansion,
Mersey Road, Didsbury,
Manchester M20 8PY.
(061-445-0159).

Cock-a-Hoop!

Dear Sir,
It is nice to know that Mrs Rush reads Chaucer in the original but I cannot agree with her that the Development Officer's efforts at publicity have been nothing but a 'cock-up'.

On the contrary, some might say he does altogether *too* well at it and might wish that he would stop encouraging all these young roosters who disturb the peace of Croquet's agreeable little farmyard.

Croquet-doodle-doo.
Peter Dorke,
Ludlow.

often have a May to September season.

Many of the people who would play in the Inter-Club and Mary Rose find that their tournament fixtures leave them few free weekends between the start of May and mid July. Only then does the CA calendar thin out a little. Last year, we had to scratch from the Mary Rose because, although we could field a team for the first round (four weeks before our season started!), we would have been unable to play the second round in time for that deadline.

Once again, the larger clubs have an advantage, being much more likely to be able to field a reasonable team, even in the busiest part of the season.

The solution? I propose that the early rounds of these events be given much later deadlines, say mid-June and end-July respectively. These are, after all, the rounds that affect the most people. It must be easier to fix the later rounds, involving fewer people, into the less-crowded calendar of August and September.

Martin French,
Ipswich.

Professionalism?

Dear Sir,
With the publication in the recent gazette of the national rankings as at July 31st, I was struck by the fact that the debate on professionalism must now be largely outflanked.

If some people can chalk up as many as 90 competitive open games by mid-season, then whether they are pros or amateurs is surely an irrelevance. Either way the rest of us cannot hope to compete with this level of activity, or with the consistency that it must inevitably bring.

Perhaps a Pro-circuit of tournaments would then release some of the rest of the silverware for mere mortals, who have to work for a living.

Jon Watson,
Stevenage.

In praise of croquet works

Dear Sir,
'Plus One - On Time' has given me The insight into croquetry. To make the breaks more feasible Any many strokes more 'pleasible'!

My handicap is coming down My brow no longer wears a frown - I know exactly what to do When I am wired at hoop two.

The only thing that I regret Is stopping at penultimate. I could have got a silver medal For running twelve when in fine fettle.

Don Gaunt's fine book deserves a attention - I hope you'll give this plug a mention - It's made a difference to me. Why don't you try it out and see.

Clinn Cardis,
Swindon.

Too hasty?

Dear Sir,
I have been less than just to Mr Charles Townsend of Townsend Croquet: he is a notably generous man who sells much of his equipment at knock-down prices and has even been known to give away whole sets of not-quite-perfect hoops. I was aware of this when writing about his mallets and should have differentiated between 'Firsts' and 'Seconds'.

I still maintain, however, that some of his Junior Club mallets are amazingly light. I have been unable to trace the 1lb 8oz mallet that featured in my article, but have recently weighed another which just managed to tip the scales past 2lbs. Moreover, has he not got the principle wrong: does not a weaker person (or child) require a heavy mallet to shift those weighty balls?

No doubt one of croquet's intense young mathematicians will have the answer to that one.

Dorothy Rush,
Brentwood.

Rules in Doubles

Dear Sir,
May I humbly suggest a radical change to the rules of doubles play? As we all know, when A and B are playing together they retain their own colours but do not necessarily play in turn. There are several disadvantages to this, and the greater the disparity between A and B the more following arguments hold good.

In the first place, while A, being the better player, is perhaps taking his ball to Penult, or Rover, and also separating the opponents when necessary, B will have a very long period of sitting out. Moreover, if a separation has to be undertaken from a position when it is to no particular advantage to either ball to undertake the job, it will fall to A - being the better player - to do it, thus increasing still further the inactivity of B. In the latter part of the game, admittedly, A's arms will



Andrew Bennet, 1988 'Coach of the Year', takes a lunch break whilst managing the Advanced Weekend at Southport.

New tournament ideas

Dear Sir,
I was very interested to read the letter from Alex Jardine in the September issue of 'Croquet' as I agree with him that there is a need for competitive play other than that provided by tournaments arranged under the auspices of the Croquet Association.

The South East Croquet Federation (SECF) organises (like most other Federations) an Association League for constituent members as well as Golf Croquet League. The format is deliberately chosen so that matches can be played in half-day alone or as part of a whole day match, or during an evening. Four matches have to be played during the season but the same players do not have to play in each match.

In addition, SECF recognises that many players are rather shy at entering a tournament for the first time, and therefore SECF arranges several one day tournaments throughout London and the South East. Most are designed to attract higher handicap players, so that a lower handicap limit (at entry) of 10 is often imposed. These events are well supported and enjoyed, and being just one day long, waiting

stiffen up through lack of swinging while he wearily waits for his less able partner to complete the course.

When A and B are of equal ability these arguments, I confess, do not apply so strongly, but even then one can sit out for a long period, and also there may be serious alterations as to who should play next.

My proposal is that turns should be taken in strict rotation and that when it is A's turn he can play, say, black or blue and similarly with B. This will ensure that each has the same number of turns; it will not make B (the weaker player) dependent by lagging far behind and will generally speed up the game. For years my family and friends played like this, under the delusion that it was the right way, with much enjoyment.

To forestall critics, the one disadvantage of my proposal is that the strength of a team should be in

its weakest link, and with my method the weaker player would not have such a vital part to play, even though he would be playing one turn in four.

I trust that the Croquet authorities will bend over backwards to give my proposal due consideration.

Andrew Potter,
Bristol.

Overseas tournaments 1988 J & B South African Championships

Dear Sir,
Once again Reginald Bamford swept all before him in the J & B South African Croquet Championships. In the round-robin open singles he lost only one game, to 17 year old Andrew Knox, and emerged a clear winner with Gary Culligan as runner-up. In the doubles Bamford and Knox dominated the event winning both the draw and the process, with newcomer Nicholas Harvey and Sybil Barras runners-up in both. Harvey made a clean sweep of the round-robin restricted singles while Corry Carter beat Leslie Riggall to win the Veterans. The main handicap event was won by Bamford in a plus two cliff-hanger against Carter and once again Bamford took the Golf Croquet honours.

Although several top performers were unable to compete at Maritzburg, including the Barlows, the tournament did indicate that the number of young low bisquers in South Africa is steadily growing and that standards are improving.

Carole Knox,
Secretary,
South African Croquet Assoc.,
Cape Town, SA.

West Province Croquet Tournament

Dear Sir,
The 17th Western Province Croquet Tournament will be held at the Rondebosch Croquet Club, Cape Town, from 11th to 18th March 1989 (our summertime) and we cordially invite all interested members of the croquet fraternity to participate. I have sent details of the tournament to the CA Office, and we would welcome overseas visitors to stimulate competition.

Whilst writing, may I take the opportunity to tell you that the interesting articles published in 'Croquet' are thoroughly enjoyed over here.

Peggy Matchell,
Secretary,
Western Province Croquet
Association,
116 Highway, Fisk Hoek,
7975 South Africa.

Your Letters

Croquet Classic

Polesden Lacey: 10 September Another Nail-Biting Finish

Report by Chris Hudson

This year's National Final was played at Polesden Lacey, a major National Trust property forming part of a 1000-acre estate near Dorking in Surrey. The Regency house was built about 1824 on a North Downs site once owned by the playwright Sheridan, and it is the seventh most popular property for National Trust visitors.

The Hon Mrs Ronald Greville, a celebrated hostess, extended the house in the 1900s and often entertained royalty, including Edward VII, George V and Queen Mary, and George VI and Queen Elizabeth who honeymooned at Polesden Lacey in 1923. The house retains its leisured Edwardian atmosphere, with a fine collection of porcelain, silver, furniture, and paintings, but unfortunately many of the trees planted by the Royals who stayed there were lost in last year's gale.

David Higgs and myself laid out 9 short croquet lawns on the Friday ready for the fray, seven on the area actually described in the Guide Book as 'the croquet lawn' and two at the side of the house. Both lo-

cations afforded a perfect setting, having grass banks on which spectators could sit, and a lovely view across the valley. The only drawback was that the sides of the valley were steep, and during play we were to see many players rush off the lawn to catch a ball before it reached the valley bottom some 300 feet below.

The 16 finalists began to arrive early on the Saturday morning, keen to knock up before the start. They came from many backgrounds and ranged in age from 13 to 64 (see insert). All had played at least six matches to reach the final, some starting off hosting games in their own gardens, and others coming through by means of group competitions organised by local newspapers, hotels, businesses, croquet clubs, schools, universities, and groups of croquet-playing neighbours.

The sixteen players were divided into four blocks of four, with the players in each block playing each other to determine the four block winners. The winners then played semi-finals and a final to determine

the 1988 Garden Champion.

The sun shone and provided us with a glorious summer day throughout. The players began to play, and it very soon became apparent that each block was going to be very close. If one player got well in front, then more often than not his opponent made a good break and caught up.

In Block 1, Gillian Noble-Jones began with a narrow win on time against Mike Hawthorn, and then after lunch found herself playing against the youngest competitor, Jonathan Rathbone, to decide the block winner. She won in a nail-biting finish, 13-12 on time.

In Block 2, Alex Lever had two convincing wins by +12, but then inexplicably lost his form to lose to William Steadman, not scoring a single point. However, John Bone played steadily to pick up 2 wins and Alex took the block on net points.

In Block 3, again there were three players each with 2 wins, but Stephen Pratt came through on points as he had two substantial wins against Bryn Lewis and Alan Stockwell, and only a narrow loss to Andrew Brown.

In Block 4, Alan Evans looked impressive, winning all three of his games fairly decisively before time was called.

So we came to the semi-finals. Gillian Noble-Jones against Alex Lever, and Stephen Pratt against Alan Evans. Alex got off to a flying

start, making 6 hoops in one break, but he made a mistake on the last stroke of this turn and left Gillian wired from her partner ball. Taking the lift, Gillian took her ball through six hoops and left Alex with a long shot from one end of the lawn to the other. Alex hit in with a magnificent shot, pegged Gillian out, and went on to win.

In the other semi-final, Stephen started well and soon had both balls on hoop 4. Alan countered after a while by taking one of his balls round to hoop 6 where he stuck. Stephen hit in and kept hold of the innings, making one hoop at a time and leaving Alan long roquets to hit at every turn. This was a sound tactic on a 'garden' lawn, and led to several trips down into the valley to retrieve balls.

With one ball on the peg, Stephen broke down with his partner ball at hoop 6 and let Alan in. Alan made hoop 6 and pegged out his opponent's ball, leaving himself for peg and 2, and Stephen for hoop 6. Stephen played his ball into an empty corner three. Alan hit in on the South boundary, and produced a spectacular roll shot to take position for hoop 2. Having made hoop 2, he took position for hoop 3 with Stephen's ball lurking ominously nearby. But then disaster! He stuck on the wire of hoop 3 and left Stephen with an easy roquet and victory.

A brief interval whilst the lawn was marked out for the final, and



Chris Hudson (left) congratulates Howard Taylor on winning one of the Regional Finals at Bowdon.

RESULTS

Block 1

Winner: Mrs G. Noble-Jones (3 wins) bt J. Rathbone +1(T), J. Sheehy +5(T), and M. Hawthorn +2(T).

Runner-Up: J. Rathbone (2 wins) bt M. Hawthorn +2(T), and J. Sheehy (wo).

3rd place: J. Sheehy (1 win) bt M. Hawthorne +5(T).

Block 2
Winner: A. Lever (2 wins) bt J. Bone +12 and A. Pidcock +12.

Runner-Up: J. Bone (2 wins) bt A. Pidcock +6(T) and W. Steadman +14.

3rd place: W. Steadman (2 wins) bt A. Lever +14 and A. Pidcock +7(T).

Block 3
Winner: S. Pratt (2 wins) bt B. Lewis +10 and A. Stockwell +13.

Runner-Up: A. Brown (2 wins) bt S. Pratt +3(T) and A. Stockwell +12.

3rd place: B. Lewis (2 wins) bt A. Brown +3(T) and A. Stockwell +13.

Block 4
Winner: A. Evans (3 wins) bt R. Alexander +10, O. Linton +6 and H. Taylor +6.

Runner-Up: R. Alexander (2 wins) bt O. Linton +4(T) and H. Taylor +10.

3rd place: H. Taylor (1 win) bt O. Linton +4(T).

PLAY-OFF
Semi-Finals
A. Lever bt Mrs G. Noble-Jones +6; S. Pratt bt A. Evans +6.

Final
A. Lever bt S. Pratt +1(T).

then into action again. Alex Lever looked as though he would win hands down with little opposition, as Stephen Pratt seemed unable to get to grips with the speed of the lawn, repeatedly going off on his croquet shots and bringing his turn to an end. So Alex was soon round



The two finalists: Stephen Pratt (left) and Alex Lever.

ward ball went well to the side of the hoop and the hoop was unrunnable. With the scores dead level, Alex took his last turn, playing the ball for the peg. An easy roquet, down to the peg, and the peg out to a great cheer from the crowd.... but his other ball was not a rover!

then into action again. Alex Lever looked as though he would win hands down with little opposition, as Stephen Pratt seemed unable to get to grips with the speed of the lawn, repeatedly going off on his croquet shots and bringing his turn to an end. So Alex was soon round

to peg and rover before Stephen had scored a point. However Stephen then got in and in two good breaks got his first ball round to rover and was taking his second ball round when time was called. Carefully manoeuvring the balls into position, Stephen was perfectly placed to peel his forward ball through rover. He did this successfully, but a slight lapse of concentration meant that his back-

Consternation! Players surrounded by managers! Play continues under 'sudden death' conditions! Jockeying for position. Stephen approaches rover but fails to get position. More jockeying. Stephen approaches again, gets a poor position, has a go but fails to make the hoop. Alex hits a relatively easy roquet, makes rover and takes the title. A splendid finish to a most exciting game!



The 'Bryn Lewis Support Team' take lunch at Polesden Lacey.

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Croquet Classic

NOTICE

All in all, some 500 players took part in this year's Croquet Classic. Many of them have already joined their local clubs and the CA. Next year, our target is to have 1000 players taking part, and many clubs have found this year that a group entry works wonders for their new recruits.

The Conditions for next year's Croquet Classic will remain unaltered, to allow anyone to enter provided their handicap is not 18 or less. Group entries (minimum 8 players) will be accepted up to 31st May, 1989.

Copies of 'The Croquet Handbook' which were provided to each competitor are available from the CA Office, price 50p. This booklet gives all the basic rules, tactics, and techniques in a nutshell and has been very well received by those just taking up the game.

PRIZE COMPETITIONS

The closing date for entries for the 'Best Photo' and 'Best Article' related to the Croquet Classic is 30th November, 1988. If you would like to enter, please make sure you meet this deadline!

THE FINALISTS

ROBERT ALEXANDER

Aged 31, from Dartford, Kent. Arable and Dairy Farmer, farming 850 acres with his father and brother. Took up garden croquet 2 years ago, and plays in a local croquet 'league' at Wrotham on 6 local lawns in the players' own gardens. Plays squash, and is a keen 200cc motor cycle triallist.

JOHN BONE

Aged 47, from High Wycombe, Bucks. Fire Consultant, supplying fire-fighting equipment and advice on fire regulations. Started playing croquet in May this year, when he joined the High Wycombe Croquet Club. Has played Rugby for Buckinghamshire. Keen gardener and member of the Rotary Club.

ANDREW BROWN

Aged 29, from London. Marketing Controller for Bisto Gravy with Rank Hovis MacDougall. Studied History at Cambridge, where he had his first taste of 'real' croquet, having played before on a lawn full of flower beds at his parents' home in Scotland. Founder member with his wife of a new Croquet Club in Ealing which they formed in June this year. A golfer with a handicap of 12.

ALAN EVANS

Aged 29, from Bristol. Has an MSc in Astronomy and is the Scientific Editor for the Institute of Physics. Joined Bristol Croquet Club in 1987, having played croquet in his garden for some time before that. A bridge player and a member of the Campaign for Real Ale.

MIKE HAWTHORN

Aged 45, from Stafford. A former computer analyst, now a Junior School Supply Teacher. Has a degree in maths. Keen tennis player and cyclist. First played croquet 20 years ago, and reached the Regional Finals of the Croquet Classic last year. A committee member of the recently formed Stafford Croquet Club. Planned to cycle from Stafford to Polesden Lacey for the Final.

ALEX LEVER

Aged 20, from London. A student at Cambridge University studying Aeronautical Engineering. President of Cambridge University's Jewish Society and former National Chairman of the Jewish Youth Group. Aiming to get a pilot's licence as soon as possible. Has played garden croquet with his parents since the age of 3, and now plays croquet at the University.

BRYN LEWIS

Aged 64, from Bury St Edmunds. A retired RAF Wing Commander, now working as Employment Officer for the Regular Services Employment Association. Has played garden croquet for 20 years or so, and helped to found the Bury St Edmunds Croquet Club in 1986. A former International Rugby Referee, he now acts as a Rugby Referee Assessor.

OLIVER LINTON

Aged 41, from Bridgnorth, Shropshire. Head of Physics at Wolverhampton Grammar School. Introduced to croquet at Cambridge University, he plays the game at school and joined Himley Croquet Club in June this year. A computer buff, keen on electronics, model railways and walking.

GILLIAN NOBLE-JONES

Aged 54, from East Horsley in Surrey. Runs a bed-sit organisation, dabbles as an antique dealer, and is a Director of a Ball Bearing factory in the Midlands. Played garden croquet for several years before joining Woking Croquet Club in May this year. She is the first lady ever to reach the National Final of the Croquet Classic.

ALAN PIDCOCK

Aged 49, from Preston, Lancs. Professor of Chemistry at Lancashire Polytechnic. First played croquet at Oxford about 20 years ago. After his first round match in this year's Croquet Classic, he joined Southport Croquet Club. A keen golfer, who has played Chess at County level.

STEPHEN PRATT

Aged 26, from Earby, near Colne, Lancs. Works for Craven District Council in the Housing Management Dept at Skipton. Started playing croquet this year, and has now joined Pendle Croquet Club. A keen sportsman, he also plays 5-a-side football and squash. Interested in photography.

JONATHAN RATHBONE

Aged 13, from Ruthin, Clwyd. In his first term at Winchester College. The youngest of 5 children. Broke his leg skiing at the age of 7, and learnt to play croquet whilst his leg was mending. Continued playing croquet at Packwood Haugh Prep School, near Shrewsbury. Keen on water-skiing and sailing, also plays tennis and golf.

JONATHAN SHEEHY

Aged 24, just moved to Cheltenham where he is getting married a week after the Final. Area Marketing Manager for Shell (UK) Oil. Played garden croquet for 10 years with his parents. Plays cricket for Knowle and Dorrige in the Midlands League. Studied Geography at University.

WILLIAM STEADMAN

Aged 26 from Somerset, Somerset. A Science Teacher at a Dorchester Prep School. Started playing croquet in April this year, when he joined Kingston Maurward Croquet Club. Plays badminton. A keen violinist.

ALAN STOCKWELL

Aged 54, from Barnes, London. A retired Fire Officer from the London Fire Brigade, and now a part-time Administrative Secretary for the Croquet Association. Started playing croquet at the end of 1987. A founder member of Vine Road Croquet Club, whose ground is owned by Richmond Council.

HOWARD TAYLOR

Aged 26, from Manchester. A Bookmaker with the William Hill organisation. Plays about 3 games of garden croquet a year. A keen cricketer, he also plays golf and rides horses. Owns a part share in a racehorse that finished second on one occasion last year.

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SOUTHWICK Fun for High-Bisquers

Report from Eileen Cheverton & other Cheltenham Ladies

A relaxed atmosphere, sunshine and lots of friendly, helpful people were the hall-marks of the new-style High Bisquers' Tournament held at the Sussex County Croquet Club at Southwick from 14 to 19 June. This was mainly for people unused to tournament play and was open to a handicap range of 10 to 18. Players came from a number of clubs in the southern half of England.

The tournament took a rather different form from others, in that the number of hoops run decided the winner of the block, not the number of games won. The first set of blocks was played over three days, the second over the next three days. Only those playing for six days could hope to win the magnificent new salver produced for the occasion. A time limit of two hours for each 18-point game (1 and 3-back) contributed to the absence of hurry sometimes experienced at tournaments when managers have to juggle with players and lawns and several events.

The tournament was ably and charmingly managed by Pat Shine who put everyone at their ease and never seemed put out by any of the queries and problems raised by her flock. She was assisted, equally ably and charmingly, by Pat Asa-Thomas, who should have been

playing in the Men's and Women's Championships at Cheltenham. She had given this up to act as the Referee and impart the correct knowledge of tournament play and customs of the game.

All the participants are extremely grateful to the two Pats for all the time and hard work put into making this tournament such an enjoyable occasion, and also to Edith Tucker who, with Colin Chandler, managed innumerable one-ball games which were laid on to keep players out of mischief in the intervals between their more serious games, and for which there was a small prize.

The more or less constant supply of coffee and the excellent lunches and teas provided by a willing catering team kept up the strength and spirits of all. At the end of the six days the winner of the new salver was Ken Bright (Bath) with a score of 159 hoops.

Novice croquet players, unused to tournaments, should certainly make a point of visiting Southwick next summer for this helpful and very enjoyable occasion. Those at the lower end of the bisque scale, some of whom had previously played in tournaments, also found it very worthwhile and at times a challenge to be giving a number of bisques rather than receiving them.

as our Bible we proceeded to unravel the mysteries of croquet.

This then is our first season, which has been hard going especially as the majority of our 40 strong membership are new to the game and with mutterings of 'I'll never get the hang of this' and 'I should have stuck to bowls', we pressed on with our training. We have ventured out to one or two clubs occasionally when we could muster 4 people together on one day who knew enough about the game to make the end result a respectable loss. At this point I must apologise to those clubs to whom we owe a return match as we seem to have run out of time; we'll make up for it next year.

Our tournament was a great reward to me, with the sun out for a change and seven 'Vine Roaders' entered into this our first Tourny, organised by the S.E. Federation and managed by Richard Hilditch who did a grand job but how he managed to get me to write the report I'll never know.

We had 18 entrants for this 18 point Swiss on our half lawns double banked, (I've never seen so

CRAWLEY

Crawley Open New Pavilion

Report by Len and Jean Nash

Crawley's new pavilion, providing a much needed refuge from the elements, was opened by John Solomon on 30 July.

In the five years since the club started many events have been staged ranging from club matches to an international televised event - (demonstrations by the New Zealand Test Team three years ago). To provide shelter a tent was erected by the lawns each time a match took place and a large marquee erected for the benefit of players and onlookers at the time of the New Zealanders visit.



Crawley's new pavilion takes shape.

At weekends, with the encouragement of the croquet playing architects and surveyor, members willingly abandoned their mallets in favour of spades to dig out and lay foundations. There were found to be some promising bricklayers in the club! Members turned carpenters to erect the pavilion but their tiling efforts were delayed by

West Sussex Jamboree Camp, 1988

Report by Jean Nash

Golf Croquet was one of the myriad of activities on offer to some two thousand or so scouts and guides at the Jamboree held at Ardingly in late July and early August. Short courses were held by Len and Jean Nash of Crawley Club. Three sessions daily for four days enabled over 150 youngsters, of all nationalities, to learn and practise Golf Croquet. Scouts and guides from America, Europe and Japan batt-

led with mallets and balls over tufted meadowland. Language barriers disappeared as they endeavoured to outwit one another at the hoops. Crawley Club hopes that some local scouts who showed interest in learning Association Croquet, as demonstrated by David Williams, will take up the offer by Crawley Club to give them further instruction.

many balls flying about in such a small space). Now I suppose I should be reporting on the game, who played, the scores and what colour socks they wore but please remember I'm very new to all this and fortunately Richard took the result sheet with him. I can say that the final was played off between Tony Sheppard (High Wycombe) and Perry Walker (Vine Road) who eventually won the trophy in a shoot out at peg as the park keeper was threatening to shut the recre-

ation ground on us. So I'm not sure how to score this, how about 'Walker bt Sheppard 'Plus Peg On Time'. Anyway a good day was had by all.

So, with this win, enthusiasm is now running high here in sleepy valley and I think we are set to challenge in '89'; I've even reached my target of 3 C.A. members for this year. I will also take this opportunity to thank all those who have supported us this year including the C.A. and S.E. Federation.

BOURNEMOUTH Club finals at Bournemouth

Report by Muriel Berry

15 year old Anthony Colbeck and his partner Jose Howlett beat Anthony's grandmother Yvonne Colbeck and her partner, Harry Cox, in the doubles. Anthony also won the A group singles competition, in which Peter Corbett was the runner-up. John Zebedee won

the B group singles, with Peter Donovan the runner-up.

On Sunday, 18th September, the club was visited by Kingston Maward when beginners from both clubs played their first 'friendly' matches. It is hoped to arrange a return visit.



Club President Arthur Cowley with the Bournemouth Club's finalists.

PLYMOUTH

A Year in the Life of the Plymouth Croquet Club
Report by Alan Backway

Just a year old, the Plymouth Croquet Club!! It does not seem to be just over fourteen months ago, on 23rd June 1987, that an inaugural meeting in Plymouth Civic Centre was held, under the chairmanship of Peter Danks, South West Regional Coaching Officer and the support of Don Waterhouse, Recreation and Amenities Officer, Plymouth City Council. Thirty plus members duly joined to form the Plymouth Croquet Club and a steering Committee was set up with Allen Backway as pro-tem Chairman until the first Annual General Meeting in November 1987. Peter Danks offered to coach six two hourly sessions, twice a day, within a fortnight from 27th July 1987.

Little was it realised what enthusiasm would be engendered for such excellent coaching or how tiring it would be for Peter Danks. Thank you Peter for all your effort on our behalf. Now we have three and a half full size Croquet Lawns on top of the Hartley covered Reservoir, surely the only Croquet Club to play over water and we have at present adequate Croquet equipment on loan for our 50 plus members.

Our crowning glory, in early 1988, was the erection of our secondhand wooden Clubhouse, 12 feet wide by 40 feet long and the acquiring and erecting is quite a story in itself.

It started with our Chairman, Allan Backway, asking for a Hut or Shed brochure from a local DIY store, Messrs Chaplins. A storage hut was for sale at the unbelievable price of £500, later reduced because of damage, to £400. That was in January 1988.

The committee readily agreed to the purchase of the hut and then, the subsequent three months delay in obtaining Planning Permission and Grant Aid. However, in May 1988 we were able, with the help of a willing band of members to lay a level 100 concrete block base. After some initial delivery delays, a team of three young contractors erected the five sectional hut in one long day of 12 hours. The estimated building costs had now risen to £1,500 including a new 'Weyroc' floor, guttering, drainage, planning fees and erection costs etc. We are grateful to the Plymouth Leisure Services committee for a grant of £750 towards the cost and to those members of our Club for the total interest free loans, repayable in five years of approximately £700.

Now we have a hard working Committee, a spacious Clubhouse, toilet facilities in Hartley Park (which hopefully will be improved) and a partly furnished interior. The exterior has been given two coats of Red Cedar wood preservative by a team of eight members.

We have had welcome coaching from David and Marie Purdon of

HARWICH & DOVERCOURT

An Indoor Match

Report by Charles Townsend

Harwich and Dovercourt Croquet Club do not boast any international stars. Our court last summer was slow, slow, appallingly slow. However, we do play throughout the winter in the hall of the Countryman Club, using Townsend Croquet's special Indoor Croquet equipment. It was therefore with some trepidation that we challenged Colchester Croquet Club to an indoor Croquet match. Teams were to be of 2 players each (all Harwich and Dovercourt could rustle up) and the match was to be 4 singles and one doubles. Each game to have a 10 minute time limit.

The Colchester team duly arrived, consisting of Paul Elliott and Jonathan Collis. Harwich and Dovercourt's team was Charles Townsend and Steve Harbron, neither of whom had ever had a handicap.

Charles Townsend then discovered he had forgotten the carpet tape used to stick down the hoops. However, he quickly got round this problem by explaining it was much quicker to set up the court if the hoops weren't stuck down and anyway, he said he had

had them set very narrow. In a five minute practice before the match Jonathan Collis discovered just how narrow when his ball was unable to pass through hoop 4.

The hoop being quickly widened, the match got under way. In the first game, Steve Harbron (H&D) beat Paul Elliott (C) 3-1. In the second, Charles Townsend (H&D) beat Jonathan Collis (C) 4-1. (Harwich and Dovercourt's experience with the indoor balls was holding up well). In Game 3 Jonathan Collis beat Steve Harbron 1-0 (Colchester gaining experience), while in Game 4 Charles Townsend beat Paul Elliott 3-2 (Harwich and Dovercourt win!).

The Scottish dancers who had the hall booked after us were late arriving so the final game was extended to 15 minutes. Colchester won this 4-3 and we retired to the bar. Harwich and Dovercourt had won their first Croquet match.

However, you can't keep Colchester Club down. Steve Harbron was rapidly persuaded to join Colchester Croquet Club and then Colchester challenged Harwich and Dovercourt to a return match.

GUERNSEY

Sausmarez Manor hosts first 'Med-Am' Tourney

Report by Andrew Lampert

The Croquet Club of Guernsey was formed five years ago and has about 20 members. The two remaining founder members are Peter de Sausmarez, whose home hosts the club's croquet lawn; and Jeanne Groves.

Four other club members also partnered people from Channel TV, Radio Guernsey, Le Marchant Publishing and the Evening Press in the fight for the OGH Cup.

The challenge was taken rather seriously, all media players turning up religiously for tutoring by club secretary Andrew Lampert - and in

the rain at that.

The exciting competition lasted all day. North American Stockbrokers Dean Witter Reynolds (Canada) Inc. organised the Buffet Lunch and had the novel idea of fixing small brass plates with their company name inscribed on them above each hoop!

The Old Government House (OGH) Hotel had a Cocktail Party for players and spectators after the match on the lawns at Sausmarez Manor and donated a cup to the winners, Andrew Lampert and Susie Lloyd.

Budleigh Salterton Croquet Club and Tony Brand of Exeter Croquet Club with help from Ivor and Richard Brand, for which beneficial coaching many thanks from our members.

We have ventured into the B League of the South West Federation and, rather to our surprise, finished second to Sidmouth.

In this, our first Croquet season, we have had two internal competitions, a Golf Croquet Competition and a Short Croquet Tournament. Next year we hope to have several more tournaments and engender interest amongst sixth form Coll-

ege pupils in Association Croquet. A social fund-raising events programme for the Autumn and Winter of 1988/89 has been arranged and with a slow, but steadily increasing membership, we hope to maintain our progress in future years.

The Committee cordially invites any Croquet Association members or interested Croquet players in the Plymouth, South Devon and East Cornwall area to join our friendly and sociable Plymouth Croquet Club.

For further details ring Allen Backway (Chairman) on 0752-403056.

Southwick: 4-9 July Croquet has its Mysteries!

Report by The Quins

It was with deep regret that we heard that Edgar Jackson was unable to manage the tournament due to ill-health, but with relief that Paul MacDonald from Roehampton had agreed to take over the onerous task. It meant for him over three hours' work each evening after playing during the day.

There were two events: the handicap singles for the Reckitt Bowl and the handicap doubles for two attractively designed cups. In the former, played as a Swiss competition, contestants were divided into Roundheads and Cavaliers, and the two winners after the six rounds met in a final. The latter was played under the Wheeler rules, according to which partners are changed for each game. The doubles were generally played in the mornings, the singles in the afternoon. The weather obligingly did not interfere with this arrangement, and was indeed exceptionally clement after the first day.

A majority of the players came from clubs other than Southwick, Cheltenham furnishing a particularly formidable contingent; and there was even a Swiss entry for the Swiss.

The croquet was mostly in a minor key; no tps were executed, and if any were planned they remained, as far as the writers of these notes could observe *in-pectore*. There was very little double banking.

The lawns were in excellent condition due to the unremitting attention of Ron Smith and his groundsman throughout the year. It was only on the first day that one of the more distant courts resembled a marsh started with intermittent pools, thus leading to the defeat of Bernard Weitz by a higher bisquer; the high bisquer having sufficient free shots to enable him

Cheltenham: 25-29 July Large Entry for Cheltenham Week

Report by Deborah Latham

'Sunshine and showers' said the weathermen, and 'sunshine and showers' they meant! With the occasional gust of wind thrown in, that's a pretty fair summary of the conditions under which the players competed in this year's July Open Week at Cheltenham. Was it coincidence that, during the brief passing thunderstorm on the Tuesday, no-one with a metal-shafted mallet required the services of a referee...?

There were eighteen visitors to the tournament, drawn together from such diverse locations as

to circumnavigate the pools.

The only other unusual incident occurred in Eileen Mabletoft's match against Peter Howell. At the outset Eileen confessed to be very, very tired and, understandably enough, was trailing badly at the end of the first half of the match. Then her play was suddenly transformed from the mediocre to the scintillating, and when she ended up with a victory (+6) Peter asked himself how it could be that increased effort leading, one would suppose, to even greater exhaustion had resulted in such superlative play. Croquet is a science but it has its mysteries.

Our thanks went to the referees and, above all, to Enid Ross who does so much for the club and who, among all her other kindly acts, saw to it that we ate and drank copiously of the best.

The competitors in the handicap doubles much enjoyed their matches played under the Wheeler rules. If one may venture an opinion it appears to the present writers that these rules result in high bisquers receiving extremely valuable tuition from expert players in the course of the tournament, whilst for the spectators the final itself is robbed of much of its drama in that it tends to present one more expert lesson rather than a tense contest between two pairs, each of which portrays an expertise in collaboration achieved by constant playing together.

RESULTS

Handicap Singles

(28 entries: 2 swiss blocks of 14)
Play-Off: P. Howell (3) bt F. Beard (5) +3.

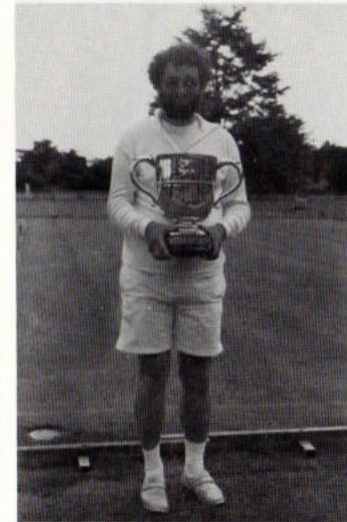
Handicap Doubles

(14 pairs: Wheeler's Rules)
B. Weitz & Miss A.E. Dawson (8½) bt I.P.M. Macdonald & Mrs T.M. Quin (16½) +1(T).

Parsons Green, Ludlow, Phyllis Court, Edgbaston, Hunstanton, Wolverhampton, Roehampton, Harrow Oak, Reigate, Southwick, Nottingham, Budleigh Salterton and Bath. What were the two managers going to unleash upon us? The structure for the week devised by playing manager Ian Maugham and non-playing 'assistant' manager Edgar Jackson was to play all singles in qualifying blocks and both doubles events as swiss, with a minimum of four games guaranteed in every event, although many games were short-

ened and all were time-limited.

This format unfortunately saw the demise of the hopes of last year's Daniels Cup winner, Nancy Lenfesty, being one of the unlucky block 'seconds' who failed to get into the subsequent play-offs, unlike the ten block winners and the six 'best' runners-up. The qualifying stage of the Daniels saw Ron Selmes' best game of the week, beating the playing manager +25 and thereby earning threats to his handicap (which failed to materialize, no doubt much to his relief!). In the semi-final stage Ray Jones suffered 'a sadness'



David Foulser, winner of the Cheltenham Challenge Cup.

against John Toye, who pegged out both players' forward balls with himself for penultimate and Ray for the third. The other semi-final was christened (by Alan Girling, I believe) the 'family singles', wherein Paul and Sally Watson found themselves facing each other for the remaining place in the final.

Sally went round on the fifth turn without using any of her three bisques, saving them for finishing on the seventh turn. Paul spent the game reflecting on 'how well' he'd taught Sally, and being applauded by the gallery each time he removed a bisque! Sally was equally thorough in the final, though it must be remembered that, considering the number of bisques he'd had to concede through the event, John Toye had done very well to be there!

The Challenge Cup was returned from the previous holder by amicable imposition upon the good nature of Paul Hands, who materialized at the club just long enough to appear in this report, though not the tournament. The event provoked a good standard of play from its entrants. Paddy Paddon's results did not reflect the quality of his performance, while Dennis Moorcraft was inspired to perform the

only completed triple of the week. Smokey Eades was helped into the play-offs by dint of a good win against Laurence Latham, coming back from two-back and rover with Laurence needing only to peg out his remaining ball and less than a quarter of an hour to go. Smokey's reward for this feat was to face the inexorable Dave Foulser in the semi-finals, while Dennis Moorcraft tackled Ian Maugham, John Toye having failed to qualify on points from a three-way tie on wins. Dave proved unstoppable in the final against Ian, despite an uncompleted triple, and the Challenge Cup once again adorns the Foulser mantlepiece.

There was a very high entry in the Money Salver and Asa-Thomas handicap range, causing the management to create a 'Fourth Class'. The anomalies produced by this may perhaps be illustrated by the situation of Deborah Latham - last year in the Money Salver, this year in the untrophied 'Fourth Class'! Each of the foregoing finals were played between the winners of the two blocks of five in each respective event. Thus the Money Salver was disputed by Paul Watson and Mike Finn, the latter proving the more successful after a slightly scrappy start. John McLaren achieved the same number of wins as Lawrence Whittaker but was the one who qualified to meet Kismet Whittall in the Asa-Thomas final; however, it was Kismet who triumphed despite some good play from John.



Paul and Sally Watson; both successful at Cheltenham.

The 'Fourth Class' final was between two players who are anything but fourth class - John Willis and Sally Watson, each of whom put on first class performances in their blocks. Yet again Sally produced a clinical maximum points win in a final; her reward at the presentation was an Albatross Streptocarpus, no less! (Hands up

who wouldn't identify that as a white flowering pot plant without prompting...!) It was something of a surprise to find a player of Beryl Gosden's calibre in the Calthrop Cup event, though not to find her in the final. Nonetheless all credit to Ingeborg Moorcraft, regaining the Calthrop after a five year hiatus. As a footnote, it must be said that it was gratifying to see the Calthrop being won by a player truly in the class for which it was intended, rather than by one of those meteorically rising 'bandits' who so often appear in such events.

Last year's holders of the Barwell Salvors - David Ruscombe-King and Jean Wraith - fell victim to Ian Maugham's and John Willis' progress to the final, where they met Bo Harris and John McLaren. With Ian's shooting 'falling off' as Bo's 'came on', and John McLaren's streak of good play throughout the tournament lasting to the end of this game, it was difficult to repress a smile at the sight of Bo delightfully embracing her partner after the peg-out. It was pleasing to see John McLaren receive a tangible token of his playing ability after several years with a distinct dearth of trophies.



Bo Harris and John McLaren, winners of the Barwell Salvors.

There was only one problem with watching the Barwell Salvors final being played on court one - if spectating from the clubhouse one was in distinct danger of getting a crick in the neck from continued angling of the head to the left. The master plan had doubtless been to play doubles finals concurrently, but the protagonists in the family doubles final on court eight had other ideas about that! Roger and Dab Wheeler, for the third time in four years, were runners-up for the Secretary's Spoon, and this time never even took croquet against Paul and Sally Watson, who were playing to the same high standard they had displayed throughout the week. Whatever are things coming

to? I mean to say, whoever heard of the family doubles final starting after lunch on the last day and finishing before two o'clock?!



John Toye, finalist in the Daniels Cup.

The handicap alterations which concluded the final presentation included reductions for several finalists, including Mike Finn, Kismet Whittall, Ingeborg Moorcraft, and Beryl Gosden. The cuts which caused the most complete lack of surprise were Paul Watson from 3½ to 2, and Sally Watson from 6½ to 4. Alan Bogle also had a handicap cut, and since he had kept pegging his opponents out and still losing, we concluded it was a reward for showing an enterprising spirit!

All credit to the many 'behind-the-scenes' workers and to the managers for another successful July tournament. The competitors were certainly inspired - look at how many finals were won by the maximum score! And by the occasional person who wasn't called Sally Watson...!!!

RESULTS

Class Events

(All with 10 entries: 2 American Blocks)

Cheltenham Cup

Play-Off: D. Foulser bt F.I. Maugham +26.

Money Salver

Play-Off: M.J. Finn bt Dr P.A. Watson.

Asa-Thomas Trophy

Play-Off: Mrs K. Whittall bt J. McLaren +12.

Fourth Class

Play-Off: Mrs S. Watson bt J.H. Willis.

Calthrop Cup

Play-Off: Mrs D.H. Moorcraft bt Mrs B. Gosden +10.

Daniels Cup

(50 entries: Handicap Singles)
Block Winners: J. McLaren (4), J. Toye (0), P.A. Darby (3½), R.S. Eades (2), A.J. Bogle (3½), Mrs K. Turtle (10), D. Ruscombe-King (4), Mrs S. Watson (6½), Dr P.A. Watson (3½), and D.H. Moorcraft (½).

Play-Off

Semi-Finals: Mrs Watson bt Dr Watson +26; Toye bt Dr R.C. Jones +10.
Final: Mrs Watson bt Toye +26.

Handicap Doubles

(11 family pairs: Swiss)
Winners: Dr & Mrs P. Watson (4 wins).

Barwell Salvors

(Handicap Doubles: 14 pairs)
Winners: Mrs G.D. Harris & J. McLaren (4 wins).

Hurlingham: 30 July-6 August Summer at last!

Report by Jean Henderson

Summer arrived for the Hurlingham Tournament - in fact the only water on the lawns was when the sprinkler on lawn 1 leaked and produced a pool. The ground staff appeared at 6.00 on Sunday evening to deal with it immediately.

The length of games and consequent lawn use was as usual a lottery - in the first round of the Mixed Doubles Nigel Aspinall and Debbie Prentis beat John Haigh and Mrs McDiarmid in 1 hour 10 minutes (+25TP) but the longest game, the final of the Baillieu Plate, lasted about 5 hours and over-ran prize giving. Gerald Wombwell beat Michael Pearson.

Martin Fox did a great job as Tournament Handicapper and Michael Pearson led an able team of referees who were kept on their toes going from the front lawns over to the cricket field and back.

The competitors were keen and prompt - the lawns were always in use on time at the 10am start. The managers (Nigel Aspinall and Michael Henderson) worked on a first come first lawn choice basis. The lawns were in immaculate condition; even lawn 2 which had a walnut tree crash onto it during the October hurricane.

In the Ladies Candlesticks, first round, Kitty Godfree, now in her 90's and partnered by Veronica Carlisle, lost to Mrs McDiarmid and Debbie Prentis. The Candlesticks were won by Joanna Prescott and Clare Collis from Wyn Browne and Mrs McDonald.

The first round of the Mixed doubles had two family sides meeting in a particularly friendly match, encouraged by the odd 'Get on with it, Mother', and ended with James and Veronica Carlisle beating Paul and Doreen Torrington (Petrie). Dr and Mrs Wiggins met Nigel and Debbie in a further round but stopped them making a Triple Peel. Nigel and Debbie won the event, beating James and Veronica Carlisle.

In true Hurlingham Cup fashion matches went on until dark - David Wiggins beat Paul Torrington in the growing dusk while Vincent Camroux and Mrs Wiggins had to peg down because of bad light. Mrs Wiggins won at 11.30 the following day.

Aspinall (-2) and Neville Lisle (8) beat John Greenwood (2) and S. Cross (2½) in the 2nd round of the Wine Coolers (+14DP) and could not understand why Cross and Greenwood had not used their half bisque - The reason? The half bisque was Neville's.

Due to a fine TP by Bernard Neal, he and his partner David Godfree beat Norman and Tom Browne in the 3rd round of the Wine Coolers, eventually to be beaten in the final by Aspinall and Lisle (who spent part of his sitting out time polishing this cup which he won with Nigel last year).

The Turner X final was played on Tuesday afternoon, and resulted in Richard Brand beating Martin Haggerston (+7).

In the final of the Younger X, and in the highest temperature this year in the 80's, P.M.A. Corke beat Bob Ponsoby who had celebrated his 77th birthday the previous day.

Mrs Quin, having travelled from Switzerland to play in the Hurlingham week, was beaten in the Longworth X final by Clare Collis (+8).

The Hurlingham Cup was won by Robert Prichard who had to play Jerry Guest to win the Process and then again immediately to win the cup outright (+10). This event also over-ran prize giving.

The Silver Jubilee Cup was won back for Hurlingham by Tom Browne from Robert Pennant-Jones of Roehampton.

RESULTS

Class Events

Hurlingham Cup

(14 entries: Advanced Play)
Draw Final: J.E. Guest bt D.C.D. Wiggins +16.

Process Final: R. Prichard bt J.E. Guest +26.

Play-Off: Prichard bt Guest +10.

Turner Cup

(8 entries: Advanced Play)
Final: R.S. Brand bt M.J.B. Haggerston +7.

Younger Cup

(10 entries: Level Play)
Final: P.M.A. Corke bt R.M.D. Ponsoby.

Longworth Cup

(8 entries: Handicap Play)
Final: Miss C. Collis bt Mrs T.M. Quin +8.

Hurlingham Doubles

(8 pairs)
Final: G.N. Aspinall & Mrs D.F. Prentis bt J. & Mrs V. Carlisle +21TP.

Ladies Field Candlesticks

(8 pairs: Ladies' Handicap Doubles)
Final: Miss Collis & Mrs Prescott bt Mrs Browne & Mrs Macdonald +13.

Wine Coolers

(13 pairs: Men's Handicap Doubles)
Final: G.N. Aspinall & N. Lisle bt D. Godfree & B.G. Neal +22.

Handicap Singles

(30 entries)
Semi-Finals: R. Pennant-Jones bt Miss C. Collis +7; T.N. Browne bt Mrs W.R.D. Wiggins +17.

Final: Browne bt Pennant-Jones +7.

Baillieu Plate

(Handicap 'Y' from above event)
Final: G.A. Wombwell bt M.G. Pearson.

Championships

Bowdon: 20-25 August THE NORTHERN CHAMPIONSHIPS Southport's Super Seven Sweep Report by Mark Saurin

The usual contingent of hopefuls turned up at Bowdon ready to do battle for six and, for some, ten days. A good entry saw players from Bristol, London, Ireland, and a large gathering of 'hackers' from Southport taking part. In fact the week was to be almost completely dominated by those hackers, with Southport players taking seven of the ten events.

In the big Bowdon Handicap competition, Chris Haslam walked into the final only using fifty percent of his total bisques to get there. In the final, he met Colin Wild who has been improving steadily over the past couple of years. Colin showed his experience by slowly wearing Chris down and winning with excellent breaks and leaves, whilst Chris surprisingly did virtually nothing with two bisques. In an earlier round Andrew Bennet played Simon Williams with Andrew thinking Simon was a -1/2 instead of -1 and Simon thinking Andrew was 1 1/2 instead of 2, which meant Andrew didn't receive the correct bisques

and lost. John Haslam won the 'Y' event.

In the other handicap competition, the Reed Cup, the winner was Diana Williamson, another Southport player who managed to play low bisquers whom she kindly trounced easily, beating Andrew Bennet in the final convincingly.

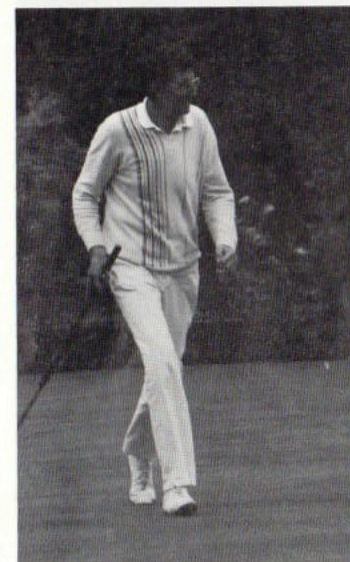
Diana Williamson played well all week and won the handicap doubles with her partner Mark Saurin. A combination of Diana's brilliantly executed 'hit-ins' and Mark's peeling got them to the final where they beat the doubles specialists, Peter Hallett and Dee Bennett in a tense affair. Certain other players would also like it to be known that Mark was the player to use the bisques in his pairing.

Mark, meanwhile, managed to win the most important event in the week, the golf croquet, going one better than last year. He beat Don Cornelius 7-5 in the big final.

So to the class events. The 'A' class was successfully defended by Chris Clarke basically because nobody could take advantage of

the several times he played awfully. He won both the draw and process which meant Ray Ransom played Simon Williams for runner-up and the cheerful Ransom won to make his visit up North worthwhile.

Colin Wild won the 'B' class beating Bennet in the dark on the wet and windy Thursday night. The 'C' class was a family affair with John Haslam playing baby Haslam in the final. Chris Haslam kindly showed what the youth of croquet can do nowadays and beat his father mercilessly. James Hawkins won the 'D' class beating Sheila Meadows in



Southport's John Haslam won the 'Y' handicap singles.

the final with both of them playing well enough to attract the handicapper's eye.

The open doubles was won by Bill Aldridge and David Lendrum, who between them unbelievably managed not to destroy any balls or equipment with their incredibly hard hitting.

The most memorable part of the tournament must be the double banking, a classic example being when Dan Kelly was playing David Appleton in the 'A' class. Dan was forced to slow his play down to get an important wired leave. After about ten minutes he finally decided to play a shot, replaced his ball on the yard line and turned to inspect the result, only to see an exocet missile from David Lendrum destroy everything. The crowd loved every single minute of that matter. Mention should also go to Russell Collighan who in a 'Z' game managed all six peels of a sextuple before over-rolling at rover.

Many thanks to the hoop setters and caterers who did a good job but most of all many thanks to Chris Irwin who did her usual superb job of managing the Northerns. Chris has managed this extremely difficult tournament for the past few years and I think she's deserved the rest she is taking from the job, so thank you from us all. Next year, same time, same place, who wants to manage it? You can send who ever you want to Denzell.

Bowdon: 26-29 August The Championship of the North of England Report by Mark Saurin

Another strong entry arrived on Friday to play in the Northern Championship with the average handicap being approximately minus 1/2. In the first round two of the favourites, Clarke and Openshaw, met with both players showing how badly they can play until eventually David won +5. Other interesting first round results were the present Women's champion beating the present Men's champion and Meads beating Walters when for 6 and out against 6 and peg, +7.

Nothing surprising happened in the second round but in the third round the first big upset took place, with Brian Storey beating Colin Irwin and then Eddie Bell beating Colin. So the defending champion was out; mind you, he unfortunately hurt his wrist during play which doesn't help. Dave Foulser beat Openshaw with a good triple in the draw and then lost to Openshaw, having just the peg out to complete another triple and win in the process.

Unmentioned so far has been

Phil Cordingley who reached both the final of the draw and process. He was playing very well and thoroughly deserved to be the 'bookies' favourite. In the draw final he beat Simon Williams relatively easily and lost to Openshaw in the process final.

And so to the best of three final between Cordingley and Openshaw. Cordingley took the first +17. In the second there was a lot of early 'dourness' which saw both players manage to get death clips at one point in time. Finally David dragged himself to victory in that game to set up a tense third game. Both players showed obvious reluctance to take risks until Cordingley got in and to 4-back. Openshaw missed the lift but Phil failed to get going. Openshaw hit in and got going but broke down at 2-back. Cordingley got to 4-back and peg and Openshaw again missed the lift. It was all over, or was it? Phil surprisingly stuck in 4-back which let in David to have the rigall so 4-back versus 2-back and peg. The Great Britain Captain showed his

true grit as Cordingley got no further chance.

So Openshaw became Northern Champion for the third time. Meanwhile back in the Swiss nobody could stop Steve Lewis who became the first ever winner of the Swiss from Bowdon. Steve also managed to get suitable revenge on Debbie Cornelius, +1 being the score. Let's hear it for Chris Clarke who laid up for a sextuple. He failed to get the cross wire and then realised, having placed his clip on I-back, that his other ball was for hoop 2, what an utter pro. Another game called for the ROT to straighten the peg and then asked could the ROT be straightened because he was crooked.

I would like to mention though Debbie Prentis who although she wasn't playing well kept a smiling face throughout maybe some other people may 'Bear' this approach in mind.

Thanks to everybody at Bowdon Croquet Club for putting up with us all. Thanks to Chris Irwin for her management, single-handedly successful.

To finish, all the players would like to wish John Meads and John McCullough all the best for their forthcoming marriages. Good luck and see you next year!

RESULTS The Northern Championship (32 entries)

DRAW 1st Round

P. Cordingley bt C. Southern +22; R. Collighan bt W.O. Aldridge +26; M.A. Saurin bt J.D. Meads +17; A.F. Sutcliffe bt D.R. Appleton +14; D.K. Openshaw bt C.D. Clarke +5; R.D.C. Prichard bt D.N.S. Peterson +20; D.R. Foulser bt R.W. Ransom +2; E. Bell bt S.E. Lewis +19; M.A. Suter bt Mrs D. Prentis +23; J.R. McCullough bt B.A. Keen +11; J.O. Walters bt Miss D.A. Cornelius +24; S. Williams bt F.I. Maugham +4TP; D.B. Maugham bt P.L. Smith +9; C.J. Irwin bt A. Bennet +22; B.J. Storey bt Mrs F.E. Ransom +16; T.D. Harrison bt C.H. Wild +15.

2nd Round

Cordingley bt Collighan +21; Saurin bt Sutcliffe +26; Openshaw bt Prichard +11; Foulser bt Bell +7; Suter bt McCullough +12; Williams bt Walters +7; Irwin bt D.B. Maugham +23; Storey bt Harrison +10.

Cordingley bt Saurin +17; Foulser bt Openshaw +5TP; Williams bt Suter +4; Storey bt Irwin +2.

Semi-Finals

Cordingley bt Foulser +11; Williams bt Storey +17.

Final

Cordingley bt Williams +17.

PROCESS

1st Round
Southern bt Mrs Prentis +14; Openshaw bt D.B. Maugham +15; Meads bt Walters

+7; Foulser bt Storey +8; Keen bt Collighan +8; Prichard bt Bennet +22; Williams bt Appleton +17TP; Lewis bt Harrison +23; Cordingley bt Suter +8; Clarke bt Smith +26TP; Miss Cornelius bt Saurin +4; Ransom bt Mrs Ransom +14; McCullough bt Aldridge +5; Irwin bt Peterson +25; F.I. Maugham bt Sutcliffe +10, Bell bt Wild.

2nd Round

Openshaw bt Southern +18TP; Foulser bt Meads +24; Prichard bt Keen +23; Lewis bt Williams +26; Cordingley bt Clarke +17TP; Miss Cornelius bt



Bowdon's Dave Watkins in play at Denzell Gardens.

Ransom +23; Irwin bt McCullough +25TP; Bell bt F.I. Maugham +14.

3rd Round

Openshaw bt Foulser +2; Prichard bt Lewis +20; Cordingley bt Miss Cornelius +10; Bell bt Irwin +17.

Semi-Finals

Openshaw bt Prichard +24; Cordingley bt Bell +9.

Final

Openshaw bt Cordingley +24.

PLAY-OFF

Openshaw bt Cordingley -17, +11, +5.

Northern Open Doubles Championship (7 pairs)

Semi-Finals
Collighan & Bennet bt Lamb & Appleton +2; W.O. Aldridge & D.G. Lendrum bt Maugham & Wharrad +2.

Final

Aldridge & Lendrum bt Collighan & Bennet +15.

Northern Golf Croquet Championship (24 entries: 1hr time limit)

Final
Saurin bt D.S. Cornelius 7-5.

Open Singles

(14 entries: Draw & Process)

Final

(Outright Winner) C.D. Clarke; (Play-Off for 2nd Place) Ransom bt Williams +5.

B Class Singles

(11 entries: Advanced Play)

Final

Wild bt Bennet +13.

C Class Singles

(6 entries)

(Continued on Page 5)

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Championships

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1989

As agreed by the Council at its meeting in March 1988 (See 'Croquet' No 198) subscription rates have been increased but a new class of membership for those over age 65 has been created and a composite rate has been introduced for husbands and wives.

Full details of the new rates are set out below.

Will those Associates who pay by Standing Order please remember to alter the instructions given to their bankers in good time to ensure that the correct amount is sent to the Association's bank. A great deal of extra work will fall on Brian Macmillan's shoulders if this is not done. Anyone requiring a new Standing Order Form should contact Brian.

1. Those who pay promptly (i.e. before 1st February 1989) are entitled to a discount.

2. The Fixtures Book will not be despatched to any Associate until his or her relevant subscription has been received in full.

1989 SUBSCRIPTION RATES

The amounts in brackets are the discounted rates which apply if payment is made before 1ST FEBRUARY 1989.

1. The STANDARD RATE of subscription is £18 (£15).

A husband and wife may pay a composite rate of £30 (£24) and both will have all the privileges appertaining to the payment of the STANDARD RATE of subscription except that they will receive only one copy of 'Croquet' and of the Fixtures Book.

2. The VETERANS RATE of subscription is £14 (£12) and applies to those who have attained the age of 65 or over on 31st December 1988.

3. The JUNIOR RATE of subscription is £12 (£10) and applies to those who were under age 21 but not under age 18 on 31st August 1988.

4. The YOUTH RATE of subscription is 58p (£6) and applies to those who were under the age 18 on 31st August 1988.

Payment of the rates of subscriptions 1-4 confers full membership benefits.

5. The NON-TOURNAMENT RATE of subscription is £12 (£9) and is available to Golf Croquet players and others who do not intend to enter tournaments in the list of Calendar Fixtures. Associates in this category have full membership benefits except that they do not receive the Fixtures Book and if they enter tournaments become liable (with certain exceptions) to pay TRIBUTE to the Association.

A husband and wife may pay a composite rate of £18 (£15) and both will have all the privileges appertaining to the payment of the NON-TOURNAMENT RATE of subscription except that they will receive only one copy of 'Croquet'.

6. The OVERSEAS RATE of subscription is £35 which covers a period of three years. This rate applies to those who are habitually resident outside the U.K., Channel Isles, and Isle of Man, and only entitles the subscriber to receive 'Croquet' and to enter tournaments in the list of Calendar Fixtures without payment of TRIBUTE.

Overseas Associates are asked to remit in sterling or to include an additional sum (equivalent to £5) to cover the bank charges for conversion and collection of non-sterling cheques.

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Weekend Tournaments

Colchester: 28-30 May

Report by Pat Hetherington

Brilliant sunshine on the first day, showers on the second and heavy overnight rain, plus more showers - a little water on North boundaries of courts 3 and 4 during morning of third day.

Because of work problems, Jeremy Short was unable to attend the first two rounds. He was substituted by Colchester member Clare Collis.

Rita Stanley-Smith had to retire with a damaged leg and groin strain after round 4. She was substituted by Colchester player Nic Carter.

Results

Winner (6/7 wins): M. Haggerston.
Runner-Up: L. Palmer.

RESULTS ROUND-UP

Nottingham Handicap Weekend: 3-5 June

Block winners

P. Watson, C. Waterfield, A. Tunbridge, Mrs S. Watson.

Crawley Handicap Weekend: 18-19 June

Winner: G. Norman. Runner-Up: M. Strachan.

Bristol Open Weekend: 25-26 June

Block A: Winner, Dr M. Murray; Runner-Up, J.O. Walters.
Block B: Winner, F. Landor; Runner-Up, Dr A. Bray.

Edbaston Handicap Weekend: 15-17 July

Winner: I. McClelland; Runner-Up A. Symons.

Harrow Oak Open Weekend: 30-31 July

Lex Mead Classic: Winner P. Cordingley.

Carrickmines: 1-6 August

Championship of Ireland
Semi-Finals: S. Williams bt Carl von Schmieder +17TP, +25TP; G.P.N. Healy bt T.O. Read +12, -5, +14.
Final: Williams bt Healy +25TP, -4, +19.

Event 2
Final: Charles von Schmieder bt M. McWeeney +7.

Event 3
Winner: M. O'Shaugnessy.

Southwick: 15-20 August

Event 1A winner: A. Symons
Event 1B winner: P. Macdonald.
Event 1C winner: A.J. Oldham.
Event 1D winner: M. Cooperman
Event 2 winner: R. Rogers.
Event 3 winner: Mrs I.G. McDiarmid.
Event 4 winners: Miss P. Shine & Dr B.G.F. Weitz.

Guildford & Godalming Open Weekend: 20-21 August

Winner D.C.D. Wiggins; Runner-Up J.R. Hilditch.

Nottingham: 8-13 August

Event 1 (Robin Hood Gold Cup): Winner J.B. Portwood; Runner-Up A. Tunbridge.
Event 2 (Open Singles): Winner D.B. Maugham; Runner-Up C.D. Clarke.
Event 3 (B Class): Winner A. Symons.
Event 4 (C Class): Winner J. Death.
Event 5 (D Class): Winner G. Norman.
Event 6 (Handicap Doubles): Winners J. Collis & G. Budd.

Surbiton: 9-10 July

Visitors to Surbiton can no longer be surprised by any obstacle placed in their path. Last year it was a locked gate which had to be mounted before admittance could be gained. This year more elaborate plans had been laid and an entire building site had to be traversed. Yes, the much awaited clubhouse is under construction. Nevertheless, twenty-two players completed the crossing and passed a busy and enjoyable weekend.

Surbiton specialises, as do an increasing number of clubs, in intensive two day tournaments. The possession of six, (and next year seven) lawns permits constant play. Six rounds of a swiss were played, two more than the adver-

tised minimum, the last being optional for those less successful.

Even before the first sumptuous lunches were served the manager's ear was burning to tales of the stupendous feats of high bisquers. The resident handicapper was noted for his absence at such moments, especially when one victim discovered evidence of a recent handicap increase for his local opponent playing off 13.

Early tussles showed that Robert Harvey and Simon Tuke were the men to watch, and by the end of Saturday they each had three wins. By lunch on Sunday Harvey was the clear leader, although, much to the handicapper's relief, he was subsequently defeated by Martyn Cooperman, thus opening up the

draw. This caused the manager some consternation as it was now 4pm and he had five contenders each with four wins. The final round dismissed these worries when Cooperman and Harvey emerged with five wins, providing Cooperman with victory and the crowd with an exciting finish.

Much thanks are due to the volunteer groundstaff. The quality of the lawns increases with each tournament. Prospective entrants to next year's tournaments will no doubt be relieved to hear adequate facilities are planned within the clubhouse to ensure that furtive sorties to the ladies public convenience are no longer required.

Harrow Oak: 9-10 July

Report by Martin Kolbuszewski

There aren't all that many weekend handicap tournaments in the London area, so perhaps it was a little surprising that there were only ten entries for this tournament. Those who did come enjoyed a tournament in the usual rather laid-back Harrow Oak style, with the traditional self-service sandwich lunches. The club knife has gone missing, by the way, and if anybody's seen it we'd like it back.

Don Cornelius very kindly presented the club with some cups, which are supposed to be for drinking out of rather than presenting as trophies, so once again the winner of the event was presented with a plastic cup, which he is welcome to get engraved if he can work out how.

The winner on this occasion was Mark James from Bristol, who used his bisques well to collect six wins. Other good performances came from the improving Woking players Sally Watson and Peter Corke (not the well-known typing error from Shropshire) and from David Drazin, a local member playing in his first tournament.

The trees in the Harrow recreation ground which had hardly seen the sun for some weeks, seemed to have decided that autumn had already arrived, and were shedding their leaves on to the lawns. Croquet players and the residents of Harrow are made of sterner stuff, however, and even the old gentleman who stands outside the clubhouse and tells anybody who passes within ten yards that he used to play this game in the garden at home was not put off by the November type weather.

Result

Winner (5 wins): M. James (10).



Ted Scott, block-winner at Hull.

Disgusted he knocked all the balls off the lawn and congratulated Betty. 'Hang on' says Betty 'you're one in front!' 'Oops' says Alan. All the balls were put back for Betty's final shot. Much to the crowd's disappointment she missed but it was good entertainment.

As usual at Hull the hospitality was excellent. 26 of us dined out on the Saturday at the long suffering 'Francos'. Tent erecting proved difficult in the windy conditions of Sunday morning but otherwise things went without a hitch. The catering was excellent and I for one will be back next year if I get in.

RESULTS

Block Winners

K. Hutton (8); Mrs A. Jones (12); A.F. Sutcliffe (0); J.H. Haslam (9); E.E. Scott (3); W.E. Lamb (1/2).

Weekend Tournaments

Ramsgate: 15-17 July

Sample the delights!

Report by Jonathan Collis

Ideally, I believe, a croquet club should have at least four lawns and a view of a church in the middle distance. Many fulfill the former requirement, a few the second, but Ramsgate by a happy chance comes up to both exacting standards with a columned clubhouse thrown in for good measure. The sunny weather of the first two days resulted in some of their little idiosyncracies being revealed; the short grass and clay soil made for fast conditions but also gave free rein to the impudently randomising undulations in one or two of the lawns, as well as shrinking the ground around the hoops; to alleviate the dreaded hoop rattle the carrot holes were regularly watered. The natural watering on Sunday led to much easier conditions, but also to rather tighter hoops.

For this, Ramsgate's second ever tournament, a fairly mixed bag of players turned up, including six players from Colchester Croquet Club who had come in three groups, each unaware of the others. The eighteen competitors were split up by Terry Ballard into three American blocks, and thus a leisurely five games were played by all before the block winners' play-offs. The relaxed format allowed players to use their time off to watch the play of others under the fluttering Union Jack, or sample the delights of the resort, among which must be numbered the catering of Margaret Fello and her ladies.

As for the games themselves, most were close, and a fair number were on time, relecting the testing conditions. Andrew Mitchell (10) stormed through his block, defeated his fellow block winner Ewan Mackenzie-Bowie +26, and thus met Terry Ballard, who was trying to emulate Denis Shaw's managerial feat in the first Ramsgate Tournament, in the final. Canny use of his bisques in a somewhat dour game carried Mitchell through +10, though the scoreline indicates that his opponent had his chances. The trophy and a handicap reduction to 7 were his rewards; Terry too had one taken off his handicap to bring him to 4. Thus ended a most enjoyable and relaxed tournament in congenial company. Don't miss it next year!

Results

Block winners: T.D. Ballard (5), A. Mitchell (10), and E. MacKenzie-Bowie (2).
Play-Off (Semi-Final): Mitchell bt MacKenzie-Bowie +26. Final: Mitchell bt Ballard +10.

Hull: 30-31 July

Roger Deacon in exalted company

Report by Chris Irwin

The third East Riding Open Weekend, played as a 6 round Swiss, attracted 14 competitors with handicaps ranging from -2 to 6. The winner from the previous two years, Colin Irwin, started favourite with expected challengers John Davis, Paul Smith and Bill Lamb.

In the first round Davis completed the first triple peel of the event to beat Derek Trotman, despite forgetting to run the second hoop. Within minutes Irwin matched this with a triple against fellow Bowdon member Colin Wild. Lamb had an easy victory over Alan Gordon while Smith eventually beat Chris Irwin on time.

The 4 top players all avoided meeting each other in the next round and all won their games comfortably - Davis producing another triple, this time against Roger Deacon.

The third round saw Davis v. Irwin and Smith v. Lamb. Irwin beat Davis by the classic score of +17 (no triple) but the game was not as tidy as the scoreline suggests and both players missed several chances. Lamb defeated Smith

Compton: 30-31 July

George Steals Peelers

Report by Roger Wood

It was good to see the regulars, but they were pretty thin on the ground in a lean year. In fact only some gentle advertising during the Opens and some frantic telephoning during the preceding week brought the numbers up to 12 and all thanks to those who came at short notice. But the weather confounded the Met. Office and stayed dry and mostly sunny throughout; many filled their spare moments watching the county match (Sussex v. Glamorgan) on the adjacent Saffrons ground; and play proceeded at a cracking pace with plenty of spare lawn capacity, resulting in the prizes all being decided well before tea on Sunday.

George Noble's early form gave every appearance of invincibility - he won his first two games with triple peels conceding only a single point. However his progress towards the Cowhorn was rudely arrested by Debbie Cornelius who disposed of his hopes in straight games in the best of three semi-finals. Nothing daunted, George went on to win the peeling finishes (a double followed by a triple), also

easily to win the right to play Irwin in the next round.

In that game, Lamb got his first ball to 4-back and Irwin missed the lift but Lamb was unable to arrange the break for his second ball. After some defensive play, Lamb managed to organise the break only to be caught by the hill on his home lawn and fail the second hoop. Irwin capitalised on the error to take his ball to 4-back; Lamb missed the lift and Irwin finished in the next turn with another triple.

Meanwhile on lawn 4, Smith failed to control his leave after three-back giving Davis a choice of

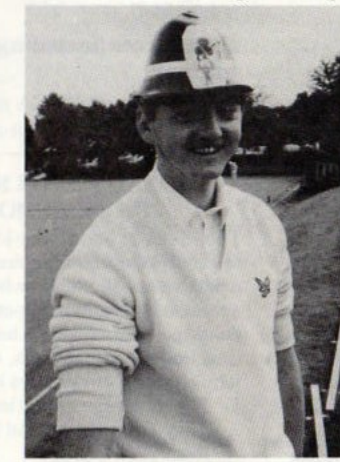


John Davis completed the first triple of the weekend.

securing for himself an undisputed claim to the prestigious 'Ace Peeler' helmet.

Meanwhile, back in the main event, Martin French won the other semi-final against Michael Stevens with a convincing 22 point margin in the third game having scraped home by 1 in the first and lost the second by 17.

The opening game of the final proved an absorbing one for both players and spectators. Martin took an early lead with a fifth turn break to 4-back. Debbie missed the lift and Martin then began a triple



Keith Aiton, former 'Ace Peeler', complete with helmet.

balls in baulk and Davis took advantage to complete the only TPO of the tournament.

The last 2 rounds went the expected way with Irwin winning both his games and so winning the tournament for the third time. Davis beat Lamb narrowly after pegging out one of Lamb's balls and then beat John Portwood to ensure second place.

Among the other players, there were the typical winners and losers although Roger Deacon (the highest handicapped player in the event) must be mentioned for winning 4 out of his 6 games to come in joint third with Bill Lamb.

While the standard of play may have been good at the top level, the same was not true of the standard of hoop setting! Yes, Bill Lamb did his usual job of setting them accurately with his famous feeler gauges but, presumably exhausted by his efforts on Saturday (and an excellent barbeque courtesy of Alan and Mary Gordon on Saturday evening) both he and tournament referee Irwin failed to spot that Penult and Rover were the wrong way round on 2 of the 4 lawns on Sunday morning. Thankfully, the obviously more observant Manager Davis spotted the error before play started.

Result

Winner (6/6 wins): C.J. Irwin.

which came to grief at hoop 6 with only the 4-back peel achieved. This allowed Debbie the opportunity to double peel Martin's forward ball which was exactly what she did. But, unable to make the rover peel before 2-back or 3-back, she found herself with a straight peel at the rover and no rush to the peg after running the hoop herself. With the aid of an amazingly high ratio stop shot, she placed Martin's peeled ball near the peg and attained position for a rush towards the peg on nearby blue. Then, rushing blue up she contrived a perfect combination peg out from about 4ft. Much applause! Cat and mouse followed and Martin eventually hit a 25 yarder to finish on a hairy three ball break. He won the second game in fine style with a triple.

RESULTS

Final

M. French bt Miss D. Cornelius +12(ODP), +29(TP).

Swiss Cowbell

Winner: G. Noble (5/6 wins).

Ace Peeler Award

G. Noble (3 triples, 1 double).

Coaches Corner

The World of Croquet

John McCullough and
Stephen Mulliner

- ★ 224 pages
- ★ Hardback £14.95
- ★ 234 illustrations

Written by two international players, it's the ideal read for Christmas. Explains how to play up to an advanced level and looks at the history and development of the game.

Available from The Crowood Press, Ramsbury, Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 2HE, @ £14.95 + £1.00 p&p.

SUMMER SCHOOL
ARDINGLY COLLEGE
JULY

The South East Croquet Federation is arranging a Summer School at Ardingly College, near Haywards Heath during the latter part of July 1989.

The School lasting one week can be residential or non-residential, and is intended for players of 6-20 handicap range. The course consists of instruction and competitions, with optional excursions, eg to the Bluebell Railway, and Kew's annexe at Wakehurst Place.

A leaflet giving full details of programme, costs, and application form is available now from David Higgs, 35 Shirley Avenue, Old Coulsdon, Surrey, CR3 1QY. Tel: 01-668-6525.

BISHAM ABBEY
SUMMER SCHOOLS
for Handicaps 6-12

— Course 1 —

Monday 22nd May (after lunch) to Friday 26th May (finishing with lunch).

This course is designed to improve the performance of players currently in the handicap range 6 to 12 who have the potential to progress to 'A' class level (handicap 3 or less).

Coaching will be interspersed with competitive play on full size lawns.

Fee per player: £169.50

— Course 2 —

Friday 26th May (evening) to Sunday 28th May (finishing about 4pm).

As for Course 1 above, but with no competitive play.

Fee per player: £89.50

Single and double rooms are available, but early booking is advised if specific requirements are to be met. Each course is limited to 16 places which will be allocated on a first-come, first served basis.

Both courses are residential. The fees include all accommodation and coaching charges. CA members qualify for a 10% discount.

Applications should be sent to Chris Hudson, The Oaklands, Englesea Brook, Near Crewe, Cheshire, CW2 5QW. Tel 0270-820296. Please make cheques payable to 'The Croquet Association'.

LOUGHBOROUGH
SUMMER SCHOOL 1989

Next year's Summer School at Loughborough will be held from 31st July to 4th August.

This course is aimed at improving the personal performance of 'beginners' - those players who have not yet obtained an official handicap, or those whose handicap is 12 or more.

Applicants will be sent a self-assessment form for completion on enrolment, and this will be used by the coaches, in conjunction with a series of practical tests on the first evening, to split the players into groups of equal ability.

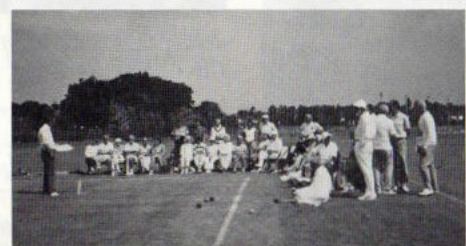
The course will provide both coaching and competitive play. Major emphasis will be placed on good stroke production. As soon as groups have a good command of stroke technique, the emphasis will shift to tactical play. Players will be moved on to higher groups if they progress faster than expected.

There will be opportunities for individual coaching on particular difficulties and successful performers will be awarded a handicap at the end of the course, existing handicaps being adjusted if necessary.

Short lawns (24yds by 16yds) will be used throughout the course.

Full details will be published in the Summer School Brochure, obtainable from:

Mrs Shirley Sandover,
Loughborough Summer School,
University of Technology,
Loughborough, LE11 3TU.
(Tel: 0509-222773).



Chris Hudson winding up the 1988 Loughborough Summer School. The course was over-subscribed, with coaching sessions run by Chris, Ross Gillespie, John Jeffrey and Ron Welch. 36 players attended.

The Brochure is published in January, but you can apply for your copy now.

Bookings for the Summer School should be made through Mrs Sandover, but please apply early to make sure of your place - for the past three years, the Summer School has been over-subscribed.

Course Fees (including accommodation and tuition):

£146 (CA members)
£158 (Non-members)

NATIONAL JUNIOR SQUAD SELECTION
INFORMATION WANTED

The Under-21 and Under-18 squads for 1989 will be selected in the autumn. John McCullough is compiling a database of all Juniors who may be eligible. He has access to information about CA Junior members but would particularly like to hear from Club Secretaries, Coaches, School teachers, etc who know of Juniors who are not CA members if:

1. They are under 21 and have a handicap of 6 or less.
2. They are under 18 and have a handicap of 12 or less.

Please write as soon as possible to John, c/o Brian Macmillan at the CA Office.

Official Business

NOMINATIONS FOR 1988 AWARDS

The Townsend Award is a Trophy kindly donated to the CA by Townsend Croquet Ltd. It is awarded each year to the Club, less than 3 years old, that has made the greatest advancement in its development during the season. All new clubs formed in or since 1986 are thus eligible for the Award, and nominations are invited.

The Apps-Heley Award, made each year to the Club that has done the most for Croquet and made the most progress during the year, is restricted to clubs more than 3 years old. All clubs formed prior to 1986 are therefore eligible, and nominations are invited for the Award also.

As a member of a club itself is often the only person who can report on what the club and its members have achieved, please do not feel inhibited about putting your own club forward for either award.

Please send your nominations to Brian Macmillan at the CA Office by 1st February 1989. Full details of the supporting information required for nominations to be considered are given in Issue 194 of this magazine (page 15), or they can be obtained from the CA Office.

Nominations are also required for the most improved players (men and women) and these should reach Brian by the same date to enable the Handicap Committee to recommend the award of **The Apps Trophy** and **The Steele Bowl** for the most improved man and lady respectively. Persons nominated must be CA members and information about their improvements (including full details of handicap reductions) should relate only to that part of the season during which they were CA members (in respect of players who joined the CA mid-way through the season).

THE INDOOR INVITATIONAL

The cream of British Croquet talent will be competing under the challenging conditions of carpet play at the first-ever National Indoor Invitational, to be held at Soham Sports Centre (near Ely Cambridgeshire) on the 14th and 15th January.

With 12 top international players taking part and the innovation of 40 minute time limits per person, the Invitational promises to produce the kind of exciting play that spectators often dream about.

But visitors can look forward to more than just watching a display of dazzling croquet; the weekend is being organised to give everyone a chance to get involved. Away from the main arena, outside the tournament itself, there will be continuous mini-tournaments on a quarter size carpet, combined with other croquet attractions. Representatives from the Croquet Association and the East Anglian Croquet Federation will be there to answer questions. Townsend Croquet, co-sponsors of the event with Soham Leisure Services, will have their latest equipment available for demonstration.

In the event itself, Steve Mulliner will be trying for another world first - to take this inaugural indoor croquet title. To do that, he will have to overcome 17 year old Chris Clarke, who recently beat him in the President's Cup, and fight off challenges from Keith Aiton and Phil Cordingley, who have denied him victory in his previous two tournaments. Uncertainty remains over the availability of Nigel Aspinall, whose appearance could turn all speculation on its head.

Accommodation and lunches can be arranged for those who would like to turn the weekend into an ideal winter break amongst the beautiful Cambridgeshire countryside. Alternatively, just appear any time whilst the Invitational is on (11am-11pm Saturday, or 10am-6pm Sunday) for a croquet feast.

For more information, contact John Walters, 17 Wroxham Road, Ipswich, Suffolk. Tel: 0473-53959(H); 0255-674404(W).

Changes at the Clubs

Five Towns C.C.

Change of name from 'Stoke C.C.'

Harrogate C.C.

Club now plays at Harrogate Cricket Club.

Oxford University C.C.

New Secretary: James Fraser, St Johns College, Oxford, OX1 3JP.

Southwell C.C.

New Secretary: Mrs B.J. Ackermann, The Dovecot, Middle Lane, Morton cum Fiskerton, Nr Southwell, Notts. Tel: 0636-830275.

Swindon C.C.

New Secretary: C.D. Cardis, The Bungalow, 95 Avenue Road, Swindon, Wilts, 5NI 4DB. Tel: 0793-35667.

New Club Registered

Welcome to....

South Derbyshire C.C.

Church Gresley, S. Derbyshire. Secretary: Sheila Cook, 11 Cherry Leys, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs. Tel: 0283-66769.

New Affiliated Organisations

Grand Island Hotel

Ramsey, Isle of Man. Contact: Mr Trevor Davis, Managing Director. Tel: 0624-812455.

New Associates

P.M. Walker	Barnes
C.G. Bennet	Edgbaston
Mrs U.K. Goddard	Beverley
P.G. Walker	Bowdon
Ms N. Currie	Bristol
Mrs K.S. Parsons	Caterham
Mrs M.F. Badham	Cheltenham
D.R.P. Booth	Cheltenham
C.H. Edmonds	Cheltenham
D.R. Harris	Cheltenham
B.R. Wainman	Cheltenham
P.C. Wainman	Cheltenham
Dr A. Adams	Colchester
I. Burridge	Colchester
P.A. Turner	Colchester
E.G. Erichsen	Compton
Mrs J.M. Wylde	Compton
A.L.F. Taylor	Cromer
Mrs B.C. Taylor	Cromer
P. Rushton	Eden Park
D. Prescott	Edgbaston
R.A. Southgate	Edgbaston
M. O'Connell	Edinburgh
F.M. Thompson	Kenilworth
Mrs F.M. Thompson	Kenilworth
W. Steadman	Kingston Maurward
C.P.H. Edmonds	Milton Keynes
Mrs M. Edmonds	Milton Keynes
H.A. Fay	Northampton
B.W. Small	Northampton
B.S. Mapperley	Norwich
Miss G.R. Peele	Oxford Univ.
Mrs M.E. Denny	Parkstone
Mrs K.E. Miller	Parkstone
P.E. George	Pendle
A.J.N. Addis	Plymouth
T.W. Atkinson	Ripon
Mrs J. Coppack	Rottingdean
Mrs D.C. Cox	Ryde
J. Jeeves	Sidmouth
L. Kennedy	Sidmouth
C.J. Haslam	Southport
Prof. A. Pidcock	Southport
I.R. Pettitt	Southwell
C.B. Cardis	Swindon
Mrs E.M. Morgan	Upminster
Mrs G. Pellegrini	Woking
S.D. Baxter	
G.L. Bean	
Rev B. Beckerleg	
Mrs D. Beckerleg	
Mrs J.A. Cushion	
M. Daines	
A.W.R. Deans	
Mrs A.K.L. Deans	
G.M. Gibbins	
G.H. Horley	
C.D. Leyer	
N. McKead	
C. Martin	
P.G. Minns	
Mrs B.H.J. Minns	
Rev P.C. Patrick	

Mrs M.E. Reid
G. Tattersall-Walker
Snr F. de Anorena
(Total: 66)

Spain

Handicap Alterations

Budleigh Salterton Club		11D10 to 10D9
R.E.G. Minter		
Colchester: 5-7 August		
J.R. Hilditch	½ to 0	
S. Comish	8 to 6½	
J. Jackson	2½ to 3½	
P. Turner	11 to 10	
J. Collis	4½ to 5	
Mrs C. French	16 to 15	
Southport: 5-7 August		
Ms G. Curry	7 to 6½	
J. Hawkins	12 to 10	
B. Lewis	16 to 15	
D. McCormick	13 to 12	
J.B. Portwood	4 to 3½	
A. Saurin	4½ to 3	
J. Shotton	14 to 13	
C. Haslam	9 to 7	
Cheltenham: 5-7 August		
Miss E. Cheverton	13D11 to 12D10	



The South Derbyshire Croquet Club. Gary Norman coaching Steven and Beverley Holland in Church Gresley Park.

L. James	11D9 to 10D8	Mrs D.M. Smith	11D9 to 10D9
R. Moule	9 to 8	Compton: 17-22 September	
Mrs M. Peebles	18D14 to 16D14	G.E. Budd	7 to 6
Miss S. Waterson	13D11 to 12D10	P. Turner	8 to 7
Mrs K. Whittall	4 to 3	R. Sowerby	9 to 7
Mrs D. Harris	3½ to 3	Mrs R. Sowerby	18 to 14
Budleigh Salterton: 8-12 August		Miss A. McDiarmid	11 to 9
T.M. Bower	7½ to 7	P. Howell	3 to 2½
T. Brand	14D12 to 12D10	Mrs C.A. Parker	11 to 10
Mrs W.C. Broad-Thomas	11D9 to 9	Miss J. Wraith	14 to 13
R.E.G. Minter	10D9 to 9	Nottingham: 16-18 September	
Mrs D.M.E. Smith	12D10 to 11D9	Mrs S. Kastal	20
Wrest Park: 13-14 August		M. Southgate	11 to 9
J. Farley	15 to 13	J. Horry	10 to 9
D. Hector	8* to 8	P.L. Webb	12 to 11
T. Parry	8* to 8	M. Cowan	5 to 4½
S. Jones	14 to 12	J. Portwood	3 to 2½
P. Elliott	3½ to 3	A. Miller	10 to 9
J. Watson	2 to 1½	Wrest Park: 16-18 September	
Edinburgh: 15-20 August		A. Judge	9 to 8
N. Smith	9 to 8	A. Schonbeck	9 to 8
F. Mann	6½ to 5½	S. Comish	3½ to 2
V. George	11 to 10	D. Hector	8 to 7
Southwick: Inter-Counties		A. Craxton	9 to 8
J. Mann	1½ to 1½	Miss J. Waters	14 to 12
Southwick: 15-20 August		Edgbaston: 17-18 September	
J. Green	18 to 15	S. Hemus	6 to 5
Mrs M. Green	16D13 to 14D12	Longman Cup Final	
M. Cooperman	10 to 8	Mrs J. Walker	11 to 10D9
R.T. Jackman	9 to 8	Miss S. Meadows	13 to 11D9
Mrs I.G. McDiarmid	5½ to 4½		
Mrs D.M. Miller	7 to 6		
Mrs J. Nash	16D14 to 14D12		
A.J. Oldham	9 to 8		
R.A.G. Rogers	3 to 2½		
A.J. Symons	2 to 1½		
Parkstone Club			
P. Trimmer	12 to 10		
Wolverhampton: 20-21 August			
G. Norman	10 to 9		
M. Hawthorne	20 to 17		
K. Fennell	15 to 13		
Bowdon: 20-29 August			
A. Bennet	2 to 1½		
Mrs D.C. Dennett	13 to 13D11		
C. Haslam	7 to 5		
D. Lendrum	4 to 3½		
Mrs S. Meadows	15 to 13		
Mrs J. Walker	12 to 11		
C. Wild	4 to 3		
Mrs D. Williamson	11D10 to 9		
Budleigh Salterton: 11-15 Sept			
R.C.G. Danby	7 to 6½		

Official Business

SECRETARY'S NOTICES

Current addresses

Help would be appreciated in tracing the following members:

J.B. Meacher Dr G.D. Coley

Literature on 'Sale or Return'

Will all Clubs who have literature on a 'Sale or Return' basis please ensure this is paid for by the end of November. Please would they also let me know what balance of literature they are retaining.

Lawn & Ball Hire Charges

Any Clubs claiming for lawn and ball hire or any other expenditure please do so before the end of the year as we cannot accept claims after that.

C.A. Trophies

Will the holders of any of the CA trophies please let me have the following details:

1. Trophy held
2. Has it been engraved with your name and date?
3. Are there any previous holders' names and dates omitted?
4. Is there sufficient space on the plinth for additions?

September Issue of 'Croquet'

Please could you let me know if you have not received your September issue of 'Croquet' (No 199), as I have had numerous copies returned to me that were unaddressed. I would also like to hear from any member who has received more copies than expected.

Brian Macmillan,
Administration Secretary.

SW Federation

A. Leggate 6 to 3
D. Thatcher 7 to 5

Scottish CA

Dr C. van Griethuysen 3½ to 3

J. Surgenor 2 to 1½

Compton: 23-25 September

T.D. Harrison 1 to ½

G.E. Budd 6 to 5

P. Turner 7 to 6

Colchester: 24-25 September

D. Roe 12 to 10

R. Southgate 7½ to 5

Cheltenham: 23-25 September

M. Boardman 6 to 5½

A. Bogle 2½ to 2

I. Brand 2 to 1½

K. Bright 9 to 8

L. Chapman 4½ to 4

D. Magee 8 to 7

J. McMordie 3 to 2½

H. Pritchard 7½ to 6½

J. Willis 6 to 5

Cheltenham Club

Dr G. Bogle 16D14

D.F. Howson 16D14 to 10D9

Miss G. Holliday 14D12 to 12D10

Mrs J. Cima 7 to 5

1988 MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT COMPETITION
PARTICIPATING CLUBS

We are grateful to the following Clubs who have taken part in this year's CA Recruitment Drive.

Bath	High Wycombe	Reigate
Bristol	Ipswich	Roehampton
Budleigh	Leicester	Sidmouth
Cassiobury	Kingston Maurward	Southport
Cheltenham	Norwich	Vine Road
	Pendle	