No. 1.

**Published by the Croquet Association** 

#### **Editorial**

Welcome to the first edition of 'Garden Croquet News'.

'Garden Croquet News' is for the many thousands of people who play croquet in their gardens with their families and friends. It is for people who like the informality and fun of garden croquet and would like to know more about what is going on in the rest of the croquet world.

This first edition is aimed at getting the ball rolling. The next two editions will be four pages each and we hope it will grow quickly to become an indispensable magazine for garden croquet players.

We want 'Garden Croquet News' to contain the type of articles that garden croquet players want to read. So please write to us with your ideas or indeed about any aspect of croquet.

The sort of articles we are planning to include are: croquet news, gossip, and stories about croquet 'characters'; details and results of garden croquet competitions; hints on tactics and how to play; details of coaching courses; news of new equipment; book reviews; croquet puzzles and quizzes; readers letters; surveys of garden croquet players opinions; and features on a whole range of subjects such as organising croquet parties and croquet games like

We hope you will want to subsribe to 'Garden Croquet News'. To do so please send a cheque for \$2.00, made payable to 'The Croquet Association', to Brian Macmillan, The Croquet Association, The Hurlingham Club, Ranelagh Gardens, London SW6 3PR. In return you will receive the next two editions of 'Garden Croquet News', and become registered with the Croquet Association.

Next year we hope to offer lots more coaching



Editorial combat: Charles Townsend, seated, Editor of 'Garden Croquet News', plays garden croquet with John Walters, Editor of 'The Croquet Almanack'.

courses for garden croquet players, particularly one day courses, and to provide you with more chances to play croquet with other local players.

A subscription to 'Garden Croquet News' will enable

you to keep in touch with all these developments and everything else in the world of croquet. **CHARLES TOWNSEND - Editor** 

#### GARDEN CROQUET COMPETITIONS

The Garden Croquet Classic is now in its third year. This year a record number of garden croquet players have entered, to make this the largest competition of its kind ever held.

You can enter the 'Classic' as an individual, or as a member of a 'group'. Players entering as individuals are paired with players living close to them. This means that they can meet other croquet players in their neighbourhood. They arrange the match to suit themselves and send the result in. The winner is then paired with another winner living close by.

If you enter as a member of a 'group' (minimum 8 players), then you can organise your own competition. The winner of your 'group' then goes forward into the relevant round of the national competition.

The competition proceeds to 8 regional finals held at stately homes or similar venues around the country. So if one member of the family is in the regional final, all the family can come and watch the croquet, visit a place of interest, and have a great day out.

The winners of the regional finals go on to the national final on Saturday, 16th September. This year the national final is being held at St Mary's College, Twickenham, the former home of Hugh Walpole. Why not come along and watch one of these finals?

Spectators are always welcome, and there is usually a spare lawn available for you to try the game and have some coaching, if you want to. It will be a good day out, with some keenly fought croquet if previous years are anything

This year's regional finals are being held at the following venues:

Sat 22nd July Denzell Gardens, Bowdon, Cheshire. Hughenden Manor, High Wycombe, Bucks. Skirsgill Park, Penrith, Cumbria. Sun 23rd July Squash Club, Winchester, Hants. Sun 23rd July Wrest Park, Silsoe, Beds. Langley Court, Beckenham, Kent. Sun 30th July Himley Hall, Nr Dudley, Staffs.

We hope to see you there! More details of venues from Chris Hudson. Tel:

#### THE REGISTER OF GARDEN CROQUET PLAYERS

The Register of Garden Croquet Players contains names and addresses of garden croquet players arranged by area. In it, you can find other garden croquet players living near you.

When you feel like further challenges or want to meet other garden croquet players you can invite them for a game.

The Register is published in November as part of Townsend's 'Croquet

Entry on the Register is free of charge. If you would like to be included, write to: Townsend Croquet Ltd., Claire Road, Kirby Cross, Frinton-on-Sea, Essex,

#### **CROQUET COACHING**

A four day croquet coaching course, designed specifically for garden croquet players, has been arranged at Loughborough 'Summer University'. Coaching will be carried out by a qualified Croquet Association coach.

The course will cover how to play the strokes, how to play a break, and the basic tactics. No previous knowledge is assumed, but those who have played before will find the course is so designed that they can proceed at their own pace. The course includes some practice games, as well as providing opportunities to try out some 'fun' variations of

There are 12 places available on the course, which starts on the afternoon of Monday 7th August and finishes at lunchtime on Friday 11th August. The all-in price, which includes full board, accommodation, and coaching, is \$178.00, inclusive of VAT. All equipment is provided, although players may prefer to bring their own mallets.

For more details and an application form, please apply to Chris Hudson, The Oaklands, Englesea Brook, Near Crewe, Cheshire, CW2 5QW. Tel: 0270-820296.

#### SOME RECENT BOOKS

The last two years have seen a spate of new books published on Croquet, reflecting the current interest in the game. Amongst these are:

**Croquet Handbook** 

Published by the Croquet Association, this booklet provides an introduction to the basic rules of Croquet, adapted to the short court. It also briefly covers stroke technique, break play, and tactics. Price \$1.00. 20pp. (Free to all who enter the Croquet Classic).

#### **Teach Yourself Croquet**

By Peter Danks, author of the 'Simple Croquet' series. Published by Shillingate Press. This book provides a step by step approach to learning croquet, as well as a guide to croquet equipment and laying out the court. Price \$7.95. 155pp

#### Plus One on Time

Written and published by Don Gaunt, an active 'A' class player. This book outlines croquet tactics for the high handicap (beginner) to medium handicap player. Very useful for players who have reached that 'difficult' stage between being a beginner and progressing to 'A' class play. Price \$5.00.

Play the Game: Croquet

One of the new 'Play the Game' series published by Ward Lock. Written by Stephen Mulliner, a Great Britain International player, this book contains many diagrams and drawings helpful in understanding basic stroke technique and tactics. Price \$3.99. 80pp.

By John Solomon. This book, the

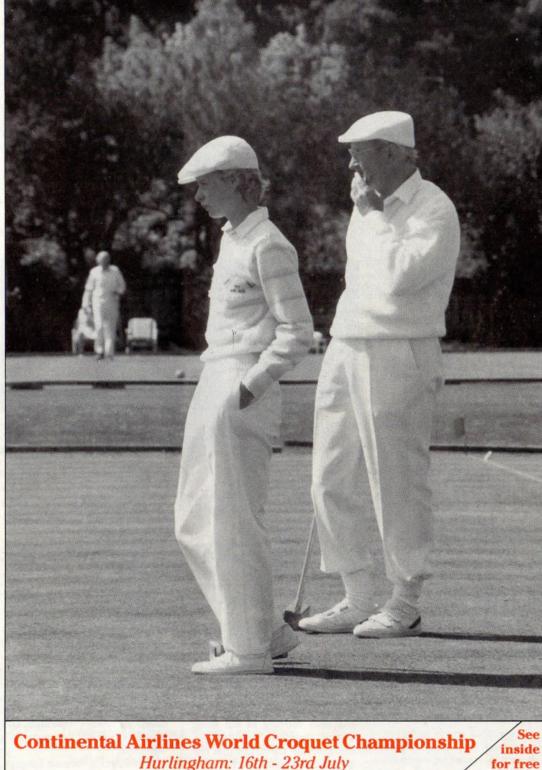
croquet players' 'bible' for many years, has recently been reprinted in paperback by Adam & Charles Black, relevant sections having been revised by the author to reflect current practice. Price \$7.95. 120pp.

The Croquet Almanack

Edited by John Walters and published by Townsend Croquet Ltd., this hardback book is the croquet players' 'Wisden'. Published for the first time in 1988, it contains a host of statistics about croquet world-wide. Price \$9.90. 216pp

More details about the above books from the Croquet Association: 01-736-3148.

**July 1989** Issue No. 204



for free Programme

### **Inside:**

**News & Views** Solomon Trophy **Championship Reports Garden Croquet News Your Letters** 

....and lots more!

£2.00 **Published by** 

**The Croquet Association** 

CONTINENTAL AIRLINES

WORLD CROQUET CHAMPIONSHIPS

16th - 23rd July

We hope that many CA members will take the

opportunity to come to Hurlingham or Surbiton

If you do intend to come to Hurlingham,

please remember that you must show your

current CA membership card on entry. Failure

to do so will result in your having to pay the

Any club party intending to visit Hurlingham

by coach or otherwise should advise Brian

Macmillan as soon as possible so that

The new project, to which I refer above, is the

publication at the end of this magazine of the

first issue of 'Garden Croquet News'. As a result

of the development work we have all been doing

over the past five years, we now have a list of

many people who play croquet outside the

recognised clubs, and this magazine is designed

Charles Townsend, who has a lot of empathy

with garden croquet players and perhaps under-

stands their needs better than most, has under-

taken to edit this new magazine. This first issue

outlines his plans for the future, and we wish the

**CLUB CONFERENCE** 

Hurlingham: Saturday 25th November, 1989.

We hope all registered Clubs will be represented

at this Bi-Annual Conference postponed from

last year. As usual, the format will be small

group conferences discussing subjects of

interest. Topics for discussion will include some

The results of trials during the year of

Advanced Handicap Singles (see 'Croquet' - May

The full bisque game in preparation for next

year's 'All England' championship which will be

The Garden Croquet Classic - how to promote

How to recruit and retain new members for

In to the 90's and beyond - Croquet on the

hope you will discuss these and other matters

in your Club. Why not hold a supper or

barbecue during the summer for this purpose?

Conference briefed with your views and ideas.

Please let me know if you have other subjects

Your representatives can then come to the

Prize money for Croquet tournaments.

Local sponsorship and media coverage.

ssue) - has your club tried it yet?

t to get new members for your club.

new publication every success.

CHRIS HUDSON

of the following:-

played to these rules.

Indoor Croquet.

you would like discussed.

Conference Organiser.

Derek Caporn

your club.

appropriate arrangements can be made.

to see these championships.

\$5.00 entry fee.

for them.

#### **Your Letters**

#### The Second Croquet Almanack

Dear Sir,

By now I am sure most of your readers will have heard of, and hopefully have read, 'Townsend's Croquet Almanack 1989'. We are already beginning the work necessary for the 1990 edition. There will be a number of changes in the next volume, both to minimise the amount of material which is repeated, and to build on those innovations which were of greatest interest to readers in the orginal.

The large section on the season's tournament results will mostly be drawn into the Player Statistics section. So that by looking up any particular player one can see at which events they played, and how well they fared. We also intend to expand this section to include all Calendar Fixtures of the 1989 season. Replacing the bulk of tournament results and also the Mac-Robertson Shield Results (which will reappear after the next International Series, in the 1991 Almanack) will be the results of the major New Zealand, Australian and American Championships. Overseas players will now appear in the Player Statistics section, and we aim to produce a 'World Computer Ranking', listing some 200 players.

Of course we will continue our commitment to publishing articles of interest to all croquet players, and would like to hear from anyone who thinks they might be able to make a contribution in this area. The section which readers of 'Croquet' will most likely be able to help in developing is the 'Records Section'. Readers of the 1989 Almanack will have seen that the records section is broken down to include not just the awe-inspiring feats of croquet greats, but anecdotes, items, and incidents of general interest. We would be very pleased to hear of any possible entries to this chapter. As an encouragement, we will be giving away copies of the 1989 Almanack to readers who come forward with the most impressive or interesting records and stories. I look forward to reading them all.

John Walters, Townsend Croquet.

#### **Croquet Customs**

Dear Sir,

When starting to play tournament croquet, about four years ago, I was taught that it was the privilege of the lower handicapped player to toss the coin at the beginning of the game. I had thought this to be an ancient tradition of the game, but have found, whilst playing a good deal of croquet, that it is not always

adhered to.

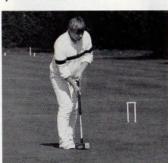
Is my impression that this custom is declining a false one? As I play almost entirely in advanced tournaments it is possible that what I have noticed is true only at such tournaments, where one often does not know the handicap of one's opponent.

If the custom that the better player tosses the coin is to continue then perhaps players' handicaps could be shown next to their name in the draw, as is done at some advanced tournaments. We have after all told the manager our handicaps on our entry forms. Or possibly, as rankings are better publicised, should they be decided according to ranking?

Until this point is clarified there are inevitably going to be a number of 'faulty' tosses. I am left wondering which is the greater impoliteness: to toss when not entitled to do so, or to ignore a 'faulty' toss and 'replay' the toss in accordance with etiquette? Duncan C. Reeve, Reepham.

#### CA NATIONAL JUNIOR SQUADS

Congratulations to the following who have been selected for the Under-21 and Under-18 Squads in 1989.



Robert Fulford, already a Solomon Trophy player and a member of the 1989 Under-21 Squad.

Under-21
James Carlisle (Hurlingham)
Chris Clarke (QEGS & Southport)
Russell Collighan (QEGS & Southport)
Robert Fulford (Colchester)
John Mann (Nailsea)
David Maugham (Cheltenham)
Mark Saurin (QEGS & Southport)
Mark Suter (Cheltenham)

Richard Harding (QEGS), a member of this year's Under-18 Squad.

Under-18
Ian Burridge (Colchester)
Richard Harding (QEGS)
Chris Haslam (Southport)
Alex Leggate (Nailsea)
Graham Pearson (Bishop Vesey's)
Chris Ross (Cheltenham)
Andrew Saurin (QEGS)
David Thatcher (Nailsea)

#### **Rolls Research**

Dear Sir,

If David Purdon had commenced reading my article as early as the second paragraph he would have encountered the phrase 'moving in the same general direction'. I thought that this was sufficient indication that I was concerned with balls moving in the same general direction - subject, of course, to the constraint that the striker's ball does not catch up, and buffet, the croquetted ball.

By the way since no one seems disposed to apologise for, or even criticise, the preponderance of errors in the mathematics, perhaps I could add that what was published does bear a superficial resemblance to what I submitted. But, as the Editor remarked to me, 'Double differentials are asking for trouble'.

Eric Solomon, Harrow Oak.

#### **Croquet in Switzerland**

Dear Sir,

We are completely isolated out here at the CERN club, so anyone passing through will be very welcome to have a game or two.

Please confact me beforehand, if possible, or otherwise on arrival. We have 25 members, ranging in handicap from 7 upwards. Low bisquers would be especially welcome.

My address is Norman Eatough, CERN, CH-1211 Geneva 23, Switzerland. Tel (+41 22) 767 3333. Norman Eatough,

#### Wrong Author?

Chairman, CERN CC.

Dear Sir.

Thank you for publishing my story 'How it altered the whole of my life' in your March issue of 'Croquet'.

BUT where you got 'DAVID' as my christian name from is beyond me!! I **typed** the correct name which is 'DERRICK'.

Derrick Charsley-Thomas, Bournemouth.

Sorry - it's beyond me too! - Ed

#### Andorra Park Hotel

Dear Sir,

Our Hotel has been a member of your Association since last year, and we are building a full-size croquet court in our gardens which we believe will be ready in May 1989.

We are looking for someone who knows croquet well to give lessons during the Spring and Summer. Our customers are select and the Hotel has 40 rooms, with a big garden, swimming pool, tennis, practice golf and croquet.

The coach would need to speak Spanish, as most of our guests are Spanish, and be good at human relations. The person would be provided with a room in the Hotel and meals. Salary to be negotiated.

The approximate dates of the Croquet season are from May 15th to October 15th 1989. Anyone interested in this offer should apply to the Andorra Park Hotel, Carrer Les Canals S/N, Andorra La Vella, (PRINCIPAT D'ANDORRA), sending personal particulars and a recent photograph.

Joaquin Garcia Marco, Director.

#### Sponsorship

Dear Sir,

Recently for the second time I had the honour to play in the Inter-Counties Championship which I very much enjoy. It is one of those opportunities to play against some very good players, and this year the weather was particularly kind.

Of course I am new to the 'Counties' scene, but it was with some pride that I took up my mallet on behalf of my team.

This year I was disappointed to find that there was no sponsorship. Surely we could do better than this, particularly if we invested in help from CA members. It is easy to see the long term potential of such a competition - perhaps eventually on the lines of the Davis Cup in tennis.

The 'Counties' should be one of the most prestigious events, to be enlarged and developed in the future-let's get to it and make it so. Peter Howell, Tunbridge Wells.

#### 1000

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# 'CROQUET' Contact Addresses

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Tournaments...

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.6,7,8,9,10,12

**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.

#### **Publication Details**

'Croquet' is published on the first day of every second month. Copy should reach the Editor on the 20th of the month, two months before the month of issue (i.e. on 20th May for the issue being published on 1st July).

Contributions (except tournament reports and results) and photographs (preferably black and white) should be sent to the Editor. They will be much welcomed and acknowledged.

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

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

#### **Editorial Team**

Luitoriai ream	
Editor Chris Hudso	or
Tournaments Andrew Benn	e
Coaching Bill Lan	nb
Features Allen Park	ei
John Walte	rs
Pictures Chris Hudso	on
Advertising Brian Buckna	al

Annual Subscription Rate

£12.00

#### PROJECTS OLD & NEW

This issue contains two items that mark the fulfilment of one project and the start of another.

The first World Croquet Championship, made possible by the generous sponsorship of Continental Airlines, brings to fruition a dream that was first expressed some five years ago—to hold the first World Croquet Championship under the auspices of the World Croquet Federation in this country.



The England team that won this year's Home Internationals (L to R). Back: David Foulser and Steve Mulliner. Front: Phil Cordingley, Eddie Bell and Nigel Aspinall.

Included in this issue, as part of the magazine, is the programme for the event, giving the draw and some background information about some of the players. We are delighted by the response that the event has evoked around the world and extend a very warm welcome to all our visitors from overseas.

By its very nature, it is likely that this event will take place in future at other venues round the World. Representatives of the member associations of the World Croquet Federation meet at Hurlingham on July 15th to discuss many matters connected with international croquet, and as with the Olympic Games, other national croquet associations as well as the CA will be bidding to stage the next World Championship.

Now that we have paved the way to a world 'individual' championship, we are looking ahead to a 'team' event. Towards the end of July, Colin Irwin and John McCullough will be playing a demonstration match at the World Games in Karlsruhe. If all goes well, the 1993 World Games in Holland could well provide the stage for a World Team Championship.

Photographs in this issue by: Andrew Bennet, Jeff Bowden, Peter Danks, Phil Gamble, John Hobbs, Peter Howell, Chris Hudson, Deborah Latham, John McCullough, F.R. Ross, Eric Solomon, and Liz Taylor-Webb. Front Cover: Debbie and Donald Cornelius playing in the 1986 Barwell Salvers at Cheltenham.

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Championships

By Brian Bucknall

This afternoon I burned the mallet. I knew that it would be a struggle but by chaining it to a stake and dowsing it with petrol I was finally able to dispose of it. No longer will it be a danger to other croquet players.

Now that this task has been accomplished I can, in what I suppose are the remaining hours of my life, complete the account of how I rose from obscurity in the croquet world to become a leading player. Many people were greatly surprised by my sudden elevation, so I suppose the story had best be told, since it is the nature of a final confession.

The story started thirteen years ago to-day. My wife and I, together with Peter and his wife, decided to spend an Autumn weekend at an hotel in mid-Wales that advertised croquet playing facilities.

We arrived towards noon and found the hotel to be a newly converted country house situated in a picturesque wooded valley. But whether it was a sudden drop in temperature caused by clouds passing in front of the sun, or the mournful crowing of rooks in the trees, I suddenly felt a transient sense of chill and unease as we walked from the car to the hotel. At the time it was quickly forgotten although I remembered the sensation again later.

In the afternoon Peter and I played open singles while our wives departed for the local shops. Neither Peter nor I were experts, being at the lower end of class B. Peter was the better player and after some four hours of play he won by a small margin. This was fairly typical play for both of us, yet I was continually irritated and frustrated by my failure to improve. Peter merely enjoyed playing and didn't much mind whether he won or lost.

That evening Mrs Griffiths, the wife of the proprietor, joined us for coffee after dinner. She said how nice it was to see the croquet lawn being used again. She said she remembered as a small child watching her grandfather play on the lawn. He had been, she believed, a very good player who had played for England. When he retired he bought this house and laid out the croquet lawn. Unfortunately there had been an accident. He was struck by lightning whilst pegging-out.

Her father had inherited the house but was uninterested in croquet. Upon his death only a year ago, she and her husband had in turn inherited the house, to which they decided to retire and open a small hotel. She said that they had no time to learn to play the game.

Further discussion revealed my interest in croquet history. She said that her grandfather's trophies and press cuttings had been kept and would I be interested in seeing them? I readily agreed to a quick look before we settled down to play bridge. Peter declined the offer so she and I walked upstairs to the attic.

There I found several trophies and replicas on a dusty ledge, together with a folder of press cuttings from the 1920's, a diary and on the floor a croquet box. I glanced at the papers and asked if I could take them back to my room for further study over the weekend. I said the 'Croquet' magazine could be interested in an article on the subject. Mrs Griffiths thought this would be splendid.

I put the papers down and

opened the box. Inside was an old blackened croquet mallet but seemingly in a good state of repair. I leaned over to pick it up but as I touched it I thought I experienced an electric shock so I let go quickly. 'That's funny', I said to Mrs Griffiths, 'I thought I received an electric shock just then, but it is impossible. There aren't any wires. Maybe it was static electricity, but it's a wooden mallet so it can't be that either'. She said that it probably was static electricity because the box hadn't been opened for many years. In fact, she didn't even realise it was there. I thought the whole episode to be distinctly odd as I gingerly reached out again and picked it up. This time there was no shock, but there was another sensation. The mallet seemed to be pulling me to the door like a dog straining at the leash.

I asked Mrs Griffiths if I could borrow it to play with in the morning. She said that would be quite all right. Indeed, if I wanted to keep it I was welcome to it. She didn't want it in the house after what had happened to her grandfather.

Thereupon we left the room with the mallet almost pulling me along, although I didn't mention this to Mrs Griffiths. I deposited the papers in my room, thanked Mrs Griffiths, and took the mallet to the open conservatory, where our own equipment had been left. I then rejoined the bridge party only briefly describing my findings in the attic.

That night after bridge, I glanced at the papers again but felt tired and therefore decided to leave them until the next day. But I could not sleep. There had been the mental stimulus of bridge com-

bined with my earlier evening experiences. I must have been dozing off, when I thought I heard the clink of croquet balls. I was immediately awake and listened intently. Yes, I heard the distinctive sound again, so I got out of bed, went to the window and looked out. In the moonlight, I could just make out a croquet ball going across the lawn. I could not see anything else but I now knew what was happening. I didn't care to investigate further so I returned to bed and went to sleep. The background to all this would no doubt be revealed in the papers.

Next morning Peter and I were to play handicap singles whilst our wives went out again. Doubles had been arranged for the afternoon.

We went to the conservatory to collect our mallets and I noticed there were bits of grass on the balls which we had cleaned after our previous game. I had not been dreaming. I showed Peter the old mallet but he was more interested in getting on with the game. I picked it up. No shocks this time but I could again feel it pulling. Peter tossed for the innings and I elected to go in first, with blue.

The mallet pulled me to the boundary opposite hoop 1. It was clearly asking me to aim for it which I did. The ball went through perfectly and came to a halt by hoop 2 which was also made. Peter raised his eyebrows. 'I don't believe it', he said. I left blue by the peg. Peter then went to the fourth corner with red. I then hit red with black, croqueted it to hoop 2 and roqueted blue to hoop 1, which I made, and then went round to rover with the three balls. Peter failed to roquet with vellow and then minutes later the game was all over. We had another game, which also won within half-an-hour. Peter was dumbfounded! We played a third game which I lost, using my own mallet. I must say I was worried in case the old mallet became jealous and acted strangely, but it didn't.

The afternoon game using my own mallet proceeded uneventfully. In the early evening, I found time for a more detailed study of the papers. The significant item was the diary from which I now quote the following relevant extracts for 1923 and 1924.

20 May. Have been playing croquet for 4 years. Should be getting better but there is no improvement. This is most frustrating.

14 August. Am getting worse. Coaching isn't helping. I badly want to win. I wonder if Damon could help? Didn't his father know Aleister Crowley of the left path? 21 Sept. Met Damon and explained



'I knew now what was happening.

problem. He said he would try to help but would first need to consult O.

15 Oct. Letter from Damon. He said come to Q's house on 31 October, bringing the mallet.

31 Oct. Halloween. Went to the address given. Mallet was placed in a chalk circle and surrounded by people dressed in black robes and hoods. Some foul-smelling liquid was wiped on the mallet. Mumbojumbo words invoking the devil which I didn't understand although I did hear that thirteen years of life were granted to all who used it. Mallet was marked with 666. (I must remember to ask Damon what this means).

1 Nov. All Saints Day. End of season but had a practice. Played brilliantly. Hopeful now for next year.
21 April. Easter Monday and start of season. First game beat J easily. Obviously my problems are over. (Further entries revealed success after success including eventual selection for the President's Cup which he won several times. He also played in international matches. The diary stopped at the end of Ocotober 1936, the day before he was struck by lightning).

Likewise, after we returned from Wales, my croquet was consistently of the highest standard, that is, when I played with the old mallet, which was most of the time. I began to be noticed and was selected for, and won, many major tournaments and test matches. Like the grandfather I became a major celebrity much to the amazement of my fellow club members who knew what I was like in the old days.

Now, thirteen years later, on this night of the 15th October 1987, my confession is complete. Because I had played with the mallet well realising the curse upon it, I doubt my life will be spared. I have had a lot of fun and presumably the price will have to be paid. My wife will be sorry but she is well provided

## Cheltenham: 29 April - 2 May Avery wins Westerns

Report by Alan Bogle

A strong field assembled at Cheltenham to contest the Dunnett Ward Western Championships, many players with an eye on the forthcoming World Championship.

Manager Bernard Neal was so confident in the players' ability to speed through the games that he played best of three from round one. However, he sensibly displayed a notice encouraging fast play. Fulford took this to heart and finished his first round match with Jones in an hour forty including two triples. Meanwhile, the manager had to be content with losing his first game by two on time.

In the event, the first two rounds were completed on schedule. The only seed to fall was Cordingley who went out to Gaunt in three games. Cordingley contrived to lose the first from peg and rover when Gaunt was still to start. Gaunt subsequently lost to Debbie Cornelius in the second round, again in three games. The other highlight of the early rounds was the footwear of Openshaw, who had forgotten his shoes and played in grey casuals!

The Championship started to come alive in the quarter finals. Cornelius took the first game from Avery, but a fine triple saw Avery win the second. The third game was a scrappy affair with opportunities for both players, Avery just taking it. The match between Clarke and Murray suffered a loss of accuracy. The Fulford and Mulliner match was very close with Fulford just having the edge in three games. A similar story in the last match saw Aiton home against Openshaw.

The first semi-final saw Avery dispose of Clarke in two games, when Clarke's customary accuracy deserted him. Aiton beat Fulford by the same margin, after the manager insisted on completing the match on the Sunday evening in order to allow a best of five final.

The final lived up to expectations. In the first game Aiton then Avery went quickly to 4-back. Aiton hit the lift and started chasing his 9th consecutive triple. However, having successfully completed the three peels on Avery's ball, some bad luck at rover left Aiton with a long peg out attempt which he missed, sending the ball off in B baulk in the process. First game to Avery.

The second game was a similar story. Both players were soon on 4-back. Avery in play subsequently failed to get the 4-back peel on three occasions, and his turn ended at penult having completed two peels of a STPO. Aiton failed to take advantage of the situation and Avery was able to take the game. The third game was of an excellent standard. Avery was first away, but Aiton hit and completed a TPO pegging out his opponent. He chose to leave one ball near corner two, the other in corner four. Avery took advantage by rolling up to hoop 1 from the ball in corner four. He ran the hoop, splitting that ball to three, going to the ball near corner two. A good approach to two followed and the Championship was won by Avery with a well controlled three ball break.

Fulford beat Clarke for third place in three games. The notable game was that won by Clarke. Clarke advanced to 4-back on the fifth turn. Fulford hit the lift shot and pegged out Clarke, leaving one ball in corner two, the other on the east boundary level with penult. Clarke took off from the ball on the east boundary, finishing inside the yard line south of hoop one. He ran hoop one off the north boundary and roqueted the ball in corner two. A successful roll to two followed and the game was won on the seventh turn with a nice three ball break. Gregory beat Murray to win the swiss.

Runner-up Keith Aiton, who completed eight successive triple peels.

Story (continued)

for. Now that I have finished I will

go to bed and more than likely

shan't wake up again. There are

Footnote. Later, in the early hours

of the morning a severe storm

arose. At six o'clock a banging

noise woke him up. His first

thoughts were 'I'm still alive!' He

observed that his greenhouse door

was banging in the wind. He

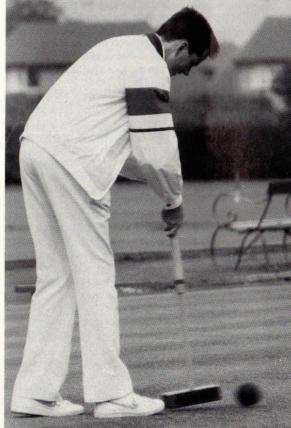
dressed and went down his garden

to secure it. On the way back to the

house he was killed outright by a

falling oak tree.

worse ways to die, I suppose.





Mark Avery, winner of the Dunnett Ward Western Championships.

# RESULTS Round 1:

D.L. Gaunt bt P. Cordingley +3, -23, +3(T); Miss D.A. Cornelius bt M. French -24, +26, +17; F.I. Maugham bt B.G. Neal +2(T), +23; M. Avery bt C. von Schmieder -3, +24, +15; C.D. Clarke bt G.A. Vince +5, +15; S.E. Lewis bt B.G. Hallam +26, +16(T); W.O. Aldridge bt J.O. Walters +14, +17; M. Murray bt A.B. Hope -1, +5, +26TP; R. Fulford bt K.E. Jones +20TP, +25TP; D. Cairns bt E.W. Solomon +14, +11(T); E. Bell bt D.J. Goacher +12, +1(T); S.N. Mulliner bt D. Maugham +3TP; +26TP; K.M.H. Aiton bt E.J. Davis -25, +17, +16TP; P.L. Smith bt D.R. Foulser +9, -6(T), +15; A.K. Gregory bt A.F. Sutcliffe -4, +17, +14; D.K. Openshaw bt C.J. Irwin +15, -26, +17

#### Round 2:

Cornelius bt Gaunt -25, +17, +15; Avery bt F.I. Maugham +22TP, +16; Clarke bt Lewis +12, +23; Murray bt Aldridge +16, +20; Fulford bt Cairns +23, +23; Mulliner bt Bell +1, +26; Aiton bt Smith +9TPO, +9TP; Openshaw bt Gregory +26TP, +9.

#### Round 3:

Avery bt Cornelius -24, +14TP, +6; Clarke bt Murray +19, +14; Fulford bt Mulliner +17, -16, +15; Aiton bt Openshaw +23TP, -10(OTP), +13TPO.

#### Semi-Finals:

Avery bt Clarke +12, +26TP; Aiton bt Fulford +16TPO, +26TP.

#### Final

Avery bt Aiton +3, +13, +14(OTP).

#### Play-off (for 3rd place):

Fulford bt Clarke +16, -14(OTP), +17.

#### **Weekend Tournaments**

Mersey

at Southport but for this St George's

Day event it was curiously inappro-

priate, leeks featuring prominently

on both days and not a slice of roast

beef in sight. Mind you, some of the

games did drag-on (geddit?) on the

Sunday, after steady overnight rain

had flooded lawns one and two.

This is a perennial Southportian

problem and, in typically British

fashion, they are always surprised

by it, never ready with mops and

squeegies an hour before kick-off.

The simplest equipment would

suffice and anything would be

better than the present arrange-

ment whereby the younger ele-

ment frantically sweep the water

#### Bowdon: 22-23 April 'Not the Southport Weekend'

Thanks to the controversially late appearance of the fixture book, there were five minus players unable to get into the Southport Weekend, looking for something to do. Despite the short notice, a tournament was organised at Bowdon.

Saturday produced two surprises. The first was that after two hours play between Steve Lewis and John Davis, the score was 3-1 to John. The second was the sight of Bill first game. Readers who may be shocked by this unexpected develof being a master of touch in his subsequent games.

Liz Taylor nearly produced upsets against John Davis and Nick Hyne, and generally the standard of play was 'early season A class'.

#### RESULTS

Storey, D.B. Maugham

3 wins: J. Davis.

1 win: M.H. Sandler.

Aldridge, under pressure from Brian Storey, playing a controlled break and finishing a triple in the opment will be relieved to hear that he did not sustain the illusion

5 wins: W.O. Aldridge, S.E. Lewis, B.J.

2 wins: N.G. Hyne.

0 wins: Mrs L. Taylor-Webb.

Southport: 22-23 April away with their mallets ten Le Bell Homme Sands minutes before the start. Alternatively, perhaps they ought to write to Dorothy Rush for advice Report by Peter Dorke on the best mallets for drying-off The grub is always good and cheap

But it is a funny old place, Southport: smooth as silk on the surface and all-hell going on underneath. More crime than Liverpool they told me over breakfast at the Halpin and a night-life to make your hair curl. Not much of this was in evidence at the croquet club, though there were one or two impressive hangovers on Sunday morning. Too many Southport shrimps perhaps.

There were some contentious issues in the air from the start. Much talk of the new rules on handicapping, some discussion of the Law's assault on careless jumpers.....and the question of seeding. Now there's an interesting item: Manager Richard Hilditch decided not to seed the entry, which led to the likely first and second seeds, Messrs Eddie Bell and Mark Saurin, playing each other in the first round. Saurin, who managed to win this match with a belated TP, was clearly very much off-form. He struggled against Alan Sutcliffe, beat your reporter by a +26 which belies the succession of free shots which he gave generously and which were as generously missed, then scraped through to the final via a +5 defeat of Chris Haslam, whom, on a better day, he would have eaten alive.

Meanwhile Russell Collighan, laid so far back he was almost out of sight, had demolished Andrew Bennet, Andrew Saurin and Rod Williams on his inevitable path to glory. We could therefore look forward to a QUEGS final on the Sunday.

What, though, might have happened if Bell had not met Saurin in a scrappy game in the cold wet dawn but had been able to make his immaculate way through the draw, warming up all the while? Perhaps a different final, if not a different result. Perhaps it doesn't matter

Meanwhile, the Swiss was underway and Alan Sutcliffe, like a terrier with a particularly juicy bone, had set himself to win it. No match is trivial to Alan and every shot is played with the same painstaking care. In another context we'd be calling him 'Sir Geoffrey'. He won the Swiss, of course: the rest of the suckers thought croquet was for

But that's moving on a bit, for we've only just reached Sunday morning and I have yet to tell of the Jolly Green Giant and the Ravening Scots. Besides, I should have mentioned right at the start that a good

quarter of the players were products of QUEGS. It is pretty clear to me, at least, that at Queen Elizabeth's they remove the student's brains on entry and replace them with copies of 'Expert Croquet Tactics'. You've heard all about the Saurins, the Clarkes, the Collighans - let me now introduce you to Richard Harding, who is as deadly a shot as ever left the Blackburn production lines.

The man in charge of quality control at the QUEG's factory, A. Bennet, was the initial organizer of this tournament and I hope he will not mind if I dig up another bone of contention that was gnawed a little between matches: The Great Fixture Book Scandal.

The Southport Open Week-end was almost completely filled before the C.A. Fixture Book appeared, Andrew having promised acceptance of entry to the large number of people who phoned him up when that slim volume failed to fall through our letter boxes at the appointed time. The question now in the air was: 'Had he the right to accept entries for a C.A. Calendar Fixture before the details of the tournament had reached the masses of C.A. members huddled pitifully on their doormats?' The answer is, apparently, that he had that right and there's nothing the C.A. can do about it. So what do we pay our subs for, if, having received



Russell Collighan, winner at Southport.

our Fixture Books, we are too late to get into the best of the early tournaments?

(Answers on the back of a cheque for \$18 to the P. Dorke Retirement Fund). Don't misunderstand me, Mr. Bennet, I think you were dead right to fill your tournament as fast as you could, but I do wonder about the role of the C.A. in all this. Can they, for instance, enforce their new ruling that only full members of the C.A. will be eligible to play in C.A. Calendar Fixtures? I have

mentioned above their latest advice on handicapping at Advanced Tournaments, advice which happily was ignored here, as the club had not been informed officially. It would in any case have been greatly unjust not to award Chris Haslam his substantial cut. I suspect, however, that there will be problems with this ruling. Will all Open Tournament entries now be accepted on the basis of the Rankings? And will it now be necessary for the A class player to inform his club handicapper of every detail of his performance at tournaments? What if he is the club handicapper? What if he doesn't belong to a club? What if his club has not got a C.A. handicapper which seems to apply to a heck of

a lot of clubs? These and other matters were exercising the minds of Southport's croqueteers while Saurin and Collighan played out their final as a best-of-five. The sun appeared at about 11 o'clock and though the weather never got warm enough for the Chairman of the Scottish C.A. to remove his Father Christmas outfit, all our spirits were lifted. Well, not all, for while Mark Saurin crouched in misery before the pavilion fire, the imperturbable Collighan smashed balls about the lawn as if a missed roquet or a clanged hoop were unthinkable. Oh, he gave his opponent the odd turn but victory was quickly his in straight games. Whatever I have said above about seeding, it is hard to conceive that anyone else present could have got the better of Russell.

The only one who might have, the gentlemanly Mr Bell, delayed his urgent departure so that your reporter might get in one final game - and was sporting enough to lose.

A fine man. Andrew Bennet replies:

There was no skulduggery by the Tournament Secretary. Not having been informed that all deadlines before 15th March were to be put back when the Calendar eventually appeared, I examined the entries on 1st March as printed and acted accordingly. Readers might not believe it from Peter's account, but our tournaments are very popular and all oversubsribed this season. The early enquiries in February are a measure of this.

RESULTS

3rd Round: C. Haslam bt R. Hilditch +11; M. Saurin bt P. Dorke +26; R. Williams bt R. Harding +8; R. Collighan bt A. Saurin

Semi-Finals: M. Saurin bt Haslam +5; Collighan bt

Williams +23.

Collighan bt M. Saurin +17, +17, +15

Hurlingham: 29 April - 1 May **Enjoyable Hurlingham Weekend** Report by Ann Browne

There was an entry of 26 players for the first Hurlingham tournament of the season. It was a most enjoyable weekend, with nine courts, double banked and full all day, with excellent and exciting croquet. The courts on the main lawns and the cricket pitch were in first class condition and playing well. An added bonus was the weather which remained fine apart from a little rain on Saturday morning.

The competitors were divided into three graded American blocks with advanced play throughout. It was good to see so many visitors to Hurlingham, which included Charles Jones and Chris Shilling from New

The play in block A was to a very high standard, with a close and gripping finish to many of the games. Triple peels were successfully completed throughout the weekend by Jerry Guest, Geoff Roy and David Croker in this block.

Two games from many are worthy of mention. In Jerry Guest vs Geoff Roy both players were unbeaten before the game and it seemed that Jerry had the game won after completing all three peels of a triple. But disaster struck when he rushed his partner ball on to the peg, thus ending his turn and unable to peg out his other ball. Geoff kept his composure and went on to win by 4 and thus went to the top of the block.

Dayal Gunasekera failed to peg out his opponent's ball when playing William Ormerod, and was himself pegged out, with his second ball at 4 back. The game ended with a very good display of tactics by William, including laying up wired rather than attempting a pegout from 10 feet. Dr Ormerod went on to win +3.

At the end of all the keen and thrilling play, Jerry Guest emerged as the winner of Block A with 8 wins out of 9, while Geoff Roy was second with 7 wins after losing to Charles Jones and Ian Plummer. Creditable results were also achieved by Dayal Gunasekera, David Croker, William Ormerod, Lionel Wharrad and Francis

In Block B the general play and competitiveness was in no way inferior to the higher block. This was emphasised by Andrew Symons who achieved his first



Bevis Sanford, block winner at Hurlingham.

competitive triple peel and came very close to repeating the process in his next two matches. The eventual and most deserving winner with 6 wins out of 7 was Paul Macdonald who used all his experience to overcome strong challenges from many up and coming players. Martin Haggerston was runner-up (5 wins, +60), followed by Andrew Symons (5 wins, +44), Tom Browne (5 wins, +44), and Mark Wormald (4 wins). Mike Pearson, David Ruscombe King and Denis Cross posed as ever a serious threat to the block leaders throughout the weekend, even though wins were hard to come by

In block C, Bevis Sanford was the clear winner, with six good wins, losing only one match. The excitement was for the runner-up spot where Norman Browne, Roger Deacon, John Ruddock and Pat Macdonald had 4 wins each, Norman coming through on net points total. Jim Tennant was a welcome late entrant to the tournament, while Barbara Mansfield and Pauline Healy fought hard throughout the weekend.

Our thanks are due again to Denis Cross for managing so excellently. It was a most efficient performance greatly appreciated by the players.

RESULTS

**Block Winners:** 

G.C. Roy; I.P.M. Macdonald; C.B. Sanford.

#### Cheltenham: 24-27 March **Easter Egg and Maugham Day Money!** Report by Alan Bogle

The weathermen had egg on their faces as once again the Easter handicap tournament at Cheltenham received some fine weather. The winds on the first two days helped to blow away the cob-webs of the winter lay-offs. The sunshine on the last two days helped warm up the aching joints and we saw some fine croquet, including two triples from Phil Cordingley and one from David Foulser. The good condition of the lawns following the mild winter also contributed. Overall, a dozen players received handicap cuts.

The fifty four players competed in six American blocks. Debbie (our rules are different!) Prentis won 7 out of 8 games to take Block A narrowly from the assistant manager, Alan (lawn 3 is not that bad!) Bogle. Ian Plummer was most unlucky, in that he defeated both these players, but had lost too many games early in the tournament

In block B, David Magee pipped fellow Cheltenham member Ian (that's my beer) Maugham. Both finished with 7 wins, David securing first place with a 21 point win over lan.

Block C was won by David Maugham (8 out of 8) which was just as well as his winnings were to prove useful in paying his entry fee. Gill (only my fifth game ever) Bogle, in her first CA tournament. finished second. Having picked up a mallet for the first time last August, Gill started the tournament on 15, was cut to 13 after day one, and finished it at 11. Peter Darby was noted as saying that at this rate of progress, Gill would be -3 in two weeks and a good outside bet for the World Championship.

In block D, Robert Prichard also won all eight games, with Andrew

Potter emerging from the pack to take second spot.

Block E was won by Joe Jackson from Newport, despite having arrived at the tournament driving a three wheeler, the fourth wheel being tenuously attached to the car. Barbara Sutcliffe played very well to finish second.

Finally block F in a close finish was won by one of Wales's best known exports(?), Peter Dorke. For those who have trouble keeping your head down, buy a hat to cover it with an assortment of badges. Bill (touting for new coaches) Lamb finished second, when Peter (my good fellow) Darby fell at the last fence to David Foulser.

Mike Finn's organisation helped the weekend run smoothly as always. Sadly Mike was unable to play this year due to illness, but all the players wish him a full and speedy recovery.

RESULTS **Block Winners** 

Ms D.F. Prentis; D.J. Magee; D.B. Maugham; R.D.C. Prichard; J.J. Jackson;

# "Matchplap"

Bill Aldridge.

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#### **Weekend Tournaments**

#### Hunstanton: 29 April - 1 May Veronica Loses Face

Report by John Wheeler & George Collin

Conditions - Fine and cool to start with, sunny and warm for prizegiving.

The tournament was oversubscribed by the leading amateurs from eastern England. The Bedfordshire Inter-Counties team were there in force and proved their form by all losing their first round games. Ipswich had also sent a large squad. The rest of the players were mostly Richard Hilditch and the London mob.

The tournament was run as two Swiss blocks with the two leading players from the lower block promoted after round three. What is more they joined the leaders of the top block with equal status. The merit of a B block with handicaps ranging from  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 14 was proved when the 14 beat the  $2\frac{1}{2}$ , albeit in a shortened game.

Duncan Reeve, from Norwich, Ipswich, Hunstanton and Wrest Park executed the first triple peel of the tournament in his round one match against Robert Prichard. In round two Robin Hobbs was twenty-sixed by Howard Bottomley. This defeat was quite understandable when one noticed the electrical device clamped to Robin's head. This apparatus was obviously worn for therapeutic reasons but caused him some discomfort judging by the wailing noises he made.

By the end of round three, 'A' Block men, Bond, Dawson, Harrison, Lamb and Noble seemed to be the players in form, while in the 'B' Block Celia Steward and Nick Harris were established as the promotees.

On day two attention centred on the pavilion where viewers gathered to see Steve Davis proceed towards another World Championship. Out on the lawns the promotees, after losing their first games in block 'A', played each other with Nick winning. Celia had a hard time against Bond and Noble who achieved the second and what was to be the last triple peel of the tournament. Nick went on to give a fright to front runner Dawson who eventually won by five

On the final day, while the leaders were contending for the championship, there was drama on lawn three where hard hitting Veronica Carlisle lost the end-face of her mallet and had to seek the R.O.T's permission to continue with the now illegal weapon.

Block B was won by Mark Senior and Robert Prichard won the A block by virtue of a close fought battle against Tim Harrison and an earlier victory over Geoff Dawson who had an equal number of wins.

The Hunstanton club enabled players and spectators alike to have a most enjoyable weekend away from the pressure of big time croquet and George Noble managed the tournament without harrassment but there was rarely an unoccupied lawnspace.

RESULTS Block Winners: R.D.C. Prichard; M. Senior.



Duncan Reeve, who did the first triple at Hunstanton's weekend.

#### Bristol: 20 - 21 May Edward Duckworth Wins Report by Hamish Hall

The weekend handicap tournament attracted 11 visitors to the 3 lawns at Cedar Park, and the fact that all four semi-finalists were club members might suggest that local knowledge of the conditions of the lawns might have been an advantage. This was far from the truth. The baking sun, and the daily cutting the previous week had transformed them from sluggish to very fast.

Tony Sammons demonstrated his improving play by running hoop 2 from hoop 4, and David Coates playing in his first tournament quickly adapted to the conditions, and won his silver award in his game against Deborah Latham. Simon Tuke confounded the spectators by chasing every ball, despite the thermometer nudging the eighties. In his game against Kevin Carter he was 2 behind when time was called. The leave was fairly cruel-balls on the east, north and south boundaries. Simon showed neat skill in getting a break going and winning by 1. Hardly recognisable as the player I first met in the area final of the Garden Classic at Castle Drogo

three years ago.

The tournament produced an unusually large number of games where one player pegged out his

# Compton: 5-7 May 50 Spectators at Final Report by Ron Selmes

After a week of missed fortunes with the weather, Friday dawned a

with the weather, Friday dawned a bright sunny day; had summer arrived? Was this the start of the real Croquet season?

Compton in the sunshine is one

Compton in the sunshine is one of the really beautiful grounds and the lawns looked in excellent shape. The subsequent three days proved that this was the case and I am sure that all players would wish to say thank you to Tom Mewett the Groundsman for such first class playing surfaces.

Blanche Dennant, managing her first Tournament, was wise enough to be a non-playing manager and handled everything efficiently. From the first morning, lists were posted on the notice board showing who played whom for the whole three days and the times they would be playing. Her plan progressed without a hitch and noone had to sit around wondering when they would next get a lawn. Well done Blanche, it was a pleasure to play in your Tournament.

Compton also has one major advantage over many other clubs, an endless army (or so it seems) of charming and competent ladies dispensing superb coffee, lunch and afternoon tea. Despite a poltergeist in the kitchen on Friday, everything ran smoothly. Pat AsaThomas presented them with a large box of chocolates on Sunday as a small token of our appreciation. They deserved it.

The Croquet? Well, four American blocks of six, each containing a good mix of handicaps, ranging from 2 to 16. Five games each with a semi-final and final between block winners.

Block 'A' was won by Bernard Weitz with 5 wins and 61 points. Block 'B' by Ron Selmes with 5 wins and 58 points; he beat Dennis Shaw by two in the crucial game.

opponent's ball. Dennis Regan, the highest handicap player in the event and somewhat reluctant to use his forest of bisques, featured in 3 of them. Derek Trotman won't forget one of them. Having pegged out Dennis's brown ball, he later pegged out his forward ball, but, although only 5 feet or so from the stick, chose to roquet green - 6 feet away. His ultra cautious play resulted in a miss. Dennis not believing his luck took his equally short shot. But it was several windscreen wipers later before Dennis finally hit. I believe that the Secretary's stock of '12 Hints to Beginners' was reduced by one at the end of the game.

The final for the Latham Cup was



Peter Howell, winner of Compton's handicap weekend.

Having got to peg when Dennis was for 2-back and 4-back, he pegged out one ball and finally won by hitting in when Dennis was for peg and peg. Block 'C' was won by Gordon Drake with 5 wins and 71 points and Block 'D' was won by Peter Howell with 5 wins and 61 points. Again in this block Paul Campion was unlucky to meet Peter playing at his best and like Dennis had four wins but progressed no further.

After lunch on Sunday the two semi-finals saw Ron Selmes beat Bernard Weitz +17 and Peter Howell beat Gordon Drake by the same score.

The final, with over fifty spectators, saw Peter in sparkling form beat Ron +17 in 1 hour 15 minutes to win the Knight Cup. Mrs Knight, who had watched the final, presented the trophy which her late husband had donated to the Club.

This report may be full of superlatives but I firmly believe Compton and all its members gave us all a Tournament to be remembered.

#### RESULTS

Block Winners: Dr B.G.F. Weitz (2), R.H. Selmes (7), H.G. Drake (2½), P. Howell (2½).

Play Off Semi-Finals:

Selmes bt Weitz +19, Howell bt Drake +17

+17. Final:

Howell bt Selmes +17.

an anti-climax to the tournament. Andrew Symons (1), gave the 16 year old Edward Duckworth 31/2 bisques. Winning the toss Andrew had first crack at the four balls and made a competant start by hitting his tice and getting his 4 ball break under way. It was to be short lived, as a careless approach shot at 3 over-ran. He then compounded his error by joining up with his partner ball near hoop 2. Duckworth, sitting next to me, could hardly believe his luck. All four balls well in off the boundaries. An excellent 30 yard roquet saved him a bisque, as he competently, if rather untidily, set about his task. Andrew had one more shot before the inevitable

Bristol - continued on Page 9

#### Cheltenham: 20-23 April Entry of 28 for 'B' Levels Report by Maurice Boardman

Everyone else shivered inside woollies and water-proofs. But Alver Bray (Bristol) insisted it was summer, winning the Cheltenham 'B' Level Tournament in the minishorts and milk chocolate fedora which he has made his croquet trade mark.

Kevin Carter (Cheltenham) was the only player to beat him in eight games - by three. Bernard Weitz (Cheltenham) also had seven wins but had lost to Bray by 16.

Their respective journeys to the

Bray: beat D. Wheeler by 6, R. Brand 7, P. Darby 5, K. Whittall 7, B. Weitz 16, R. Jenkins 1(T), B. Harris 11.

Weitz: beat J. Haslam 20, D. Magee 8, P. Stoker 20, R. Jenkins 17, P. Darby 12, B. Harris 10, K. Carter 12. 'B' Level Tournaments are undeservedly rare birds. Manager Betty Weitz believes Cheltenham's is one of only two in the calendar. There was an entry of 28 with handicaps ranging from two to nine. Players came from Southport, Henley, Budleigh, Bristol and Bath.

But where were the triples? Frances Ransom delighted herself with a tournament first but muffed the peg-out for gold.

#### RESULTS:

7 Wins: A. Bray, B.Weitz.
6 Wins: K. Carter, R. Jenkins, K. Whittall

**5 Wins:** R. Brand, D. Williamson, D.Magee, J. Jackson.

4 Wins: B. Harris, C. Smith, P. Darby, J. Haslam, M. Boardman, R.Wheeler, F. Ransom, K.Jackson, D. Wheeler.

Bristol - continued from Page 8

happened 40 minutes after the start. Edward used his 3 bisques which he might just have saved had he played with a little more care.

Martin Murray, fresh from his successful trip to America, arrived in time to be nobbled into presenting the prizes. Congratulating Rosemary Gugan on her management of the event, little did he realise that the manager had just inscribed a further hint in The Tournament Manager's Guide. When using a Japanese 24 hour alarm clock for signalling the end of time, remember that 2.30 can also mean 2.30am. Whilst we have a new clubhouse, the flood lights have yet to be installed!!

RESULTS Latham Cup

Final:

Semi-Finals: A. Symons (1) bt D. Gugan (6) +16; E. Duckworth (4½) bt M. James (6½).

Duckworth bt Symons +24.

#### Surbiton: 11-14 May Surbiton hosts Peel Memorials

Report by Derek Caporn
We hope the revival of this old and famous event, launched in 1898 to commemorate the man who invented the peel, is now under way following the successful four day event at the Surbiton Club. Entries rose from 11 men and one lady last year at Guildford & Godalming to 18 men (2 failed to arrive) and five ladies and the revival of the 'mixed' doubles (not played for the last two years) produced 16 entries.

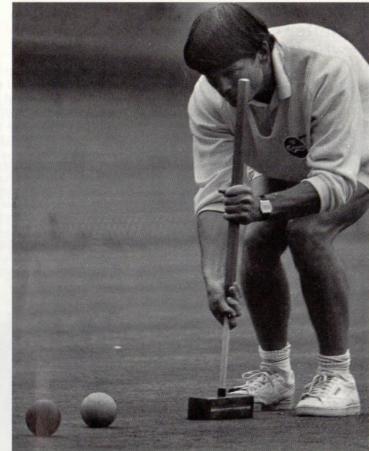
The Manager exercised the power of the Almighty and changed players' sexes in order to pair. Unfortunately there were only three mixed doubles pairs but the event was brilliantly staged to produce a final between two of these pairs! The winners, George Noble and Eleanor Grant had a walkover in the first round as D. Williams failed to appear but won the next 2 rounds including an exciting final by 3. This was completed in one day. The five ladies in the Ladies Peel Memorial were all long bisquers so the games started from the 3rd hoop. The outstanding player was Mrs Eleanor Grant who won all four games. She had benefitted from coaching from George!

The men's event was fiercely contested, the highest handicap being 8. There were several pegged out games. Generally the standard was typically 'start of season', the play being mostly bad or indifferent!

At the end of round 4 the holder, Les Chapman, had won all his games and had it been a knockout would have claimed the bowl. Unfortunately for him, it was a swiss, with another four rounds. Chapman lost the next two rounds, first to Alec Thomas and then to Smorfitt, who like Lazarus, rose from the dead to take the lead only to be beaten by George Noble who then beat Jerry Guest to become 'Lord' Peel. He was one of the few players to play consistently well, except he did have some problems in finishing his last game!

The catering in the hands of Hazel Kittermaster was very good with a banquet on the Saturday evening. The new Clubhouse and improved grounds were appreciated by all. Our thanks to George and Jerry for all their hard work on the grounds. The Management was, of course, at its usual high standard and the event was brought to a happy conclusion in sunshine at teatime!!

We hope the Peel Memorials will continue at Surbiton, grow from strength to strength, and attract



George Noble, winner of the Men's Peel Memorial Trophy.

more handicap players of all standards, particularly the ladies. This, after all, is the premier handicap event in the Calendar. RESULTS Winners: Men: G. Noble (-1) Women: Mrs E. Grant (11)

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#### Harrow Oak: 13-14 May A Matter of Rankings

Report by Tim Harrison

One of the attractions of the croquet circuit is the varying characters of the different clubs and different tournaments. Harrow Oak is situated in the middle of a busy park in North West London. Whilst not enjoying the luxurious facilities of more prosperous private clubs, there is always plenty of activity if the croquet happens to be dull. For those interested in natural history, it is possible to see all kinds of dogs ranging from what looked like two wolves to two small but fiercesome puggish dogs complete with gold

Once again, there were several late withdrawals from this tournament with the major culprit being the necessity to arrange Inter-Club fixtures. Since the strongest club teams contain mainly tournament players, there is surely a good case for restricting the entry for the Inter-Club to eliminate those teams which have no chance. This would make it both easier to arrange the fixtures and also help support the tournament circuit. Perhaps some formula could be derived using the rankings.

Despite the withdrawals, there was still a full field of sixteen players. Three of the four seeds won their initial matches with the large exception of our manager, Richard Hilditch, who lost to the rapidly improving Steve Comish. I shall make no reference to Islamic religious leaders apart from saying that I consider personally abusive letters as having no place in 'Croquet'. In fact, they are almost always a sign of defeat.

The second round saw the fall of two further seeds. Alan Sutcliffe came back from 2nd and 4th hoops against peg alone to beat Duncan Reeve. Duncan had about a dozen long diagonal shots at the peg, but did not have the luck needed in such a situation on not the flattest of lawns.

The other seed to fall was Dayal Gunasekera who lost to a faultless performance from Tim Harrison. This included Tim's split shot of the season when from on the boundary near 1st hoop, he got behind a ball 2 feet out of corner 2 and at the same time put a ball a foot in front of 3rd hoop. In many tournaments nowadays, such ambitious shots are rarely attempted because of the concern/paranoia with not losing and the rankings. And why is there this obsession with rankings? Is it so that entry to the next tournament is guaranteed, and so the next weekend can also be spent worrying about not losing? John Walter's letter in May's 'Croquet' pinpoints this change in attitudes exactly. Surely it is only by attempting difficult manoeuvres that one's game improves and at the same time a sense of achievement is gained when successful. Or is winning everything?

How ironic it was that in the latter stages of the game, Dayal was heard to mutter about loss of ranking points and promptly lost. However, I do not wish to denigrate Dayal as he is arguably the most elegant of A-Class players and despite his result over the weekend, he is always a good bet against the top player (witness his narrow defeat by Steve Mulliner in last year's Opens).

One of the difficulties in reporting a tournament managed by Richard Hilditch is getting to watch any games apart from your own. All I can say about Steve Comish's semi-final against Alan Sutcliffe was that he won in two games. In the other semi-final, Tim Harrison had two chances to finish in the first game but stuck in penultimate both times and after some erratic play, Martin French raised his game to win. The second game was probably the best of the weekend with Martin winning by +3TP in the eighth turn. Tim's one mistake was a failed halfjump at rover.

With the benefit of subsequent practice, I discovered that the Southport (Birkdale) balls make this shot considerably more difficult than with Jacques balls. This was the first tournament I have played in which used Southport balls throughout and I was impressed with them. Before now, Harrow has had a combination of types which at best is difficult and at worst is frustrating and annoying. I am sure this has been a key factor behind some of the adverse comments about the new balls.



Martin French, who completed immaculate triples at Harrow.

The conditions were particularly easy, even for Harrow, and so the emphasis was on good shooting, making no mistakes and executing triple peels. This is precisely what Martin French did in the first two games of the best of five final, giving him three triples in a row. By the time a mistake came midway through the third game, Steve Comish's confidence had been undermined by Martin's devastating display of faultless croquet. After a scrappy period, Martin eventually won and almost had a fourth successive triple. Yet again, Martin showed what a consistent player he is and how difficult he is to beat.

Much of the entertainment and excitement at weekend tournaments such as this come from the consolation games. Who says they don't matter? I was privileged to double-bank with the most exciting game of the weekend between David Ruscombe-King and Daval Gunasekera. In normal circumstances, this would be a sure win for Dayal, the significantly better player. However when the conditions are easy and the lesser player gets the first break, it becomes a totally different game. Indeed, David adopted the unusual but very effective tactic of going to rover and conceding a contact.

Having lost his last two games by +26, this is when the better player thinks how unlucky he is that everyone plays like an absolute master against him. He then thinks all those ranking points he is about to lose and finally with a ball near 1st hoop, he is now expected to show his class, make an all-round break and peg out his lesser opponent. How often is it that the better player is reduced to a total nervous wreck in such circumstances? It was not surprising then when Dayal broke down at the 6th hoop on a four-ball break.

The next act in the play involves the lesser player getting a break with his backward ball. It is now his turn to think of the glory of beating a top player and all those ranking points he will gain. And so we have two very tense players. David now proceeded with a precarious break, obtained his rover peel and eventually reached penultimate. Here, a poor approach left a sharply angled hoop. The experienced spectators knew now that David's moment of glory had ended and Dayal would have a narrow victory.

But no! To everyone's surprise, not least the players', penultimate was run and with a ball at rover, it was all over. This was when Dayal played his masterstroke - the so-called minus player's stopping bisque. David agonisingly managed to miss the ball at rover from three feet. David admitted later that he had been put off by running penultimate which he had not

Dayal could not afford to concede a contact and so could only go to 4-back, and just hope the lift shot was missed. It was not, but now the pressure was beginning to tell on David with the result that he failed to get close to rover and had the inevitable stick.

The excitment was not over yet. Dayal duly went to the peg with his other ball and pegged David's ball out. Then when routinely finishing off, Dayal accidently peeled his opponent's rover ball and followed by just grovelling through the hoop. The game was in the balance again as Dayal was severely hampered, with the added pressure that a miss guaranteed an instant defeat. This is where it should say turn to page 33 or worse still, wait till next month. In fact the hampered shot was hit and so the game ended with the expected win for the better player.

Such games are part of the appeal of tournament croquet - it is not all about the main event. I have lost similar games as both the better and the lesser player and I know how it feels, so I offer my commiserations to my fellow club member.

On a final note, congratulations to Alan Sutcliffe who achieved his first tournament triple

Round 2

D. Reeve bt A. Symons +7; A. Sutcliffe bt D. Ruscombe-King +21; S. Comish bt R. Hilditch +17; C. Southern bt A. Reed +3; M. French bt G. Vince +25; L. Wharrad bt M. Kolbuszewski +12; D. Gunasekera bt J. Dawson +7; T. Harrison bt I. Plummer +5.

Sutcliffe bt Reeve +1; Comish bt Southern +23; French bt Wharrad +17; Harrison bt Gunasekera +17. Semi-Finals

Comish bt Sutcliffe +7, +16; French bt Harrison +4,

French bt Comish +18TP, +26TP, +21.

#### Southwick: 26-29 May INTER-COUNTIES CHAMPIONSHIP Gloucester take title for first time

Report by John Walters

The Inter-Counties is an event dear to the heart of its many followers. A peculiar event, there are pretensions of top class croquet (it is representative, contains the country's top players, and sets teams playing advanced croquet), but it is perhaps the camaraderie of the event which keeps it good natured and reminiscent of restful summers past. Although one of the first CA events ever to be sponsored, this year the Inter-Counties avoided both the minefields of professionalism and drug-taking, while the absence of any 'Natal Counties' team avoided a third!

An Eastern Counties team (which has got gradually younger each successive year for the past five) arrived this time looking for their fourth victory in five years with an age range of 22 to 27. The holders were soon to find that bad things do indeed come in threes, with the third - 3rd place in the competition (and their worse performance since 1984) - not the biggest disappointment for certain team members. For prior to that John Walters became involved in a motor accident, when his car brakes failed on the way to Brighton; while perhaps the biggest shock of the tournament was the theft of Debbie Cornelius' purse from the Southwick Ladies' changing rooms on day 1!

The only damaging aspects of the pernicious 'professional attitude' were the 'posthumous scratching' of Middlesex from 2 matches at the end of day one (reducing them from 3 out of 3 wins to 1 out of 3) because their squad contained 10 people (9 being the maximum). Also the response of one well-known CA dogmatist to Don Gaunt's admirably pragmatic approach of calling for a 'second opinion' when testing a very close 'wired ball'. The critic said that Don 'should just have given the benefit of the doubt' and left him understandably narked!

Otherwise day one proved uneventful; Eastern counties scraping home against all opposition including Avon, their supposed 'closest rival'. More of a surprise was Avon's loss to Bedford, where in the deciding game a nervous Tom Anderson took advantage of an even more nervous Roger Jenkins when the latter stuck in a short, angled hoop 6 for the match. Perhaps Tom's +1(T) win in that match made up for his +1(T) loss against Lancashire and Cheshire, where a missed 6 inch straight rush to his hoop gave them a straight 6 inch rush to their hoop - for victory! We also discovered a new angle to the perennial debate over British Summer Time, with the discovery of another BST - Brighton, Southwick Time. This occurs when the tea ladies won't serve tea because the manager has decreed no tea until 4.15, but the time is already 4.17!?! John Walters' mobilisation of the hungry troops further established his reputation as a 'radical and revolutionary'!

On day two Avon's defeat of Gloucester and Devon and Dorset's more predictable(?) defeat of Eastern ensured that no team was on 100%. Gloucester (aka Cheltenham), Surrey (aka Surbiton) and Eastern (aka Ipswich) now seemed to be battling for the title. Debbie Prentis (of Canada) became the latest addition to the Middlesex team, showing how helpful it is in fulfilling qualification criteria if your county doesn't actually exist!!

Both David and Ian Maugham were playing for Gloucester this year. More naturally, they should have been playing for Somerset - then they would have been Somerset Maughams! The pairing of David with Don Gaunt seemed to be developing nicely after Don hit a medium length roquet, and his response to David's 'Did you have to rush it to the peg?' was simply 'Shut up! Your're lucky I hit it at all!

Day three started with a crucial match between Eastern and Surrey, with Steve Mulliner now added to the latter's side. In the top game Walters went to 4-back on the 6th turn and Mulliner hit the lift to reply in kind on the 7th. Both Debbie Cornelius and Danny Palmer stuttered, but finally Danny took a break to peg with Steve finishing after a missed lift - an impressive match considering the treacherous conditions of a fast lawn. The bottom match was a drawnout struggle which finally went Eastern's way and the middle match looked a certainty for them as well. Eastern for 4-back (Mark Avery) and penultimate (Tim Harrison), Surrey for 2 (Mike Stevens) and 4-back (George Noble) 5 minutes before time was up. After making 1 hoop Stevens missed a roquet, allowing Avery to go to peg; Harrison finally made penultimate (having had a number of previous attempts) but left a 10 yard roquet which Stevens hit. Two leaves later Mike Stevens made 3rd hoop with an opponent ball in each of 2nd and 4th corners when time was called. Astonishingly, he not only took his ball to peg (and pegged it out) but achieved the two peels he needed (a straight 4-back peel and a peel through penultimate after making rover) to go 1 point ahead, so that when Tim missed the last shot victory was Surrey's!

It looked like some comfort might be given to Eastern by a Middlesex defeat of Gloucester. but though a 3-0 scoreline seemed likely Gloucester managed comebacks to take the final games +2(T) and +1(T)! Eastern's hopes were finally crushed by a 2-1 defeat at the hands of Gloucester (including a nervous pegged out game which pitted Debbie Cornelius on 2-back. against Paul Smith on 1, Dave Foulser having rid Debbie of partner; although given chances, a dejected Debbie failed to capitalise).

The final day dawned with Gloucester almost certain to take the Inter-Counties title for the first time in its history. However, after a 2-1 loss to Yorkshire a 3-way tie (Gloucester/Eastern/Avon) was still possible. Hopes were pinned on Lancs & Cheshire to pull off a 3-0 coup against the favourites; on paper a strong team, Lancs & Cheshire had suffered a disastrous run - could they now prove themselves? The 3-0 result, in Gloucester's favour, answered both questions, including the destination of the trophy.

Only second place remained in the balance. David Goacher in the last game of the tournament to finish (swifty to the last), held together a break to peg-out and win by the definitve +1(T), to steal 2nd place for Avon from Eastern.

Thus ended another Inter-Counties. Manager Nigel Aspinall appeared for the prize-giving, but fortunately sub-manager Don Gaunt was there for the rest of the tournament. The treacherous transfers from Eastern (Don Gaunt to Gloucester and Danny Palmer to Surrey) had proved decisive-but we're still waiting for the transfer fees!



Mike Stevens, who won a critical match for Surrey against Eastern Counties.

RE	SULTS	
1.	Gloucestershire	8 wins
2.	Avon	7 wins
3.	Eastern Counties	7 wins
4.	Surrey	7 wins
5.	Yorkshire	6 wins
6.	Bedfordshire	5 wins
7.	Sussex/Hampshire/I.O.W.	4 wins
8.	Devon & Dorset	3 wins
9.	Lancashire & Cheshire	3 wins
10.	Middlesex	3 wins
11	Kent	2 wine

The ties were broken by counting the number of games

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#### **HOOP GAUGES**

The Croquet Association has for sale new stainless steel hoop gauges at \$5.00 each (plus VAT and postage = \$5.89).

The CA's Equipment Committee recommend that these gauges should replace the old plastic gauges issued previously, as the new gauges make for easier and more accurate hoop setting.

To assist clubs in this matter, the CA will exchange old plastic gauges for new stainless steel gauges at a special price of \$4.50, inclusive of postage and VAT.

Please send old gauges and cheques to Brian Macmillan, The Croquet Association, The Hurlingham Club, Ranelagh Gardens, London, SW6 3PR.

Report by Charles Marshall

Even our experienced Tournament Secretary, Ray Stevens, was surprised and pleased to find this event oversubscribed the day after the Fixture List was published; all credit to him in this his eleventh year in the post. There was a good entry from 'A' and 'B' class players. but not so many in the 'C' class. The 'high bisquers' do not all seem to realise what valuable experience they can get from tournament play, apart from the pleasure of meeting players from other clubs, whom they will, hopefully, be meeting for many years to come.

Audrey Croker, after her initiation, last year, had the technique of management taped and kept everyone happy while also playing herself. She had problems; the lawns were in splendid condition after the mild winter and the care of Charles Smith, the lawns manager and Chris, the groundsman. They had become very fast and players were slow to master them, hence more than half of the first day's games went to time. The late Col. Healing, a sometime club champion, used to say that anyone who could not get round in two hours should not call himself a croquet player. Be that as it may, would it not be a good idea in these circumstances to shorten the next day's games by, say, a quarter of an hour each? It would certainly make for a shorter day for the tournament officials.

Audrey had arranged for two 3-block competitions for the 'low bisquers' and a one block competition for the others. The highest scoring block winner went straight into the final, the others had a 'play-

The senior event was a repeat of last year's final; this time John Hatherley turned the tables on Paul Macdonald. It is difficult to chose which of many interesting inci-



Paul Macdonald, block winner at Budleigh.

#### Parkstone: 5-10 June Good Organisation Makes a Happy Tournament

Report by Peter Howell

If one is looking for a good well-run tournament in pleasant surroundings. then Parkstone Croquet Club provides all the right ingredients for an enjoyable week's play.

On my first tournament visit to the Club, I found it was excellently managed by Roger and Dab Wheeler from Cheltenham, with attentive assistance from Margaret McMordie, the Club Secretary. The Wheelers ensured a smooth-running schedule which meant that no-one had to wait around for games. Double-banking helped - which some participants may not entirely approve of, but perhaps certain other clubs should take a lesson from Parkstone in using doublebanking and thereby providing such a brisk and busy tournament.

The only snag to the efficient organisation, where time limits are imposed as a last resort, was the persistent slow play of one or two players which delayed others unnecessarily.

The driest May on record resulted in very fast lawns and even the odd bursts of rain did very little to slow things up, and many players were heard to curse their take-offs.

David Harrison-Wood, a home member entered in his first tournament, gave a good account of himself in the Y handicap. A late afternoon game between him and Roger Wheeler gave spectators an exciting finish to watch. Harrison-Wood was pegged out by his opponent when his other ball was for 2-back. Roger Wheeler was round to peg and rover when Harrison-Wood had a long hit-in. With great deliberation and patience he had us all on the edge of our seats as we watched him catch up and then peg out to win the game. He went on to win the B Block singles against Bevis Sanford (+17).

In the handicap doubles, an exciting final was won by Diane Williamson and Bob Bailey, scraping home by +8 against Joyce Taylor and Bevis Sanford.

The occasion was made even more pleasurable for me due to the attendance of 'Bunny' Vulliamy, from Reigate, who taught me how to play the game in 1985. Although his handicap is rising a little these days (he's currently 83 year's young), he still plays well-long may he enjoy the game. Shall I go back again? Well, the

weather was good, the food was good (thanks to Mrs Mickie Rumsey and her team) and the tournament was organised to a 'T', giving those players who had travelling and hotel expenses a full busy programme which is much appreciated and makes the effort more cost effective, unlike some other tournaments I can remember. But what about that delightful Dorset accent and the friendliness of the local members - oh yes, I will go back to see my new friends Parkstone next year - I have to return the Gold Cup too.

RESULTS Open Class 'A' (Advanced Play) Winner: D. Charsley-Thomas Open Class 'B' (Level Play) Winner: D. Harrison-Wood Cripps Memorial Gold Cup Handicap Play) Vinner: P. Howell (2) Winner: F. Howell (2)
Handicap Singles (9 bisques or more)
Winner: Mrs D. Williamson (9)
Summer Doubles Cup (Handicap Play)
Winners: Mrs D. Williamson & R. Bailey (9½) dents to record but what follows was quite exceptional. Christine Bagnall, the Club Chairman, found herself five hoops behind Eric Kitchener when time was called. Having the innings, she caught up with some very accurate play, and having reached the peg with this ball, laid a 'dolly rush' at its own hoop for her backward ball. Eric narrowly missed the long shot which she left him and that was that. Christopher Williams from Dyffryn was the third block winner. Last year this tournament saw him get his handicap down from 13 to 9; this year it came down from 6 to 5. As this is only the third season for him and his club, clearly we shall be hearing more of them.

In the next event Leslie Toye of Sidmouth went straight into the Final (he was a block winner last year). He beat Andrew Potter of Cheltenham, who had beaten the other block winner, Marjorie Marshall, a very senior local member, who got a special round of applause as she received a handicap reduction, as did the other prize winners.

The Long Handicap Cup was won by E.C. Owen of Sidmouth, J. Perry of the home club being the runner-up.

The Doubles completed Sidmouth's tally of wins; John Hatherley (playing in his third match on the final day) with Mary Hardman beat Audrey Croker and Don Laney. In this event one match went on for thirty five minutes after time was called! Christine Bagnall again was the one with the iron nerve who ran the deciding hoop.

The 'Y' Doubles went to Pattie Hague of Ellesmere and John McBurnie-Wood of Budleigh.

Last but not least must be mentioned the 'super' meals provided by the ladies; they were very much appreciated.

#### RESULTS

**American Handicap Singles Block Winners Division I** 

J. Hatherley (4½), C.N. Williams (6), I.P.M. Macdonald (21/2).

Play-Off Godfrey Turner Challenge Cup: Hatherley bt Williams +1(T); Hatherley bt Macdonald +5.

**Division II** A. Potter (8), Mrs C. Marshall (11), L.E. Tove (71/2).

Play-Off J.K. Brown Memorial Challenge Cup: Potter bt Mrs Marshall +7; Toye bt Potter

**Division III** Play-Off

L.G. Walters Long Handicap Trophy: E.C. Owen (13) bt J. Perry (16) +4(T). **Handicap Doubles** 

(Daldry Cups: 21 pairs entered) Semi-Finals

Dr Laney & Mrs Croker bt Mr & Mrs Stevens +16; J. Hatherley & Miss Hardman bt F.A. Rowlands & Mrs Bagnall +13.

Final.

Hatherley & Hardman bt Laney & Croker +8.

#### RESULTS BOARD

Ryde: 7-9 April 6-round Handicap Swiss: 18 entries Winner: Miss D.A. Cornelius (-1/2) Runner-Up: R.J. Smith (1)

Roehampton: 13-16 April Handicap Swiss: 17 entries 8 wins: J.D. Greenwood, M.J.B.

Southwick: 14-16 April Open D&P: 18 entries Draw Final: J. Walters bt F. Landor **Process Final:** 

M. French bt S. Comish +26TP.

French bt Comish -21, +16, +17.

#### **Coaches Corner**

#### **Coaching Comments** By Bill Lamb

It is quite common on the tournament circuit to hear the exclamation 'Oh, I don't know how to use bisques, I play better without them'. Now the first statement may well be true; the second certainly is not. Wasting bisques will not improve your technique or your tactics. In

fact, the player who never learns to

use bisques properly will be doubly

penalised because he will not learn

how to concede them either. Most players recognise that, when they have more than four or five bisques against scratch or minus players, they have to use them in the fourth and sixth or fifth and seventh turns of the game to set up and maintain four-ball breaks; fail to do that and they run the risk of being beaten with

bisques standing.

from an early hoop.

The situation is rather different against weaker players. On the one hand, there are fewer bisques available; on the other there is less danger of being beaten by the opponent going round and peggingout in two turns. In this case, you must always be on the alert to use a 'high profit' bisque, i.e. a bisque which will give you a four-ball break, especially if your opponent has the advantage. You should be looking for opportunities where a single bisque could mean a swing of several points in your favour. In this context, remember that a bisque has its greatest potential if you can set up a four-ball break

A simple situation, which all players recognise, occurs when you stick in a hoop off your opponent's ball with a four-ball break set out, particularly if your opponent's ball is for that hoop. You just cannot leave the break for the opponent. Now suppose you stick in the hoop off your own partner ball. Many players are content to end their turn in that position, confident that they will not lose the innings. However, the opponent will have a safe, medium-length shot which, even if he misses, destroys your four-ball break, whereas one bisque gives you your four-ball break back again.

Other promising positions occur when your opponent has laid up with both balls by your hoop, or has left your partner ball by your hoop and laid up with a rush near a boundary. It is not difficult then to construct a four-ball break with a single bisque. If you learn to recognise these situations and profit by them, you will also learn that they are not positions you should leave against an intelligent opponent to whom you are giving bisques.

Suppose you are conceding bisques and have hit your own tice at the start of the game and taken off to your opponent's balls on the

east boundary, leaving your partner ball as a tolerable pioneer for hoop 2. Unfortunately, your rush to hoop 1 ends up at the end of 'A' baulk. What do you do next? A hopeful roll up to the hoop with the intention of retiring to the boundary near your partner ball if you do not get position, thinking that your opponent will have to move the ball at hoop 1? Congratulations, you have just set up a single-bisque, four-ball break for your opponent when he shoots with his other ball at your boundary ball. You cannot afford to leave his ball as a pioneer at hoop 1, even though it means you will probably not get a break in that turn. Far better to approach hoop 1 with a take-off or a split and be content to make a single hoop or retire in safety unless, of course, you know your opponent does not know how to use his bisques!

So, the next time you hear someone say that he plays better without bisques, just smile and think to yourself: 'That is why his handicap is as high as it is!'

# **Coaching Courses at Budleigh Salterton** Report by Peter Danks

Budleigh: 29 April - 1 May

Members of the Grade 1 Coaching Course at Budleigh, with David Purdon (right).

During the winter David Purdon was appointed Regional Coaching Officer in the South-West. On the Saturday he attracted 11 student Grade 1 coaches to an all-day

of Peter Danks, the retiring RCO. From 10am - 5pm the niceties of the Beginner's syllabus were

course which he ran with the help

shown on court while the student coaches demonstrated their coaching techniques. Each student demonstration was followed by constructive discussion.

On Sunday and Monday a Grade 2 coaching course was run by Peter Danks with the help of David Purdon and three aspiring coaches Maurice Boardman, John Hatherly and Reg Minter.

The coaches first met on the Saturday evening. Peter managed to drag out the proceedings for 3 hours! It is amazing how much there is to talk about when some of the coaches are unfamiliar with the course syllabus.

On Sunday the course opened at 10am. The coaches and students were introduced to each other. They started 12 hours of worthwhile hard graft. The day finished for students at 6pm and for coaches at 6.30pm.

Monday was a similar day. As the weather improved so did the morale of the students. At the closing ceremony they professed themselves highly satisfied, and congratulated Maurice Boardman and John Hatherley on the award of their Grade 2 coaching badges. (Reg must wait until his handicap comes down).

Those who were strangers on Sunday morning had become old friends by Monday evening, having shared the same experience of what is hard enjoyable and, it is hoped, profitable work.



#### Obituary

#### MRS M.E. LANGLEY

Margaret Langley, who died aged 74 on April 2, was the outstanding personality at Bath Croquet Club throughout the

Tough, cheerful, determined, she served the club loyally in many areas, building soundly on the foundations laid by Joyce Brash-Smith and the late Bill

Margaret joined Bath in 1977 and was soon persuaded to join the committee. By 1982 she was Hon. Secretary and held this post till her death, giving priceless support to successive Chairmen. But even this thankless task did not absorb all Margaret's formidable energy. She was also primarily responsible for club tournaments, gymkhanas and open days, and prominent in team selection, coaching, handicapping and publicity. Later she became a CA Coach and Handicapper.

Margaret's management skills had much to do with Bath being given several All-England and South West Federation events yet she was entirely unpretentious,

naments, this year's Cheltenham Easter Weekend being the last. Her strokeplay was notoriously erratic, but this was offse by extremely sophisticated strategy and tactics; thus she often triumphed against more accurate but less intelligent opponents. This was an object lesson to those privileged to be her pupils and many

members profited greatly by her advice

wielding the washing-up mop as often as

the clipboard. As a long-time Brownie

Leader, she could hoist the Club Flag with

unrivalled panache and she always offered

the warmest welcome to newcomers and

It was sometimes assumed that croque

was Margaret's whole life. Not so. She gave

unstinting service to her Church and to

local charities but, characteristically,

Margaret played in many outside tour-

never advertised the fact.

visiting teams.

and example.

Bath now faces a new season, without the familiar, bustling, eager figure and the old saying that 'nobody is indispensable will be tested to the limit. Margaret Langley will be sorely missed.

**Home Internationals** 

#### A Journey to the other end of the World THE NEW ZEALAND CHAMPIONSHIPS 1989

By David Openshaw

On a cold foggy day last November I decided I needed some winter sun and that I should pit my strengh against the New Zealanders again before I got too old.

So I entered for the New Zealand Championships to be played at Nelson and also for the South Island Championship at Christchurch, which immediately preceded the main Championships.

My first obstacle was to survive the 32-hour journey from Heathrow to Christchurch and to be fit enough to play my first match within 24 hours of arriving!

Good fortune smiled on me on the morning of departure (31 December) when the postman delivered a copy of Townsend's



Bob Jackson, winner of this year's New Zealand Championship.

Croquet Almanack. I can tell you that this excellent book is essential reading for any 32-hour journey. I now claim to be the only person who knows whose name appears most in the 216 pages of closely printed results and records.

I was flying via Sydney with Quantas Airlines. The plane left on Friday at 6pm. Over Luxembourg and Southern Germany drinks and dinner were served. After two hours of flight I began to look through the Quantas in-flight magazine. On page 22 was the Quantas Quiz - '4 Brainteasers to help you wile away an hour or two'.

I took only 15 minutes to finish them but I got one of them wrong - I should have taken an hour.

As we were flying over Sofia at 37,000 feet and 555mph I was reading about the new tennis centre in Melbourne. Like many sports they are testing a new playing surface. This one is called Synpave Rebound Ace. The writer asked 'Will the Lawn Tennis Association of Australia change its name to the Synpave Rebound Ace Tennis Association of Australia?'.

By nine o'clock I turned my attention to the in-flight audio

system by means of which, through personal headphones, one can listen to 10 different channels. Channel 9 caught my eye - '20 greatest hits'. That should pass the next hour very pleasantly I thought, until I discovered what Quantas meant by the 20 Greatest Hits. I had never heard of any before. The first four were 'Howzat' by Sherbet, 'Down Under' by Men at Work, 'Line It Up' by Mental as Anything (sounds like a croquet player's song) and 'Western Union Man' by Max Merrit and the Meteors. So, instead of music, it was time to sleep.

Three hours later the first breakfast of the flight was served. There were to be three more during the flight!

Still the Croquet Almanack kept me going. I learnt that there is only one registered Garden Croquet Player in the Isle of Man, that Miss D.D. Steel won the North of England Championship five times, that William Ormerod was 2nd in the 1971 President's Cup having won 12 out of the 14 games, that ...I must have dozed off again. What, another breakfast?!

Eventually I arrived at Sydney and after changing planes I reached Christchurch at 2pm on Sunday afternoon, feeling as fresh as a daisy!

Mary Murfitt met me at the airport and suggested that I probably needed some practice because she said Roger was playing very well. So it was straight off to the United Croquet Club situated in Hagley Park near the centre of Christchurch. On arrival I saw that Roger Murfitt, John Prince and Jerry Guest were all practising intensely. I joined them and, to my surprise, seemed to be playing remarkably well. After a good night's sleep it's straight off to play in the first round. The thoughtful Manager had not scheduled me to play at 9am, so I

could relax for the morning. My first game was a Doubles. I was playing with Jerry Guest, the first time we'd ever played together, but we seemed to strike up a good partnership immediately. We had a very successful week, beating the New Zealand International pairing of Roger Murfitt and John Prince +1 in an early round. We were helped by developing a secret weapon which, when used sparingly, seemed to induce an error from our opponents with a high degree of regularity. However, I cannot reveal our method as we might need it again sometime! We lost in the final of the draw to Paul

Skinley and Peter Gleeson but met them again in the play-off by winning the process. This doubles was a very in-and-out affair which we eventually won +3 to become the South Island Doubles Champions.

The South Island Singles was a tough event with four members of the New Zealand MacRobertson Shield team competing. In the draw I beat Peter Gleeson, Paul Skinley and Jerry Guest before losing to John Prince in the final. In the process, I met John Prince in the first round and won +19 but succumbed to Roger Murfitt -10 in the next round. The process was won by the outsider Peter Couch but he did not pose too many problems for John Prince in the play-off. John, playing well, won +25 with a straight triple to take the South Island Championships.

After 8 days of croquet there was time for 2 days of sightseeing before travelling the 200 miles to Nelson for the New Zealand Open Championships. On arrival I found that the seeding for the main event was based on computer rankings. Since the New Zealand computer has not heard anything about my prodigious powers I was not seeded. What was worse I was drawn to play number 4 seed, Graham Beale, in the first round.

I began to think it might have been a long way to travel to lose in the first round! However, in a tough match I won +4 +17. The sensation of the first round was that Joseph Hogan, who won our Open in 1986, was eliminated in a highclass game by Tony Stephens +12TP +17.

Bob Jackson was in good form winning one match with a TPO in the first game and a sextuple in the second.

The semi-finals were between John Prince and Paul Skinley and myself and Bob Jackson. At this stage in the competition, President's Cup hoops were introduced and set very firmly in the ground.

The play continued to be of good quality and both semi-finals went to three games. John Prince beat Paul Skinley -17 +23 +26TP. Bob Jackson won the first game against me +26TP but I replied with a convincing +25 in the second. The deciding game was very exciting, with some errors creeping in but Bob hit his 'last' lift to win +4. The final was a very dour affair, the first two games each lasting for four hours with one victory each. Bob Jackson however turned on his skills in the final game to take the trophy +26TP.



David Openshaw.

In the Doubles I again played with Jerry Guest. The New Zealand Doubles is played as a draw and process event and has been won by Hogan and Jackson for eight of the last ten years. We had the satisfaction of beating them +26 in the first round of the process and Murfitt and Prince beat them in the semi-final of the draw. However, Jerry and I could not reproduce our good form later in the week and failed to reach the final. This was contested by Murfitt and Prince against Stephens and Steve Jones (an ex-Cheltenham player).

In an exciting finish Murfitt failed to peg out after completing 3 peels and Stephens and Jones made the most of this by finishing in their next two turns to win by +2.

On my return trip, I was left to reflect on the wonderful hospitality I had received and also on our chances next January in the MacRobertson Shield. The New Zealand team will, I expect, be exactly the same as that which won the trophy in England in 1986. It's going to be tough for our team to regain the Shield. As always, the Doubles matches will hold the key but I have a feeling we will win.

So, back to Heathrow after 3 weeks away. I was very cross to find that there had been no snow and that the January weather had been very mild.

Even so, it had been a most enjoyable trip.

#### **Budleigh Salterton: 3-4 June** HOME INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP **England recovers its pride**

Report by Peter Danks and others

This year saw yet another format for this event. The first time the event was played, there was a knockout. Each country played another on Saturday. On Sunday the two winners played for first and second places while the two losers played for third and fourth. Last year each country played all the others, with each player playing two games against his opposite number. Ireland won. This year the two games were extended to the best of three. England won. Incidentally it would still have won if last year's format had been continued. It was agreed that the new format is best.

It is difficult to report on 10 simultaneous matches. All players of international standard play interesting games, some more than others. It is the latter which were reported by the players themselves on a pad of paper left on a table.

Saturday was a cold grey day with intermittent rain.

#### **England v Wales**

W. Prichard was first to 4-back. Mulliner made a mess and left a short lift. Prichard hit and completed a delayed triple. The second game was dominated by Mulliner who just failed a delayed triple. Prichard broke down carelessly. Mulliner went out. In the third game it was nearly all Mulliner who finished on a standard double

Croker missed the tice. Aspinall made a break of long rolls but was hoop-bound after 1-back. Croker went to 4-back and then stuck in Hoop 2. Aspinall finished with a delayed triple. In the second game Aspinall made the first break but over-approached 3-back from plumb in front. A couple of minutes later Aspinall hit a longish shot and finished with a QUADRUPLE peel.

So, after the first session, ENGLAND 31/2 WALES 11/2. IRELAND 3 SCOTLAND 2.

#### **England v Scotland**

Mulliner to 4-back and stopped at Hoop 5. Aiton hit and reached 4-back. Aiton ended with a delayed triple. In the second game Mulliner white-washed with a triple. In the third game Aiton hit on third turn and went to 4-back. His lift was flawed(!). He left Mulliner's ball north of Hoop 4 with 1/2-inch showing. Mulliner hit it from A baulk. Mulliner had a successful TPO leaving one ball in Corner 2 and his peg ball in Corner 3. Aiton failed to make Hoop 1 off the contact. Mulliner joined wide. Aiton missed from 27 yards. Mulliner had a 3-ball break to finish. **Ireland v Wales** After both had early mistakes S.

second Healy pegged out Foulser whose other ball was on 4-back. Foulser hit the lift and finished on two balls. Foulser won the third game in style with a two turn straight triple. This made the third win against Ireland. England had regained the Championship.

#### Scotland v Wales

W. Prichard won the first game on



International line up, with team captains seated (L to R): Stephen Wright (Scotland), Fred Rogerson (Ireland), Nigel Aspinall (England) and William Prichard (Wales).

Williams completed triple after W. Prichard had broken down on his attempt. In the second game Williams got pegged out when for 2-back against Hoop 3. With balls in Corner 3 and near Corner 2 he split the former to 3-back, hit a ten yarder rolled to 2 feet straight in front of 2-back, missed the return roquet, and lost. The third game which Prichard won was delayed until Sunday afternoon.

ENGLAND 4 SCOTLAND 0 (One unfinished). IRELAND 31/2 WALES 11/2.

#### Sunday was a glorious sunny day.

#### **England v Ireland** S. Williams reached peg and 4-back

in two turns. Mulliner missed and Williams seemed set to finish when he approached Rover badly. Mulliner hit and reached 4-back. Williams missed the lift and Mulliner set out on a delayed triple that turned into an STP. In the second game Williams laid the Duffer tice. Mulliner hit from Corner 3 and went to 4-back. Williams missed. Mulliner failed Hoop 1 and retired. Williams missed. Mulliner picked up a break but with a partner ball waiting at Hoop 3 for peel elected to roll from near Hoop 3 to Corner 4 to extract enemy. Too much energy and striker's ball went thundering over South boundary. A bit in and out. Williams hit and missed a short shot. Mulliner hit and finished.

Healy won the first game. In the

the seventh turn with a triple. In the second game Prichard looked to be finishing another TP but carelessly appoached 2-back. Aiton taking croquet for the first time in the match went to 4-back. After two changes of innings, Aiton embarked on a TP but inexplicably stuck in Hoop 3 to hand match to Prichard. In the first game Bond finished in

three turns. In the second game Hilditch hit lift and won the game. In the third game Bond was round early and got a triple going, but only just. He ran Rover and had to hit partner ball. He pegged one out. Hilditch hit and took ball from Hoop 1 to peg, wiring Bond from peg while laying up at his Hoop 2. Bond to middle of West boundary. Hilditch sticks in Hoop 2. Bond narrowly misses peg to middle of East boundary. Hilditch made Hoops 2 and 3 and split to Hoop 5 and rolled up to 1 foot in front of Hoop 4 and still managed to lose.

R. Williams took the first game comfortably when R. Prichard stopped in one hoop too many. The second game was interrupted by lunch after Williams had broken down at 2-back on a triple. The lunch and/or liquid transformed Prichard's play. He took the game and finished the third in barely an

ENGLAND 41/2 IRELAND 1/2. WALES 4 SCOTLAND 1.

Here endeth the contributions.

It was not possible to use the President's Cup hoops but mention was made that the club hoops were well set and very firm. Charles Smith is now very adept at setting hoops and is bringing on a team of tyros to help him. The participants in the Chairman's Salver should be pleased. The lawns had been watered and were easy paced.

The Irish brought with them the Trophy won last year and received belatedly. They have had the plinth engraved but unfortunately left it in Dublin. When they went to collect it the engraver was on holiday!

It is interesting to note that this year 71 games were played. Last year it was 60.

#### RESULTS HOME INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

#### **England v Wales**

S. Mulliner bt W. Prichard -17TP, +22, +26; N. Aspinall bt D. Croker +16TP, +26QP; P. Cordingley lost to R. Hilditch +15TP, -23, -19; D. Foulser bt R. Prichard +23, +12; E. Bell drew with D. Gunasekera -18, +1.

England 31/2 Wales 11/2.

#### Ireland v Scotland

S. Williams bt K. Aiton +10, +9; C. Irwin lost to I. Bond-20, +15, -14; F. Rogerson lost to S. Wright -12, -4TP; G. Healy bt G. Roy +6, +5. C. von Schmieder bt R. Williams +17, +16.

Ireland 3 Scotland 2.

#### **England v Scotland**

S. Mulliner bt K. Aiton +17TP, -26TP, +13TPO; N. Aspinall bt I. Bond +24TP, +26TP; P. Cordingley bt S. Wright +14, +15; D. Foulser bt G. Roy +17, -25, +16; E. Bell bt R. Williams +11 (unfinished). England 4 Scotland 0 (One unfinished).

#### Ireland v Wales

S. Williams lost to W. Prichard +10TP, -5, -6; C. Irwin bt R. Hilditch -16, +4, +12; F. Rogerson bt D. Croker +17, +6; G. Healy lost to D. Gunasekera -6, -13; C. von Schmieder bt R. Prichard +2,

Ireland 31/2 Wales 11/2.

#### **England v Ireland**

S. Mulliner bt S. Williams +3STP, +10; N. Aspinall bt C. Irwin +17, +26; P. Cordingley bt F. Rogerson -4, +12, +25; D. Foulser bt G. Healy -11, +13, +25TP; E. Bell drew with C. von Schmieder +5,

England 41/2 Ireland 1/2.

#### **Scotland v Wales**

K. Aiton lost to W. Prichard -26TP. -14: I. Bond bt R. Hilditch +21, -17, +11, S. Wright lost to D. Gunasekera -12, -18; G. Roy lost to D. Croker -15, +16, -6TP; R. Williams lost to R. Prichard +22, -8, -17.

#### Scotland 1 Wales 4. FINAL RESULT

#### England 3 wins 12 games 7 games Ireland 2 wins

Wales 1 win games 0 wins Scotland 3 games

#### What the Balls do

By F.R. Ross

Some people believe that Croquet is a game to be played and enjoyed, without any attention to what is happening. But 27 years ago Calladine and Heyman wrote for 'Engineering' a paper on the mechanics of the game, and some of us thought it might be a good idea to test out the theory. So we constructed the Croquet Machine. capable of hitting a ball with repeatable power, in an accurately known direction, with a known mallet angle. One problem on the agenda was the vexed question of 'pull' when peeling, and the effect of rain on this. Several hundred shots were recorded, and some preliminary results were reported in 'Croquet', but we got bogged down because the figures for energy and velocity and so forth just didn't add up. When two bodies come in contact, such as mallet and ball, or ball and ball, the coefficient of restitution, 'e', controls the exchange of energy between them. 'e' cannot exceed unity, yet it often appeared to do so. It all boiled down to finding out the velocity with which a ball left the mallet. The distance it goes should be proportional to the square of this velocity.

Now one can measure this velocity exactly by hanging the ball on a string and seeing how far it rises when struck. These simple experiments

still didn't make sense of 'e'. So we took off the mallet handle and hung the head on a string too, and light dawned. If anyone tells you that a mallet handle behaves like a piece of string at the moment of impact, he is talking nonsense! We can now begin to analyse our hundreds of data, but meanwhile here is an important feature not dealt with by Calladine and Heyman. When a ball is struck along the grass, it starts by skidding, moving without rolling; friction from the grass slows up the bottom until this stops and the ball is fully rolling. It is then going quite a bit slower than it was after you hit it. If it hadn't lost any energy at all by friction with the grass it would be moving at only six-sevenths of the speed it started with.

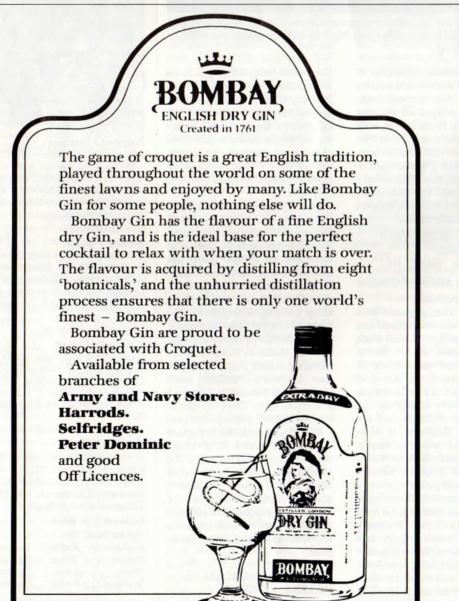
Let us consider the *rush*: if you hit down on your ball, you squeeze it into the turf, start it rolling at once with less of its energy in the forward velocity and the risk of causing it to jump and hit the ball to be rushed above its centre, or even go clean over it. If you stand too far back, your mallet can bodily lift your ball off the ground, with the same result, except that your ball is not rolling. If it is struck exactly horizontally, it won't have begun to roll much in the first foot of travel, but after 2 feet or more,

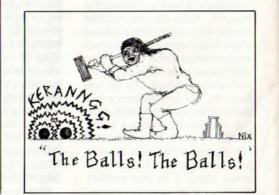


The Croquet Machine.

20% of the energy you gave it will no longer be available to transfer to the rushed ball, and on contact it will try to roll that ball backwards: very inefficient.

We have seen expert players do spectacular rushes right up the court, and the same experts muff an coccasional one: so consider the ideal rush, and how precise it is. Your ball should hit the rushed ball, exactly at ground level, and with its full velocity, which means it should not touch the grass between the mallet and the impact. You should stand far enough back to lift it slighty. Bearing in mind that we do not yet know exactly what the ball speeds are, the following are not of practical use, but they illustrate the problem. For a 2 foot rush, the vertical mallet should be 4 inches behind the ball for 10 feet per second, but only 21/2 inches for 15 feet per second, and just over 1 inch for a harder stroke still. 4 inches back would be fine for 20 feet per second and a 3ft 4ins rush, but that ball would go clean over a ball at half the distance, and might well bounce in front of a ball a bit further away and so not contact it at ground level. It should be no surprise that rushes sometimes fail.





# Solomon Trophy

# Palm Beach: 7-11 April England Retain Solomon Trophy: US Hoists Warning Signals

Report by Martin Murray

The second contest between Great Britain and the USA for the Solomon Trophy was held in West Palm Beach from April 7th to 11th. The British team showed three changes from that which won so convincingly in Cheltenham last year, Nigel Aspinall, who declined the invitation to travel, Colin Irwin, and William Prichard being replaced by Mark Avery, Robert Fulford and Martin Murray, the latter two being first time visitors to Florida. The players who had retained their places from last year were David Openshaw, Keith Aiton, and Phil Cordingley, who, like Mark, had also played in Florida in 1987, in a match which was half CA rules, half American rules.

The USA team only showed two changes from last year, the newcomers Teddy Prentis and Jerry Stark joining Kiley Jones, Johnny Osborn, Bob Kroeger, and Tremaine Arkley from last year's team. The team would have been different if some players had not preferred to enter a tournament in California which offered record prize money, though they must have felt they made the wrong choice when that tournament was cancelled because the bad winter weather ruined the preparation of the courts.

the courts.

The British team arrived in Palm Beach at varying times before the start of play, five choosing the boring route via Miami, Martin in typically complicated style deciding that a route via San Francisco seemed more attractive. Keith cut things close by arriving only the evening before play started, missing the opening cocktail party, and was perhaps a little jetlagged when the three doubles matches started in a temperature over 80 degrees F at the Palm Beach Polo Club.

By lunch the USA were leading in two of the matches, and Teddy and Kiley held on to their lead in the afternoon to equal on the first day the total score the team had achieved in the whole match last year. David and Mark (with the first triple) had a relatively easy win in their match, but Robert and Martin were fortunate to be playing on a court equipped with floodlights, as their match lasted until well after dark before they took the second and third games after losing a close first.

If the British team thought that the US success on the first day could be ascribed to a combination of jet-lag and unfamiliarity with the warm Florida weather, they got a shock the next day when the singles started, three at the Polo Club and three at the PGA centre, the USCA's national headquarters. At the PGA, Johnny had an excellent win over Phil, nearly completing triples in both games, and Jerry was even more impressive in beating Mark, who made only one significant error in each game. Luckily for GB, Martin had discovered how to shoot, so had an easy win over Tremaine, who was himself shooting well enough to lengthen the second game, but not taking full advantage of the opportunities. Back at the Polo Club another win for USA looked on the cards as Keith and Teddy shared the first two games, but Keith held on to take the third. David and Robert had comfortable wins, but the score at the end of the second day, 6-3 to GB, was rather different from what had been expected after last year's near whitewash.

The improved performance of the US team was obviously putting the GB players under considerable pressure, which was reflected on the third day by the slowness of play in all three doubles matches. By lunchtime none of the first games had finished, all were very close, and GB were lucky to take two of them after lunch. Play was then halted for some time while both teams attended a gala function at the Polo ground, where they were presented to the crowds after riding round the ground in Cadillacs. Martin and Robert finished the second somewhat quicker to take the match in two, but neither of the other two matches finished that day. An early start on Monday was therefore required, and to all-round surprise Bob and Tremaine took the second and third games of their match against David and Mark, a fitting reward in particular for a fine effort from Bob in the second game, when, Tremaine having been pegged out, he hit the lift and finished from penultimate in one

With GB only leading 8-4, there was everything still to play for, but the second round of singles showed the British team getting somewhat nearer to the expected results, the bottom four all producing triples in straight-game wins. The top pair were in more trouble, Mark again being swept aside by a very positive performance, this time from

Kiley, who completed the first triple for the US in the first game and gave Mark little chance in the second either. David also looked like losing in two straight games until Jerry failed on his triple in the second game, allowing David to produce a typical 'grinder's' performance, scoring the required.

52 points for victory without reply. The match now being won for Britain, the final day's doubles were of less importance, and as David had to catch an early flight home, his match was abandoned. Both the matches played went GB's way, despite a triple from Jerry in his match, and the final score for the match was 15-5 to GB. The improved score from the US point of view can definintely be ascribed largely to an improvement in their standard of play, particularly from their top two, Jerry and Kiley, both of whom were definitely playing to MacRobertson Shield standard. The remaining four players were not quite that strong, but still presented a serious test for the British team who were perhaps a little rusty after the winter lay-off. The more opportunities the top Americans have to play CA rules the better they will get.

The hospitality provided to the British team throughout the visit was very generous, and all the players thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Four of the team, joined by Colin Irwin, stayed on to earn some money as coaches in the USCA's spring coaching school, which was hard work in the hot sun, but provided an excellent opportunity to meet more American croquet players, who are as interesting and varied a crosssection of American society as their British equivalents. All of us made many new friends and look forward to the next opportunity to go again.

After the coaching school the final croquet engagement was the Presidents' match, which is played to American rules, nine single games (one and a half hours time limit) in one day. Chris and Colin Irwin made up the six needed for the British team for this match, and the improved US performance in the Solomon Trophy, coupled with the unfamiliarity of most of the British team with American rules, made us less than optimistic. Certainly as the match started some of the antics of the British team proved the point about unfamiliarity, but the American team, which also showed three changes from the Solomon Trophy match, seemed to suffer from almost the same bewilderment with the obscurer points of tactics of the American game, and GB eventu-



The Solomon Trophy; still in Great Britain's possession, but a warning has been sounded.

ally ran out relatively comfortable winners by 6-3.

The social highlight of the tour came the next day in the form of the annual croquet ball, a festive occasion at which croquet players are encouraged to appear in the incongruous dress of tuxedo and sneakers, the only possible advantage of this being that it is possible to tread on one's partner's feet while dancing and do less damage than wearing shoes (as your correspondent inevitably discovered). The British players also luckily avoided winning free croquet lessons in the raffle, or any significant prizes in the wicketshooting contest, and finally set off for home tanned and tired with the Solomon Trophy and Hooter's tshirts (ask Mark about those) safely in their baggage.

#### RESULTS

1989 Solomon Trophy Match

Doubles:

D.K. Openshaw & M.N. Avery bt J.C. Osborn & J. Stark +13TP, +17; lost to R. Kroeger & T. Arkley +6, -4, -17.

P. Cordingley & K.M.H. Aiton lost to K. Jones & T. Prentis -5, -10; bt Osborn & Stark -3, +3, +9; bt Kroeger & Arkley +13, +17.

R.I. Fulford & M. Murray bt Kroeger & Arkley -3, +12, +16; bt Jones & Prentis +4, +14; bt Osborn & Stark -13TP, +7,

Singles:

Avery lost to Stark -6, -16; lost to Jones -26TP. -17.

Openshaw bt Jones +17, +23; bt Stark -21, +11, +26.

Cordingley lost to Osborn -1, -17; bt Prentis +26, +24TP.

Aiton bt Prentis +17, -20, +14; bt Osborn +25TP, +25.

continued overleaf Page 18

#### The Croquet Player's 'IF'

If you can start your game from the beginning With keeness and enjoyment as your aim. And whether you are losing or are winning Remember always croquet's just a game. If you can play with quickness and decision, If you can wipe 'Aunt Emma' from your map, And make each stroke with cleanness and precision. And never never shove nor double-tap.

If you can hide what you are feeling When your opponent puts you in a fix, And smile as he is gaily triple-peeling Although you're going to lose by twenty-six. If you can play a forward game, refusing to blame the court for long shots you have risqued And never when a handicap you're losing Complain that your opponent's over-bisqued. If you can, in a tournament when playing be always

up to time and on the spot And never ask for leave of absence, saving 'My work is most important', when it's not. If you can show a spirit meek and humble When given a court that's worse than all the rest, And start your game without a single grumble And simply say - 'The Manager knows best'.

If you can joke when hoops are causing trouble And be the same should fortune smile or frown. And never after playing in a Double Be heard to say, 'My partner let me down'. What's more, if you can use discrimination In speaking of opponents you have fought, You'll be voted by the whole Association A welcome acquisition to the Court. Dr N.H. Oliver

#### The Finnish

Its been a Sods-law Sunday We are both on Two. They are already on the Stick But their peg-out proves untrue. My leader is a smallish chap But today - he's a mighty Finn For he goes right round - pegs one out And darn-well gets me in!

Throughout the ten other lawns There falls a breathless hush As patiently - he gets me round Although I feel like mush!

Our peg-out is a simple thing For some-one good - like me! Come next year - I will lead And put the wind up he! Les James

#### Whose bisques are they anyway?

It happened at a tournament in Ryde The manager had authorized five bisques Or so Mike thought! It cannot be denied -He'd play it cool - not take too many risks. Five rods we sent into the ground. Mike tossed, His opponent called out 'heads' (but wondered why Shouldn't the low-handicap have?) he lost! Mike started well, beneath the azure sky. His adversary made a break of seven, Mike's handicap was six, he thought that this Was very good for one who was an eleven! He'll have to be more careful and not miss.

The game progressed, both players level pegging No bisques were being used by either player Each wondered why the sentinels went begging It was touch and go to see who'd be the slayer. 'Twas only when his opponent was on Rover,

Mike realised the bisques were his to use!

For his opponent (handicap of ONE) it was all over With five bisques to hand Mike could not lose. Mike polishes the trophy won at Ryde While telling this quaint, but authentic story. In future he will double check which side Should get the bisques! Here's to his future glory.

#### A Croquet Player's Lament

Just a 4-ball break Is all I want and all I ask, for heavens sake Just a 4-ball break.

My defeat by him still tingles Just one more chance.

With the rain reaching almost to our ankles Just one fine day

Just one more game.

Just one great day When Parkstone played on our pad We beat them and they were rather sad Just one great day.

Just one more chance. To say that '88' was divine And to look forward to '89', For just one more game. Muriel Berry

#### **Dorothy Jane Rush**

#### Solomon Trophy continued from Page 17

Fulford bt Kroeger +8, +11; bt Arkley

Murray bt Arkley +26, +17; bt Kroeger +4. +14TP.

#### **Final Score**

Great Britain 15 United States 5.

#### 1989 President's Match

(USCA Rules)

C.J. Irwin & M.N. Avery bt J. Stark & T.

P. Cordingley & R.I. Fulford bt J. Osborn & D. Dribben

Cliff Cardis

M. Murray & Mrs C. Irwin lost to R. Kroeger & M. Gibbons. Singles:

Avery bt Dribben. Cordingley lost to Stark. Fulford bt Arkley. C.J. Irwin bt Kroeger. Murray bt Osborn. Mrs C. Irwin lost to Gibbons.

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# his handicap.

Freddie was twice invited to join

Zealand after retirement (1949), which he had to refuse for personal reasons. He did however play against New Zealand in 1956 in all 5 test matches in this country.

He has lived in Budleigh Salterton, where he was renowned for his very hard hitting of the croquet ball. The legend that he once hit his ball into the sea is exaggerated; the ball only reached the High Street.

He was a delightful partner and opponent and never questioned (on court) the decision of a referee, though once, when a 'decision' had cost him a championship, the referee did afterwards apologise for wrongly interpreting the Laws!

Freddie had his 90th birthday early in 1989. He still watches croquet - and plays bridge which is as deadly and as accurate as was his croquet.

Just one more Bisque, I know that if I had one I'd just get ahead of Yvonne Just one more Bisque. Just one more chance To play Williams at singles

Just one fine day It's awful in macintosh and wellies

Just one more game With Marjorie and I thought I'd slate her Now she's my best friend and how I hate her

Blond bombshell of the croquet courts, White-skirted witch of the speculative roll. Devourer of bisques and buttered biscuits With refined mayhem in your croquet-playing soul.

### Profile Major Gerald F. Stone (Freddie)

Congratulations to Freddie Stone, who has recently celebrated his 90th birthday. Gerald Cave writes about some of Freddie's remarkable achievements.

Freddie Stone, born in 1899. started playing at the age of 6. He was 'coached' by his father who was a member of the 'best ten' in the years 1911 and 1914.

Freddie's first tournament was at Sidmouth at the age of 10 in 1905. He played in the handicap doubles, but despite making a break from 4 to 4-back, lost. His handicap for the event was 5\*, the then beginners handicap, which was confirmed as

At the age of 14, in a handicap doubles at Exeter, he made his one and only quadruple peel! He was recommended for a reduction in handicap from 1/2 (as he then was) to scratch. The Association Handicapper refused to confirm this reduction, saying that he refused to have a small boy as an Association Member with a scratch handicap. Inevitably he was already a Silver Medalist, which he won in 1912 (aged 13).

GB touring sides, once to Australia when he was still serving, but couldn't get 'leave' and once to New



#### **Champions of the Past** (The following brief biography

appeared in the Croquet Gazette dated 8th June 1905 p47).

#### The late Dr A.C. Prior

Our photograph today is of a former patron of the game to whom croquet players owe a great deal. Dr Alexander was born in 1809, and as a young medical man practised in Kensington, but gave up his practice and took the name of Prior on coming into an estate in Somersetshire. He then travelled about the world studying botany. Coming across Mr Walter Jones Whitmore in London, he learnt the game of croquet from him and became passionately fond of it, but though a good player, was nervous, and did not like playing in tournaments. At Halse, his place in Somersetshire, he had a ground nearly as true as a billiard table but he liked it slow and green, and therefore did not have it mown as close as most people like a lawn these days. On Sundays he used to walk about the lawn, and if he saw a weed he would put a peg to mark it for the gardener to deal with on Monday. He constantly entertained the great players of his time: Gray, Peel, Whitmore, Law, James D. Heath, Spong, Evelegh; and many great games have been played on his lawn; he kept up the game all through the years that it went to sleep as a tournament game. He published among other works 'Notes on Croquet' and 'Popular Names of British Plants'. The former work is very interesting in relation to the history of croquet, and some of his opinions therein expressed are very quaint. He was exceedingly angry over the term 'roquet'. After giving the etymology of the word, 'a woman's smock, chemise, or shift', he says, 'and let who will, in joke or in earnest, have given it its slang sense of 'hit and go on', we hope that for the future the ladies will forbid the familiar reference to this part of their dress on the croquet lawn, and insist upon the word being eliminated from the glossary of the game. The ladies do not seem to have acted on this advice. Dr Prior assisted Mr Whitmore in

his search for a ground for the



Dr A.C. Prior. headquarters of croquet, and persuaded the committee of the Botanical Gardens to allow the club to be started there. His project however fell through, owing to some want of tact on Mr Whitmore's part. Dr Prior then helped Mr Whitmore to acquire the ground at Wimbledon which became the headquarters of croquet. Mr Whitmore had differences with the other leaders in the game and

broke away from Wimbledon and, with Dr Prior again backing him, started a roving club. Subsequently he came to the assistance of the Wimbledon Club when they wanted it badly. Dr Prior, when he was 83, thought his lawn (the best probably ever seen) not good enough, so he had it relaid. He continued to take interest in the game to the time of his death at the age of 93.

We are indebted to him for most of the photographs of former champions, as he made a large collection of them, and Messrs. Maull and Fox of 187a Piccadilly, used to take them for him. Unfortunately this firm quite lately destroyed an album full of photographs of croquet players of 35 years ago, but luckily they had the plates of most of the Champions of early days, and so are able to reproduce them for the Gazette. Several of them will appear in subsequent issues.

#### **Greek meets Greek** An account of a game played in 1904.

(Note: This was the old sequence game with the balls played in the order: Blue, Red, Black, Yellow. Until 1905 the start of the game was from one foot in front of the first hoop. The 'A' baulk was not introduced until 1907. The 'forward stroke' was what we now call the 'side style'. The golf style of the second player was the most common style in the nineteenth century. It is hardly ever used to-day except by some players for roll strokes. -Allen Parker)

Brilliant sunshine, tempered by a slight breeze; a fast and true lawn, surrounded by an unbroken ring of spectators, evidently waiting for some more exciting match than that which is being dragged to a close by two performers rendered more nervous than usual by the unusual 'gallery' that criticises their play. - Ah! Thats over at last! and the rattle of the stricken peg sends a thrill of expectation through the waiting crowd. From opposite corners stepping lightly over the netting the two ladies for whom we are waiting. Both tall and fair, graced with the slimness of youth, but markedly differing in face and style - alike however in the keen look which gathers quickly every detail of environment, and in the subdued promptness of preparation which marks the expert. One, who has won the toss, takes the lead with Blue and Black, in a feathery hat and trailing dress deftly gathered to leave the right side free for the sweep of the mallet, the other in blouse, short business-like skirt, and shady straw

Blue plays with the forward stroke off the right foot, aiming with a characteristic airy poise, and hitting with a fine upward sweep. The ball runs well past No. 2, and by the next stroke into 3 corner. Red follows with the golf stroke.

played with startling rapidity, one glance at the object seeming to suffice. Gently through the hoop, and a tice close to the peg is her response to Blue's opening. Black takes up the gauge, and hitting red, rolls both to No. 3, and lays the break for Blue. Yellow shoots, but in vain. A roquet, an easily laid rush, and Blue is away with a break. Each ball in turn rolls, apparently by instinct, into the right position; running of hoops is child's play, so perfect are the short approaches; Yellow is picked up from the boundary, and lies in the centre. Red is crossed to 2-back at the appointed time: cause and result seem automatic - but there is a check! The machinery stops; and Blue lies up against No. 5 hoop. Something has gone wrong. An error of a few inches in direction, helped by the mysterious affinity between the ground and the natural perversity of the ball, and the turn is over. All Blue can do is play away from Red, which lies

dangerously near. Only fifteen yards! Of course Red will hit. Before the majority have grasped the position, the lithe figure has straightened as the mallet swings and Red - misses.

Black will not make such a mistake, say the wiseacres, as she proceeds to roquet, split and rush the balls for the easy break left; and, as before, the automatic game goes on with a leisurely swing, and point follows point with a certainty that bodes ill for Yellow. But there is always, or nearly always a but -Black repeats Blue's error, and comes to rest close indeed to Blue, but with the wire of 1-Back between them, and no ball open. There is nothing for it but to trust Yellow again. This time the slashing golf stroke is truly struck, and Yellow roquets Red in the centre at

As has been aptly quoted of her, 'When she is good she is very very good, and with the perfect nerve and brilliant rapid execution, Yellow dashes off the 4-ball break to the first Rover hoop and lays the break for Red, Blue safely wired in 4-Back.

Blue can but corner, and Red repeats the break, making no semblance of a mistake till 4-back; there, with Black close by, she is short in her approach and leaves a difficult hoop - 3 yards and barely open! But she is well set in her game, and decides to take the risk - the ball takes the wire at the angle and spins through. A round of applause greets the plucky player,

who finishes up the break by making all Red's points except the peg, placing Black near No. 3 corner, and leaving Yellow with Blue and Red close by, all three protected from Black by inter vening wires. Black lets drive rather on the principle of the slayer of Ahab, at a venture, but without analogous success, for the ball glances from a wire and runs harmless off the boundary. Yellow makes the last two hoops, gets a rush on Red and pegs out, winner of a brilliant game, to the enthusiastic delight of the large gallery, who have followed every stroke with keen appreciation and hail the victory of what was undoubtedly the best play. Very marked is the difference of

the two styles. The machine-like perfection of one is such as to evoke surprise when anything goes wrong: the rapid brilliancy of the other leaves the impression of a succession of tours-de-force with danger always near. Yet the machinery is, when necessary, capable of studied brilliancy, the less remarkable because of ease of execution; while the constant brilliancy resolves itself on analysis into real accuracy of stroke, disguised, or maybe embellished, by extraordinary rapidity.

When next they meet, may I be there to see, and let not the issue be confined to a single game. J.A.M.

#### **Official Business**

New Associates	
I.A. Hammerley	Ancell Trust
V.E. Cheesman	Bath
Irs M. Padfield	Bath
M.C. Evans	Beverley
Hutton	Beverley
C. Cowland	Bournemouth
V.E. Black	Bowdon
Is H. Perrin	Bristol
Irs B.M. Cartledge	Budleigh
V.P. Gillott	Cassiobury
Irs M. Foster	Cheltenham
I. Fellows	Edgbaston
Jackman S. Burnett	Ellesmere
S. Burnett	Hurlingham
1. Coles	Hurlingham
Irs H.M. Newsome	Hurlingham
irs D. Wallace	Lansdown
.D. Kenward	Leicester
Johnson	Letchworth
.P. Judge	Letchworth
rig R.G. Harmer	Littleton
LW.T. Dickens	Northampton
.D. Sparks	Norwich
Is J. Streener	Nottingham
i.E. Webb	Ottery St Mary
). Orchard	Oxford
liss V. Gadsby	Parsons Green
Laryea	Parsons Green
r S.A. Bobak	Roehampton
Irs M. Hobbs	Roehampton
frs T. Jensen frs V. Lawrie	Roehampton
Irs V. Lawrie	Roehampton
Irs A. Neil-Gallacher	Roehampton
lrs J. Oades	Roehampton
Irs G. Niehaus	Roehampton
Irs L. Schayek	Roehampton
.E. Wernley	Roehampton
Irs K.M. Wernley	Roehampton
Kennerley	Ryde
Irs R.E. Tucker	Southwick
I.R. Firth	Stony Stratford
.J. Meares	Swindon
.J. Howe	Taunton Dene
Butler	Tracy Park
.L. Alibone	Tunbridge Wells
I.M. Reader	Tunbridge Wells
.P.N. Dugdale	Vine Road
Muhairez	Vine Road
.C. Robertson	Vine Road
I.R. Hayes	Woking
J.R. Annetts	Worcester
Irs M.E. Grein	Worthing
. Amherst	
liss G.I. Austin	
Baker	
D. Baxter	
ls A. Bennett	
. Billen	

R. Constant H.A. Cooper

P.A. Gregg Mrs A. Hall T.B. Harry D.B. Hart

A.B. Latham W.J. Marshall

R.T. Platon Miss S.E. Richardson

Air Vice Marshal B.L. Robertson

E. Day Ms C. Delehanty

Mrs B.K. Seymour	
C. Shilling	
Mrs H. Stephens	
Mrs F. Troughton	
Mrs A. Tuck	
R.F.H. Ward	
R.A. Watts	
D.W. Welch	
Mrs C. White	
S.W.B. Whiteley	
Mrs S.W.B. Whiteley	
Mrs B.M. Widdows	
J.D.F. Williams	
N.A. Wilson	
Ms M.F. Young	
A. Wilson	Australia
Mrs M. Wilson	Austrlia
J.C. Kay	Duba
Miss A. Smith Mrs U.J. Kelleher	Jersey New Zealand
T. Gunnarsen	Sweder
J. Cussane	USA
	USP
(Total: 112)	
Deaths	

#### We record with regret the following death:

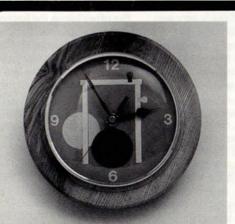
Н	land	C	ap A	ltera	tions
			Octobo		

Rev W. Gladstone	ing death.
Handicap Alteration	ıs
Harwell: 1 October	
M.J. Moreton-Smith	5 to 61/2
Southport: October	-
C. Haslam	5 to 4
C. Haslam J. Haslam	7½ to 7
A. Pidcock	14 to 13
Cheltenham: 1 November	
G.E.P. Jackson B.G.F. Weitz	½ to 2
B.G.F. Weitz	½ to 2
Mrs G.D. Harris	3 to 21/2
Roehampton: 1 November	
I.P.M. Macdonald	3½ to 3
P.D. Hardyment	6 to 41/2
D.J.F. Gurney	12 to 11
Phyllis Court: December	
K. Plater	13 to 10
Cheltenham: 27 March	
G. Bogle	16D14 to 15D13
Mrs M.B. Thornhill	16D14 to 12D10
Mrs B. Madams	19D14 to 16D14
Mrs M. Allanach	16D14 to 15D13
Mrs M. Leach	11 to 9
M. Rangeley	10 to 7
J.H. Willis	5 to 41/2
Mrs M. Warren	7 to 8
Roehampton: 28 March	
D.J.F. Gurney	11 to 9
Budleigh Salterton: 5 April	
C.M. Bourne	20D17
Mrs P.K.L. Danks	18D14 to 18D16
P. Henderson	18D14 to 18D16
Dr J.R. Murdock	18D14 to 18D16
R.A. Scaddon	19D17
Mrs R.A. Scaddon	20D17
D.C. Wallace	2 to 3
Ryde: 7-9 April	
Miss A. McDiarmid	9 to 8
W. Platt	10 to 8
Southwick: 14-16 April	
S. Comish	2 to 11/2
N.G. Williams	5½ to 5
Cheltenham: 26 April	
Mrs B. Widdows	20
Mrs V.A. McClements	20
Mrs R. Underwood	20
K. Carter	2 to 21/2
J. Hyames-Mername	17D14 to 16D14
Hunstanton: 28 April - 1 May	
N. Harris	6 to 4
J.G. Read	10 to 7
Bowdon: 29 April - 1 May	
A. Linton	15 to 13
P. Walker	18 to 16
D.J. Wright	16 to 14
C.H. Wild	3 to 2
Southwick: 29 April - 1 May	
J.G. Green	14 to 11D10
Mrs M. Green	14D12 to 11D10
Mrs G. Pearse	16 to 14
Mrs G. Wiggins	13D11 to 12D10
J.H. Bowman	2½ to 4



Colin Wild, Bowdon, down from 3 to 2, and still enjoying himself.

A.R.K. Miller S. Tuke	7 to 6 5 to 4
Cheltenham: 29 April - 1 May	V.10. 1
A.K. Gregory	1 to 0
Southport: 30 April	
D. McCormick	12 to 8
Roehampton: 4 May	
.P.M. Macdonald	3 to 21/2
M.J.B. Haggerston	2 to 1½
Compton: 5-7 May	11. 15
Mrs E.H. Dalby	14 to 15
A.J. Kellaway	7 to 8
E.F. Robinson	16 to 17
E.J.A. Salmon	8 to 9
R.H. Selmes	7 to 6
Mrs M.E. Selmes	13 to 12
Mrs E. Ross	7 to 8
Bowdon: 6-7 May	01.0
Burridge	6 to 3
A. Saurin	3 to 1
C. Haslam G. Pearson	3 to 2
3. rearson	8 to 6
Glasgow: 6-7 May	0.1- 7
M. O'Connell	9 to 7
Budleigh Salterton: 8-13 May	10
.A. Baskwell	116 10 4
C. Hatherley	4½ to 4
.P.M. Macdonald Mrs C.W. Marshall	2½ to 2
I Neek	11 to 10
J. Nash E.C. Owen	13D11 to 12D10 13 to 12
Dottos	
A. Potter	8 to 7½
A. Rowlands	4½ to 5
E. Toye Col E.L.L. Vulliamy C.N. Williams	7½ to 6½
N Williams	4½ to 5½ 6 to 5
Surbiton: 11.14 May	0 10 5
Surbiton: 11-14 May Mrs M. Selmes	12 to 13
Ars E. Grant	11 to 10D9
I.W. Smurfitt	7 to 51/2
Chapman	
Chapman G.W. Noble	4 to 3
Thomas	8 to 7
A. Thomas Southport: 13-14 May	0 10 7
A. Pidcock	13 to 10
P. George	18* to 14
Pendle: 13 May	10 10 14
. Beech	8 to 61/2
/. George	10 to 8
. Rea	10 to 8
Cheltenham: 14-20 May	10 10 8
C. Cotterell	1½ to 1
C. Edmonds	16 to 15
. Hymes-Mername	16 to 15
A.T. Paddon	1½ to 1
. Turtle	17 to 16
kG.F. Weitz	2 to 1½
Budleigh Salterton: 19 May	2 10 172
A.B. Brand	12D10 to 10D9
Vrest Park	12010 10 1009
	1½ to 1
D. Appleton	1½ to 1
2. Audsley 3. Bogle	11 to 9
). Hector	7 to 6



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Powys WI Dyfed WI Dyfed WI Dyfed WI S. Glam WI Mrs J. Shaw Mrs M. Morris Mrs M. Carpenter Mrs B. Clutterbuck Mrs J. Langham Mrs D. Johns S. Glam W Mrs A. Glyn Mrs A. Whitehead Mrs M. Helmore Mrs C. Holbrook Mrs J. Fowkes Surrey WI Sussex WI Herts WI Beds WI Beds WI Essex WI Herts WI Mrs J.M. Wiseman Herts WI Herts WI Cleveland WI Cleveland WI Cambs WI umberside WI Cambs WI Derbys WI Derbys WI Mrs E. Meaden Mrs P. Carter Mrs S. Boyman Mrs J. Maylin Mrs, J. Lewis Mrs J.A.F. Murray

#### **Official Business**

#### **Extract from Minutes of a Meeting of the Council** held on Saturday 18th March 1989

Before opening the meeting the Chairman referred to the sad death of the Rev. Bill Gladstone, an exmember of Council.

#### APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT TREASURER

The Chairman presented his report which had been circulated. Mr Oldham, in speaking on it, drew attention to the enormous increase in work; for example, in 1967 the turnover was \$2,000-in 1988 it was \$80,000. There are two major items which have greatly added to this work, namely the National Sports Council Grant with the various budgets in connection with it, and VAT. There was a need for a qualified assistant not only to take over some of the burdens but to help plan for the future as the CA was now a business concern. The report was approved in principle unanimously.

#### REPORTS

- (a) The Finance and General Purposes report was presented by Mr C. Irwin. The Management accounts for 1988 were approved.
- (i) It was agreed on the proposition of Mr McCullough, seconded by Mr Mulliner, to place \$1,500 as had been previously approved by Council, in a designated account called 'The Four Lawn Fund'.
- (ii) On the 1989 budget, questions were raised including one by Mr Hope as to how much deficit Council was prepared to contemplate. Mr Mulliner said we must maintain at least \$20,000 in liquid assets as a bare minimum and that meant a maximum shortfall of £6,000.
- (iii) Mr McCullough asked for \$250 to be added to the Development budget to 'prime the pump' for the Midlands Federation which was now moving on from being a league table organiser to its proper Federation function. This was agreed unanimously.
- (iv) The budget was then approved. The F&GP recommendations relating to Managers' expenses, deposits on CA equipment and maximum levy of 30% of the Open Singles Championship gross entry fees per player per event were all approved.
- (v) The Committee's recommendation that the loan repayment from the Surbiton Club be postponed until 1993 and that the rent for 1989 and 1990 should continue to be paid by the CA and, subject to the lawns being maintained and improved to the satisfaction of the CA, further waived for 1991 and 1992 was carried nem con after an amendment by Mr

Mulliner, which was seconded, that the Club pay \$100 licence fee per annum during this period was lost by 6 votes to 8.

Mr Caporn expressed his concern that some members did not recognise that Surbiton was a CA Regional Centre and that he would circulate to all Council members his submission to the F&GP Committee in this respect. He hoped that this and the licence from the CA to the Club would be approved in the autumn.

The F&GP Report was then approved unanimously.



Craig Hitchcock, Kingston Maurward's first Chairman, in play at the club. Kingston Maurward won the 1988 Townsend award.

(b) The **Development** report presented by Mr McCullough was approved after a Motion by Mr Walters, seconded by Mrs Anderson, that no discretionary charge for indoor carpets be given to the Development Officer was defeated by 7 votes to 10. The report included the following awards:-

APPS HELEY - Worthing TOWNSEND - Kingston Maurward

(c) The Publicity report was given by Mr Danks and was approved unanimously.

- (d) The International report by Professor Neal was approved.
- (e) The Laws report was presented by Mr Mulliner. Although only tabled at the Meeting, the Chairman ruled it was urgent and the draft of Regulation 2(a) was therefore taken and passed unanimously. This will be a temporary variation until passed by the relevant majority at the next Council Meeting.
- 2(b) and 2(c) passed at the last meeting were unanimously confirmed and are now incorporated into the Regulations.
- (f) The Handicap report was presented by Mr Keen, who announced the winners of the Steel

and Apps Bowls, respectively Claire Collis of Colchester (14 to 7) and Steve Comish (16 to 2).

He also requested a temporary variation in the upper handicaps from 20D14 to 20D17 and this was agreed.

- (g) The Development Officer, Mr Hudson, gave a brief report inter alia;-
- (i) Croquet had been added to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme 3 years ago and the first award was made last year.
- (ii) Although the Minor Sports videos shown on Channel 4 last year would be repeated, the Croquet video had been the only one to employ professional actors and could not be repeated because of contractual problems with 'Equity'.
- (iii) He was sending out entry forms for the Garden Classic.
- (iv) Coaching courses were very popular and fully booked.
- (v) 12 'Croquet Demonstrators' courses would be held this year, mainly for WI members.
- (vi) The Southern Federation had been established.
- (h) The Administration Report was given by Mr Macmillan who said that 1051 associates had paid their subscriptions, of whom 214 were 'veterans'. 423 had not paid so far. He regretfully announced the death of Mrs Hazel Parker. He tabled the names of 26 associates who were elected.

MOTIONS as follows were proposed by Mr Caporn and seconded (a) by Mr Mulliner and (b) by Mr Greenwood.

(a) 'That in all CA and Club Calendar Fixture Tournaments there shall be an opening as well as a closing date for entries and that the former shall not be prior to 1st March.

was amended by deleting 'and that the former shall not be prior to 1st March' was passed by 13 votes to 5, the amendment having been carried by 9 votes to 6.

A second amendment to delete 'and clubs' was lost by 8 votes to 10. (b) 'that in any CA event, if there are less than 6 people who actually play then the trophy for that event shall not be awarded'.

was amended by deleting '6 people' and substituting 'two in singles and 2 pairs in doubles' (10 in favour, 4 against) was carried by 11 votes to 3.

#### ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(i) Mr Mulliner said he had received a letter from Mr Kellaway, the Chairman of the Compton Club. that the Saffrons Club was proposing to take back another lawn and would the CA write in

support of his protest. The Council agreed.

- (ii) Mr Oldham drew attention to the redevelopment plans of the Hurlingham Club on display in the Long Room. He said the CA had been allocated an office where the Professional's shop had been in the 'Four in Hand' Yard.
- (iii) The Chairman expressed his thanks and those of the Council to Miss Hampson and Miss Macleod who were not standing for reelection, for their work on the Council.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the Hurlingham Club on Saturday 22nd April 1989

#### 1. WELCOME

The President, J.W. Solomon, welcomed members to the A.G.M. 2. MINUTES

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on the 23rd April 1988 were approved.

#### 3. CHAIRMAN'S SPEECH (Copy in 'Croquet' Magazine - May

1989, No 203).

#### 4. TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr A.J. Oldham, Hon. Treasurer, presented his report which was accepted nem con. He answered questions regarding the Trophy Fund and recovery of VAT. The President thanked him on behalf of the Association for the magnificent work he had done as Treasurer over the years. He was warmly

applauded. 5. ELECTION OF TREASURER

Mr Oldham was re-elected as Treasurer. He said he had held this post for 25 years but now felt that owing to the additional burden, not only in the increase in the amount of work but also the complications of VAT, he needed assistance, the Council already having agreed to appoint Mrs Audrey Croker as Assistant Treasurer.

#### 6. ELECTION OF COUNCIL **MEMBERS**

The following members were reelected unopposed:

D.C. Caporn, P.A. Danks, R.S. Eades, S.N. Mulliner, A.J. Oldham, and C.P. Townsend.

W.A. Coles and W.R. French were two new members elected.

#### 7. MOTIONS

Owing to an administration error, the motion put forward by Mr K.M.H. Aiton was withdrawn and will be put on the Agenda for a Special A.G.M. to be held in October.

8. ELECTION OF AUDITORS Messrs Nicholass, Ames and Co.

were re-elected as Auditors.

#### **Official Business**

#### 9. BENEFACTORS BOOK

The names were read out by the Vice President, R.F. Rothwell. An additional name was Mr B. Bridger, who has donated 5 silver cups left to him by the late Miss Weightman. Mr Rothwell pointed out that this was the first time a non-associate had become a benefactor. He also asked if Miss Bird, who kindly writes the names in the book free of charge, could be thanked. Mr Macmillan, Administration Secretary, said that this was always done.

#### 10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) The Chairman apologised for the lateness of the Fixture Book. (b) Various questions were asked about the forthcoming World Croquet Championship, the involvement of South African players and the Gleneagles agreement. The President said these items would be discussed at the Council meeting following the A.G.M.

(c) The questioner on the use of drugs prescribed by a doctor was informed that an article would be appearing on the subject in the May issue of 'Croquet'. A list of banned drugs could be obtained from the Croquet Association, and special dispensation could be obtained if no alternative drug was

#### 11. PRESIDENT'S CLOSING **ADDRESS**

The President closed the meeting by informing associates of tremendous progress during the last five years. He referred to what was the first sensible article on croquet by the National Press which appeared in the Daily Telegraph and brought over 1500 enquiries about the game and through it our own approach to the sport became more professional. Our 5 year plan had had a more decisive impact on the Association than anything that had happened in the last 122 years of its history, resulting in a large increase in both members and clubs.

The support and immensely beneficial help received from the Sports Council has made it possible for us to put forward, implement and achieve many programmes which have been of great benefit to croquet, i.e.

Development of Regional Feder-

Implementation of a National Coaching Scheme.

Schools and University competitions.

National Garden Competition.

Also for attracting sponsors for many events, not only the main ones, but many others.

He thanked Chris Hudson, the Editor, for producing a professionally prepared 'Croquet' magazine with a much greater visual appeal.

All these factors and many more have been a tremendous fillip to the game we love. There are many tournaments to play in, more

following people: The Steel Bowl - Claire Collis Apps Bowl - Steven Comish Townsend Award - Kingston Maurward Coaching Award - John McCullough Apps Heley Award - Worthing



John Solomon, CA President, cutting the tape at Newport's inaugral day. 13 new members were recruited on the day, with another 37 still being courted!

coaching and more sponsored receptions to enjoy. All this has only happened because a dedicated band of people, in the form of your Council, give a tremendous amount of effort in planning and implementing these events, not just at Council meetings but at very many Committee meetings for which they give their time unstintingly: after which these plans are disseminated by the Administration Secretary and his staff. He also thanked Derek Caporn, Hon. Secretary, who is responsible for

He said we must look to the future as times become harder. The Sports Council grant may disappear, sponsors may become more difficult to find. We had been fortunate this year in obtaining sponsorship from Continental Airlines for the first official World Croquet Championship. This followed on from the formation of the World Croquet Federation, which was holding its inaugural meeting at Hurlingham before the Championship. He will have the honour of chairing this first meeting.

the Council minutes.

If times become harder, renewed efforts will have to be made. The Council is to be commended for its foresight and enthusiasm and also for tackling the difficult and contentious subjects and debating them fully. If one or two members strive to pursue a crusading attitude on a particular subject, they have the benefit of the combined experience and wisdom of their fellow members to help them form their opinion. Argument and debate are always healthy but the collective decisions of Council are paramount. We have a healthy and vigorous sport.

Mr Solomon thanked everyone for coming and wished them a happy and successful season.

He presented CA awards to the

#### **Extract from Minutes of the** Council Meeting held on Saturday 22nd April 1989.

#### **NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS**

The Chairman welcomed Mr French on his election to Council, Mr Coles (in his absence) and Mrs. A Croker as Assistant Treasurer.

Regulation 2 (a) passed at the previous meeting was affirmed nem

#### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

The Chairman (Dr M. Murray) and Vice Chairman (Mr S.N. Mulliner) were re-elected. This was proposed by Mr Oldham, seconded by Mr Rothwell, and passed unanimously. REPORTS

The International report was given by Professor Neal. After discussion and amendment the following were agreed as Council's views to be

submitted to the World Croquet Federation:-

(i) That the South African Croquet Association be admitted to the W.C.F. as an 'Observer Member' (i.e. with non-voting rights) subject to the South African Croquet Association confirming its commitment to nonracial sport. (One vote against).

(ii) That South African nationals would not be permitted to compete in W.C.F. sanctioned events. (One vote against).

Mr C.P. Townsend proposed, and Mr. Walters seconded, that as a matter of urgency the Council should discuss the proposition 'that this Council abides by the Gleneagles Statement on apartheid in sport'. Council voted by 14 votes to 5 that it was not an urgent matter.

Professor Neal said that the All **England Lawn Tennis and Croquet** Club, Wimbledon, had generously presented a fine silver bowl to the CA for the World Croquet Championships. This was accepted with delight by the Council. The Chairman had written to Wimbledon thanking them for their generous gift.

He also mentioned that croquet will be demonstrated at the World Games in Karlsruhe, West Germany, on Thursday 27th July 1989, and that a meeting of the WCF would be held

at Hurlingham on Saturday 15th July 1989.

The Tournament report was presented by Mr Aiton and after discussion on the croquet grading system, item (4) was approved, including the provision that the 'full bisque' game would be used for the All England Handicap in 1990; that the President's Cup, the Opens, Mens and Home Internationals should be designated events for the purpose of Regulation 2 which relates to the use of drugs, and that the recently donated Ranelagh Club trophy should be presented to the winner of the Selectors Weekend.

The Development Officer, Mr Hudson, reported (inter alia) that the Bank of Scotland had renewed its sponsorship for a further 3 years, that the entries for the Garden Classic were up on 1988 and that the second indoor carpet would be delivered shortly.

The Administration report was presented by Mr Macmillan, who said that 1128 members had paid their subscriptions, leaving 386 unpaid and that he thought not many of these would renew as most were elderly. Mr Oldham expressed his anxiety and drew attention to the continuing need to recruit new members to reach our membership target.

#### INTERNATIONAL BUDGET

Mr Mulliner, Vice Chairman, asked the Council to approve \$3,900 for the 1990 Test Tour consisting of \$1,800 from the Test Tour Fund and \$2,100 from the Development budget. This was approved with one vote against.

### MOTIONS

(a) 'That in all CA and Club Calendar Fixture Tournaments there shall be an opening as well as a closing date for entries and that the former shall not be prior to 1st March'.

This was proposed by Mr Keen and seconded by Mr Lamb. It was passed unanimously.

#### COUNCIL COMMITTEES

The Chairman tabled a list of members of these Committees for 1989/90. The Committees then elected their Chairmen as follows:

F&GP: C. Irwin C.P. Townsend Publicity: J.R. McCullough Development: G.N. Aspinall Tournament Handicap B.A. Keen S.N. Mulliner Laws International Prof B.G. Neal Equipment BA Keen I.B. Brand Schools Coaching W.E. Lamb

#### SELECTION COMMITTEE

The existing members were nominated, namely Messrs Aspinall, Keen, Mulliner, Murray and Neal, and elected unanimously

#### ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman read a letter from the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, Wimbledon, releasing the CA from its obligation to the Wimbledon Club to adhere to the condition that the three Croquet Championships, namely the Open, the Ladies and the Mixed Doubles be restricted purely to amateurs.

#### News ..... News ..... News ..... News ..... News ..... News ..... News .....

#### THE CONTINENTAL AIRLINES WORLD CROOUET CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Continental Airlines World Croquet Championship is the first ever official World Croquet Championship. It will take place at the Hurlingham Club, London from 16-23 July. Come along and watch the world's best players. Entrance is free for members of the Croquet Association, \$5 each for others.

Amongst those coming from overseas will be the two legendary New Zealand croquet players, Joe Hogan and Bob Jackson, currently rated No 1 and No 2 respectively in the world.

Bob Jackson is the only player ever to complete an Octuple peel, in which you hit the ball you are striking through 12 hoops, use it to knock your second ball through 8 hoops and then peg both balls out-all in one turn! Other top New Zealanders, Australians, Americans and Japanese will also be playing. It promises to be the most spectacular Croquet tournament ever staged. Come along and watch.

#### **GREAT BRITAIN RETAIN** SOLOMON TROPHY

Great Britain beat the United States of America in the Solomon Trophy Test match played in Palm Beach Florida on the 7-11 April, Although the final score of 15-5 looked comfortable, the Americans have improved considerably since last year, when we beat them 20-1. This year, they gave the British some shocks, particularly in the first 3 days. The full scores were:

R. Fulford & M. Murray (GB) beat T. Arkley & R. Kroeger -3

Openshaw & M. Avery (GB) beat J. Osborn & Stark +13TP +17 E. Prentis & K. Jones (USA) beat P. Cordingley & K. Aiton +5

Day 2:

J. Stark (US) beat Avery +6 +16 D. Openshaw (GB) beat Jones +17 +23 Osborn (US) beat Cordingley +1 +17 Aiton (GB) beat Prentis +17 -20 +14 Murray (GB) beat Arkley +26 +17 Fulford (GB) beat Kroeger +8 +11

Cordingley & Aiton (GB) beat Osborn & Stark -30T +13 +9 Kroeger & Arkley (US) beat Openshaw & Avery -6 +4 +17 Fulford & Murray (GB) beat Jones & Prentis +4 +14

Jones (US) beat Avery +26 +17 Openshaw (GB) beat Stark -21 +11 +26 Cordingley (GB) beat Prentis +26 +4TP Aiton (GB) beat Osborn +25 +25 Murray (GB) beat Kroeger +4 +14TP Fulford (GB) beat Arkley +26TP +19

Cordingley & Aiton (GB) beat Kroeger & Arkley +13 +17 Fulford & Murray (GB) beat Osborn & Stark -13TP +7 +17 FINAL SCORE: 15-5

#### GLOUCESTERSHIRE TAKE INTER-COUNTIES TITLE

At Southwick on 26-29 May Gloucestershire defeated joint favourites Eastern Counties to win their first ever Inter-County Championship title.

8 wins

7 wins

7 wins

7 wins

Final positions were: 1. Gloucestershire **Eastern Counties** Surrey

Yorkshire 6 wins Bedfordshire Sussex/Hampshire/ Isle of Wight 4 wins Devon & Dorset 3 wins Lancashire & Cheshire 3 wins 10. Middlesex 3 wins 11. Kent 2 wins

The ties were broken by counting the number of games



The Hurlingham Club, a magnificent setting for the first-ever World Croquet Championship.

#### ENGLAND WIN HOME INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

England comprehensively beat the holders, Ireland, to win the Home International Championship at Budleigh Salterton on 3-4 June. The results of the matches were:

England beat Wales	31/2-11/2
Ireland beat beat Scotland	3-2
England beat Scotland	4-0
(1 unfinished)	
Ireland beat Wales	31/2-11/2
England beat Ireland	41/2-1/2
Wales beat Scotland	4-1

#### **MENS' AND WOMENS' CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Keith Aiton beat Dayal Gunasekera to win the Mens Championship at Cheltenham on 12-18 June.

Mrs. 'Bo' Harris won the Womens Championship.

Gossip

#### AROUND THE COURTS

In the Western Championships played at Cheltenham from 29th April to 1st May, Keith Aiton scored 8 triple peels in a row to reach the final.

A triple peel is a single turn in which the player hits the ball he is striking through all its remaining hoops - usually 12 - and at the same time hits another ball through its last 3 hoops, and then pegs out.

It is believed this is the second longest run of triple peels in a row ever performed. The record is held by Paul Hands with 10. Keith went on to lose the final of the Western Championships to Mark Avery, despite performing yet another triple peel.

Claire Heritage, a member of Bury St Edmunds Croquet Club, has recently completed a coaching course at Ipswich. One of her former jobs was organising tours around Britain for Americans. With R as her middle initial, her name is C.R. Heritage.

Peter Dorke, tournament croquet player from Shropshire has reported performing a 14-yard jump shot over penultimate hoop. However, he did not tell us whether the mallet and ball had survived the experience.

A recent survey of the top 36 British Croquet Players showed that over 40% of them were unmarried. Does this mean that croquet players are too involved with croquet for outside interests. Or are they just too intelligent.....

**Feature** HOW MUCH SPACE DO YOU NEED TO PLAY CROOUET?

This is probably the question most frequently asked by garden croquet players. The answer however is far from simple.

A full size croquet court is not necessarily suitable for garden croquet. It measures 35yds by 28yds and needs to be very flat with a fast smooth surface like a bowling or putting green. A full size court which is bumpy or where the grass is long can be completely unplayable. Full size courts are best left to experienced players, and those who play at clubs or in tournaments.

There is a smaller official size court called a short court. This measures 24yds by 16yds, so dimensioned as to fit on a grass tennis court. Even at this size, the grass should be very fine and the court as flat as possible

However most people's lawns are not quite perfect. They may have bumps, slopes or uneven grass. This does not mean to say you cannot play croquet, but you should play on a smaller area. If you are playing with a full size set, probably the smallest area to get a good game is 14yds by 10yds. However if you move down to smaller sets you can play on as little as 10yds by 8yds. To counteract very bumpy lawns, set the hoops a little wider than usual

It is a mistake to think you should play on the biggest area available. Beginners to croquet often get a far better game playing on a smaller court rather than a big one. The important thing is to be able to hit the ball comfortably and easily from end to end of the court without using 'golf shots' which can damage your mallets and balls. If you cannot do this because the grass is too long or lush, you should reduce the size of the court.

The area you need therefore depends on a number of factors. It depends on the skill of the players, the length of grass, the flatness of the lawn and the equipment being used. Once you have a court, try to keep improving it since the smoother the grass the more fun you will have.

#### **End Piece**

#### THE CROQUET ASSOCIATION

Garden Croquet News is published by the Croquet

The Croquet Association is the governing body of Croquet. The annual membership subscription is \$18 for tournament members (£14 if you just subscribe to the CA's magazine 'Croquet').

As a full tournament member, you receive six issues of 'Croquet' each year, and the CA's Fixtures Book, which contains a whole range of Croquet Association and other tournaments you can enter.

You also get free entry to watch CA Championships at Hurlingham, including the Continental Airlines World Croquet Championship, as well as discounts on equipment, clothing, and coaching course fees. Membership entitles you to wear the CA tie and vote at the Croquet Association's AGM.

If you would like to join the Croquet Association, please write to Brian Macmillan, The Croquet Association, The Hurlingham Club, Ranelagh Gardens, London SW6 3PR enclosing your subscription.

'Garden Croquet News' is edited by Charles Townsend. Contributions or letters to the Editor should be sent to 'Garden Croquet News', Townsend Croquet Ltd, Claire Road, Kirby Cross, Frinton-on-Sea, Essex C013 0LX Tel: 0255-674404