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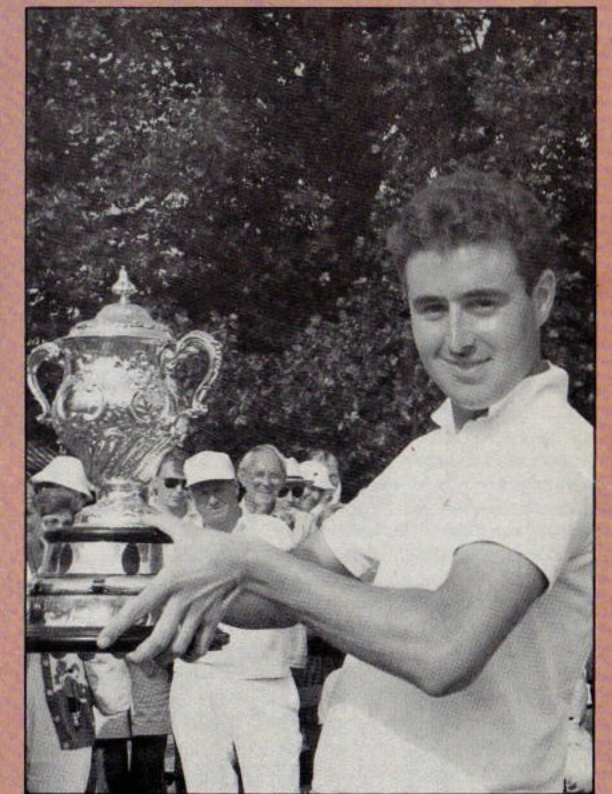


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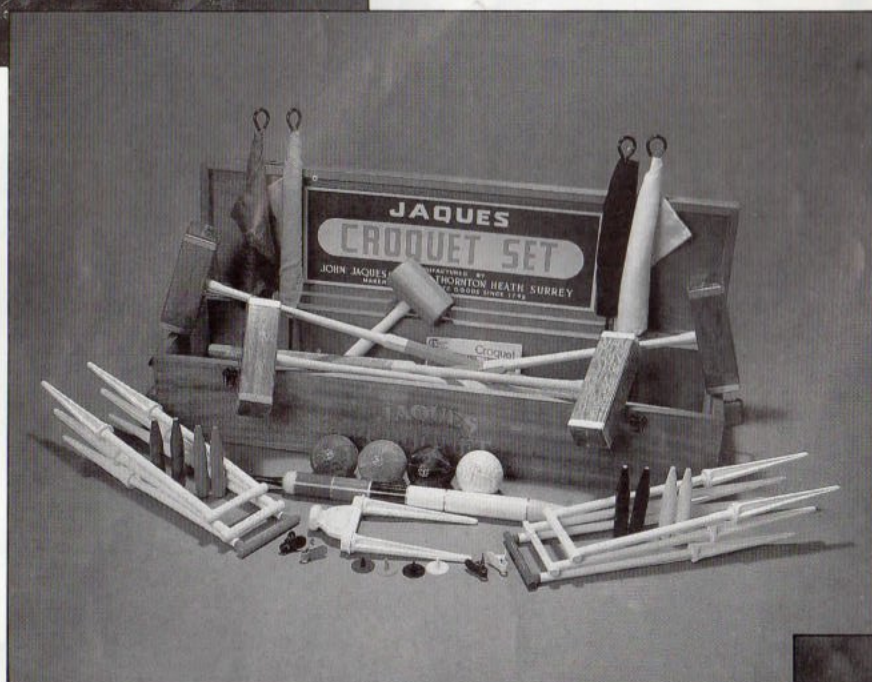
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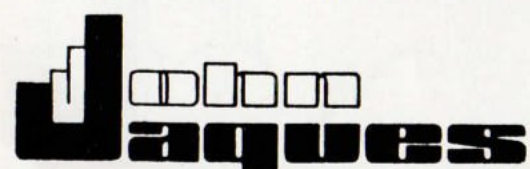
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INDEX

	Page
Championships	
Junior.....	21
Men's & Women's	13
World	8, 9, 10
Club News	11, 22
Coaches Corner.....	28
Comment.....	3
Early Days	26, 27
Garden Croquet News.....	15, 16, 17, 18
Golf Croquet	20
Letters.....	24, 25
Mole Catching	29
National Rankings	29
Odds & Ends.....	29
Official Business	31
Overseas News	30
Puzzle Corner.....	23
Schools.....	14
Short Story	22
Tournaments.....	4, 5, 6, 7, 12
Universities.....	19
World Croquet Fed'n	14
World Games	14

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Front Cover: A clutch of trophy holders at the World Championship. Top: Joe Hogan with the Wimbledon Cup. Bottom: (Left) Jerry Stark with the 'Fun Cup'; (Right) Mark Avery with the Ayres Cup.

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Editorial

Comment

The World Croquet Championship 1989

Now that this event is over, one can look back and assess various aspects of its organisation, and consider how successful it was.

While I would not pretend that everything was perfectly done, I think that the many CA members who put so much work into the arrangements can feel very pleased at the achievement that it represents. At the closing ceremony I tried to thank everybody who had contributed to the success of the event, and I would like to repeat those thanks here, where they will reach a wider audience.

First on the list is of course Continental Airlines, whose sponsorship made the whole event possible.



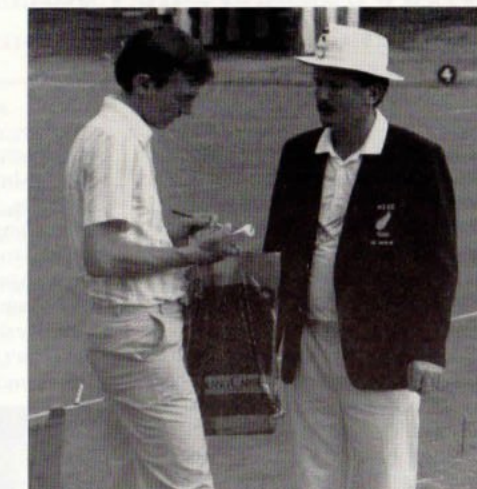
Alan Stockwell and his wife Pauline manning the CA's bookstall at the World Championship.

Then come the Hurlingham Club, who provided excellent fast lawns, the All-England Club, who presented the magnificent trophy, to be known in future as the Wimbledon Cup, Jaques, who again provided free sets of new balls for the event, and Harrow Oak and Colchester who staged preliminary matches.

Many CA members helped in so many ways, none more so than Brian Macmillan, Chris Hudson, Bernard Neal, and Stephen Mulliner who between them were largely responsible for all the administration that was needed. Bernard also acted as Referee and organised accommodation for the visitors. Publicity was handled by Charles Townsend, so well that press coverage, including daily reports written by David Peterson, was better than ever. Internal CA publicity led to large numbers of members coming to Hurlingham to watch, many for the first time, and Alan and Pauline Stockwell at their sales stand found a ready market for literature and equipment. Their record sales could have been much greater if more stock, especially of mallets, had been available.

All the publicity and media attention always cause additional problems for the manager of a tournament like this, but Tim Haste was completely in control at all times. When one considers that this was probably the largest event ever held in Britain, if not the world, it was impressive how Tim always seemed to know exactly what was happening, despite having eighty players and two venues to manage. The hot weather, which slowed up the games considerably, and the large entry, made the event almost impossible to finish on time, so it was not Tim's fault that, with Joe Hogan having reached both finals, the Doubles Final had to be held over to the Monday. Despite the hot weather, all the players seemed to enjoy the event, and were very cooperative in often playing till very late in the evenings.

The size of entry that was accepted was a victory for those who argued in favour of the largest possible entry, but this view is not universally held. It does have the advantage of lessening difficulties of deciding which players should qualify for places in the event,



Charles Randall, Daily Telegraph, interviews Joe Hogan after the final.

and also of increasing the entry fees collected by the CA, but the necessity of using multiple venues, with the resulting dispersion of players, the different qualities of the lawns used, and some loss of atmosphere, leads many to oppose such a large entry.

Along with the size of entry goes the question of the format of the World Championship. The combination of the event with the British Open inevitably led to the adoption of the best-of-three knockout format, but future World Championships may well be separate from national Open Championships, and the possibility of providing visiting players, who may well be playing out of season, with more than one match as a guarantee will have to be considered. An American block format, with four blocks of perhaps 6 or 8 players, followed by a best-of-three play-off between the best 2 or 4 in each block, would answer many of the criticisms levelled at the simple knock-out format, but this inevitably leads to a much lower total entry, and arguments about the distribution of the available places can be anticipated.

In assessing the play provided by the tournament, several performances stand out. Joe Hogan was once again the supreme player, and if his play lacked some of the excitement we remember from 1986, this can probably be assigned to the faster lawns, the overall slightly weaker opposition he had to face, and his own success in getting to the Doubles Final, which made the event a real test of endurance for him. As a complete performance, his ranks with anything I have seen in over 25 years of watching top-class croquet. Among the other players, all of whom rank as also-rans compared to Joe, notable performances came from Mark Avery and Colin Irwin amongst the more established British players, and Steven Comish, Duncan Reeve, Russell Collighan, and David Maughan among the younger players. But for me the play I most enjoyed watching was from the old master John Prince, when he came back from game down to beat Robert Fulford. There may be players around who can hit the ball better than John, but none whose grasp of tactics and psychology produce such interesting situations and entertainment for the discerning spectator.

How soon we shall see another World Championship remains to be seen. Negotiations with Continental for a repeat next year are at a critical stage as I write, and both New Zealand and Scotland are also bidding to stage the event. Although the problems of gaining suitable sponsorship still make the continuance of the championships questionable, few, after this year's experience, will dispute that they enrich the game both here and abroad.

MARTIN MURRAY

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Tournament Weekends

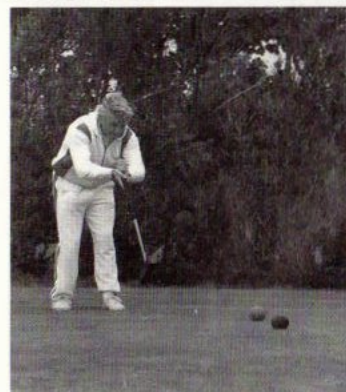
Southport: 27-29 May Juniors Overpowered by Elders!

Report by Andrew Saurin

This year the tournament saw (again) a change of management. Don and Diana Williamson managed with skill and efficiency.

There was a large range of handicaps, the lowest being Colin Irwin at -2, who conceded 37½ bisques in his block in the first two days, won two games out of five with a gross points score of +63 and a net score of -63.

There were many exciting moments. Dan McCormick pegged out Don Williamson's ball and accidentally his own when his other was for 4 and Don's for 6. After a great one-ball ending, Dan beat Don +1.



Runner-Up, Brian Lewis.

Cheltenham: 27-29 May Six out of Six

Report by Alan Bogle

The May bank holiday weekend at Cheltenham was a scorcher in many ways. Fifty eight competitors arrived to do battle in some of the hottest weather of the year. From the evidence of tanned legs which appeared below both shorts and skirts, many players had been busy on the lawns during the early season. This practice combined with fast(ish) lawns saw some fine play over the weekend.

The management team, consisting of the Wheelers, had arranged three large swiss blocks with six games in total for everyone. No time limits were imposed generally, and only a few games had to be limited subsequently, proving that the sun is a strong factor in determining the length of the game.

All three blocks threw up outright winners, each winning all six games. This performance did not go unrewarded and handicaps were pruned accordingly.

In Block A, Terry Burge from Surbiton walked through the field in a swashbuckling fashion. With a 12 handicap, it was some surprise to see him win two games with a rover peel, but this was only a

On Saturday many players found the hoops impossible (literally) after Mark Saurin had set them in the morning. He was called on many times to run on with 'the Bucket' to reset them. Come Sunday and Monday he never showed his face for fear of being murdered with a bisque by one of his victims.

The final on Monday was between Don Williamson and Brian Lewis. It was rather long but never dull, and Don 'managed' to win the Jubilee Tankard by 8. The third and fourth-place playoff was a family feud between John and Barbara Haslam, Barbara winning +3 on time.

For some reason, no juniors got into the semi-finals. Probably it was because there were only three of us. So come on, juniors, get an entry in next year and I'll meet you in the final!

As usual the catering was excellent: unusually, so was the weather, apart from the temperature at the end. After the presentations, the Committee threw us out of the clubhouse and the only words audible through the keyhole were 'lawns' and 'tournaments next year'. What is happening?

prelude to his unfortunately unsuccessful attempt at the triple. However, it truly reflected the boldness of his play. Clear runner up with five wins was Philip Lewis from Dyffryn who played solidly, losing only to Terry Burge.

In Block B, a fellow Dyffryn player, Chris Williams scorched through the field, winning his final game convincingly by 26 against Andrew Symons. Andrew was joint second with several other players. Alan Bogle could have finished clear with five wins but lost a close match to Kismet Whittall in last round. Both finished with four wins as did Sally Watson, Margaret Cotterell and Charles Edmonds.

Block C was won by Gill Bogle. This included two 26-point wins. John Evans finished second with five wins, and showed that he is recapturing his previous form. A notable performance came from newcomer Alex O'Connor who won four and received due reward from the handicapper. Unluckiest player in the block was Peter Darby who lost both to Gill Bogle by 26 and John Evans by 24 on the last day and played only a total of seventeen strokes.

It was top marks all round, for the winners, for the management team, for the super lawns and not least for the weather.

Ramsgate: 14-16 July Ramsgate Lawns Settling Down

Report by Gordon Drake

I won't give too many secrets away to those who haven't yet experienced a tournament at Ramsgate; what I can say, however, is that you will be made most welcome by Eileen and Dennis Shaw and their jolly band of helpers who appear to have an endless supply of an excellent variety of refreshments at any time of the day. As the club on its present site is only three years old, the lawns are still 'settling' - some parts more than others, or could it be that other parts are rising? Whatever, to play on them is a distinct challenge and for the stout hearted I would recommend that a diploma in Land Survey would be a useful asset.

As for the tournament, this was ably managed by Dr Terry Ballard, everyone having at least five matches. The relentless sunshine throughout each day enhanced this beautiful setting above the cliffs on this East coast of Kent. Gordon Drake and Mrs Susan Wiggins headed the 'A' block, and

Bristol: 24-25 June Dry testing conditions

Report by Hamish Hall

Mutterings on the condition of the lawns were distinctly audible from most players as rush lines evaporated and take-offs wandered off course. What or who was the culprit? The baking sun, the absence of rain, or possibly the over zealous member who rolled the lawn at the wrong time. Whatever the reason, it made little difference to the resulting gravitational discontinuity so readily apparent. The challenge was who had the temperament as well as the skill to master the freakish conditions.

Don Gaunt assiduously gathered grass beyond the boundary to assist in preventing his balls from separating in an approach shot. He may as well have saved himself the bother, as he rattled the wire. Alan Bogle had an 8-inch backward take-off, and having obtained perfect position, was powerless as the ball slowly retreated to 3 inches beyond its original spot. Roger Jenkins ran his hoop, agreed the point, and whilst enquiring whether his opponent wished his next roquet shot to be watched, found the ball had rolled back into the jaws. Never mind, Roger. Beef up on the laws next winter.

But enough of the disappointments: Ray Ransom, perhaps not unsurprisingly, was the first to master the conditions and actually demolished his opponent in under

Ron Atkinson, a rapidly improving 'new boy' from Colchester and Dennis Shaw the 'B' block. It is worthy of note that during the matches Shaw, having only five shots during the game with Atkinson, never took croquet!! In the play-offs, Drake beat Shaw and Atkinson beat Mrs Wiggins, who did manage one hoop. The final turned out to be quite a thriller in the end. Atkinson turned on the heat using his bisques and with none left had reached the peg and rover. Drake hit in and took his ball from 3 to the peg and pegged out Atkinson's ball; he then succeeded in advancing his other ball from 2-back to penult but let an easy wiring opportunity go begging in the middle of the north boundary which Atkinson promptly hit and won the game by four. His week-end efforts earned him a reduction of two from his handicap.

Thank you, Ramsgate, for a most enjoyable time.

2 hours in his first game. But that was 1 of only 4 games that were completed in time on the first day. By Sunday the conditions were being mastered, with 4 players tying for the highest break of 9 points, Peter Dorke managing a peel in his big turn. But it was Alan Bogle who displayed the most consistent form, winning 4 games in the A block with David Goacher the runner up also with 4 wins. The continual changing of his shooting and his rushing mallets did not help him in his vital game against Alan. In the B block, Kevin Carter had an excellent tournament, winning all his 5 games. Young Alex Leggate from Nailsea was in contention all the way, losing only 1 game.

Martin Murrery's newly acquired parental responsibilities left a void in the office of Manager, and gave Alvar Bray his baptism of fire. Like the soucerer's apprentice, he rapidly realised that the smooth running of even a small tournament requires more than just a little magic. He had his problems with so many games going to time, but the need for an 8.45am start on Sunday really tested his metal - and his feeble will to give up smoking. Never mind Alvar. It was a brave attempt and with any luck, the Magician will perform next year!

Himley: 1-2 July A Himley Diary

Report by Peter Dorke

Up betimes and to Himley Hall for the croquet, where I was to be referee of the Abnalls Tournament. It had been much noised that Mr Aiton was to make an appearance in the A class and that Mr Hilditch was including Himley in his Grand Tour of England. This news attracted such a horde of scallywags and ne'er-do-wells that I feared for the well-being of such noble and delicate ladies as are normally to be seen at this tournament and arranged for a ravaging Alsatian to patrol the vicinity of the Hall. This happy action did fend off all trouble and even the squeals of the Rat Pack were muted and restrained under the baleful gaze of the canine sentinel.

Arriving in the roseate light of dawn I set about driving in the hoops and was much disconcerted at the variety of their shape and size. Mr Potter, who was managing, did pronounce upon my frustration thus: 'Yes, well, it's the hoops', which did comfort me greatly. The trials of Mr Potter in this week-end's enterprise were manifold but he laboured ceaselessly to please us all, being particularly careful of the happiness of the C class, wherein a joyful confusion reigned. Witness the following exchange between Mrs X and Mr Y on the occasion of a hampered shot, Mrs X's ball being a scarce 4 inches from the wire:

Mrs X: 'Would you like to watch this?'

Mr Y: (from the safety of his chair) 'I am watching it!'

Then did Mrs X, with a bold, raking action of her mallet, drag her ball into contact with another nearby, performing such a rat-tat-tat-tat as may be heard during the Changing of the Guard at the Palace. At this Mr Y, waving cheerfully, gave forth as follows: 'That's fine.'

I will not forbear to mention here the stout performance in this class of Mrs Townsend of Wolverhampton who, though in no small discomfort, did strike the ball with great verve and straightness. For all her efforts, however, and those of the other ladies, many of whom had travelled from far Southport, the winner to emerge from this company was a gentleman, Mr Fennell, who suffered a great cut for his pains.

Greater pain yet was inflicted upon himself by Mr Hyne. This gentleman, while leaping upon the court, did smite his own ankle skilfully and to great effect, namely his temporary withdrawal from the combat, in search of a poultice. At

this Mr Bogle, his crafty scottish opponent (if there is not a tautology here), was observed to smile and to beseech the Manager to register a win by default. These antics did take place in the A class, where Mr Aiton, in contention with Mr Weaver, commenced the proceedings with a failed sextuple, converting it smoothly into a failed quintuple, thus failing to be first player in the tournament to affix a clip to the peg, the honour falling instead to myself. I was, at that time, at odds with Mr Christopher Gordon (sic) Bennett of Edgbaston, whose mobility of purpose must perforce be remarked in this Journal. Though lofty of handicap and severely hampered by the selection of fine wines and ales contained within his travelling chest, Mr Bennett gave a good account of himself and withstood bravely defeat after defeat, rising with indomitable spirit on Sunday evening, to present the trophies and monies to the winners. One of the latter might well have been the author of this unworthy Journal, had not Mr Aiton recovered from the effects of his extended Sunday luncheon in time to snatch a narrow win from the very jaws of defeat. In this he was in no wise abetted by the performance by Mr Hilditch at the lawnside of his celebrated and amazing strangulated chicken imitation, no doubt in celebration of his win over the unlucky Mr Richard Brand.

This latter gentleman was in some choler at having waited a long two hours while his opponent quaffed a leisurely lunch at a neighbouring alehouse, this causing also much bile in the Manager, Mr Potter, who did rightly scold the miscreant for his tardiness.

During the proceedings of this tournament I had conversation with Mr Ivor Brand, brother of Richard, on medical and other matters, this being a tournament where much noise was made of the healing arts and there being, moreover, a quack in attendance in the person of Dr Bogle. Great was my surprise to discover that both these gentlemen are presently seeking fresh employment, though I hardly expect them to experience great pains in the search, being well-set-up young bravos of impeccable qualifications.

Of Dr Bogle I would say more, for she is a lady to glut the senses with her powerful play and keen aptitude for the game. I must aver that I had expected this most athletic of women to triumph easily in the B class but I had reckoned without the fearsome presence of Mr Stanley, who pulverized all oppo-

Tournament Weekends

Southport: 8-9 July Beside the Seaside

Report by Andrew Bennet

What a wonderful sense of tact and timing is possessed by Peter Dorke. The July magazine arrived just in time for us to read, in his report on our April weekend, that if only we were there an hour before play with 'the simplest equipment' then our flooding would not delay play.

Those of us who spent the whole of Saturday using scoops and buckets (please explain, Peter, what is simpler) were not amused by his criticisms. Perhaps he has some simple suggestions for preventing torrential rain.

In the end, I found myself trying to manage a competition of 20 entrants on two playable lawns. The players were good humoured all weekend and the locals were not at all put out by my decision to make all the visitors play first, abandoning my original order of play.

The young players made little impression, as is traditional in this event, with the exception of Chris Clarke in 1985. They get bored too easily.

Because some players had one round more than others, the winner was determined by a play-off between the three who had no losses: it was no surprise that Alan Pidcock was the one to lose his qualification as a long-bisquer, having been runner-up last year.



Alan Pidcock.

sition with his scandalously oversized mallet. His immense frame, surmounted by an enormous travelling bag, attached to his shoulders by an ingenious arrangement of thongs, and decked about in a kind of scarlet cloak, struck such terror into his opponents that none could check his progress. The trophy was his and I did hear tell that fierce cuts were made upon him by the Handicapper, Mr Storey of a certain Northern Club, who did himself perform a notable triple.

I had the pleasure, during luncheon on the Sunday, of viewing Mr Weaver's latest art works, which he displayed to considerable effect at the rear of his carriage. I doubt that I have seen such a painter as Mr Weaver for many a year, so well does he portray the protagonists of our beloved game and so keenly does he observe and convey the effect of light upon his subjects. I was put in mind of Mr Hockney and wondered why he does not offer his paintings to a wider public.

Returning to the croquet I had the pleasure of Mr Bennett's peel and attempted peg-out of a ball which had already been for peg, much mirth being occasioned amongst the assembled cognoscenti. It had been Mr Bennett's only peel of the season. Thus with much laughter and good fellowship was this tournament conducted and the

weather was likewise fair. The ancient Hall was a fine setting for such a contest and it was a churlish fellow indeed who, as the silver was finally apportioned, still harboured a grudge against the unpredictable lawns.

So home to supper and to bed, fancying myself to play again with Mr Aiton, this time with a more satisfactory result.

Wrest Park: 7-9 July All Good Practice for the Open's

After the prolonged dry spell, a day of almost continual rain on the first day tested ALL the players' abilities to adjust to the conditions.

This, followed by a return to warm dry conditions, caused a number of games to go to time, even one involving the manager!

The weekend winner was Bill Aldridge, David Openshaw coming a close second. Both only lost one game but Bill beat David - c'est la vie.

The prize for the most improved player was won by Duncan Hector from Letchworth.

The main event - the World Championship Snooker - was won by John Rose with the generous assistance of Greene King. But where was David Openshaw, when the beer and fish and chips were flowing; practising for another lesser event?

CONTINENTAL AIRLINES WORLD CROQUET CHAMPIONSHIP

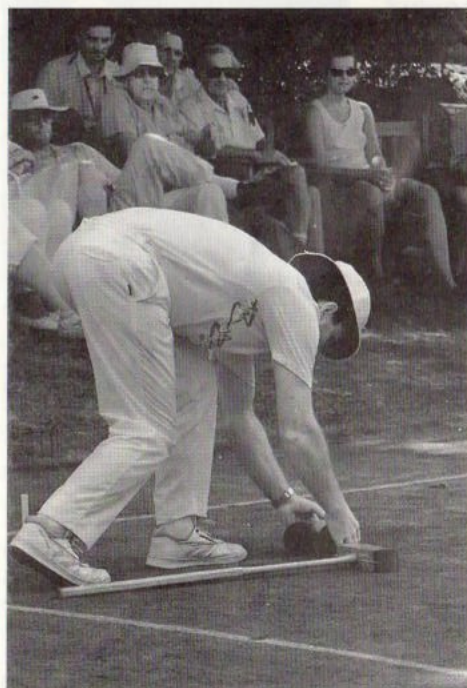
Hurlingham & Surbiton: 15-23 July

Hogan takes World title in a week of incident and top class croquet

Report by David Peterson

The Open Championships transformed itself this year into the World Championships, sponsored by Continental Airlines.

All of the top sixteen British players competed, as well as four New Zealanders as famous as it is possible to be in the croquet world (Hogan, Jackson, Prince and Skinley). Also there were two thirds of the Australian Test team (Cleland, Herington, Latham and Pickering). Five representatives from the fragmented world of American croquet were present, and Toru Takano became the first Japanese to play



competitively in Britain. With Keith Wylie and Michael Heap appearing, it was a pity that Bernard Neal's withdrawal broke a chain of champions stretching back to 1969.

The cosmopolitan flavour of the event was enhanced on the Saturday morning when, with the hoi polloi dispatched to first round matches in Surbiton, Harrow and Colchester, the powerful met to launch and then lunch the World Croquet Federation. The two most colourful results of this meeting were the 'Fun Cup' donated by the Italian delegation and to be presented to the 'McEnroe of the Tournament', and two French delegates from La Rochelle who, immaculate in their green blazers, remained as spectators for the whole week.

The qualifying/first round saw a new look Keith Wylie with a Skinley style swing and sporting shorts for the first time in 25 years play, but with a now sadly familiar scoreline. Richard Hilditch dealt with Toru Takano nippily, but more significant for Croquet's developing nations were victories by three Americans (Arkley, Collins and Ballenger). Peyton Ballenger's game against Brian Sykes was the most remarkable in that, despite a 4-hour time limit for the first game it lasted four and three-quarter hours as the result of a deputy-managerial error. This was at

Surbiton, and was the first indication of how difficult the lawns at both main venues would become during a scorching week.



Hogan on the attack as Avery watches his chances recede. 'So near, yet so far.'



On Sunday the tournament started in earnest with the first round of the British Open Doubles. Aspinall and Mulliner (the champions) were struggling against Cornelius and French, and dropped the second game. Aspinall's poor hooping was largely responsible, but he responded with a triple in the third. Clarke and Fulford, each a losing doubles finalist in the last two years, joined forces this time. They blended well and inflicted a heavy defeat on Neal and Solomon, conceding only three points and finishing the match before noon with a Fulford triple.

None of the other matches were so manager-friendly. Fittingly Heap and Irwin against Skinley and Prince was played on the slowest lawn (No 2) for when Irwin stuck in Rover he launched Skinley into a game-saving break from fifth to the peg for a +1(T) win. The New Zealanders moved out of neutral and up to cruising speed with a delayed TP by Prince in the second. Not one to be overshadowed is Jerry Stark who seems to use ultra-violet shoe laces

to guide the mallet-head. He pegged out from fourth corner to win the All-American doubles match +1(T) and ultimately won the 'Fun Cup' for his impact on the tournament.

The second round of the singles proved a disaster for the Australians; all four of them lost at Surbiton. Chief perpetrator of this inhospitality was Tom Coles. His indifference to the distances travelled by his opponents had already accounted for the much fancied New Zealander Chris Shilling when he knocked-out the top-seeded Australian Alan Cleland. His able accomplices Alan Sutcliffe and Duncan Reeve then disposed of Latham and Herington, none of the matches going to three games. Sorry Surbiton, but the parable of sowing seeds on stony ground does rather spring to mind. The most resistance was put up by Colin Pickering who should have beaten Paul Skinley when he lost the second by one point.

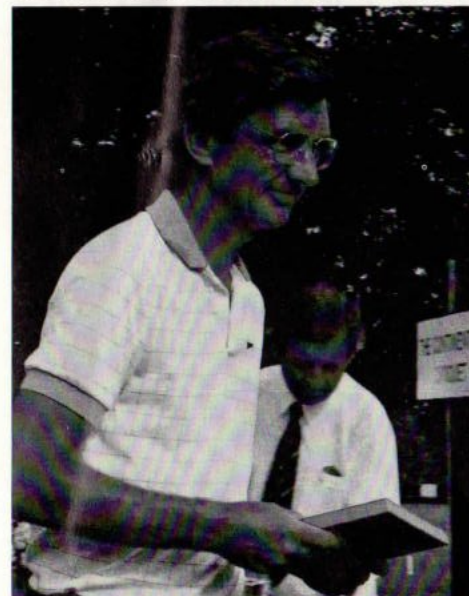
Back at HQ, Aspinall was put on the cricket pitch against the debutant Steve Comish from Ipswich who has only been playing 24 months. Comish, who has an Irish grip and a French style, had impressed the previous evening when he

and Reeve put Avery and an out-of-touch Openshaw out of the doubles in straight games. Against Aspinall, Comish built up an early lead but then had his forward ball pegged out. Aspinall joined up and Comish hit the lift and finished from 3-back. Aspinall's authority was quickly reasserted in the second, but surprisingly in the third Comish's long shooting and Aspinall's nervous single ball strokes culminated in a marvellous win for the youngster.

At this stage the managerial strategy became less clear. Tim Haste ruffed furiously between singles and doubles but on a couple of occasions seemed to get trapped in the wrong hand, resulting in longish between-match delays for some of the players.

Avery hit top form on Wednesday and became the first singles quarter-finalist when in less than three hours play he won two best of three matches, thrashing Fleming of Canada and Collighan of Blackburn, without conceding a hoop and completing three triple peels. No one else could match such alacrity or form. Hogan

and Jackson both dropped games at Surbiton, to Bell and Gunasekera respectively, Jackson slowing his game down to combat the difficult conditions. He took two hours to beat Gunasekera +26, and later in the week Bond and Noble played an entire plate game during one of his turns. Meanwhile Comish had lost to a bullish Murray to become, I suspect, the only



Semi-Finalists: David Openshaw...

player ever to have beaten Aspinall in the Opens and still qualify for the plate.

The seeds began to meet in the last 16. Hogan defeated Clarke fairly comfortably after a TPO in the first game in what should have been one of the best matches. Tremaine Arkley, the only 'qualifier' to reach this stage, could put up little resistance to Jackson except for one remarkable shot approaching second hoop from its corner and achieving perfect position by passing through the hoop from behind.

The best match of the round was between Fulford and Prince. The first game ended with a seventh turn triple by Fulford, Prince not scoring. In the second, Prince went to 1-back on the fourth turn leaving the delayed (or standard, depending on your viewpoint) sextuple leave. Attempting the sextuple he reached 4-back and peg conceding contact to which Fulford, after a leave, responded with a break to 4-back. Prince hit the lift and finished after one mistake by each player, the only mistakes of the match, for in the third Prince won +26TP on the ninth turn.

The only setback to this ominous New Zealand progression was Openshaw's straight games defeat of Skinley. Observers experienced in Openshaw's slow build-up routine were not fooled by his shaky form earlier in the week. Finally on Wednesday evening, with all play finished on the front lawns, a gallery of eighty players and hangers-on gathered by lawn 5 to watch Mulliner struggle against Aiton. With the first lost, Mulliner barely scraped home in the second by 3 after hitting what should have been his last shot at a ball in the jaws of penultimate. The next morning Aiton extended a record of never having taken croquet in a resumed match, thanks to a bloodless TP by Mulliner.

Two surprise quarter-finalists, and the only non-seeds, were Lewis and Irwin, both from Bowdon. Arguably Lewis was not a surprise as he performs well at the Opens every year. His gritty concentration had already seen off

Hilditch and William Prichard, and outlasted Heap. Against Hogan he looked like winning the first but broke down on his triple peel at 3-back. Hogan showed him how it should be done, and then allowed him no chances in the second.

Irwin was playing his best croquet for some time, and despite losing the first to Prince, he recovered to win the next two. Prince was visibly



... and Colin Irwin.

tired by the end of this match. He had played superbly in the morning to recover from game down overnight to Fulford, but the heat was oppressive (90°+) and the lawns increasingly difficult. Nobody wants to win a match because of the opponent's fatigue, and yet such scheduling is inevitable in a tournament of this size.

The other two quarter-finals were marvellous matches. Openshaw and Mulliner were on lawn 4 where the area between rover and first corner had become quite treacherous because the surrounding trees, although they shelter the crowd, drain the lawn of all moisture. Openshaw should have won the first, rather scrappy game, but he missed a four-yard peg out with few minutes remaining. Mulliner scampered round with a three-ball break after time had been called that included a wonderful long gentle rush to 2-back to steal victory by 2. The second game was by far the most exciting of the week. It was not of high quality until, with about twenty minutes left, Mulliner was left with only one ball for the peg and next to it, with Openshaw separated in first and fourth corners. Openshaw hit his partner ball and split it to third, obtaining a rush to second (his other clip being on 4-back). With the minutes slipping away, Openshaw played a seemingly unhurried three-ball break (itself an achievement on a lawn so difficult). Slowly the gallery regained its interest, lost when an easy victory for Mulliner has seemed inevitable, but nobody knew exactly how much time remained. Openshaw needed to reach peg before time was called to give his other ball a chance to score the remaining points after time. The time-keeper began to call out at 2-back '7 minutes', at 4-back '4 minutes', after rover '1½ minutes' - still time for a leave. He rushed the enemy ball to first corner and danced nervously waiting for it to stop, then he went trotting up to third corner to lay up behind 4-back. He finished with 25 seconds to spare to the most applause I have heard for a non-finishing turn.

Mulliner immediately cornered to give himself another shot.

Time was called, and now Openshaw had all the time he wanted. A two-ball break from 4-back to the peg was necessary. He went to wipe his glasses and hands. He rushed badly to 4-back and ran a longish hoop, only to have to split to penultimate from six yards to the side which resulted in another one. This time he could only grovel through and left himself hampered from his partner six yards distant. He hit it, approached rover well, but still had a nervous five yard rocket after the hoop. For the peg-out from eight yards he called on a referee. He rolled gently and the front ball seemed to deflect as it passed the peg, Openshaw thought it had hit, but the referee said not. He pegged out his backward ball to level the scores. Mulliner missed from the fourth and Openshaw pegged out. The deciding game had to wait until Saturday morning and proved something of an anti-climax, as Openshaw exploited the psychological advantage won the previous evening.

The last quarter-final to finish was Avery against Jackson. It was not as exciting as the above match, but the quality of Avery's play was the best seen during the week. Despite losing the first game by 3 late on Friday evening, he out-classed Jackson in a brilliant display on Saturday morning. In both games Jackson was first to 4-back, but on each occasion Avery hit, went round, and left a very aggressive leave. Jackson's shooting was not at its best and Avery won the match with two triple peels, playing very quickly and confidently. At one point Jackson, unable to risk shooting, attempted to intimidate Avery out of playing with his backward ball by playing onto the 'rush-line' of a six yard rush. Uninhibited, Avery took the rush right to Jackson's ball and so produced one of his triples.

Avery and Openshaw both then suffered in the semi-finals for their heroics. Hogan won the first against Openshaw with a seventh turn triple, and then the British Captain couldn't regain enough form or concentration to take the second. Avery playing Irwin on lawn 4, immediately after



Joe Hogan (left) and Bob Jackson, winners of the British Open Doubles Championship.

Tournament Week

Ryde: 5-10 June Laurence Latham wins again

Report by Deborah Latham

Though perhaps not quite as well supported as in previous years, the week's tournament at Ryde was every whit as enjoyable and was played in the welcoming and warm atmosphere visitors can always expect at this small but friendly club.

From the outset mention must be made of the sterling efforts of manager Roy Newnham to accommodate a sudden and excessive flood of requests for leave while keeping everyone in all events they originally entered for. It is unusual for so many people to take leave and still stay in the competition, but Roy very heroically succeeded in both meeting all the requests and keeping to schedule, and he certainly deserves to be 'mentioned in despatches'!

It must be said that the club suffered a rather unusual downpour on one occasion during the week - showers of quite long grass came wafting down onto the courts! This drew forth the whimsical observation from one of the players that the weather forecast must have been 'light to moderate grass in places'!

The first two days, taken up with the contest for the handicap event,

were not very warm in temperature, but there was some heated activity on the courts. Bill Platt, who together with Phil Kennerly - the eventual winner of the Y - is in some danger of having the repu-



The winners at Ryde (L to R): Val Tompkinson (Doubles), Mary Robinson (C Class), Mick Tompkinson (Doubles), Laurence Latham (A Class), Phillip Kennerley (Swiss Handicap), and Deborah Latham (B Class).

tation of being the local 'bandit', only narrowly lost his first round match, and both gentlemen show every sign of becoming 'formidable' (in the nicest possible way, of course!).

There were some unexpected early departures into the Y Swiss event, such as William Broad-Thomas, who went on to play some

very fine croquet thereafter, and Mick and Val Tompkinson, ditto. As is beginning to be traditional, Deborah Latham lost -1 to Harry Brownsdon - on this occasion at the semi-final stage - which was slightly disappointing since Laurence beat Frank Newman to proceed to the final, and it is the nearest yet that the Lathams have come to

Newnham and Harry Brownsdon, an achievement with which they may rightly feel pleased. Among the remaining pairings the family partnerships all came out with two wins each, thereby causing a one-ball croquet tie-back with partners playing alternate turns, but both time and circumstances conspired to force William and Jennie Broad-Thomas to withdraw.

Fresh from just having been beaten by the Lathams, the Tompkinsons promptly won the tie-break +2 against them and took the Birch Cups home for the third time. The entire match caused intense interest among the 'gallery', most of whom had not seen this form of tie-break before.

In the 'C' class, Robert and Faith Fawcett, newly come to croquet, acquitted themselves honourably against the greater experience of Diana Erith and Edward Carleton. Doris Cox was also playing well, but all had to accede to the display of ability which awarded Mary Robinson the Hutton Cup, her first singles trophy.

Notwithstanding Arthur Rowlands' absence from the 'B' class (and he is usually a force to be reckoned with!), strong challenges were put in by Val Tompkinson and Phil Kennerly at the expense of Jennie Broad-Thomas, Margaret Newman and Bill Platt. However, Deborah Latham was playing consistently well and took the Chapman Cup with a clean sweep of wins; a performance that contributed to her being awarded a handicap reduction at the end of the tournament. Phil also experienced an abatement of his handicap, after he had obtained second place in the block.

In spite of an authoritative victory over Laurence Latham at the outset of the 'A' competition, Roy Newnham's challenge sadly faded along with that of Frank Newman and Harry Brownsdon. Mick Tompkinson's form improved gradually during the week, but it looked until the last games of the block as if William Broad-Thomas was going to be the one to have something to take home with him and polish. However, at the last moment arithmetic forced him into second place behind Laurence, against whom he suffered his only defeat, the Championship of the Isle of Wight thus being resident in Taunton once more for the next year.

Sea air, wonderful hospitality and superb atmosphere - why don't more people avail themselves of the opportunity to play at Ryde? In the words of the King of Siam as per Rodgers and Hammerstein - 'Is a puzzlement!'.

MEN'S & WOMEN'S Aiton regains Men's title Cheltenham: 12-17 June

Report by Alan Bogle

The 1989 Men's and Women's Championship was a strange event. For a start it was subjected to the hottest weather of the year, indeed the hottest day since 1976. Forecasters blamed it on increased sunspot activity, and perhaps this was the cause of several other odd happenings and behaviours.

To start with, the appointed manager Barry Keen defected to the USSR and Ian Maugham was coerced to fill in at the last minute. Martin Murray was attending the birth of his daughter, Hannah. Bernard Neal's back prevented his participation as a player, but not as a referee, and nobody wanted to write the report for the gazette.

However, having refused once, I cracked at the second asking. My task was made more difficult by Ian's desire for me to play on distant lawns (actually lawn 5) when all the excitement took place at the same time elsewhere. What follows therefore is based on second hand accounts which may or may not reflect the whole truth.

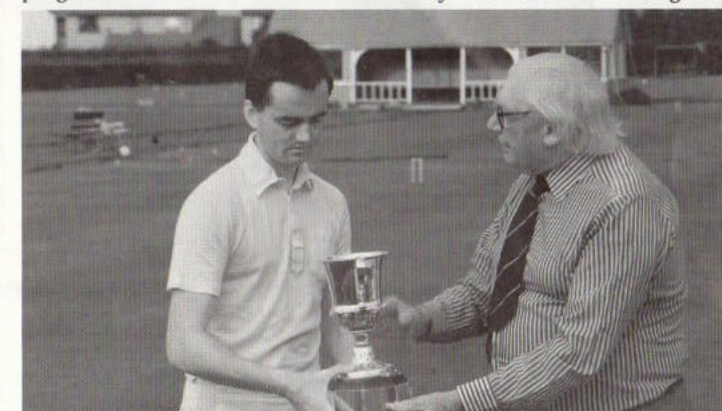
There were few surprises on the opening day in terms of results, the exception being the defeat of David Foulser at the hands of Jerry Guest. Mention should be made of Francis Landor, who completed his first competitive triple, and this proved the only triple of the round. Indeed triples were a scarce commodity. Only seven were scored in the event, Landor (1), Fulford (1), Gunasekera (1) and Aiton (4). This didn't reflect a low standard of play; rather it highlights that the lawns were faster than for some years at Cheltenham.

Bill Lamb, who had a bye in round one, arrived in the evening on the first day when not due until day two. Since his opponent had already won through, the manager refused to allow Bill to practice if he was not prepared to play. Bill compromised and settled for refereeing. John Walters also turned up on the first evening four hours late. The manager had his revenge by getting John to arrive four hours early on day three thanks to a late change in the order of play.

Round two followed the pattern of the first with results reflecting the players relative ranking. The exception this time was Francis Landor's fine win over Jerry Guest. Francis was later rewarded with a scratch handicap. The closest match saw Phil Cordingley beat John Walters after losing the first game.

In the quarter-finals, Robert

Fulford's shooting gave him a comfortable win over Ian Bond. Dayal Gunasekera staged a great comeback against Phil Cordingley after losing the first game from peg and peg. Colin Irwin finally mastered the lawn to beat Bill Aldridge in three games, and Keith Aiton ended Francis Landor's progress.



Edgar Jackson presents Keith Aiton with his Trophy.

Fulford's shooting failed him in the semi-final against Dayal, who won in two games. The interesting match was between Keith and Colin. Playing elsewhere, I missed this match. However, by all accounts Colin should have won the match in the second game, having scraped the first game from Keith by 3. Somehow, he contrived to lose it from peg and peg, and Keith won the third game with a fine triple.

The final was another close affair with Keith again steeling the match, this time in the third game. In the first game Dayal won by 26 with a fine triple, Keith failing to take croquet. I actually saw the second game but this was a rather scrappy affair which Keith won by 9. John Walters fell asleep during this game, only to be woken by Keith hitting a lift. At which point John nodded off again. The third game (which I saw only from afar) was worthy of the final. Keith started by blobbing hoop one and Dayal went to 4-back. Keith missed the lift and Dayal completed two peels in going to peg, only bad luck preventing the triple. Keith then gets the innings and goes to 4-back out of nothing. Dayal hits lift, makes rover but fails the long peg out, going off the lawn on the south boundary. Keith goes to peg including three peels but fails to peg out front ball. Sadly Dayal missed the lift and Keith was the new Men's Champion.

In the Women's Championship, there were a number of close wins

in the lower half of the draw. Liz Taylor-Webb progressed to the semi-finals with a +1 win on time in the third game against Carmen Bazley. And in matching circumstances, Dab Wheeler beat Veronica Carlisle. In the semi-final Dab only needed two games to beat Liz.

In the top half of the draw, Bo Harris beat Francis Ransom and then Betty Weitz in the semi-final, needing only two games in each match. The final was slightly disappointing. Bo Harris played very well to win in two games,

helped to some extent by Dab's failure to find the form which had taken her to the final. Bo added to the entertainment value of the second game by accidentally pegging out her forward ball while she was for penult. However, good shooting allowed her to go on to win. Thus Bo took the Women's Championship to go with her Ladies Field victory last year.

Nine pairs entered the Mixed Doubles. As this reporter was not present at any of this event, I can do little other than to note that the event was won by Ian Maugham and Bo Harris. In the final, they defeated Ian Bond and Veronica Carlisle who had earlier knocked out last year's champions Paul Smith and Carmen Bazley.

The Du-Pre was played as a draw and process for both men and women. Bill Lamb and Brian Sykes caused managerial problems because of their successful advance in both halves, finally meeting in each. The score was one all, with Bill going on to beat Phil Cordingley in the final of the draw. Brian Sykes meanwhile lost to David Foulser in the process. In a very close final David just pipped Bill by 3.

A good time was had by all who attended. As for other strange antics, there was Ian Plummer's 'hippy' shirt which he claimed was a relic of Woodstock(?). There was the manager's desire to play nobody other than Don Gaunt (4 games, honours even). This reporter was even persuaded to

Championships

participate in a croquet film being made for Nippon TV (possibility of stardom in Japan?). Most thanks must go to Juliet Povey who kept all the competitors well watered from the bar.

RESULTS Men's Championship

Round 1
R. Fulford bt C. Jones +24, +12; D.L. Gaunt bt F.I. Maugham +8, -8, +3; I.D. Bond bt B.G. Weitz -6, +11, +17; P.W. Hands bt P.L. Smith -3, +17, +19; D. Gunasekera bt D.J. Goacher +24, +15; I.R. Plummer bt M. Murray (wo); P. Cordingley bt B.G. Neal (wo); D. Kelly bt A. Bogle +6, +5; W.O. Aldridge bt D. Cairns +22, +3; C.J. Irwin bt R.W. Ransom +21, +10; F.I.R. Landor bt D. Moorcraft +22, +23TP; J. Guest bt D. Foulser -4, +2, +22; K.M.H. Aiton bt A. Hope -17, +13, +21.

Round 2
Fulford bt Gaunt +16, +26TP; Bond bt Hands +6, +14; Gunasekera bt Plummer +26TP, +15; Cordingley bt J.O. Walters -7, +4, +26; Aldridge bt Kelly +19, +13; Irwin bt W.E. Lamb +12, +10; Landor bt Guest +4, +26; Aiton bt B.C. Sykes +13TP, +4.

Round 3
Fulford bt Bond +8, +13; Gunasekera bt Cordingley -2, +6, +6; Irwin bt Aldridge +18, -25, +17; Aiton bt Landor +24, +24.

Semi-Finals
Gunasekera bt Fulford +10, +3; Aiton bt Irwin -3, +2TP, +16TP.

Final
Aiton bt Gunasekera +26, -9, +2.

Women's Championship
Round 1
Mrs E. Weitz bt Mrs C. Smith +10, +3; Mrs G.D. Harris bt Mrs F. Ransom +14, +19; Mrs E. Taylor-Webb bt Lady Bazley +15, -19, +1; Mrs D.A. Wheeler bt Mrs V. Carlisle -25, +2, +1.

Semi-Finals
Mrs Harris bt Mrs Weitz +13, +11; Mrs Wheeler bt Mrs Taylor-Webb +11, +13.

Final
Mrs Harris bt Mrs Wheeler +13, +14.

Mixed Doubles Championship
Round 1
I.D. Bond & Mrs V. Carlisle bt P.L. Smith & Lady Bazley +6.

Round 2
Bond & Mrs Carlisle bt D.J. Goacher & Mrs K. Whittall +19; D.L. Gaunt & Miss A. McDiarmid bt D.A. Moorcraft & Mrs D. Wheeler +15; F.I. Maugham & Mrs G.D. Harris bt Dr & Mrs B.G. Weitz +4; R. Race & Mrs K. Yeoman bt Mr & Mrs R.W. Ransom +3.

Semi-Finals
Bond & Mrs Carlisle bt Gaunt & Miss McDiarmid +14; Maugham & Mrs Harris bt Race & Mrs Yeoman +25.

Final
Maugham & Mrs Harris bt Bond & Mrs Carlisle +10.

Du Pre Cup (Draw & Process)

Semi-Finals
Draw: W.E. Lamb bt P. Cordingley +15; Process: D.J. Foulser bt B.C. Sykes +20.

Final (Play-Off)
Foulser bt Lamb +3.

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Schools

ROYAL BANK OF SCOTLAND INTERSCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIP

Edgbaston: 5 July
Which school is best?
Report by Andrew Bennet

Since the inception of the Inter-Schools competition the conditions of play have been controversial. The Royal Bank of Scotland this year sponsored a new level-play championship to show which school really has the best players.

The lawns at Edgbaston were very fast and when we arrived the hoops were the widest I have ever seen, so the start was delayed while adjustments were made. Hoop 3 on Lawn 1 caused the most difficulty; we lost count of the number of times Dan McCormick went skating past it. In fact the young players adapted quickly. Alex Leggate from Nailsea and Adam Jarvis from Bishop Vesey's soon found the delicate touch needed to put the balls in the right place, while Queen Elizabeth's top player, Russell Collighan, revelled in these conditions, managing a couple of peels in his first game.

Only one game went to time and most were finished quickly. Special mention must go to Alex Leggate who had a good controlled break when Russell Collighan was poised for his inevitable pegout, and to Adam Jarvis for his win against Dan McCormick, who in a handicap competition would have given him six bisques. Andrew Saurin played immaculately as usual.

Even without Chris Clarke and Mark Saurin, Queen Elizabeth's won the new championship convincingly, and Bishop Vesey's played with spirit to be runners-up. It was a most pleasant and friendly day, rounded off by the

presentation of the cup and medals by Mr Barry Williams from the Royal Bank of Scotland.

Queen Elizabeth's will be without



Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, winners of the Royal Bank of Scotland Level-Play Schools Championship. (L to R): Russell Collighan, Dan McCormick, and Andrew Saurin.

their three minus players next year, so we hope that more schools will feel able to enter this competition.

RESULTS Royal Bank of Scotland Interschools Championship (Level Play)

Round 1
R. Collighan (QUEGS) bt G. Pearson (Bishop Vesey's) +24. A. Griffiths (Bishop Vesey's) bt D. Lilly (Nailsea) +4(T). D. McCormick (QUEGS) bt R. Atwell (Nailsea) +19.

Round 2
A. Leggate (Nailsea) bt Pearson (Bishop Vesey's) +14. A. Saurin (QUEGS) bt Lilly (Nailsea) +16. A. Jarvis (Bishop Vesey's) bt McCormick (QUEGS) +12.

Round 3

Collighan (QUEGS) bt Leggate (Nailsea) +12. Saurin (QUEGS) bt Griffiths (Bishop Vesey's) +25. Jarvis (Bishop Vesey's) v Atwell (Nailsea) unfinished.
TEAM RESULT
Queen Elizabeth's 5 wins.
Bishop Vesey's 2 wins.
Nailsea 1 win.

World Croquet Federation appoints Management Committee

The World Croquet Federation met at Hurlingham on 15th July, prior to the World Championship.

New Zealand, Scotland, and England gave notice of their intention to bid to stage the next World Championships in 1990, and these Associations are now putting together formal applications.

The delegates elected the following Management Committee for the years 1990 to 1993.

President: Mr A.D.J. Heenan, OBE. (New Zealand).

Secretary-General: Mr C. Hudson. (England).

Other members: Mr R.E. Carter. (United States).

Brig. C.J. Miles. (Australia).

Mr F.J. Rogerson. (Ireland).

Prof. M. Ikeda. (Japan).

Croquet Demonstrated at World Games

Report by Chris Hudson

The International World Games Association (IWGA) is a group of international sports federations whose sports are not represented in the Olympic Games. Amongst the mem-

IWGA provided a microphone and public address system which John used to great effect when giving a running commentary in German whilst he was not playing. Available for spectators we had leaflets explaining the game in



John McCullough (centre, back to camera) commentates whilst Colin Irwin is in play.

bers of the IWGA are Netball, Karate-Do, Baseball, Petanque, Minigolf, Archery, Tug-of-War, and many other 'minor' sports.

The World Games are held every 4 years (the next one is in The Hague in 1993) and we were invited by the IWGA to demonstrate Croquet at this year's World Games in Karlsruhe.

Karlsruhe is near Stuttgart, and it was arranged that John McCullough and Colin Irwin should play a demonstration match on Thursday afternoon, 27th July. Having no idea what to expect, we arrived in Karlsruhe by various means to find ourselves allocated space for the demonstration on a piece of land normally used for hockey.

The IWGA officials were most helpful and mowed the grass as short as possible. Having looked at the conditions, we decided to play a 'best-of-three' match on a half-size court, roped off to enable spectators to get as close as possible to the action.

To help the demonstration along, the

French, German and English, kindly supplied by Townsend Croquet Ltd.

During the course of the afternoon, we handed out some 200 of these leaflets to spectators, and discovered several people who had already played a little croquet in England or elsewhere.

The event was filmed for German television. They even provided an actor to play the part of a butler, handing John his mallet and a cup of tea at the appropriate moments. Later, we discovered that the TV producer had also played croquet in England, and had absorbed many of the myths perpetrated by Lewis Carroll!

After the demonstration, we met Rolf Noess, Secretary General of the IWGA, and were able to discuss arrangements for the 1993 Games.

Holding the demonstration has proved to be a useful step on the way to having croquet accepted as a participating sport by the IWGA. I hope it has also helped to encourage more people in Germany to take up the game.

GARDEN CROQUET NEWS



Inside:
Coaching Tips
Hosting a Croquet Party
The Croquet Classic
News & Views

No. 2.

(Published by the Croquet Association)

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JOE HOGAN IS WORLD CROQUET CHAMPION

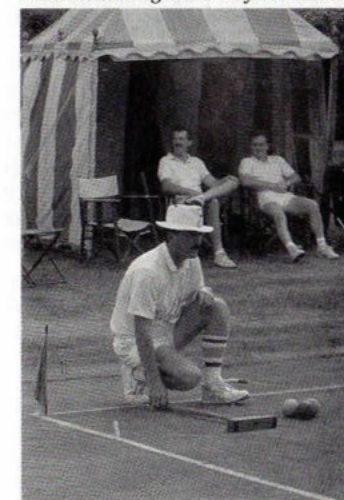
Joe Hogan (31) of New Zealand beat Mark Avery (24) of England to become the first ever World Croquet Champion in the Continental Airlines World Croquet Championship.

The final, played in blistering temperatures at the Hurlingham Club, London, was a battle of the building trades. Joe Hogan is a carpenter while Mark Avery is a builder.

In the first of the best of three games, Mark Avery got his first ball to the four-back hoop. (Championship croquet uses the laws of advanced play. These laws are slightly different to those normally used and allow your opponent to start his next turn with an advantage if you hit your ball through the four-back hoop. Consequently top class players usually stop before running that hoop).

Mark Avery then got into a break with his second ball and started a triple peel. (In a triple peel you not only hit the ball you are striking through its hoops but also use it to hit your other ball through its last three hoops. If you stop at the four-back hoop, that ball has three hoops left to run). The triple peel was going perfectly, and Mark had completed the first two peels when he stuck in the jaws of the two-back hoop from a distance of only six inches.

Joe Hogan took the opportunity this presented. In his next turn he took his ball right the way round and



Joe Hogan lines up a corner cannon.



Mark Avery in play during the World Championship Final.

used it to hit Mark's forward ball through its last hoop and then pegged it out. With only one ball left, Mark and Joe had a long cat and mouse game with Joe eventually winning by +3.

The second game was very similar. Again Mark got his first ball to the four-back hoop, then got another break going, and started on a triple peel. This time he stuck in the four-back hoop, but Joe failed to get in and Mark Avery was able to get one ball to the peg and the other to the rover hoop. However, Joe finally got in again and completed a perfect triple peel to win +3TP.

The match was an interesting contrast of styles, Mark Avery going for and hitting long difficult shots to get his breaks going. Joe Hogan was less spectacular, but needed only half a chance from a single error to get into the game and eventually win.

Earlier in the week there was some spectacular croquet, and some surprising upsets. The quickest win was Mark Avery's demolition of Reid Fleming, the world's top money winner in croquet tournaments in 1988, and the current North American Champion. Mark Avery won in one hour 5 minutes, completing two triple peels and not allowing Reid Fleming to run a single hoop.

Two young unseeded East Anglian players, Duncan Reeve and Steve Comish, had an astonishing run. Firstly, in the doubles, they knocked out top seed Mark Avery and David Openshaw. Steve Comish then

DUNCAN REEVE WINS EASTERN CHAMPIONSHIP

In the Eastern Championships held at Colchester on 8-10 July, Duncan Reeve beat David Maugham 3-2 to take the title in a closely fought best of 5 games final.

THE NATIONAL JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP

Mark Saurin won the National Junior Championship beating Russell Collighan in the final.

The tremendous strength of the present Junior players was demonstrated by Chris Clarke, last year's Junior Champion and winner of the President's Cup, only managing to come fourth.

PRESIDENT'S CUP SELECTIONS

The President's Cup is a competition in which the best eight or ten available players are invited to take part. It ranks on a par with the Open Championship as the most prestigious tournament in British Croquet. The players selected to compete this year are:-

Nigel Aspinall
Stephen Mulliner
Robert Fulford
Chris Clarke
Keith Aiton
Colin Irwin
Phil Cordingley
Mark Saurin

THE CROQUET CLASSIC: Players reach the last 16

Denzell Gardens, Bowdon, Cheshire.

This Regional Final was won by David Franklin who lives in Market Drayton, Shropshire.

The whole event was dominated by Mrs David Franklin, who spent the day in labour at Shrewsbury hospital, but we had a radio telephone at court side, where prospective Godfather John Franklin and prospective Uncle Richard Franklin were in the crowd.

Congratulations to David and Mrs Franklin on their achievements! Denzell Gardens are a delight at the moment.

Regional Finalists

David Franklin (3 wins); Roger

Huyshe (2 wins); Paul Humphries (1 win); Colin Abrahams (0 wins).

Wrest Park, Nr Silsoe, Beds.

The lawns were very fast at Wrest Park, due to the hot weather, and competitors had a short practice before the start to get used to the conditions.

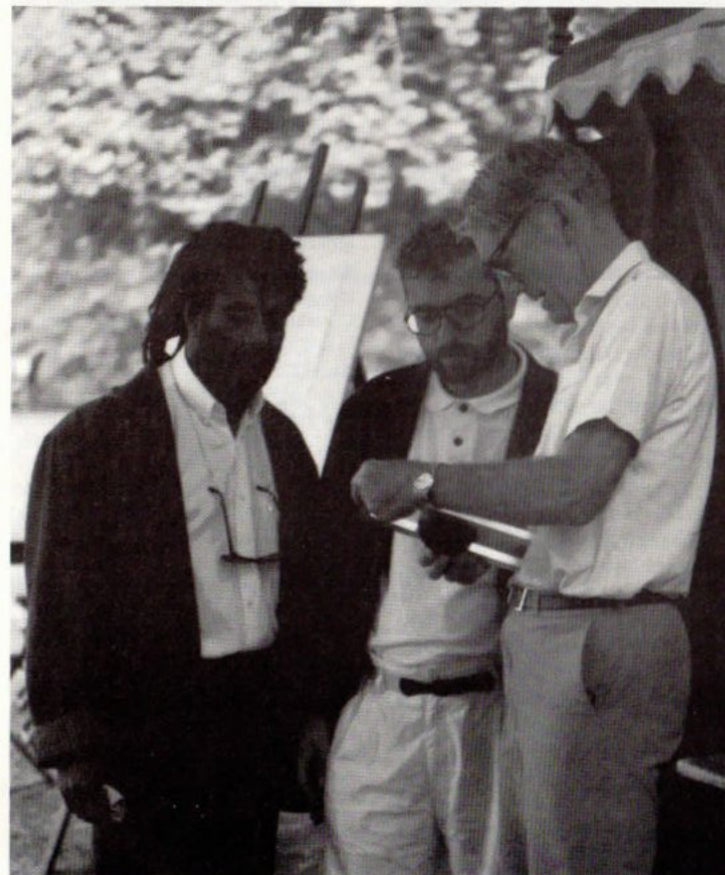
All showed good stroke play, but Rodney Ward had the edge because he knew more about tactics.

Regional Finalists

Rodney Ward (3 wins); John Trainor (2 wins); John Rusted (1 win); Peter Hardy (0 wins).

Tracy Park, Near Bristol

It was a very pleasant afternoon, the
(continued overleaf)



Antoine Ravez (centre), President of the French Croquet Association, and Jean-Baptiste Grochain, discuss a ball gauge with Bernard Neal at the World Championship.

EXCITING TIMES FOR CROQUET!

July was a momentous month in the history of world croquet. Not only did it see the first issue of Garden Croquet News but is also saw the inaugural meeting of the World Croquet Federation, the first-ever World Croquet Championship, and Croquet being included as a demonstration sport in the World Games at Karlsruhe in Germany.

The meeting of the World Croquet Federation on 15th July was the culmination of three years hard work in bringing the various National Croquet Associations together to form a World Federation. Present at the meeting were representatives from the Croquet Associations of England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Japan, France, and Italy. Among the topics discussed were who would host the 1990 World Croquet Championship. Bids for the championships were made by New Zealand, Scotland and England.

In future years we may well look back on this July as the start of a new golden age of croquet. Certainly Croquet is burgeoning all over the World. This was emphasised at the World Championship, where there were TV crews filming from 5 different countries.

Amidst all this, the first issue of Garden Croquet News came out. Garden Croquet News was started by The Croquet Association since they felt too little was being done for Garden Croquet players. This autumn The Croquet Association will be deciding how to proceed. Whether to continue

with Garden Croquet News and whether to develop it into a special category of Membership of the Croquet Association with its own tournaments and coaching.

It is important that your views as Garden Croquet players are taken into account. Please write to us and tell us what you want from The Croquet Association. Do you want tournaments, coaching, free tickets to top croquet matches, a magazine? If you want a magazine, what type of articles would you like to see? The reactions we have had so far to Garden Croquet News have all been excellent. If you have not already let us know your opinion on Garden Croquet News and what the Croquet Association can do for you, please write to us. It is only if we hear your views that we can provide you with what you want.

This issue of Garden Croquet News, as promised, is twice the size of the first. This has given us more space to expand the articles and features. If you wish to continue receiving Garden Croquet News you must write to us with your subscription if you have not already done so. The subscription for the next issue is £2.00 which includes your registration with The Croquet Association. Cheques or Postal Orders made payable to 'The Croquet Association' should be sent to: Brian Macmillan, The Croquet Association, The Hurlingham Club, Ranelagh Gardens London SW6 3PR. CHARLES TOWNSEND

The Croquet Classic (Cont'd from previous page)



Neil Goodyear, one of this year's National finalists, playing in his group competition at Radbrooke Hall.

lawns were fast but had benefitted from some overnight rain. There was a good 'gallery', including Ray Ransom (Chairman of the South West Croquet Federation) and others from the Bristol Club.

Martin Murray (Chairman of the Croquet Association) came with Mrs Murray and their very new daughter. The winner was 11-year old Ben Green, whom Martin Murray presented with his Rosebowl Trophy.

Martin mentioned that, only a week ago, he had participated in a somewhat different presentation at the Hurlingham Club, but he had no doubt that the present occasion was just as important to the four finalists

as it was to the participants in the World Championship.

The Bristol Evening Post sent a photographer, and we look forward to Ben's progress in the national final.

Regional Finalists
Ben Green (3 wins); Derek Reed (2 wins); Ellis Hughes (1 win); Beryl Owen (0 wins).

Himley Hall, Near Dudley, West Midlands

Despite the weather alternating between heavy showers and hot sunshine, making the lawn conditions vary considerably throughout the afternoon, everyone enjoyed being part of the Regional Final.

This was especially true of Hugh

Coming Events



St Mary's College, Twickenham.

The President's Cup 5-9 Sept.
The Hurlingham Club, Ranelagh Gardens, London, SW6 3PR. (2 minutes walk from Putney Bridge Tube Station.) Entry is free to Croquet Association members. The entry fee for non-members is £5.00. Tickets are obtainable from The Croquet Association.

The President's Cup is an event in which the 8 or 10 players are invited to compete. Everyone plays everyone else twice. Winning the President's Cup rates with the Open Championship as the two top competitions.

The Garden Croquet Classic: National Final. Saturday, 16th Sept. St. Mary's College, Strawberry Hill, Twickenham TW1 4SX. (Less than half a mile from Strawberry Hill S.R. Station.)

The winners from the regional finals will be competing to find the 1989 National Champion.

Williams who, after just defeating Andrew Yates in his first game, went from strength to strength and was well deserving of his runaway success.

Regional Finalists
Hugh Williams (3 wins); Andrew Yates (2 wins); John Riddington (1 win); Diane Dunn (0 wins).

Welcome Research, Beckenham, Kent

In the morning, the four finalists were fairly evenly matched and Julian Sheraton-Davis was unlucky not to win any games. However, John Bramhall was a clear winner - and went straight back to Reigate to captain a cricket team! Simon Jacot was runner-up after a hoop count.

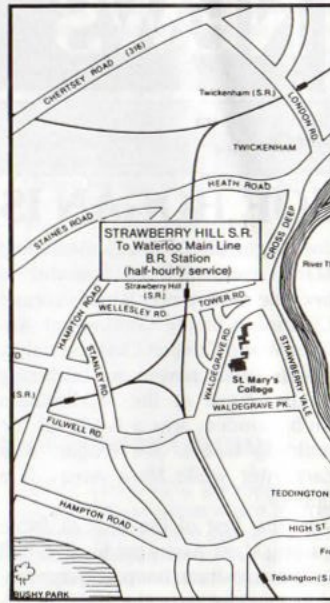
The draw between these two players occurred because both players insisted that they did not know the rule about playing on after time until the deciding hoop was scored; and they would not have left the balls in that position if they had known; and would much rather leave the result as a draw, if the manager didn't mind!

Regional Finalists
John Bramhall (3 wins); Simon Jacot (1½ wins); Peter Cross (1½ wins); Julian Sheraton-Davis (0 wins).

In the afternoon final, it was what managers dread - A beats B, B beats C, C beats A!

However, Edward Dymock eventually emerged as the winner on hoop count, after some very impressive hitting-in by Alec Bell. Sean Briggs found the standard rather high, but let's hope he'll have another go next year.

Regional Finalists
Edward Dymock (2 wins); Alec Bell (2 wins); Robert Alexander (2 wins); Shaun Briggs (0 wins).



Your Letters

Dear Sir,

Thank you for sending me 'Garden Croquet News'. At last, a magazine for Garden Croquet Players!

I am writing because I was hoping you can help me with a problem. The way we have always played croquet is you can choose which of your balls you want to play each turn. However we played against some friends recently and they play differently. They say you must play both balls in the order on the peg and you can't choose which one you want to play. Could you tell us which is right.

Frank Green,
Clifton.

You are right. At the start of each turn, you can choose which of your two balls you wish to play. Playing the balls in the order on the peg, sometimes referred to as the 'sequence game', was the way croquet was played up until 1913.

The laws of croquet are often passed on from father to son, so old laws sometimes persist long after they have been changed. One example of this is that some people still believe you can place your foot on the ball when you play the croquet stroke. This was banned as long ago as 1870! - Ed.

Subscribe to
'Garden Croquet News'
and ensure it continues!
(details in Column 2 above)

Hosting a Croquet Party

All of us have an image of a perfect summer's day. The sun beating down while the ice clinks in the glasses and the croquet mallets click on the balls. This is the feeling that the perfect croquet party should conjure up. It should be informal and relaxed, with the food and drink complementing the play to leave everyone with an afternoon to remember.

What are the ingredients of a perfect croquet party?

The Lawn and Garden

The most important thing in arranging the party is the lawn on which the croquet will be played. The first question you need to ask is what size of court you will be using. The two things you should take into account are the speed and smoothness of the grass, and the experience of the guests.

The court should be of a size whereby the players can strike a ball without straining from end to end of the court. Guests who have not played croquet before will find this more difficult than experienced players. So if you have guests who are new to croquet, the court should be scaled down. As a rough rule, if there are people who have never played before, the court should be between 10yds by 15yds and 16yds by 24yds. (It should only be the largest of these sizes if the grass is absolutely smooth and very fast). If the players are all experienced and the court is very smooth and fast, then a bigger court can be used, up to 28yds by 35yds. It should be noted that a court of this size is not suitable for beginners (or for anyone else for that matter!) if the grass is long or rough.

Having decided on the size of the court, the boundary should be marked out. There should also be an area close by in the shade where chairs for the guests wanting to play can be placed together with tables for the food and drink.

How Many Guests?

The number of guests at a croquet party is very important. You don't want to have people waiting around all day to get a game. You should allow 40 minutes for a 14-point game (this is a game in which you hit your balls through all the hoops only once before hitting them onto the winning peg). If you play doubles, which is highly recommended for a croquet party, then a total of eight people is the ideal number. This means you have four people in play while the other four sit in the shade and watch. You can also organise a simple knockout competition, with the winners of the first game playing the winners of the second game in a 'final'.

If you want more than eight people at the party you will need to organise more court time. There are two ways to do this. You can either have a second court if you have the space, or you can have two games going on at once on a single court. This is



Hosting a garden party can be fun: ask Harriet Walter, Jeremy Sinden, or Linda Baron!

called double banking and the second game uses balls of different colours to the first so they don't get muddled up. These different coloured balls are called 'second colour balls'. They are green, brown, pink, and white, and can be purchased through your sports shop.

Showing Beginners how to play

If some of your guests have never played croquet before, it is worth having simple leaflets available explaining how to play. Most croquet sets contain these and they can be

photocopied at your local library. Alternatively leaflets can be obtained from The Croquet Association, The Hurlingham Club, Ranelagh Gardens, London SW6 3PR.

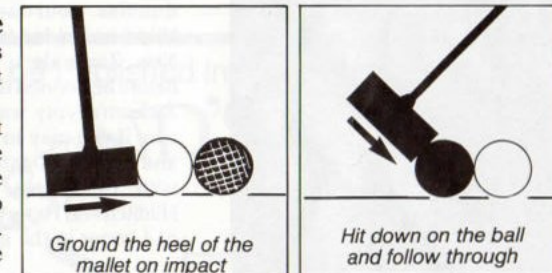
Clothing

The most important item of clothing is the footwear. You should ask your guests to wear tennis or other flat soled shoes. This is so that you don't finish the party with a lawn pitted by high heels. Other clothing should be casual summer wear, white if poss-

Coaching Corner: The Croquet Stroke

The croquet shot is the shot played after placing the balls together. Both balls must move when playing the croquet shot, but how do you control how far they move?

If the balls are placed in line and the rear ball is hit straight with the mallet, the front ball will go about three times as far as the back (or striker's) ball. This is fine for some situations, but in others you may want the back ball to go further than the front ball or maybe to move hardly at all. The distance the back ball travels can be controlled by the use of spin.



Stop-Shot.

Roll-Shot.

The Roll Shot

If you want the back ball to travel further, you hit it with more top spin. This is called a roll shot. To play a roll shot you stand further forward and hit down on the ball, following through as you strike it. See diagram. To put a lot of top spin on the ball you need to stand so far forward it is difficult using the conventional 'between the legs' stance.

You therefore stand sideways on and hold the mallet much lower down, with the bottom hand just above the head. Hitting the ball like this you can make the back ball travel further than the ball at the front. This is called a pass roll. The photographs show Lee Herington of Australia before and after playing a roll shot in the World Championships.



Australian Lee Herington plays a roll-shot during the World Championship.



The Stop Shot

If you want the back ball to move as little as possible, you put back spin on it. This is called a 'stop shot'. A stop shot is played by standing further back from the ball. As the mallet hits the ball, the heel of the mallet should be grounded so that the mallet does not follow through. So by varying the amount of top and back spin, it is possible to control exactly how far the back ball goes and get it exactly where you want it.

Around the Courts

The Continental Airlines World Croquet Championships brought up some interesting sidelines. While the final was being played, The Wimbledon Cup, given by The All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, Wimbledon, to be presented to the World Croquet Champion, was placed on a table by the court for all to see and admire. Spectators were surprised to read Keith Aiton's name on the plinth. After all, this was the first-ever World Croquet Championship, so how had Keith Aiton's name, however deserving, got on the plinth. The mystery was eventually solved. The Wimbledon Cup did not have a plinth of its own, so one had been borrowed from another trophy to make the cup stand out better on the trophy table. Hard luck Keith, maybe next year.



Jerry Stark, winner of the 'Fun Cup'.

The Italian Croquet Association donated a 'Fun Cup' to be awarded to the player in the World Championship who provided the most pleasure and entertainment. The cup was won by Jerry Stark, the amazing giant from Arizona whose huge handlebar moustache and brightly coloured braces left an indelible impression.

During the World Championship Chris Clarke (18), who last year became the youngest player ever to win The President's Cup, overheard a children's programme on Channel 4. The presenter was saying "If schoolboy Chris Clarke wins the World Croquet Championships this week he will win enough money to keep him in sweets and comics for the rest of his life!"

One of the most impressive features of the two top New Zealand players in the World Championship was their total unflapability. Both Joe Hogan and Bob Jackson concentrated on the task of winning and let nothing disturb them. On their way to winning the doubles championship there was a good example of this. In the second round they were due to play Richard Hilditch and Nick Hyne, two of the great characters of croquet. Richard Hilditch and Nick Hyne have started a tradition that when they play together, one of them wears a pair of antennae. However they were now drawn against the world's best players in the world's most important



Richard Hilditch and Nick Hyne (left foreground) prepare to challenge Bob Jackson and Joe Hogan.

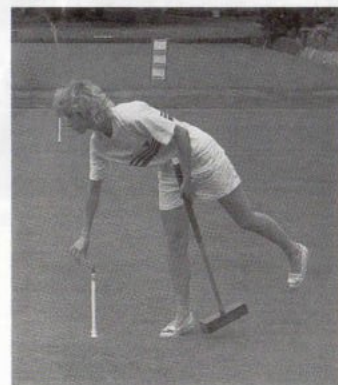
doubles tournament. Richard Hilditch decided he should ask the New Zealanders if they minded before he donned the antennae. Bob Jackson's reply was simple. 'I don't care if you play in your underants' and he and Hogan went on to win with two triple peels, allowing Hilditch and Hyne to run only a total of 4 hoops in the game.

Three out of the four New Zealanders at the World Championships were celebrating on finals day. Joe Hogan was celebrating because he had won. Bob Jackson and John Prince were both celebrating because it was their birthday. Bob Jackson was 57 John Prince 44.

One of Croquet's perennial questions is 'Who is the best woman player in the world?'. In the 1930's Miss D.D. Steel was not only the best woman player, but was also better than the men. However the women have been declining since then.

The President's Cup is a competition for the best 8 or 10 players available. The players invited to compete represent the leading players of the year. Until 1964 at least one woman had competed every year (except the War years) since 1922. However since then only one woman has been selected, a New Zealander in 1970. Britain's present top woman player is Debbie Cornelius and her progress is such that she may well soon compete in the President's Cup.

However, the question remains, is she the best woman player in the World? The other contenders are Madeline Hadwin of New Zealand, Carolyne Spooner and Creina Dawson of Australia. When Bob Jackson of New Zealand, who has seen all four play, was asked who was the best, he believed it was between Madeline Hadwin and Debbie Cornelius.



Debbie Cornelius in play.

Bob Jackson is the only player in Croquet ever to complete an Octuple peel. An Octuple peel is a turn in which the player not only gets the ball he is striking through all twelve hoops but also uses it to hit his other ball through its last eight hoops, and then pegs both balls out.

When asked if he was now contemplating a nonuple (9) peel, Bob replied he thought the next one should be a dectuple peel - a turn in which the ball he is striking is hit through all twelve hoops and his other ball through ten before pegging

both out. He has already worked out the leave to set it up. He would leave his opponents balls either side of hoop one (so they can't get at each other), one of his balls in the jaws of hoop three, and the other in the third corner. His opponent shoots at the ball in the corner, misses, and off Bob goes.



Bob Jackson.

It is often said that power is the finest aphrodisiac. This certainly seems to be the case in the world of croquet. The wives of both croquet's current Chairman Martin Murray and Vice-Chairman Stephen Mulliner have just had babies. Andrew Hope, croquet's last Chairman, also became a father while he was Chairman. Who, I wonder, will the next Chairman be?

End piece THE CROQUET ASSOCIATION

Garden Croquet News is published by the Croquet Association.

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, 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, CO13 0LX. Tel. 0255-674404.

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 Almanack'.

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, CO13 0LX.

Hurlingham: June The 'Varsity Match Huge Quivering Bulk seen at Hurlingham Report by Ian Plummer

Twelve bright young things from Oxbridge met on a sunny June day at the Hurlingham Club little knowing what was lurking in the bushes. The nervous Cambridge Captain, James Carlisle, denying that he was receiving sponsorship for the cigarettes he was chain smoking, paced, waiting for half of his team to arrive. Richard Hilditch, stalwart of many 'Varsity Matches', was engaged as referee and got what games could be played underway. It was about an hour later that a black London taxi disgorged the remainder of the Cambridge team on the steps of Hurlingham.

We were not alone at the Hurlingham Club, a large contingent of women had taken over the ball-room and appeared to be holding a jumble sale! It was rumoured that Terry Wogan was about but fortunately nothing was seen of him. A loud roar and rumbling was however heard from the bushes by lawn 6.

The morning started with six singles played level advanced. The first game to finish was the sixth pair, with Tony Whyte of Oxford beating Alex Lever. Michael Sutcliffe of Cambridge smoothly pulled ahead of Tim Marr to leave the score one game a piece. This was answered by Oxford's Paul Harbord who failed to peg out his opponent, Mike Bithell, and eventually ended up trying a 9 yard peg out on his partner ball. The sages amongst the spectators were shaking their heads only, to see a clean peg out of both balls; Oxford 2, Cambridge 1.

Again Cambridge came back; this time Cambridge's Jonathan Collis in a close game, pegged out Peter Turner's forward ball with the two backward balls on penult. Peter failed to get the innings and Jonathan won plus 3. The to and fro continued.

For the first time in recent history only four lawns had been made available and some of the singles had to be double banked. The two top seed games were sharing lawn 6. Fiona McCoig was not playing to her usual form but unfortunately her Oxford opponent, Nigel Williams was (i.e. abysmally). Some of the tactics would not be believed - hardened Aunt Emmas would have sucked their teeth in disbelief. 3-2 to Cambridge.

The singles result thus depended on the top seeds from the Universities - James Carlisle from Cambridge versus Mike Ainley-Walker. In front of a growing crowd the end of the game approached. Ainley-Walker for peg and rover was pegged out by Carlisle whose backward ball was on two back. Ainley-Walker missed the shot and James two-balled through two and three back only to get hoop

bound on his rush for four-back.

The huge quivering bulk was now seen in its full glory when Richard Hilditch ambled on to the lawn to referee James' hampered shot. A large blue shimmering hot air balloon lurched above the trees and bushes. Like a manic blancmange it quivered and bobbed amongst the trees as tension mounted in the final single. It looked poor for Oxford. After a bit of cat and mouse manoeuvring, the 'Nipper' layed up a rush for penult, leaving Ainley-Walker a 28 yard hit in. This suicidal shot was taken, hit, and the game finished. 3 games each.

University honour was left to the doubles after lunch, when Cambridge's top pair of Fiona and James played Mike and Peter. The mutual respect that the Cambridge players had for each other was further enhanced when Fifi heard that James was supplementing his nicotine intake with alcohol. There is some dispute over what she actually said.

Oxford's non-playing Captain, Ian Plummer, decided to use a tactic used in previous years by Cambridge, and substituted Robin Brown into the Oxford team. This generated a successful pair with Paul Harbord, who beat Collis and Lever. Cambridge retaliated with the Cambridge Michaels - Bithell and Sutcliffe - never giving Williams and Whyte much of an opportunity. Oxford 4, Cambridge 4.

The crowd moved to the final double where Fiona and James had a comfortable lead over Mike and Peter. Fiona had trundled around to 4-back and left James to do his stuff. There was more waiting than doing though. Cambridge however took advantage of their lead and went on to win the game and the match. Cambridge now enjoy the fruits of Oxford's hard work at raising sponsorship - a prize team meal at Brown's restaurant - happily an establishment with branches at both Oxford and Cambridge.

We would like to extend our thanks to the Hurlingham Club, Brown's Restaurant and Richard Hilditch - all respectable eating establishments.

RESULTS

Singles
(Level Advanced Play)
(Oxford names first)

M. Ainley-Walker bt J.W.H. Carlisle +4; N. Williams lost to Miss F. McCoig -5; P. Turner lost to J. Collis -3; P. Harbord bt M. Bithell +3; T. Marr lost to M. Sutcliffe -23; T. Whyte bt A. Lever +10.

Doubles

Ainley-Walker & Turner lost to Carlisle & Miss McCoig -25; Williams & Whyte lost to Bithell & Sutcliffe -19; Harbord & Brown bt Collis & Lever +17.

MATCH RESULT

Oxford 4, Cambridge 5.



The Oxford University side (Back row, L to R): Nigel Williams, Tony Whyte, Mike Ainley-Walker, Tim Marr, and Robin Brown. (Front) Peter Turner & Paul Harbord.

INVITATION EVENTS

Congratulations to the following players who have been invited to take part in this year's 'Eights'.

President's Cup	Chairman's Salver	Spencer-Ell
K.M.H. Aiton	D.C. Reeve	A.K. Gregory
G.N. Aspinall	D.B. Maughan	C.M. von Schmieder
C.D. Clarke	R.J. Collighan	I.G. Vincent
P. Cordingley	M.R. French	D.J. Goacher
R.I. Fullford	S. Comish	A.F. Sutcliffe
C.J. Irwin	Miss D.A. Cornelius	W.E. Lamb
S.N. Mulliner	J.E. Guest	D.C.D. Wiggins
M.A. Saurin	D.R. Foulser	J.P. Dawson
Reserves	Reserves	Reserves
D.C. Reeve	W.O. Aldridge	F.J.R. Landor
S.E. Lewis	A.B. Hope	J.R. Hilditch
M.E.W. Heap	E. Bell	
M.D. Gunasekera		

To be Published in November 1989

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THE GOLF CROQUET CUPS

Phyllis Court: 10-11 June
A Change of Champion!

Report by Smokey Eades

The Brand twins came to defend their cups but went away empty-handed.

Ian Maugham won the singles and Stephen Wright and Geoff Roy the doubles.

The weather - after a poor start - was croquet friendly, the Thames setting, as always, was memorable, and Phyllis Court Club immaculate. On singles day (Saturday) Ivor Brand, Stephen Wright and David Croker all had five wins (from six games); Ian Maugham four. It was, however, Brand and Maugham who survived the semi-finals and Maugham who demolished Brand 7-3, 7-4 to win the Ascot Challenge Cup.

On doubles day (Sunday), Geoff Roy and Stephen Wright beat the Brand brothers in the semi-finals, whilst Smokey Eades and Leonard Greenbury beat Maugham and Croker. It was Roy and Wright, however, who won the Delves Broughton Challenge Cup 7-6, 7-5 in a hard fought, hard hitting and exciting final.

The undoubted shot of the weekend was that of Ted Mathews running two-back from the North Boundary.

The most bizarre performance was that of Eades who, playing Roy, twice approached the wrong hoop in order and, to add lunacy to stupidity, decided to treat hoop 13 as four-back and not three! Alcohol was suspected but a breath test confirmed senility as the most likely explanation!

Throughout the tournament there was a greater evidence of strategic play - calculated cannons, controlled in-offs, stop shots and purposeful blocking. Perhaps Chris Hudson's article on Crowther-Smith's booklet 'The Art of Golf Croquet' is beginning to bear fruit!

RESULTS

Ascot Challenge Cup
(Singles: 14 entries)

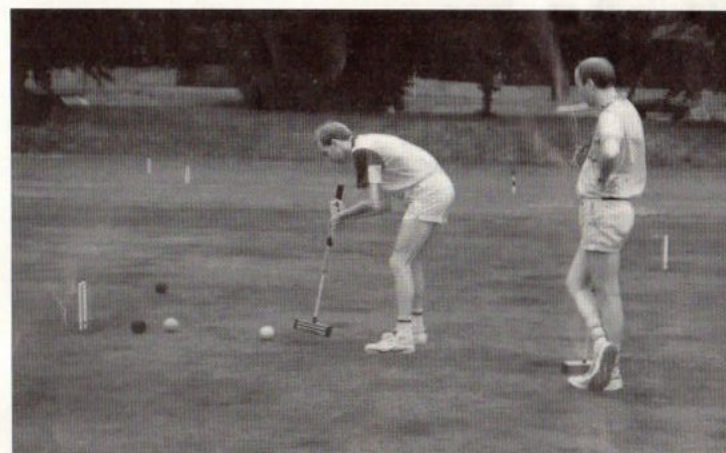
Semi-Finals
I. Brand bt D.J. Croker 7-4.
F.I. Maugham bt S. Wright 7-6.

Final
Maugham bt Brand 7-3, 7-4.

Delves Broughton Challenge Cup
(Doubles: 6 pairs entered)

Semi-Finals
G.C. Roy & S. Wright bt I. & R. Brand 7-3; R.S. Eades & L. Greenbury bt F.I. Maugham & D.J. Croker 7-6.

Final
Roy & Wright bt Eades & Greenbury 7-6, 7-5.



Ivor & Richard Brand in play at Phyllis Court during the Golf Croquet Cups tournament.

NATIONAL COMPETITIONS

Review by Don Gaunt

I have been very pleased with the promptness of clubs in reporting their results. The granting of extra time to play the early rounds seems to have been successful. It also seems to have reduced the number of teams who have scratched, only 2 out of 93 entries, both of them for good reason. Well done everyone!

John Mann is reported as having played well for Bristol against

Bowdon, and in the Pendle-Walsall Longman match the scores were 2-all with everything resting on the final doubles match. Pendle were 7 hoops behind on their last turn before time. They made exactly 7 hoops, leaving Walsall only a long shot which was missed. Pendle then made the single hoop to win 'Plus One On Time'!

I wonder why I find that score interesting!

P.S. If anything interesting happens in your match, please let me know.

The National Results - see page 21 column 4.

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Recommended by Egon Ronay
Ashley Courtenay, Derek Johansen

NATIONAL JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP

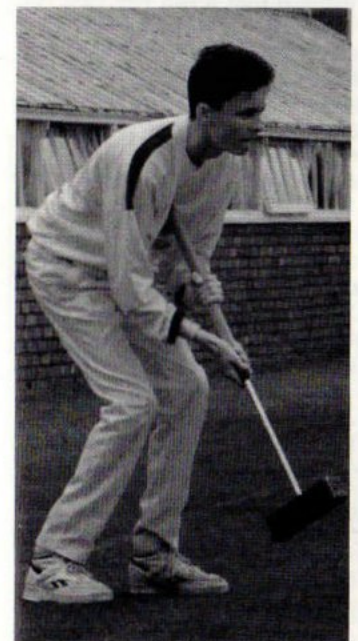
Was it really Keith?
Report by Chris Clarke

This years NJC was the strongest ever by far. Kevin Cooper was the only D-class player in the tournament and he was certainly better than his handicap of 15. The conditions at Nottingham were easy (Ian Burridge from Colchester described them as very slow whilst Chris Haslam from Southport described them as very fast!). Despite the groundsman setting the hoops to sub-presidential width, after a couple of hours each day the juniors had clubbed them into submission.

The pre-tournament pundits predicted a win for Collighan, but with Clarke fresh from a successful World's and Saurin determined to play himself into a good eight, it looked like being a close tournament.

The first round saw Saurin beating Collighan with a TP on the trickiest of the lawns. Elsewhere, there was good play with Chris Haslam and Dan McCormick both looking good and Rick Harding worrying Mark Saurin for a while. Chris Clarke came close to bringing off a delayed sextuple - finishing on rover & rover. Play ended with the 3 favourites and Chris Haslam still in both halves. The best of 5 shoot-out at the peg between Collighan, Saurin, and Clarke to decide who slept on the floor was lost by Saurin who unfortunately was lucky enough to have a bed after all.

Most of the competitors returned to Kenlo Guest House for the evening, but due to new management guests were thrown out at 11pm. Which prevented Dan from celebrating his birthday to quite the extent we had anticipated. Saturday morning brought the



Dan McCormick, winner of the Swiss.

Saurin/Clarke clash. Mark was soon round to 4-back but Chris hit the incredibly short lift shot and made a 1-back leave. Mark missed the 30-yarder and Chris had the TPO and double riggall. A 2-back clang gave Mark a 6 hoop 2-ball break which stopped at 2-back. Chris' second disaster came at 4-back, when, after Mark stuck, Chris' shot hit centre-wire and bounced back to give Mark a handy rush to penult. After some nervous play by Mark and a succession of missed 15-yarders by Chris, Mark finished.

Meanwhile, Chris Haslam had completed his first tournament TP and a few hours later, Rick finished his first TP in any sort of play. We had broken the record of 6TPs already and the final tally was about a dozen.

Mark had progressed to both finals and decided to marry the competition off. This gave Russell a chance to play Chris Clarke in a best of three. Russell took the first by 9 with a good TP. Chris had the first ball round in game 2, but Russell hit and deliberated for a long time about whether to go for TPO. Eventually, he decided against it and doured the escape ball into the middle. Having done this, he promptly rush-peeled 4-back and was forced to complete the TPO and go on to win the match.

Far more interesting than the actual play in this game were the antics of a squirrel who seemed to be very keen on croquet. On Friday, he had made a triple target of Dan's into a quadruple and now it was the red corner flag that took his fancy. After this was removed, the red ball and black flag were both attacked. There were rumours that this squirrel was in fact Keith Aiton (our real manager) in fancy dress, possibly trying to semaphore some tactical comment on Russells TPO, but this was never fully established.

Saturday night gave Clarke his biggest success of the weekend when he managed to exchange 17 King Prawn balls for 16, plus a portion of sweet and sour sauce. The evening's entertainment split the juniors into two groups - the mindless Schwarz-egger watchers and the bridge players. But even junior bridge players have to be different and so the game was played in the back of Rick's car. With the film over, the traditional poker evening began, with Ian Burridge proving his generosity by distributing his money between the rest of us (two miles away, Chris Haslam was just giving his straight to Dan).

Sunday morning came with the manager (Mark) threatening to report Clarke to the CA if he refused to play a 3/4 place play-off against Haslam, despite the fact that Clarke was already 3rd. Although nobody except the manager thought this

game should be played, Clarke was forced to play. Haslam took the first comfortably but Clarke had a good come-back in the second to win 5TP. Haslam pounced on a Clarke error in the 3rd to produce his second triple of the weekend, from which Wylie would have extracted much amusement had he been watching.

Meanwhile Mark had won the first game in the final, in which Russell had difficulty getting nearer than two feet on any of his lift shots, or even not taking a divot. (Russell's excuse



Chris Haslam (left) and Graham Pearson, two rapidly improving Juniors.

was that he was lower to the ground because he had taken the insoles out of his trainers). Mark looked to be having the second with a TP, but missed a 4-yard Mulliner return after refusing to Irish-peel rover. However, Russell failed to take an easy break opportunity and Mark became the National Junior Champion. Mark benefitted from solid play and should be congratulated on what was in the end a comfortable victory after very little competitive play this year.

Dan McCormick won the Swiss comfortably with an excellent win over Ian Burridge that was not only stylish but artistic. Dan has great potential and if he continues to play seriously should be vying for a place in the President's in a couple of years. Ian Burridge is also improving quickly while Edward Duckworth has looked impressive since I first saw him play two years ago. Alan Griffiths played stylishly but was over-ambitious and Pearson has also improved greatly. Chris Ross and David Thatcher both failed to produce their true form. Alex Leggate has a good style and probably needs more real A-class play to bring out his full potential. Chris Haslam has improved rapidly and is an infuriating opponent. His stroke play, except for rolls, isn't very good and his tactics are awful. However, he won a lot of games and it will be interesting to see how he fares under more testing conditions.

Thanks to the Nottingham club for their hospitality and for providing excellent lunches. Thanks to May Ollett, who put up two of the players, and to Steve Thomas without whom Nottingham would be much worse off. Finally, thanks to Keith whose management was so good that most of us didn't even notice that he was

there.

RESULTS

DRAW

Round 1

R.J. Collighan bt M. Saurin +19TP; C. Haslam bt C. Ross +19; D. Thatcher bt A. Leggate +9; A. Griffiths bt K. Cooper +14; D. McCormick bt R. Harding +15; I. Burridge bt E. Duckworth +11.

Round 2

M. Saurin bt Pearson +17; Haslam bt Thatcher +11; McCormick bt Griffiths +10; C.D. Clarke bt Burridge +26TP.

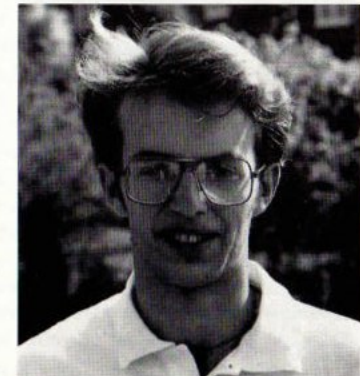
Semi-Finals

Saurin bt Haslam +26TP; Clarke bt McCormick +11.

PROCESS

Round 1

Pearson bt Cooper +26; Haslam bt Burridge +17TP; Collighan bt McCormick +16TP; Duckworth bt Ross



+7; Saurin bt Harding +8; Clarke bt Leggate +14.
Round 2
Haslam bt Pearson +10; Collighan bt Thatcher +20; Griffiths bt Duckworth +9; Saurin bt Clarke +5(OTP).
Semi-Finals
Collighan bt Haslam +17TP; Saurin bt Griffiths +14.
PLAY-OFF (Marriage)
Collighan bt Clarke +9TP, +12TPO.
Final
Saurin bt Collighan +13, +18.
Play-Off for 3rd place
Haslam bt Clarke +20, -5TP, +20TP.
Handicap Swiss
Winner:
D. McCormick - 7/7 wins.

RESULTS (continued from page 20)

LONGMAN CUP

Round 1			
Bishop Vesey's	3	Cheltenham	2
Stourbridge	3	King. Maurward	2
Oxford Univ.	4	Reading	1
Letchworth	4	Compton	1
Ramsgate	4	Parkstone	1
Parsons Green	3	Harrow Oak	2
Sidmouth	3	Nailsea	2
Roeampton	3	Crawley	2
Reigate	5	Woking	0
Tyneside	3	Ellesmere	2
Ormesby Hall	3	Wolverhampton	2
Southport	3	Worcester	2
Harwell	3	Nottingham	2
Culworth	3	Hunstanton	2
Bretby	3	Wrest Park	2
Leicester	3	Himley	2
Edgbaston	3	Ipswich	2
Bear of Rodboro'	4	Colchester	1
Dyffryn	bt	Newport	(wo)

Round 2

Sidmouth	3	Roeampton	2
Bristol	4	Surbiton	1
Tracy Park	4	Caterham	1
Bowdon	3	East Riding	2
Pendle	3	Walsall	2
Beverley	4	Edinburgh	1
Tyneside	4	Ormesby Hall	1
Edgbaston	3	Leicester	2
Bear of Rodboro'	3	Dyffryn	2

SECRETARY'S SHIELD

Pendle	4	Nailsea	3
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MARY ROSE

Round 1			
Bowdon	4	Worcester	3
Surbiton	5	Nottingham	2

Round 2

Bowdon	bt	Parsons Green	(wo)
Himley	5	Cheltenham	2

INTER-CLUB

Round 1			
Surbiton	6	Ipswich	1
Harrow Oak	5	Culworth	2
Woking	7	Parkstone	0
Cheltenham	5	Nottingham	2
Bristol	4	Bowdon	3
Edgbaston	6	Wrest Park	1
Hurlingham	bt	Worcester	

Round 2

Harrow Oak	5	Surbiton	2
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Club News

Fun on the Lawns

Report by Colin Chandler

On Sunday May 14th a unique occasion was organised by the Southwick and Worthing Clubs, along with Littlehampton, Hove Lawns, Preston Lawns and Rottingdean, who combined to present a fund raising - cum membership drive entitled 'Fun on the Lawns'.

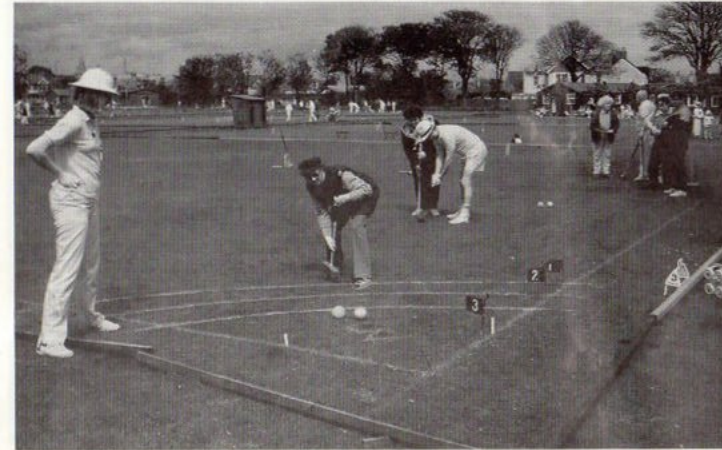
The main entertainment was a croquet gymkhana in which 12 very varied and apparently easy games cunningly concealed unbelievable difficulties. This was evident from the fact that only 6 players scored more than 36 points out of a possible 80. The winner being Martyn Cooperman with a total of 40.

After a spell of cold weather, the day fortunately dawned bright, and there were spells of sunshine,

although it was never possible to shed much clothing and the 200 taking part were glad to keep moving.

Apart from the fun of the games themselves, the gymkhana was used as a membership drive, for on the back of every admission card to the games was an invitation to return the following weekend to learn something about Association Croquet and to receive free tuition. On the fund-raising side there were stalls, a treasure hunt and of course a splendid tea.

The event was planned and superbly organised by Pat Shine who, by gathering together about 60 helpers, was able to have all the Competitions manned at all times, by 4 overseers (2 on duty, 2 taking



Contestants trying their skill at 'semi-circle shooting.'

part or thankfully having tea!) and so keep the rhythm going and ensure a finish on time. Scorecards were printed by kindness of the London and Edinburgh Insurance Co.

POSTSCRIPT: As a result of the above event, 12 people turned up for tuition at Southwick and expressed interest in becoming members.

Short Story

Croquet Short Story

By Andrew Beck

When I awoke, the sun was shining and the daffodils were dead. This was a good sign, as the start of the season could not be far away.

It had not been a good hibernation, partly because He had torn me from my slumbers - I guess it must have been late autumn because the trees were golden brown. We went into this building, and then suddenly we were on a croquet court! It was all very strange - lawns usually chatter on incessantly but this one never uttered a word.

Now I must say I rather enjoy a gentle pre-season rubdown and varnish, but I nearly died when I saw Him get out the paint-stripper. I itched for days afterwards, to say nothing of the embarrassment I knew I'd feel at being seen in such a hastily slapped on coat of varnish. I began to think that something must be amiss.

Come to think of it, I remember overhearing something He said at the funny lawn last autumn - something about 'getting a Spaminial for next season'. Of course I'd heard of this legendary player - could it be that we would be his doubles partner during the coming season?

I found out the awful truth at the first session of the season. I played a few strokes then was thrown into the back of someone else's Travelling Machine, to hear the words 'It's fine for a spare' to which He replied 'Is a tenner all right?'. What a cheek - my handicap is 7 and He knows it! For the rest of the evening I had to watch Him playing with his accursed new Spaminial.

And that was that for three miserable weeks until the first tournament. My new owner brought me down to the Club, but watching others play did nothing to raise my steamrollered spirits. The fine spring weather had predictably given way to a tournament deluge; the court resembled a battlefield with heavily clad figures furtively emerging from the huts, taking a hasty shot and, with a look of relief accompanying the hopeless miss, diving back under cover of the shelter.

After a while the rain eased off and people began to attempt breaks, slugging their pioneers across the sodden turf and watching their take-offs squelch to a halt yards short. The look of despair slowly lifted from the face of the manager, who had given up hope of any games finishing before lunch.

My new owner had doggedly worked round to rover and two-back, but having got the pace of the lawn his opponent made an all-round break and, with the help of a chancy peel, Riggalled. From then on my owner's hitting got progressively more desperate as his opponent played a series of disposable 3-ball breaks to reach penultimate. Things were looking pretty desperate when he managed to hit in, giving a cannon in corner 3.

The wafer cannon would give him a pioneer at 3-back with a long scoop to 2-back, but on a lawn this slow? I could hardly bear to watch as grimly he positioned the balls and calculated the angles. As he took stance I could sense that he was going to give it every ounce of strength, and I could only wince in sympathy as the mallet head crashed into the balls and the shaft splintered.

Muttering profanities, he came and fetched me. As you can imagine I was desperately hoping that he would not try a repeat performance! The lawns were chattering away excitedly to each other about how much more fun it all was with a bit of rain - a view not shared by mallets, or anything with more than a splinter of intelligence for that matter. Whether my new owner belonged in that category was distinctly questionable at this point.

The opponent had very sportingly dismissed the possibility of a foul stroke and our turn continued (the lawns were discussing this and attempted to draw me into the debate, but their interpretation of the laws is so basic as to be contemptible). A big roll separated the opponent and got us near 2-back, but a duff continuation stroke left us badly angled on the hoop. Opponent joined up.

I sized up the chances for running the hoop - roughly nil. He was going to have a go at it

though, and I did my best but it clanged hopelessly off the wire. He dragged me off the court and the next thing I knew I was propelled through the air to land in a carefully pruned privet hedge. I had to make polite conversation with said hedge for a good five minutes before he retrieved me.

After that, the lawn and I had some fun. We let him hit in, then sent the rush in completely the wrong direction. We let his hoop approaches trickle gently onto the wire. His perfectly aimed long shots we hilled at the last minute. It wasn't long before his opponent, wearing a satisfied if slightly perplexed grin, was clearing the lawn.

As we returned to the clubhouse, a curious figure approached. Defeated by the rain, it had presumably reduced its attire to shorts and bare feet but it might have been completely naked beneath its bright orange cagoule. As it drew nearer, I recognised that it was He. 'Hey!' he shouted 'Any chance of borrowing my old mallet back? I've been hitting so hard, I've knocked both faces off my new Spaminial!'

'Borrow it? You can have it!'



Cartoon by Jack Shotton.

One Crowded Hour

By Jim Townsend

The following short story is an elaboration of a puzzle which I constructed, and which appeared in CROQUET, over 30 years ago.



Surely not another Selection Event! This was my first bemused reaction when I read that the Treasurer's Trophy was yet another Invitation Event being introduced in the Calendar Fixture List. When I became an Associate forty years ago there were just two Selection Events, the President's Cup and the Ladies Field Cup, but since then we have witnessed the birth of the Chairman's Salver, the Spencer Ell Cup, the Longman Bowl (for Ladies) and the Selectors' Weekend. Perhaps the next in line will be the Secretary's Saucer!

My qualms however proved to be unfounded, as on reading the Conditions I found that 'entry was confined to the six best players under the age of 21 who would be invited to compete', recognition of the welcome burgeoning talent of the younger generation. I was relieved that I was no longer on the Selection Committee as, in addition to their extra work load, the determining of a Form Book was obviously going to present more problems than those for the other Selection Events where Tournament results together with personal experience provide a ready guide to the panel. Be that as it may, the Selectors came up with six eminently worthy contestants and the inaugural competition got under way under the experienced management of Edgar Laxson.

What unfortunately marred the proceedings was the unprecedentedly bad weather throughout. Heavy rain, gale force winds and subnormal temperatures led to a number of interruptions of play during the tournament, and Edgar was no doubt relieved that he had been able to maintain the scheduled sequence of games at the end of the penultimate day.

His patience was however sorely tried on the final day, Saturday. Play had been in progress for only an hour when a torrential downpour flooded the lawns. After a long wait and with no prospect of a speedy resumption, the players were told to take an early lunch in the hope that play would be possible soon after one o'clock. These hopes were set at naught by further heavy rain, and it was not until four o'clock that with the appearance of the sun the waters began to subside.

It was becoming increasingly obvious that there would not be time to complete the remaining rounds, and the only solution available, that of finishing on Sunday, had to be ruled out because one player, a joint leader at that stage, was booked to travel abroad on business on that day, while the other joint leader, a strict Sabbatarian, firmly declined to play.

Edgar nevertheless, mindful of his long established reputation of keeping players' noses to the grindstone, announced that he would devise some way of keeping all six occupied in the likely time available, and when the lawns proved to be playable soon after half past five he summoned the players to his tent and described his plan.

There was to be a series of five rounds of one-ball games, each lasting precisely ten minutes. In order to secure rigid adherence to the time

limit, Edgar would ring a starting bell, and a finishing bell when play was to cease immediately. Two points would be awarded for a win and one for a draw. Edgar had already completed all the preliminaries, which stipulated the draw for each round, the lawn allocations, which player should have the blue and which the red ball, and which player was to start each game. The players showed varying degrees of enthusiasm but all co-operated to the full and the Event was completed in just an hour, the gaps between the rounds being kept to a minimum by the players' expedition in moving between lawns at the end of each round.

After the players had retired to the bar I found Edgar poring over the results. On seeing me he remarked that they showed a number of unusual features. In the first place the score was different in every game. Strange to say, Alan, Brian, Chris and David each had the same number of hoops scored against as for, 12, 14, 18 and 15 respectively. No player had advanced beyond the sixth hoop in any game and there was only

one game where a player had failed to score, the one in which Alan beat Brian by 3-0. The only other game where less than 4 points were scored was Eric's win over Alan by 2-1.

The highest number of points scored in any game was when Brian and Chris met. Ferdinand's games were all evenly contested, drawing three and winning the other two by a margin of one point, scoring 18 points in all 5 games. Alan beat Chris by two points, making the third hoop a split second before the bell, but he only made one hoop against David. David beat Eric by 5-2, and both he and Alan had no drawn games.

'Very interesting. May I see the complete table?' I said. 'That's not necessary' replied Edgar. 'From what I have told you, you can construct the whole thing for yourself, even though as an actuarial octogenarian your mental prowess may be not what it was.'

Readers may wish to verify his assertion, and so by completing the table discover who won. The solution will appear in our next issue.

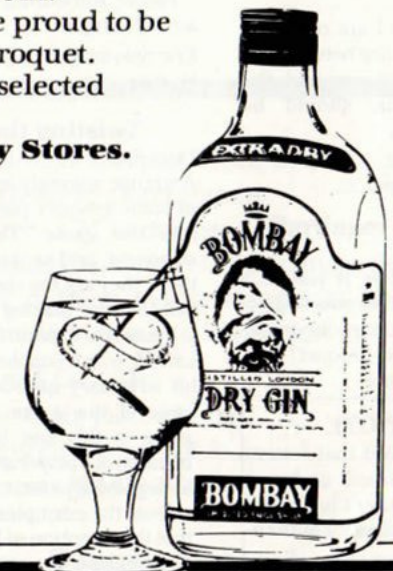

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Your Letters

Correction

Dear Sir,
May I correct two printer's errors in 'Wildlife on the Croquet Lawn: Part 2', as they completely alter the sense of what I wrote.

The Gymnogene is not the strongest but the strangest raptor here. It hunts weaker prey and its long thin legs, specially evolved to reach into rock crevices and tree holes, do not compare with the powerful legs and terrible talons of those mighty hunters the Crowned Eagle and the Black Eagle.

The spider which disappears unless one knows precisely where it is, is the bark spider, not the black spider. Its camouflage would be ineffective if it were black.

Leslie Riggall
Kloof, South Africa.

Prize Money

Dear Sir,
As an occasional tournament player, perhaps I could express my views on the subject of Prize Money.

I enter two or three handicap weekends each year, and derive a great deal of pleasure in so doing. The existence of cash prizes for block winners offers me no inducement to enter a tournament. The full cost of entering a tournament - including travel, particularly if overnight accommodation is involved, totally eclipses any prize money. If I have played well and find myself 'in the money', the amount involved must be as embarrassing to give as it is to receive. If monetary reward was a consideration, then there must be a more profitable way of spending two or three days of blood, sweat and toil.

I do not suggest that the answer is to increase the entry fee and purse accordingly, as was proposed recently. On the contrary, I think that prize money should be taken right out of the amateur game. Success should be recognised by a small trophy or memento. This need cost no more than the current cash prize and, I believe, winners may find it more rewarding. Am I alone in this view?

I should say that I am not 'anti-professional' but the line between the enthusiastic club player and the serious professional should be realised and drawn.

Richard Danby
Bear Of Rodborough C.C.

Shin-guards required?

Dear Sir,
We have all met her. It was at a garden party where the possibility of on-site croquet was under discussion. 'Are you talking about Croquet? Ooh, that's a vicious game!'

PLEASE NOTE

Readers are reminded that letters can only be published under a pseudonym if the writer's full name and address are supplied for authentication.

She was a senior secretary with a law firm, quite attractive, and I felt that I should appraise her of the truth of the matter. On the prior advice of our President I suggested that the game was no more vicious than Tennis. 'Oh no, she replied, 'It is much worse than that.' I suggested that possibly we were talking about different games, and added that I quite often entered Croquet Association tournaments in which I had yet to see any injuries of consequence. 'Well,' she said, 'I have two



The new lawn at QEGS, following its extension.

friends who go in for those 'socation tournaments and you should see their ankles - they're black and blue!'

It should have been a case of 'tread softly, for you tread on my shibboleths'. She was not about to relinquish her treasured view of our game, and I should have realised that I was not going to win. But no, I pressed on and asked why her friends were on court when the opponent was playing. Perhaps they were exponents of the 'ankle self-roquet'. 'What's that?' I explained that perhaps they accidentally tap themselves on the ankles when they swing the mallet - it is quite easy. 'Don't be ridiculous.' And with that she stalked off into the shrubbery.

People sometimes ask me why I am still single!

Eric Solomon,
Harrow.

Twisting the Laws

Dear Sir,
A strange anomaly in the behaviour of some croquet players has crept into the game. They ask their opponent, or if he is unwilling to tell them, they ask the spectators, which ball they are playing with.

If asked to explain this, they quote Law 44, which enables a player to ask his adversary questions about 'the state of the game'. Examples are given in this law, but there is no mention of a player asking which ball he is playing with.

From the examples given it is clear that the intention of Law 44 is not to assist a player to win, by enlisting the

help of the adversary or the spectators, but only to clarify the state of the game, mainly at the time when a player commences a turn. A player may walk onto the court and find a clip missing, or one of his balls in a hoop, and if he is for that hoop he needs to know from which side it entered the hoop, as he might prefer to run the hoop instead of lifting the ball. Obviously the adversary should give information on request if he is responsible for the ball, or kept the missing clip in his pocket.

Although stated so clearly, this law is never observed. I have witnessed a number of incidents where a spectator has warned a player who was about to run a wrong hoop or play a wrong ball, occasionally speaking directly to him, but usually by exclaiming loudly enough to be heard. On every occasion the player hesitated, and then refrained from making the clearly intended stroke. Such is the frailty of human nature.

Playing the wrong ball can confer a great advantage upon the striker. For example, if the blue clip is on rover and the black clip on hoop 1, and the player roquets black with blue, it would be very profitable to switch the balls and take croquet with black instead of blue. This can happen unconsciously as a result of wishful thinking, to which all human beings are prone. Thus Law 28(b) is very important as a deterrent against players playing the wrong ball.

In view of the situation which has arisen, referred to in my first paragraph, and the ill-feeling that disputes would cause, I feel that the Laws Committee should be requested to consider this matter and express an opinion for the guidance of referees and managers of tournaments.

It must surely be an undesirable situation where the adversary or spectators aid a player to win, whether requested or not. I can remember an era when spectators spoke only in whispers, so as not to disturb the players' concentration, and to ensure that no player, including the player sitting out, would hear anything which might benefit him.

Leslie Riggall
Kloof, South Africa.

Hurry Up!

Dear Sir,
One often hears the complaint that croquet takes too long. This is especially so when long bisquers play each other often with hardly any bisques to quicken things up. The truth is that 14/16s playing together need over four hours on average to reach a conclusion. On the other hand two players of about scratch need less than two hours, figures I have obtained from timing over 3000 games. Anything that can be done to reduce the time needed would improve the game and increase the appeal of croquet.

The idea of introducing Advanced Play (lifts and contact) into handicap singles is a very bad one if only because it would prolong all games except perhaps those between minus players. I have timed dozens of B Class and C Class handicap and level play games. The latter take a good half an hour longer. By observation this is because the forth-coming lift interrupts the play itself. Introduction of lifts in handicap play at these levels and above would certainly have the same result. However, all encourage-

Law 49 also states that a player, 'should not take advantage of unsolicited information or advice.'

ment should be given to the full bisque game.

As usual Cheltenham is in the forefront of experiments! This year we are playing the season long Big Handicap in blocks with full bisques without time limits. The handicap range involved is -2 to 18 reasonably well spread. Play is not yet completed but over half the games have been played and the majority timed. The indications are that this method of play will shorten the time needed by a significant amount - perhaps more than half an hour. If the full bisque method became general, think of the benefit to the ordinary handicap weekend. We could either give more games to each player or take in more people.

I have heard objections to the full bisque idea that it would entail recasting the current handicap practice. I fear that the answer to this is that the present system needs recasting anyway as it increasingly favours the better player. At present scratch players and lower win more than 65% of their games: players off 4 win about 55%: 8s win 45%, while players of 12 and above do not win as many as 30% of their games (see page 18, Croquet No. 184).

At one time it was held that if a player won 50% of his games his handicap was about right. From many reviews of results this has not been true for several years and as current practice is mostly to reduce handicaps and hardly ever put players up, the discrepancy constantly widens. In the current issue of Croquet No. 204 there are 109 handicap adjustments, 91 down and only 18 up!

On grounds of speed I hope the idea of lifts etc. in handicap games will be squashed and the full bisque practice developed, and on grounds of fairness, especially to the newer and less skilled player, the handicap system will be overhauled.

Croquet tends to be run by the better players, the low bisquers, though many seem seldom to play on handicap. Nevertheless it is surely up

to the game's administrators to push forward any idea which may speed up the game for everyone and reorganise the present handicap system which so favours the better players.

Edgar Jackson,
Cheltenham.

Roll Shots

Dear Sir,
If Eric Solomon had persevered with reading my letter as far as the final paragraph he would have encountered my reason for writing it. It would have been interesting to know at what angle of split a pass roll producing a ratio greater than two to one could be achieved without any degree of 'push'.

It seems pointless to pursue the matter, since I appear to be the only reader to respond to his article other than lightheartedly, and I have no wish to be subjected to a further patronising reply.

David Purdon,
Budleigh Salterton.

The Good Old Days

Dear Sir,
We used to play Croquet for fun, but obviously this is old fashioned and probably totally and completely out of date.

Having studied Tim Harrison's report of the Harrow Oak two day weekend, page 10, issue no. 204 (I understood that weekend tournament reports should be short, factual, and to the point) I find that now all that matters is 'Ranking Points'.

As at least 90% of Croquet players will never achieve a mention on this National Ranking list, it is all rather alarming. It seems one must be born in an era where one can attend an approved school - Q.E.G.S. if possible - take up Croquet by the mid-teens at the latest, rapidly achieve 'A' class skills with handicap to match, then select one's tournament with care, and play only to gain Ranking Points. What on earth does one do with the remaining 60 years of life??

Tim even has the effrontery to

suggest that in the Inter-Club Tournament the entry should be restricted, thus eliminating those teams that have no chance! Computer Rankings again? There was a year in the 70's (consult John Walters' Almanack), when Hunstanton fielding a team with the combined handicap of around +16, actually got to the final. What fun it was, no one took us seriously and we kept on winning. In the final Cheltenham did us the honour of fielding a President's Cup standard team and soundly beat us. I think Veronica Carlisle was the only member of Hunstanton who actually got as far as giving a lift, but we will never forget the fun we had getting there.

Having attended the final three days of the so called World Croquet Championship at Hurlingham, I was shattered to find my free programme bore on the cover a photograph of a banned player. Was this just a sick joke? Obviously Reggie is far better looking than most of the other contestants portrayed, but I cannot imagine that that was the reason for his inclusion. It is sad to find that one of the best young players in the world, who only three years ago was invited to Hurlingham to play in the President's Cup, where he fully justified his presence, should find himself banned from the World Championship. If New Zealand cannot play a South African, possibly we should manage without New Zealand?

It is fortunate that at club level, croquet is still a game that we actually enjoy, players actually laugh when a 2-yard roquet is missed - but of course it doesn't upset one's Ranking. Our peers should remember it is the unranked players who give up their weekend's croquet for these prestige tournaments, do most of the work including the catering, and dutifully applaud those B.O.T.P.S. Then a whole page in 'Croquet' is given to the blow by blow report. I often wonder if dear old Mrs XYZ actually won her D class by 1 on time. Sarah G. Hampson,
Hunstanton.

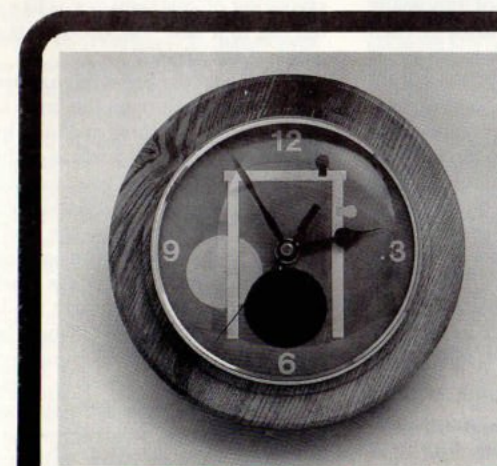
It is the World Croquet Federation, through its member bodies, that is ultimately responsible for the conduct of the World Championships. The CA, like the other members of the WCF, can express its views through its vote.



Adrian Saurin, following in his brothers' foot-steps and now down to a handicap of 8.

The CA Council discussed the question of South African participation at its meeting in April this year (see issue 204) to determine its current policy. The matter will be debated further in October, so if you have views on the subject, please pass them on to a Council member before the meeting.

The cover of the Souvenir Programme contained photos of several international players who did not take part in the Championships. No 'sick joke' or political message was intended when the original artwork was prepared - Ed.



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Your Letters

The Crush Stroke in 1905

By Allen Parker (Parkstone)

The present laws no longer refer to a 'crush stroke', but there are three kinds of fault under Law 32 that can be committed when striking a ball when it is close to a wire or the peg. Two of these refer directly to the obstacle, viz:

(xi) Strikes the striker's ball so as to cause it to touch a hoop or (unless the striker's ball is pegged out in that stroke) the peg when still in contact with the mallet;

(xii) Strikes the striker's ball, when it lies in contact with a hoop or (unless the striker's ball is pegged out in the stroke) the peg, otherwise than in a direction away therefrom.

Although it does not specifically refer to hoop or peg, the first part of Sub-law (ix) (strikes the striker's ball audibly and distinctly twice in the same stroke or.....) is also relevant because the cause of the double tap may be due to the deflection of the ball by the wire or peg back on to the mallet. It is interesting to compare these laws with the proposals that appeared in letters published in the 1905 Gazette, which indicate that the problem was fully appreciated in those days by the umpires (i.e. referees) but apparently not by a large majority of the players.

Some Varieties of Crush Stroke

Dear Sir,

The 'Crush Stroke proper', as we may call it, is familiar to every croquet player..... and consists in forcibly pressing a ball through a hoop from an impossible position by an obviously prolonged pressure of the mallet on the ball. There are however less noticeable varieties of crush stroke which are worthy of every croquet player's attention, and the simplest is that which may be unconsciously used in running a hoop from a difficult angle. Suppose that, looking along the line from the ball to hoop it is seen that running the hoop fairly is just possible. It is necessary to strike the far wire hard with what may be described as the centre of the ball, when properly applied spin or follow will carry it through the hoop.

But if the ball lie close to the hoop, the requisite strength cannot be given to the stroke without pressing, or allowing some of the rebound from the wire being transmitted to the mallet, thus constituting a foul stroke. It follows that there is some critical distance from the hoop (varying with the skill of the player) where the stroke may be legitimately attempted, but with its risk of being a foul. At this distance, moreover, no

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An advertisement in the Gazette: July 6th, 1905.

one but the player himself may be able to say accurately whether or not the stroke is fair.

A second and more insidious danger of unconsciously using a crush stroke may arise from the striker's ball lying in close proximity to a wire or peg. The player wishes to roquet a ball lying some distance away. But on standing well behind the ball and looking along the proposed line of aim, it is clear that the ball cannot be roqueted without the striker's ball just grazing the wire or peg. Yet I have seen players, and good players too, effect such a roquet by a stroke that you could certainly not call a foul by the most careful use of eyes and ears. Of course an umpire could only decide the question by looking carefully at the position before the stroke was made; and if such inspection has not been made, no argument will convince the striker that the stroke was not a fair one.....

A third and less common temptation to play a crush stroke may be added. The striker's ball is wired from all other balls by a hoop which could easily be run, but which is not the striker's hoop. Strategically it may be to the striker's advantage to reach the further boundary of the lawn through the hoop rather than retire to one of the other boundaries. It is easy to run the hoop, but impossible to do so with sufficient force to reach the desired spot. The player is perhaps temporarily suffering from an absence of the true philosophical spirit to which all players aspire, and it is well known that to strike a ball violently is some relief to this condition. He therefore bangs his ball through the hoop to the end of the ground. The stroke is obviously foul, but his opponent, partly from fear of adding fuel to the flame, and partly from generosity induced by his more favourable position, does not claim it.

E. Kaye Le Fleming

Editorial note on Crush Stroke
We sincerely hope that the new crusade against the crush stroke, which began so promisingly with Dr

Edkins' letter on page 7, and was continued with Mr Le Fleming's excellent article on page 15, will not be allowed to come to nothing.

The very large quantity of tournament players - about 95% we should think - appear, from their habitual methods of playing a ball lying near a hoop or peg, to be either absolutely ignorant of what constitutes a crush stroke, or absolutely careless as to whether they play one or not. The manner in which some of our most prominent lady players (we regret our opinion that ladies are the worst offenders) simply shuffle the ball through a hoop whenever it is within 6 inches of it is a positive disgrace to a game which calls itself scientific.

Not only this, but nearly every habitual offender, when the nature of his error is pointed out to him, is totally unable to comprehend why or in what respect the stroke is unfair. 'But I made a perfectly clean hit,' he replies, 'and there was certainly no audible double tap.' Which of course has absolutely nothing to do with the case. It is hopeless to explain to him why. No definition of what constitutes a crush stroke can be given without the use of the word 'right angle'; and it appears that nearly every croquet player is so constituted that the mere mention of any word savouring of 'mathematics' is like a red rag to a bull. 'Oh, Croquet is a game; it isn't Euclid.'

A player whose ball is left against a wire bangs it through the hoop to the boundary, without paying the slightest regard to the fairness of the stroke. So widespread was, and still is, this evil that we suggested in our notes of last June that the only remedy lay in adopting the opinion of Mr 'Bolde' and legalising the crush stroke, provided that it were made with a 'clean hit'. The result would be in most cases a clumsy and unscientific stroke, but at any rate there would be no premium on unfairness, as there now is, or loss to the few conscientious players who will not attempt a crush stroke even when placed in a wire by the opponent.

The only alternative is for our leading players especially, and for all players who will, to have the moral courage to refuse to allow such strokes to pass unchallenged, and to claim them as fouls; above all, to call attention beforehand to the probability of a crush stroke when the opponent is about to play; and to call the opponent's attention, and ask for an umpire, whenever the player himself proposes to attempt any stroke which might result in a crush stroke. We repeat once more that the feasibility of such strokes can only be judged before the stroke is made.

If only this course were pursued by our leading players for a month or so, we feel convinced that the majority of their opponents, and eventually of playing Associates, would learn at any rate the necessity of being careful, and might even, in time, come to learn what a crush stroke is, to realise that it is a foul, like other fouls, and that it cannot any longer be made with impunity.

A Novel Suggestion

Dear Sir,

.....The only other reform I should like to see provided for is the one dealing with crush strokes, which are quite too common, and give a very unfair advantage to the player using them, as against an opponent who does not indulge in them. Here, again, the remedy should be made as simple as possible. A player having approached a hoop should in every case before attempting to run it, be able to insert the head of his mallet sideways between his playing ball and the nearest wire, and unless the mallet be clear of both hoop and ball, the player should be bound to ask the opponent whether an umpire is desired. Such a rule would be simple, and some players would hesitate about trying doubtful strokes if players other than themselves were to be judges of the fairness of the stroke.....

Truly yours, T.B. Moffat.

Proposed Improvements 1905

Dear Sir,

When a ball is in position, good or bad, to run a hoop, in a large number of cases the stroke is made unfairly if the ball happens to lie within an inch or so of the hoop. In these cases the mallet follows the ball, so that it is a matter of impossibility to avoid hitting the ball a second time after the ball has touched a wire. A large number of players rely on the absence of an audible double-knock to justify the fairness of the stroke. Our organs of hearing are not adapted to appreciate the double knock which often exists in these cases, and, therefore, this test must be defined as altogether insufficient. I think it would be greatly in the interests of the game if a clearer conception of what a crush stroke is could be formulated. I therefore venture to suggest the following elaboration of the law: 'If in hitting a

ball, with the intention of causing the said ball to run a hoop, the striker so follow the ball with his mallet that (1). The mallet must necessarily again hit the ball when the course of the ball is deflected by a wire of the hoop, or (2). The mallet remain continuously in contact with the ball so that, when the course of the ball is deflected by a wire of the hoop, the mallet is still in contact'.....

Yours faithfully, J.S. Edkins.

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Dear Sir,

Although signs are not wanting that the crush stroke is beginning to be more generally understood and a less frequent source of dispute, it will, I think, be generally admitted that a large majority of croquet players look upon the law (if indeed they ever look upon it at all) as enveloped in a haze of mystery and beyond their comprehension, though nearly all will recognise a stroke that forces a ball through a hoop from an obviously impossible position as a foul one.

Generally speaking it is the finer gradations of crushing that are less easily understood, and the appreciation of which is often supposed to be bound up with some intricate mathematical problem and therefore beyond the grasp of ordinary mortals. To the minds of such it will never occur that where a ball is left close to a hoop and in such a position that it can run it without much difficulty the question of a foul stroke by

crushing can arise. The principle that is involved in all crush strokes is in reality a simple one.

Whenever a ball strikes a hoop or peg it is first checked and then rebounds along an altered path. The amount of check and deviation of course becoming greater the more fully the object is struck. If now, at the moment the ball strikes the peg or wire, the striker's mallet is also in contact with it, the check is to some extent smothered or neutralised and

The main objective of this article is to plead for an authoritative definition of the crush stroke in the Laws of Croquet. Presuming that nearly everyone would regret to see crushing legalised, the offence should surely be made more definite. The following is suggested as a basis for framing a clear and simply-worded definition to replace the present law: 'To strike a ball so that it touch a wire or peg while still in contact with the mallet',..... and 'To strike a ball lying in contact with a wire or peg other than directly away from the wire or peg.'

E. Kaye Le Fleming.

Crush Stroke and Pass Roll

Dear Sir,

.....Is the play of the stroke, the manner of its execution, any different, in the case of a crush-stroke partly round a peg or wire, from the play or execution of a pass-roll recognised as fair? Is not each stroke solely due to the sustained or prolonged pressure of the mallet on the striker's ball. Similarly, Dr Edkins' argument that an audible second impact occurs in many crush-strokes is surely equally applicable to the legitimate pass-roll. If the striker's action is the same in each case and the variation in result is merely due to the different resistances offered by a moveable croquet ball and a fixed wire respectively, why should this stroke be called skilful in one place and dubbed clumsy and unscientific in another? Thus this law in effect says that you may, in taking croquet, do that which you must not do in running a hoop. This seems regrettable, but apparently must continue, unless either the crush-stroke is legalised or all follow-on strokes penalised. The latter procedure would injure the game, but why is it thought that the former would do so? Yours truly, T.H. Godfrey.

This was followed by a note from the Editor:

We agree that the methods of playing crush-strokes and roll-strokes are very similar in many cases.

Conclusion:

E. Kaye Le Fleming certainly had the right idea. The description of the various kinds of 'crush-stroke' in his two letters could well be read with advantage by to-day's novices, and his two proposals for revised laws are almost identical with our present sub-laws 32 (xi) and (xii). J.S. Edkins' letter gives another insight into what used to be called the 'crush stroke', and his proposed laws are to-day covered by our sub-law 32 (ix).

It is to be hoped that to-day's players are not so ignorant as the 95% referred to in the 'Editorial Note', but we have certainly watched some who could read this contribution with advantage.

Finally the last letter by T.B. Moffat raises the perennial question of when a roll stroke is legal, if ever.

